Police state lock-down fails to stop
Mass protests vs NATO killers

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire
Chicago

This city was the scene of an historic outpouring of activism and indignation on May 20, when at least 15,000 people rallied and marched in opposition to the imperialist war policies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The demonstration took place in defiance of state and ruling-class intimidation, which was engineered by the city administration and the corporate media under the aegis of the White House and the Pentagon.

For weeks the local and national pro-business and military-friendly media had been inundated with reports of possible street violence and mass arrests. It was an attempt to discourage people from coming to Chicago for a series of activities that began on the weekend of May 12-13 with a People’s Summit.

But it failed. The week witnessed numerous demonstrations in support of immigrant and workers’ rights and in defense of the supposedly constitutionally protected ability to speak freely and congregate.

During the middle of the week, the home of a local activist in the Bridgeport neighborhood was raided by law enforcement. Three youth were beaten, arrested and charged with outrageously trumped-up charges of “terrorism.” The activists were essentially disappeared until attorneys located them in a lock-up, shackled as if they were dangerous criminals.

Of course, the corporate media played its part by constantly repeating without question the bogus charges of operating a petrol bomb-making factory and planning attacks against the campaign headquarters of President Barack Obama, local police stations and other targets.

Chicago resembled an armed camp on May 19, just one day prior to the large rally and march. On nearly every street corner in the Loop, gangs of local Chicago police, Federal Protective Services officers, Cook County cops and FBI agents looked as if they were prepared to do battle against anyone who appeared to challenge their authority. At an otherwise peaceful demonstration against repression that day, police rammed bicycles and a vehicle into a crowd of several hundred activists in downtown Chicago.

Rally & march, a significant victory

On May 20, in 90-degree heat, people began to gather at Grant Park as early as 10 a.m. for a scheduled noon rally. Numerous organizations set up literature tables, and people mingled freely, talking politics and engaging in spontaneous cultural presentations.

The rally featured more than 40 speakers representing various political and organizational affiliations: immigrant rights, labor, Civil Rights, Black Liberation, Palestinian, peace, international solidarity, housing, women’s, environmental,Filipino and other struggles. Speakers included Larry Holmes of Workers World Party and the Occupy4Jobs Network; Joe Iosbaker of the Committee to Stop FBI Repression; Standish Willis of the National Conference of Black Lawyers; Kathy Kelly of Voices for Creative Non-Violence; the longtime Chicano international solidarity organizer Carlos Montes, who is currently fighting a frame-up in Continued on page 5
Put your money ...

‘Put your money where your mouth is.’ We’ve all heard that expression; it means to give to the causes and  
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are hours; our pensions are threatened. That is, if you’re lucky enough to have or have had a job. Some of us live on  
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Before the second-degree murder trial of George Zimmerman, who killed the Trayvon Martin case, the 17-year-old unarmed African American fatally shot by Zimmerman on Feb. 26 in Sanford, Fla. There is now a growing chorus of mainstream media asking the question if Zimmerman should even be brought to trial due to evidence released on May 17. The New York Times of May 16 published a major exposé of “missteps” by the Sanford police department, claiming that this may make it even harder to convict Zimmerman.

Zimmerman, a self-proclaimed neighborhood watchman living in a gated community, followed Martin after he left a convenience store and was heading back to the home of his father, whom he was visiting. In recorded 911 tapes, Zimmerman stated that Martin looked “suspicious” because he was Black and wearing a hoodie. A friend of Martin’s told the police that he had told her during a phone call that he was being watched by a stranger, just minutes before he was killed.

The police did not initially charge Zimmerman with Martin’s shooting, saying that the Stand Your Ground law was applicable to the case. SYG is a state law passed in 2005 that allows someone to claim self-defense if they feel threatened by others. Zimmerman told the police that Martin posed a threat to him, when in reality it was just the opposite. In fact, even the police stated that Martin would still be alive today if Zimmerman had taken their advice during the 911 call and not gone after him.

Due to the national outcry in the form of rallies and marches in large and small U.S. cities demanding the arrest of Zimmerman, a special prosecutor, Angela B. Corey, was assigned to the case in April 11, more than a month after the shooting, Corey and the Sanford police were forced by mass pressure to arrest Zimmerman. After less than two weeks in jail, he was released April 23 on a $150,000 bond. He had to put up $15,000 bail and has not been seen in public since he was released and provided with a police escort.

An overview of evidence

On May 17, special prosecutor Corey released to the public 183 pages of documents on the Martin case. The pre-trial documents include eyewitness statements, medical reports, various investigation reports, photos and much more.

Contrast the soft glove treatment Zimmerman received a capitalist system that relies on an ideology of white supremacy to keep the 1% in power over the 99%. Demanding the legal conviction of Zimmerman, while very important, is not enough. The courts cannot be trusted to care about justice for people of color like Trayvon Martin and Marissa Alexander. The courts must feel the righteous, organized anger of the masses in the streets with demands like “No justice, no peace!”

Marcus Schell, Reggie Schell, Fred Hampton, Jr.

March 21, Union Square, New York City.

The city raids were designed to deter people from attending the Revolutionary Peoples Constitutional Convention when people, mostly activists, would gather together to write a new revolutionary constitution for a new, revolutionary America.

The raids backed off, for afterwards, support came from all quarters, even those which had previously avoided the Panthers.

But even after the dissolution of the Party, Reggie continued his work by founding the Black United Liberation Front which composed mostly of local ex-Panthers. The issues were the same — protecting and defending the rights of Black people, fighting against police brutality, for decent housing, and against the prison-industrial complex. He worked closely with any group or individual who could help, and had a close and personal working relationship with the late North Philadelphia-based cleric, Father Paul Washington, long-time rector of the Church of the Advocate.

