Two-party DACA cruelty
Migrants pawn in gov’t shutdown

By Fred Goldstein

BULLETIN: As we go to press, the Democratic Party leadership has agreed to end the government shutdown in return for a pledge by Republican Senate leader Mitch McConnell to “be fair” in taking up immigration. The lives of 800,000 dreamers are in the hands of the Senate and House Republican anti-immigration racists.

Jan. 22 — The present government shutdown crisis is essentially about immigration and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). There could be a surprise deal at any time that would put an end to the shutdown. But this crisis has already revealed much.

In this struggle, the basic characteristics of the primary players have come to the fore. The relentless, brutal, racist cruelty of Donald Trump and the Republican Party has stood out. On the other hand, the cowardice and opportunism of the Democratic Party leadership has been laid bare.

The cynics of the Republican Party tried to force the Democratic Party into a deal to stop the shutdown by holding out a six-year extension of the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). The Republicans don’t care one whit about CHIP. Funding for CHIP was passed in the House on Nov. 3, 2017, and has been sitting in the Senate ever since. The health care of 9 million children has been held hostage by the Republicans as a wedge against the Democrats.

At the same time, the Democratic Party leadership, in the person of Sen. Chuck Schumer, got on his knees before Trump, offering $20 billion for a border wall along the Mexican border as part of an attempt to get a last-minute deal and avoid a government shutdown.

This craven concession to the racism, repression and massive militarization of the border is aiding Trump’s hard line on immigration. As such, it is unconscionable opportunism. It should be noted as well that the Democrats, led by Schumer and Rep. Nancy Pelosi, are motivating an end to the shutdown by citing the need for military preparedness and planning.

And beneath it all, it is clear that while there is a “shutdown” of many vital social services, with tens of thousands of government workers facing unpaid furloughs, the repressive apparatus of the state — the military, ICE, the FBI, courts, etc. — will continue to function.

DACA at core of shutdown struggle

At the core of the shutdown is the struggle over continuation of the DACA program set up by former President Barack Obama.

Continued on page 10

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MIGRANT RIGHTS NOW!
Haitians march vs. Trump 5

follow Dr. King’s legacy 6-7

KOREA: Olympic unity

EDITORIAL 10

HONDURAS Solidarity needed 9
SYRIA U.S. spreads chaos 11
Gymnasts bravely expose sexual abuse

By Monica Moorehead

Jan. 22 — Since Jan. 16 at least 120 current and retired women gymnasts have publicly denounced Larry Nassar, the former doctor who sexually assaulted them starting when they were as young as 6 years old. Every day dozens of workers have testified in Ingham County (Michigan) Circuit Court about the horrors they suffered, many for years, at the hands of this predator.

Nassar was sentenced to 60 years in prison after pleading guilty in November to federal child pornography charges. He is currently in the sentencing phase after convictions in his sexual-assault case. Judge Rosemarie Aquilina is allowing every survivor, many of them Olympian medalists, to speak before she sentences Nassar.

As a sports training doctor at Michigan State University for over 20 years, Nassar had access to hundreds of young girls and women whose parents entrusted him to take care of their children’s chronic injuries. Over 150 gymnasts have sued Nassar for assault with internal pain and trauma for many years, felt empowered for the first time to speak directly to Nassar in court. The women provided graphic and shocking details of what Nassar did to their bodies. Many thanked the MeToo movement for showing them they are not alone in surviving sexual abuse.

Nassar could not act alone

More and more details are emerging that show that Nassar, a world champion and could not carry out his horrendous crimes without there being a culture surrounding him in which he was not brought down. Nassar did not and could not carry out his horrendous crimes to do so he needed a pedophile who is able to act alone. Abuse without there being a culture surrounding him in which a pedophile is able to act alone is not possible. Therefore, Judge Rosemarie Aquilina is allowing every survivor, many of them Olympian medalists, to speak before she sentences Nassar in court.

One by one these gymnasts, who suffered in silence with internal pain and trauma for many years, felt empowered for the first time to speak directly to Nassar in court. The women provided graphic and shocking details of what Nassar did to their bodies. Many thanked the MeToo movement for showing them they are not alone in surviving sexual abuse.

Nassar could not act alone

Gymnasts bravely expose sexual abuse

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black and Brown youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class owns and controls the means of production and can produce all wealth in society, and this wealth should be owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been at the forefront of the fight to eradicate the grinding poverty provided this notice is preserved.

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Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are dedicated to organizing a truly-class-conscious, united, disciplined and hard-working revolutionary Marxist-Leninist organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward!