In later years, even when under the ravages of kidney disease so serious it required weekly dialysis, Reggie Schell was at his post, ignoring his pain, passing out leaflets on C. B. Moore Ave., or painting signs of protest for passersby.
A victory was won in the struggle against police brutality on May 11 when the New York Police Department and the City of New York opted to settle a federal suit brought against them by Michael Tarif Warren and Evelyn Warren. While coming to the defense of a young man they witnessed being beaten by police, the two had been brutalized and arrested in 2007. Rather than face trial, the City will pay the Warrens a sum of $350,000.

Michael Tarif Warren is a New York attorney well known for representing victims of police brutality or their families, including Michael Stewart, Yvonne Smallwood, Sadilii "Bro. Shep" Ojoriohghala, and the five Black teenagers falsely accused and convicted of raping “the Central Park Jogger.” (justiceforwarrens.org)

On June 21, 2007, the Warrens had stopped their car at a red light in Brooklyn, N.Y., when they witnessed NYPD officers chase a young man and then beat him in full view of passersby, including children. When Michael Tarif Warren stepped out of his car and yelled to the police to stop beating the young man, the police, including a sergeant, approached the Warrens’ car and proceeded to beat Michael Tarif Warren. They then dragged him out of the car and arrested him. When Evelyn Warren, who is also a practicing lawyer, objected to what was happening, police hit her in the face and arrested her as well. The police were not ready, however, for the response that ensued. Within hours hundreds of supporters of the two gathered at the 77th Precinct, where the Warrens had been taken, refusing to leave until the two had been released. The police were forced to relent. Months later, the criminal charges against the Warrens were dropped by the district attorney. The Warrens then filed the civil rights lawsuit against the City and the NYPD.

Michael Tarif Warren and Evelyn Warren.

An email from the Warrens’ attorney, Jonathan Moore, states, “Although there is the standard no admission of liability, the amount of the settlement speaks for itself in terms of whether there was wrongdoing on the part of officers in the NYPD.”

This important victory frees Michael Tarif Warren to continue his work defending others abused at the hands of the police. He is currently representing Bro. Shaka Shakur, who was arrested after police raided his Bronx, N.Y., apartment with a trumped-up warrant. Shakur is the co-founder of the People’s Survival Program, which provides members of the Harlem, N.Y., community with much-needed services like food, clothing, and assistance in housing and health care.

Alan Blueford, an 18-year-old Black student at Oakland’s Skyline High School, slated to graduate next month, was killed by Oakland police on May 6 in East Oakland, Calif. His family says that he and two friends were just waiting for some young women who planned to meet them on the corner of 90th and Birch streets when the cops approached them with guns drawn for no justifiable reason. Their crime? Being Black young men on a corner.

Oakland police are notorious for violence against Black youth. Blueford ran for two blocks, after which he was shot three times by one of the cops. The police wouldn’t even give out the name of the cop who shot him. Members of Blueford’s family went to a meeting of the Oakland City Council to demand some answers. Demanding justice, more than a hundred community members packed the chambers and the balconies in support.

The family’s next step is holding a rally at the Alameda District Attorney’s office on May 23. They are demanding the following: Release the name of the cop who shot Alan Blueford, take him off paid leave, fire him and charge him with murder.

— Terri Kay

OAKLAND, CALIF.

Community demands justice for Blueford

U.S. chapter of Int’l League of Peoples’ Struggle launched

By LeiLani Dowell

New York

Thousands of people poured into this city by the lake on the May 19-20 weekend. A few were high officials, prime ministers and presidents. They came to attend the summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a military alliance of the United States, Canada and Western European powers. Hiding behind masses of heavily armed police, they winced and dined and plotted new wars against poor people in Africa and Asia.

Many thousands more, working and jobless, students, retirees and military veterans, came to protest their plans for endless wars and endless war spending. Several hundred among them also came to attend a different summit meeting. Mostly young and mostly people of color, they packed El Centro Autonomo, a community hall in Chicago’s largely immigrant Albany Park neighborhood.

The theme of the May 19 assembly was “Unite with the Global 99% Against Monopoly Capital, the Source of Economic Crisis, Racism and War.” Their purpose was to launch the United States Country Chapter of the International League of Peoples Struggle.

The ILPS could be called the anti-NATO. It unites nearly 400 mass organizations in 43 countries on six continents. It represents workers, peasants and fishers, students, indigenous people, the urban poor, environmentalists, human rights lawyers and advocates, antiracist activists and fighters for women’s and queer rights. With all their diversity, they are united in seeing imperialism, the global system of monopoly capitalism that is centered on Wall Street, as the primary enemy of working class and oppressed people all over the world.

The U.S. Chapter of ILPS was launched by 26 local and national member organizations. They included the International Action Center, the U.S. branch of the Philippine women’s organization Gabriela and youth organization Anakbayan, the People’s Organization for Progress, the Palestine Youth Movement, the Committee to Stop FBI Repression, Solidarity with Iran, Alianza Boricua, the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice, and Chelsea (Mass.) Uniting Against the War. It will join four other ILPS country chapters in the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia and Canada.

‘Gathered beneath brightly painted murals and banners, the assembly was opened with a Skype message from the league’s chair, exiled Philippine revolutionary leader Jose Maria Sison. He said, ‘We appreciate the significance and urgency of the theme of your assembly: ‘Unite with the Global 99% Against Monopoly Capital, the Source of Economic Crisis, Racism and War’; build a brighter future that is ours! You are responding to the challenge posed by the rapidly worsening crisis of the world capitalist system. It is imperative that you raise the level of...’

Continued on page 6
C.I.W. targets Chipotle chain

After a hard-fought, year-long battle for union recognition, the port truck drivers in Los Angeles who haul brand-name fashion imports voted April 12 to join Teamsters Local 70. The workers had to battle the Australian-owned, $8.8 billion Toll Group, which waged a vicious, expensive, union-hostile campaign to intimidate workplace leaders and suppress free choice. Though the workforce is small — its role in building the war machine and not paying workers. More than 3.8 million work-related injuries and illnesses occur every year in the U.S., with people in the U.S. having lost jobs and vital social services due to imposed harsh austerity measures on working people around the world. The AFL-CIO Now blog on May 2)

L.A. port truckers win union

Too many job-related deaths

Since every year since 1991, the AFL-CIO has commemorated workers killed at work and those who die from work-related causes on Workers Memorial Day, April 28. According to the 2012 edition of its report, “Death on the Job,” data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show 4,500 workers — an average of 13 a day — were killed at work, with an estimated 50,000 dying from occupational diseases. Latino/a workers, often immigrants working in high-risk construction jobs, continue to have the highest fatality rate — 3.9 per 100,000 workers. More than 3.8 million work-related injuries occur every year in the U.S., with workers killed at work, the year’s highest fatality rate — 3.9 per 100,000 workers. More than 3.8 million work-related injuries occur every single day, the year’s highest fatality rate — 3.9 per 100,000 workers. More than 3.8 million work-related injuries occur every year in the U.S., with people in the U.S. having lost jobs and vital social services due to imposed harsh austerity measures on working people around the world. The AFL-CIO Now blog on May 2)

S.F. Labor Council supports protests of NATO/GB

The Executive Committee of the San Francisco Labor Council unanimously passed a resolution May 7 opposing the G8 nations for imposing harsh austerity measures on working people around the world and NATO for fighting unjust wars throughout the world, all while people in the U.S. have lost jobs and vital social services due to bloated military budgets. The resolution supported the anti-NATO protest in Chicago on May 20 that was endorsed by labor unions, community groups and anti-war organizations, and called for the permitted demonstration to be allowed to proceed peacefully so that the protesters’ grievances could be heard.
NATO Summit: 1%’s enforcers talk tactics

By John Catalinotto

While 15,000 people were-braving police clubs and 50 U.S. military veterans were throwing their medals as they denounced NATO as a criminal military alliance, top officials from the 28 NATO members and some associates were proving that the demonstrators were right on target. NATO intervenes against the people of the world, even as Chicago cops do against protesters.

The riots, the attack’s big public topic was the alliance’s current hot war against the people of Afghanistan. President Barack Obama, who hosted the summit, announced that the war would finally wind down over the next two years. France’s Francois Hollande said he’d pull out French troops before the end of 2012. Washington had opened this war more than 10 years ago with some nominal NATO help as apparent revenge for the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The Pentagon named the operation “Enduring Freedom.” The war has certainly endured, as has the slaughter of Afghans, and is now set to continue for another two years, since a U.S. airstrike killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. The Pakistanis may re-open the route, but are asking for a toll of $35,000 per truck instead of $220 as in the past. (Chicago Sun Times, May 21)

U.S. chapter of ILPS

Continued from page 4

By Emmanuelle Cannci

In the 1970s, the Indian Social Forum (ISF) started its own struggle in order to fight against the repression of democracy in Asia. The Asian Social Forum (ASF) was founded in 2000 in the wake of the Indian Social Forum (ISF) to fight against the repression of democracy in Asia.

The ISF was founded in 1989 by a group of students, intellectuals, and activists who were arrested and imprisoned for their participation in the anti-government movement. The ISF was a loose coalition of groups and individuals who shared a common concern about the repression of democracy in Asia. The ISF was particularly active in India, where it organized protests and demonstrations against the government’s repression of democracy.

The ISF was a relatively small group, but it had a significant impact. The group’s protests and demonstrations brought attention to the repression of democracy in Asia, and they helped to build a movement for democracy in the region.

The ISF was not just a protest group, however. It also had a political program that it sought to implement through action. The ISF’s program included the following:

1. The ISF sought to build a strong movement for democracy in Asia. This required building alliances with other groups and individuals who shared a commitment to democracy. The ISF worked to build alliances with trade unions, student organizations, and other groups that shared a commitment to democracy.

2. The ISF sought to create a public sphere in which people could express their views and participate in political life. This required challenging the suppression of democracy and the silencing of dissent. The ISF worked to challenge the suppression of democracy and the silencing of dissent through protests and demonstrations.

3. The ISF sought to change the economic and political system in Asia. This required challenging the political and economic power of the ruling class. The ISF worked to challenge the political and economic power of the ruling class through protests and demonstrations.

The ISF was able to achieve some significant victories. For example, the organization played an important role in the successful campaign to end the Indian Emergency, which had been imposed by the Government of India in 1975-77.

The ISF was also able to achieve some significant victories in other parts of Asia. For example, the organization played an important role in the successful campaign to end the military dictatorship in Indonesia, which had been imposed by the Government of Indonesia in 1965-99.

However, the ISF also faced significant challenges. The organization was often targeted by the government, which used violence and repression to try to silence the organization and its supporters. The ISF was also often unable to implement its program of action, due to the lack of support from other groups and individuals.

But the ISF’s work showed that it was possible to build a movement for democracy in Asia, and to challenge the suppression of democracy and the silencing of dissent. The ISF’s work also showed that it was possible to change the economic and political system in Asia, and to create a public sphere in which people could express their views and participate in political life.

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Demonstration exposes NATO as real source of violence

By Caleb T. Maupin
Chicago

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is one of the most violent organizations in the world. NATO was formed after World War II to try to stop the people of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Red Army from driving out the imperialists and beginning socialist construction in countries that had been liberated from fascist rule. One of NATO’s first acts was to defend the autocratic Greek monarchy against a popular democratic and anti-imperialist people’s movement.