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, joblessness and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Of course, we are aware that some workers have a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Of course, we are aware that some workers have a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black and Brown youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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Women march toward progressive unity, women's liberation

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

For the second consecutive year, mass- movement demonstrations led by women swept through the United States, countering the wave of right-wing reaction intensifying under the Trump administration.

Corporate news commentators would have us think that millions of people in the streets were simply a buildup for the 2018 U.S. elections. USA Today's headline actually read: "The real march is on Election Day." But for the crowds this year from Aus-

tralia to Zambia for the 200,000 in New York City and the 14,000 in Knoxville, Tenn., Jan. 20 was a day of struggle toward a new movement for women's liberation.

At the grassroots, those organizing for progressive unity in this new wave are fighting for women's liberation to be an- ti-racist and anti-imperialist, pro-work- er and pro-union. "We are celebrating with people with disabilities as well as LGBTQ sex/" and respect for genderqueer.

er and pro-union. They are celebrating with women; Solidarity with Haitian, Lat-

in Americans, the prison system and prisoners, and racism, sexism and white supremacy.

A contingent of over 1,000 Na-

tional Women's March Marching in the first eight weeks. The bill was de-

signed to make abortion illegal for women who are disproportionately low-wage working women of color, often

single mothers, young women, those with disabilities, those living in rural areas and women who have been subject to do-

mestic violence.

In 2013 Medicaid was the leading source of public funding for family planning, accounting for 75 percent of all pub-

lic funds spent on contraceptive services and supplies. However, because of the Hyde Amendment, passed in 1976, no fed-

eral or state funding goes to poor women for abortions except for a tiny percentage of cases of rape, incest or conditions that threaten the life of the woman.

According to Destiny Lopez, co-director of AAJ, Above All, a coalition of 130 reproductive rights and justice groups mobilizing to overturn Hyde, "It's im-

portant to understand that the Trump/ Pence administration and our anti-ab-

ortion Congress are using the Hyde Amend-

ment as their weapon of choice to stop women from getting abortions. We see the tentacles of the Hyde Amendment everywhere."

But AAJ affiliates like New Voices for Reproductive Justice, which advocates for Black women and youth in the Pitts-

burgh area, are mobilizing against the Trump agenda. La'Tasha Mayes, found-

er and executive director of New Voices, states, "We rise up for a future where we can decide whether and when to have children, give birth without risking our lives, and raise those children without fear of hunger, violence, or discrimina-

tion. We rise up for a future where we can live with respect, health, and justice."

Now that's in the spirit of Roe v. Wade.
Boston organizers fight ICE, DCF

By Sam Ordoñez

Boston

Supporters gathered Jan. 9 in front of the John F. Kennedy Federal Building here to demand justice for local activist Siham Byah, who was detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents at a routine check-in with immigration services in November. Her son was also taken into the custody of the Massachusetts Department for Children and Families (DCF), who then refused to place him in the care of Byah’s sister, who was detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center officials neglected to provide medical treatment for Monterrosa.

Supporters speak out about abuse at ICE Hutto Detention Center in Taylor, Texas. (Photo: Grassroots Leadership)

Monterrosa’s advocated say: “What is happening to Laura is endemic of detention centers and almost impossible to completely eliminate unless we eliminate detention centers. There has been a trail of incidents and most of them go unreported and this is why: they don’t get investigated and the women who come forward are shamed or transferred or otherwise punished.”

Fleeing violence, imprisoned in violence

Many female migrants are already fleeing violence against women in their home countries. El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala have female homicide rates among the highest in the world, according to the Washington Office on Latin America. (Feb. 21, 2017)

This turmoil is due to U.S. imperialism that leads to instability, the lucrative drug industry and political strife based on U.S. policy, such as stealing of elections in Honduras, as well as other social, economic and political turmoil manufactured by the Pentagon, like the 16-year long war on Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, an estimated 80 percent of Central American girls and women are raped on their journey to the U.S. For them to then be jailed, detained and experience further abuse is deplorable. (HuffPost, Sept. 12, 2014)

Conditions for people in detention are only expected to worsen under the Trump administration. What is the solution to this rampant abuse, which is reminiscent of 19th-century prisons?

Solidarity. Organization. Fightback. As long as there is capitalism, imperialism, supremacist, misogynist president, Donald Trump.

The three speakers were Ariella Riapos from G-REBELS on the resistance in Honduras; May Madarang from GABRIELA-NYC on repression and fightback in the Philippines; and Taryn Fivik from WWP on the role of revolutionary feminism versus bourgeois feminism. Each of the speakers spoke on the role that women play in these important struggles. The meeting was chaired by Paddy Colgan.