More recently, NATO has bombed and destroyed Libya and continues to occupy Afghanistan. Justifiably, millions throughout the world loathe NATO and its murderous reign of drone strikes, military occupations, bombings of civilians and unrestrained violence in service of the bankers and corporations in Western capitalist countries. Many felt it necessary to protest against NATO’s May 20 summit in Chicago.

The strategy of NATO and its backers in the halls of power was to isolate the protesters with deceptive rhetoric about “violence.” These efforts failed.

In the lead-up to the NATO summit in Chicago, the media were filled with stories demonizing the planned mass demonstration. Buildings in downtown Chicago had routine terrorism drills. Employees in the downtown area were warned to “dress like a protester” to avoid being assaulted. Even security director Mark Andaliva confirmed, “There’s no data out there to substantiate somebody like a protester” to avoid being assaulted.

Several days before the mass march, an apartment in Chicago was raided and nine youth were arrested. The police claimed they were manufacturing explosives. Their lawyer has pointed out that the only thing police found was beer-making equipment. The youth were prevented from seeing a lawyer for 17 hours. Their bail was set at $1 million.

The youth suspect that the entire raid was merely retaliation for a video they had posted on the internet earlier in the week, exposing police harassment they had already endured.

The same word that NATO forces use to justify their brutal drone attacks on civilians in Asia and Africa is now being used against activist youth. They are being charged under an obscure Illinois “anti-terrorism” law.

Despite the repressive atmosphere, hundreds of Occupy protesters from throughout the U.S. poured into Chicago several days in advance, setting up tents in parks and sleeping in nearby churches. When the protest called by the United National Anti-War Committee and the Coalition Against NATO/G8 War and Poverty Agenda finally took place on May 20, more than 15,000 people participated, despite all the hype and repression.

As the march ended, the police herded the large crowd of protesters into a small area, not allowing people to leave. As they were pushed against each other, some violent youth pushed back, trying to prevent the crowd from being packed even tighter than before.

The police then attacked the crowd with wooden batons and night sticks. Countless people were severely bloodied and injured as police weapons connected with the skulls. Pepper spray was used, and other acts of violence were unleashed against the peaceful crowd before the police finally allowed people to leave the demonstration. Those who sought medical attention for their injuries were arrested at nearby hospitals.

Despite the heavy repression and media hype, the streets of Chicago were filled with support for the protests. Any hostility toward the demonstrators was rare, and nearly all on the streets were united in their disgust at the extreme police crackdown. Bus drivers, store clerks and workers in the downtown area supported the protests almost unanimously.

The effort to isolate some sections of the anti-NATO protests by labeling them “violent” failed. When the police brutality was unleashed, all major leaders of the demonstration came to the defense of the victims. The people’s movement against NATO and its crimes overcame incredible odds and successfully exposed NATO for what it truly is — the real source of violence in the world.

The struggle to drop the false terrorism charges and win justice for those who suffered brutality on May 20 continues.

WWP active in 10 days of anti-NATO protests

By Frank Neisser
Chicago

For 10 days Workers World Party members and friends actively worked with the peoples’ mobilization against the NATO Summit of the war-makers in Chicago to build momentum toward the magnificent May 20 march.

The Coalition Against NATO/G8 War & Poverty Agenda (CANG8) sponsored the main march. WWP’s delegation, with people from Chicago, Detroit, New York, Boston and cities in Wisconsin and Utah, participated in meetings, marches, press conferences, pickets and rallies.

WWP activists got out thousands of copies of Workers World newspaper and thousands of a special supplement — headlined “Unite to fight racism and imperialism — Abolish NATO — Defend the right to protest — People’s Power — Next step DMC and RNC” — at all the week’s events.

Those distributing WW had great discussions with veterans eager to expose NATO’s true role, students considering what People’s Power might look like, and activists learning first-hand about the role of NATO in the domestic arm of NATO’s war machine.

Protest & solidarity

On May 12-13, CANG8 and Occupy Chicago held a People’s Summit to discuss the issues.

Occupy Chicago called a week of daily anti-NATO actions for May 14-21. These included a Monday, May 14, education rally at a high school the Chicago Board of Education had listed for closure. A May 15 march for immigrant rights went through immigrant neighborhoods and continued with a direct civil disobedience action: occupying the Chicago Immigration and Customs Enforcement office by sitting in and blocking the doors. On May 16, a militant march in support of a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions targeted the Bank of America.

On May 17, Workers World Party held a public forum on “NATO, Tool of the 1%.” WWP First Secretary Larry Holmes, who also coordinates the ILL People Movement and Occupy a Jobs, discussed the significance of the Occupy movement in the context of the world uprising against a global program of war, cutbacks and austerity.

Representatives of the local housing struggle and Final Call, the newspaper of the Nation of Islam, participated. Holmes represented the Committee against FBI Repression, who was herself one of the 24 anti-war and international solidarity activists whose homes were raided by the FBI in September 2010, spoke of the case of Carlos Montes, who goes on trial in Los Angeles in June.

Earlier that day, WWP members and supporters participated in a rally in solidarity with Carlos Montes at the Dirksen Federal Building, where the investigation against the 24 and Montes is headquartered.

WWP members also attended a press conference and a march condemning the police invasion of the home of Occu Chicago activists and protesting that three of them were held on bogus terrorism charges. Cops seized a home beer-making kit and spun a story that it was to be used for making molotov cocktails.

Later that day, WWP members were central organizers of a “NATO – EU – Hands Off Greece!” demonstration at the Greek consulate. They expressed solidarity with the Greek workers, who have rejected all political parties that have agreed with the European Union’s and the banks’ super-austerity program.

At the huge May 20 antivax demonstration, WWP staffed two literature tables and got out hundreds of Workers World newspapers. The WWP organizers, including a large delegation from Detroit, joined the ILPS contingent. WWP’s lead banner read, “Abolish NATO, Tool of Wall Street Rule, We Need Jobs Not War.”
No relief for Greece & Europe’s workers

By John Catalinotto

The recent G8 summit did nothing to relieve the worldwide capitalist crisis that has cost up to 80 million jobs worldwide since 2008. Nor did it help feed the hungry, stop global warming or prevent wars. This should be no surprise as none of these problems was really on the meeting’s agenda. Its main preoccupation was the financial crisis in Europe and the possibility that Greece will default on bond payments and/or leave the euro zone.

The G8 meeting included the leaders of the seven most powerful imperialist countries — the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Canada — as well as Russia, which, even though it is now a capitalist country, is unwelcome in the inner circle of historical imperialist world powers.

The summit was not aimed at relieving the problems of the billions of people whose economic conditions these imperialist’s actions affect. These leaders represent the bankers, billionaires and generals who run capitalist society — the top 1% of the 1%

The G8 summit, which had at first been scheduled to take place in Chicago during the same week as the NATO summit, instead moved away from any population center to the woods at Camp David, Md. This gathering of capitalist thieves also reached no significant agreement on their goal: a common strategy to confront Europe’s financial crisis, which impacts the entire world economy.

During the summit U.S. President Barack Obama and French Prime Minister Francois Hollande publicly pressured German Chancellor Angela Merkel to back off from strict austerity. This “austerity” forces all countries in the euro zone to give priority to paying off bonds — owned mainly by German-based banks. Austerity has triggered a strong fightback from workers in many countries whose standard of living has already been cut to the bone.

U.S. banks own some Greek bonds and hold other investments in exposed French and German banks. The euro zone overall has entered a recession that can drag the U.S. economy down. Thus Washington — while far from promoting a pro-worker program — prefers some expansion, as in Obama’s 2009 “stimulus.”

Austerity is extremely unpopular as it immediately increases the suffering of the workers and poor. This does not mean, however, that a stimulus would relieve all the symptoms of the crisis.

Background to the crisis

The financial crisis hanging over Europe is not just based on government policies. It is an expression of the world capitalist crisis that exploded in the United States in 2008 and is once again growing more intense in Europe. None of the capitalist world leaders has a means for resolving the crisis and resuming economic growth while staying within capitalist limits. And, of course, none will go beyond those limits.

The current crisis is one of capitalist overproduction. But there’s a difference between this one and past cyclical crises. The increase in productivity in this era of globalized production has become so rapid that now even the upturn phase and new investments fail to revitalize the job market. Interested readers can find a more detailed explanation of this development in the recent book “Capitalism at a Dead End” by Fred Goldstein.

Europe’s big banks had plenty of capital on hand post-2008, but few profitable industries to invest in. They thus aggressively sought to make loans to governments that would guarantee them. The severe capitalist downturn, however, ruined the economies in Europe’s periphery — Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Spain — and paying back became a question mark.

The English-speaking corporate media, using the countries’ initials, call these countries “the PIIGS.” This is meant as a snide insult to serve the corporate lie that the workers in these countries are lazy and greedy and thereby caused the problem. This slander is a conscious attempt to drive a wedge between the workers in Northern Europe and those in Mediterranean countries.

The truth is that the German capitalists have beaten down the wages and benefits of workers in Germany over the last 10 years. The resulting increase in productivity — the result of paying workers less — was enough to increase profits as they undersold the competition throughout the euro zone.

Because they are now in one currency zone, the countries where wages didn’t drop so much no longer could allow their currency to depreciate to keep their products competitive, as they might have before the euro. Thus companies failed, unemployment grew, tax collections decreased, and it was even harder for them to repay debts, etc.

In Spain, official unemployment is nearly 25 percent. In Greece it’s more than 23 percent, in Portugal and Ireland around 15 percent, and nearly 10 percent in France and Italy.

Political failure of crisis

Over the past few decades, those running the governments of most Western European countries have alternated between an openly pro-capitalist center-right party or a center-left party with ties to labor unions. Both parties served the capitalist system, including supporting imperialism. More and more these parties have become as similar as the Republicans and Democrats in the U.S.

While in office, both these political forces have backed the recent austerity programs. Popular revulsion at austerity has caused voters in recent contests to reject and eject whichever party was in office. In Spain and Portugal, center-right parties replaced “socialist” parties. In France on May 6 the “socialist” Hollande replaced rightist Nicolas Sarkozy. Changes like these also took place in Ireland, Britain, Denmark and many Eastern European countries.

In most of these countries communist parties made relative gains. However, some neo-fascist parties campaigning against immigrants, like the National Front in France, won even larger votes.

In Greece and Italy at the end of 2011, the banks stepped in to replace two elected leaders, whose recent loss of support had made them incapable of putting through an unpopular austerity program. Dispensing with the democratic farce of a vote, they appointed “technocrats,” meaning bankers, to rule directly, replacing center-left George Papandreou in Greece and billionaire media magnate Silvio Berlusconi in Italy.

Vote is measure of consciousness

We should remember that, as Friedrich Engels wrote, the vote shows the “level of maturity of the working class,” and does not in itself determine a change in the social system.

The dramatic election on May 6 in Greece, the center of the financial crisis, indicated a big change in consciousness. The center-left PASOK lost two-thirds of its votes, while the center-right New Democracy’s votes were halved. The total for the two went from 77 percent to 52 percent, a loss of 3 million votes from the 5 million cast in 2009. Voters tossed any party that had signed the austerity program imposed earlier by the Troika — the European Union, the European Central Bank and the IMF.

But the rural area surrounding President Barack Obama’s retreat at Camp David, Md., was an armed camp on May 18 and 19 as local police and the military took it over for the Summit Meeting of the G8 countries. Nevertheless, protests took place throughout the day. Occupy movements from Baltimore and Frederick, Md., and Washington, D.C., called a series of events both in Thurmont, Md., the closest town to Camp David, and Frederick. Occupy Baltimore set up tents and an overnight camp outside Thurmont, staging protests during the entire day. Frederick Occupy held a People’s Summit in that town. All roads to Camp David were shut down, as were surrounding public campgrounds. A friendly farmer who asked not to be identified allowed occupiers to camp, however. Tons of media from around the globe interviewed protesters continuously.

Continued on page 9
The route they followed was not the one they had planned all over old Quebec City and back. Quebec’s parliament, and marched from there north on Rue Berri at 9 p.m., blocking a route that had been filed with the police.

Syriza’s program puts it in the same orbit as most of the euro left parties like Germany’s The Left, France’s Left Front and Italy’s M5S. These parties support the existence of the EU and the common currency, but ask for policies more favorable to social benefits for the working class. Syriza, for example, calls for Nato’s dissolution but does not promise to withdraw Greece from Nato.

For voters fed up with the capitalists, but not yet ready to vote for a communist party or for revolution, these parties often become the first choice. Since no Greek party was formed in time for an election, a new vote has been scheduled for June 17. Recent polls favor Syriza to come in first, under Greek election rules, it would then win a bonus 50 parliamentary seats. But much can change still.

One can expect enormous pressure and threats from the EU and Germany not only on Greek voters to vote for the traditional parties but also on the leadership of Syria — a coalition and not a tested workers’ party — to submit to the bankers’ demands.

Workers around the world will be watching the events in Greece and in Europe. Whenever possible, they should intervene on the side of the Greek workers.

Quebec students defy cops, call mass protests

Quebec students, who have been striking for three months to protest the triple tuition hikes, are defying the cops and marching in thousands around the city of Montreal. The cops claimed that around 10 p.m. on May 22, they arrested the.deployed the police to block the route that had been filed with the police.

Some 10,000 people, mainly Franco-Canadians, joined in support of the students. Parents, teachers, and the leaders of Quebec’s equivalents of professional organizations who urge violations to the new law are calling on the students to participate in the strike.

Three major student associations have played an active role in Quebec politics for years. They all support the strike. They are the College Student Federation, led by Léo Bureau-Burin, which represents students in the CEGEPS, the equivalent of community colleges in the U.S.; the University Student Federation, led by Martine Desjardins; and the Broad Coalition of Professional Journalists — and the leaders of organizations who urge violation to the new law. (thp.org)

The students, who have demanded a repeal of 75 percent tuition hikes, are defying the law by demonstrating and holding marches in large numbers in Montreal and Quebec City and in smaller numbers in Rimouski, Gatineau and Sherbrooke.

The student movement has issued a call for 100,000 people to come out on May 22 to mark the 100th day of the strike.

The cops deem these marches illegal. But students are pressing forward to demand their democratic rights to free speech and assembly and to end the police’s targeting of student organizations that have been doing this work. Some students have been arrested.

The cops claimed that around 10 p.m. someone threw a Molotov cocktail (gasoline) bomb at them, so they declared the march illegal. Marchers wound back to Emile Gamelin around 11 p.m. Skirmishes between cops and protesters continued until 3 a.m.

A NEW RELEASE

Africa’s food security and the G8 summit

"The Hunger Project reports that out of a global population of 6.8 billion, 925 million people do not have sufficient food for health and nutrition. Malnourishment is a global problem, one that every country is dealing with. The world is not producing enough food to feed its people or the growing population. In 1990, 3 billion people lived in undernourished conditions. By 2050, it is anticipated that there will be 1.6 billion people living in undernourished conditions.

The problem of food deficits in Africa. The African continent is the only continent that does not produce enough to feed its own citizens. Last year’s food crisis and famine in the Horn of Africa serve as a stark reminder that chronic hunger and malnutrition remain a persistent problem on the continent. (The Citizen, Tanzania, May 21, 2012)

Just three years ago, at another meeting of the G8 in L’Aquila, Italy, some $22 billion was pledged to address the problem of food deficits in Africa. The Aquila Food Security Initiative was endorsed by 27 countries and 15 international organizations. The program was supposed to be implemented by the U.N., Food and Agricultural Organization Investment Center.

At least two aid organizations, InterAction and Oxfam, president of the Group of 8 rich nations, international donors and the G8 summit. But this has not been a focus of interest for the multinational firms. As a result of decades of underinvestment, today Africa is the only continent http://www.abayomi-azikiwe.org/afrika.htm

The student strike and demonstrations are still on strike after 12 weeks. The government’s own figures, about a third of the students — 155,000 out of 450,000, according to government statistics on hunger. It is estimated that around 270 million people there are facing food deficits. The problem of people who have not been fed enough to help students in their fight for lower tuition and other rights.

The students — 155,000 out of 450,000, according to government figures, about a third of the students — are hungering in seven countries: Rudi gladhess, China, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia and Pakistan. (thp.org)

In Africa it is difficult to acquire accurate statistics on hunger. It is estimated that around 270 million people there are facing food deficits. The problem of people who have not been fed enough to help students in their fight for lower tuition and other rights.

Workers around the world will be watching the events in Greece and in Europe. Workers around the world will be watching the events in Greece and in Europe. Whenever possible, they should intervene on the side of the Greek workers.
The CEO of JPMorgan Chase, Jamie Dimon, had his ego on the line—literally. He was covered with eggs thrown by protesters outside the gate of his company’s annual stockholders’ meeting in Tampa, Fla. The May 15 meeting came only a few days after the bank announced it had lost nearly $8 billion in speculative trades, which Dimon called “riskier, more volatile and less effective” than previously held positions. The bank bigwig, who raked in $23 million in salary and bonuses last year, said his bank was guilty of “errors, sloppiness, bad judgment and egregious mistakes” and then proceeded to fire a high-paid underperformer.

Markets around the world immediately wiped an additional $1.4 billion off JPMorgan’s share value. But the eggs thrown in Tampa did not come from the stockholders, who actually gave a resounding vote of confidence in their CEO. They came from progressives who were protesting against big banks: “I’m here because I’m against corporate greed and I’m against the influence corporations have over government,” said David Wasman. (Channel 10, Tampa, May 15)

JPMorgan’s shock losses “will likely impact all capital market-sensitive stocks due to increased concerns of a more restrictive Volcker Rule,” Citigroup warned, saying that “it would severely impact liquidity in the markets.” (RTE News)

The Volcker Rule is part of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act slated to go into effect this summer. It was originally proposed by economist and former U.S. Federal Reserve Chairperson, Paul Volcker to restrict banks from engaging in speculative trading. The bank is forced to see to it that they don’t succeed.

JPMorgan’s shock losses will likely impact all capital market-sensitive stocks due to increased concerns of a more restrictive Volcker Rule, Citigroup warned, saying that “it would severely impact liquidity in the markets.” (RTE News)

Legacies of Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh live on today

By Larry Hales

May 19 was the birthday of two beloved internationalists and revolutionaries. Ho Chi Minh was born in 1890. He was the founder, in 1941, of the Viet Minh independence movement, which eventually kicked the French out of Vietnam in 1954. He was also the leader of the National Liberation Front that led the fight against the U.S. colonizers who replaced the French. Ho had traveled extensively in Europe, the United States and Asia, and had witnessed movements in those countries, even becoming a founding member of the French Communist Party. Ho Chi Minh did not live to see the liberation and unification of his country once the U.S. military was kicked out in 1975.

Malcolm X was born in Nebraska in 1925. He became one of the great Black leaders in this country, seeing far beyond the fight for civil rights and catapulting that movement into the international stage. He inspired the militant Black liberation movements of the 1960s.

It was his cosmic feat, not war it fate, that these two were born on the same date. But the conditions in both countries and the qualities of both made them great revolutionary leaders of their time. Both Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh are to be remembered today because the struggles that they were part of and led were ongoing. They were the struggles of all workers and the oppressed.

Ho stated the above very clearly in 1966: “It is incorrect to classify the struggle of the Vietnamese people as that of the Black against White, or as a purely American problem. Rather, we are today testing a global rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter.”

An outpouring of sentiment of the U.S. intervention in Vietnam, Malcolm X asked why it was that Black people were expected to be violent toward the Vietnamese and not against racist KKK terror in the South.

Ho Chi Minh wrote in a 1924 essay on the conditions of Black people in the United States. He exposed the ruse of so-called democracy in the United States. In the essay he states: “It is well known that the other side of the race is the most oppressed and most exploited of the human family. It is well known that the spread of capitalism and the discovery of the New World had as an immediate result the rebirth of slavery, which was, for centuries, a scourge for the Negroes and a bitter disgrace for humanity. What everyone does not perhaps know is that after 65 years of so-called emancipation, American Negroes still endure atrocious moral and material sufferings, of which the most cruel and horrible is the custom of lynching.”

Both Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh saw the importance of the global class struggle, in whatever terms they placed it. As the fight against oppression becomes more radicalized, because of the increasing repressive, reactionary tendencies of the capitalist class and its governments, it is even more important that the movement remember the revolutionary leaders of the past and make the mechanisms of struggle relevant to today. The struggle has not changed — just the urgency for greater internationalism, due to the vices of the capitalist system, which is greatly expanding and thus radicalizing workers the world over.

Reprinted from the Workers World issue of May 24, 2006.

‘Love Means Second Chances’

A novel about abortion rights

By Dinae Anderson

Women’s reproductive rights are surely the right to abortion, and, still under attack. With recent attempts by the Catholic Church and right-wing extremists, it is only appropriate that Susan Elizabeth Davis has published her first novel, Love Means Second Chances. In 1991, college student Christy, whose family is Catholic, battles with her protective but loving mom, Carole, when she decides to have an abortion. The story also revolves around Carole’s own past, when she became pregnant with Christy and her soon-to-be husband had wanted her to get rid of her child. With the help of Christy’s grandmother, Mary Louise, the two women explore how much love is needed at times of struggle like this./

Davis gives a modern voice to the topic of abortion in a fictional story — and does a great job at that. It not only does the book inform the reader about important facts about reproductive matters, but that tends perfectly into a storyline that’s filled with love, compassion and even grief.
The U.S. has a dual approach in its relations with China. It tries to gain economic and political concessions by carrying out negotiations on a government-to-government basis, and at the same time, it carries a big stick.

Left out of the Times report about China building up its military was that the U.S. has recently carried out so-called “joint military exercises” with Taiwan directed at China, at a time when the Philippines and China are engaged in a dispute over several territories in the South China Sea. “Joint military exercises” means U.S. military exercises. The Philippine government and military are hardly a threat to the U.S. military.

Marines are being rotated out of Iraq and Afghanistan into Australia as part of the Obama administration’s (read – Penta- gow and Cowbow) “pivot” toward the Asia-Pacific region. This so-called pivot is in large part a soft military threat disguised as an alleged change in policy. In fact, the U.S. has been pivoting toward the Pacific since 1854, when Commodore Matthew C. Perry sent gunboats to “open up” Japan. The U.S. colonized and conquered Hawaii, Samoa and the Philippines and sent troops to put down the Boxer Rebellion in China toward the end of that century. Washington has the goal of con- quering and ruling over the Pacific Basin for more than a century. The U.S. threw massive resources behind the Chinese revolution against Chinese imperialism in the Pacific with a view to conquering China. The Chinese revolu- tion of 1949 put an end to the Pentagon’s strategy.

The U.S. then proceeded to try to iso- late the Chinese Revolution, keeping it out of the United Nations for a quarter of a century, building up the Seventh Fleet to menace the Chinese People’s Repub- lic, and launching two wars, one in Ko- rea and one in Vietnam, both on China’s borders.

The profound hostility of the U.S. rul- ing class to China and the Chinese Revolu- tion has kept historic and material roots. Washington and Wall Street will be satis- fied with nothing less than the complete destruction of China, the destruction of the remaining pillars of socialism, and the untrammeled rule of capital over one- fifth of the human race who dwell there. No concessions by the Chinese leadership will mitigate this hostility. The cause of this hostility lies precisely in the con- tinued existence of the socialist sector of China. The Chinese leadership can pro- tect China against irreversible incursions of imperialism, even on a nationalist ba- sin, only by defending the state-owned enterprises. They are the foundation of its economic survival and the development of its military and the PLA.

Pentagon attacks China’s military

On the heels of the tariffs, the Penta- gon issued a report denouncing China for building up its military and called it “the surest guarantee of socialism in China.” More information about these books and other materials is available at www.lowwagecapitalism.com.

End.
Ataques contra maestros/as intentan debilitar sindicatos

Por G. Dunkel

Nueva York

La ola de despidos de maestros/as, el auge de las escuelas “chárter” y el alegato de que los/as maestros/as y sus sindicatos están “fracasando” son la nueva guía de las políticas educativas, se han convertido en un ataque contra los sindicatos de docentes en todo Estados Unidos.

Los dos principales sindicatos educativos, la Federación Americana de Maestros (AFT) y la Asociación Nacional de Profesores (AAUW), se encuentran entre los sindicatos más grandes en los Estados Unidos. Incluso en estados como Dakota del Norte, donde los sindicatos representan sólo al 3,2 por ciento de los/as trabajadores/as, se han convertido en un ataque contra los sindicatos de docentes en todo Estados Unidos.

Las escuelas están prescindiendo de los sindicatos, y en lugar de esto, se han unido a las escuelas “chárter” y los “frameworks” para evitar el sindicalismo. Los sindicatos, que representan más de 1,1 millones de maestros/as en todo el país, están presionando para que los sindicatos sean eliminados por completo.

El sindicato de maestros de Chicago ha debido cerrar 117 escuelas desde que asumió el control del distrito del personal, su administración las recibió una cobertura amplia en los medios de comunicación. La United Federation of Teachers (UFT) de Nueva York, el local más grande de la AFT, ha recibido un acercamiento del Department of Education (DE) relativo a un plan sobre los exámenes anuales de rendimiento profesional. Respondiendo, la administración del multimillonario alcalde Michael Bloomberg ha cerrado escuelas arbitrariamente definidas como “fracasadas”. Después de despedir a la mitad del personal, su administración les ha ofrecido un salario mínimo de 20.000 dólares anuales.

Más que eso será necesario para rescatar los sindicatos de maestros/as y maestras/as de su posición actual. La UEU está entre los peores del mundo

Como muestra el informe sobre la salud mundial

La tasa de nacimientos prematuros en EEUU está entre los peores del mundo

Por Ellen Catalinotto

La tasa mundial de nacimientos prematuros está aumentando, tanto en los países industrializados como en los más pobres. Más de uno de cada 10 bebés, o 15 millones, ha nacido prematuramente en 2010. Más de un millón de estos bebés morirán en el primer mes de vida, haciendo la prematuridad la principal causa de muerte del recién nacido.

Más de cuatro de cada cinco nacimientos prematuros en países desarrollados por la guerra y el hambre en África y Asia, y sólo ligeramente inferior que la de Malawi, que tiene la tasa más alta del mundo: 28,1 por ciento. Las tasas más altas de prematuridad se encuentran entre las causas principales conocidas de los partos prematuros. En los países más industrializados, incluyendo a Estados Unidos, las cesáreas médicamente innecesarias y las inducciones de parto antes de que los embarazos lleguen a su término, contribuyen a los nacimientos prematuros. Sin embargo, tanto en los países ricos como en los pobres, alrededor de la mitad de los nacimientos prematuros carecen de una causa identificada. La contaminación del aire y el humo indirecto de personas que fuman son los únicos riesgos ambientales conocidos en el informe.

Los nacimientos prematuros pueden ser evitados mediante el acceso universal a la planificación familiar gratuita — especialmente para adolescentes, mediante la atención prenatal que detecta y trata infecciones y enfermedades como la diabetes, la VIH y las altas tasas de embarazos de adolescentes se encuentran entre las causas principales conocidas de los partos prematuros. En los países más industrializados, incluyendo a Estados Unidos, las cesáreas médicamente innecesarias y las inducciones de parto antes de que los embarazos lleguen a su término, contribuyen a los nacimientos prematuros. Sin embargo, tanto en los países ricos como en los pobres, alrededor de la mitad de los nacimientos prematuros carecen de una causa identificada. La contaminación del aire y el humo indirecto de personas que fuman son los únicos riesgos ambientales conocidos en el informe.

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