——- Monica Moorehead

Women in ICE detention attempt suicide

By Teresa Gutierrez

In yet another blatant instance of cruel and inhumane treatment of migrant workers in the U.S., a woman in an immigration and customs detention center attempted suicide after repeated sexual abuse by a guard. (Revwire, Jan. 6)

Laura Monterrosa, a Salvadoran, has been held at T. Don Hutto Detention Center in Taylor, Texas, since May 2017. The guard began assaulting her shortly afterwards. Her charges of sexual assault went ignored, according to Grassroots Leadership, a nonprofit social justice advocacy organization formed to support the J20 Days of Rage protests targeting the one-year anniversary of the white supremacists’ insurrection.

Monterrosa spoke out about her abuse in November 2017. ICE and the county sheriff’s office did little in response. The guard, continuing to work at the center, saw Monterrosa every day.

Monterrosa is not alone in her allegations of abuse. After she spoke out, other women detained in Hutto came forward. ICE declared it found Monterrosa’s allegations to be “unsubstantiated.” That announcement came after only two interviews with Monterrosa, where translation was inadequate and where she was not allowed access to counsel. This additional abuse led to Monterrosa taking over 50 pain pills on Jan. 14, medication given to her by prison medical staff.

Suicide common in ICE detention

Suicide attempts at ICE detention centers are tragically common. Hutto, where Monterrosa is still held, is a medium security prison managed by CoreCivic (former Corrections Corporation of America), a for-profit “adult corrections company.” Not much improvement can be expected from this incarceration monster.

CoreCivic has a long and sordid history of prison abuse, including dangerous and fatal medical neglect, racist food, cruel and inhumane treatment by guards and staff, including the long-denounced practice of solitary confinement, known to exacerbate trauma and mental health issues.

In fact, Monterrosa twice experienced “medical confinement.” That’s how support groups describe that what “ICE and private prison companies like CoreCivic use as a form of solitary confinement.” Monterrosa told her supporters that she initially hesitated to go public about her abuse for fear of being subjected to more solitary confinement. (grassrootsleadership.org)

In addition, the Hutto Detention Center, which exclusively detains asylum-seeking women, has a long history of sexual abuse. In 2007, a CoreCivic guard was accused of sexually assaulting a woman “while her son was sleeping in his crib inside the cell,” according to Court- house News. In 2010, another CoreCivic guard was charged with sexually assaulting eight women he was tasked with transporting. (Dec. 12, 2017)

Any relief Monterrosa may receive depends on an official investigation being launched. Monterrosa can’t be deported while she waits for an appeal of her original asylum case. This means, say supporters, she will continue to encounter her abuser on a daily basis.

One of Monterrosa’s advocates said: “What is happening to Laura is endemic of detention centers and almost impossible to completely eliminate unless we eliminate detention centers. There has been a trail of incidents and most of them go unreported and this is why: they don’t get investigated and the women who come forward are shamed or transferred or otherwise punished.” (revwirenews.org)

In 2016, Human Rights Watch published a report of deaths in ICE custody. Of the 18 people studied, all committed suicide after demonstrating signs of serious mental health conditions.

Berenice, a woman of Garifuna descent from Honduras, described life in Dilley Detention Center in Texas as “soul-destroying.” Berenice had organized in Honduras for her people and then had to flee the reactionary regime. When ICE told her she could stay with her child if she paid $5,000 in bail, that might as well have been $8 million. That’s when she tried to kill herself, thinking her child would be free. (Guardian, May 22, 2015)

In June 2017, an Afghan national, a woman who had been locked up with her two children, attempted suicide in her attempt to free the children. Samira Hakimi had been held in the Karnes County Residential Center in Texas for six months after crossing into the U.S. from Mexico. She had been told she and her children would be held for only three months. She had no legal counsel and no information about her case, which led to her despair. (HuffPost, June 2017)

An inspiring forum featuring three young, dynamic,阴道revolutionaries was organized by the New York City chapter of Workers World Party on Jan. 18. Entitled “Women Fight Back Against Capitalism and Imperialism,” the meeting was a building event for the J20 Days of Rage protests targeting the one-year anniversary of the white supremacists’ insurrection.

Holding the banner, left to right, are Ariella Riapos, May Madarang and Taryn Fivik with Monica Moorehead.

—– Monica Moorehead

Women activists on capitalism, imperialism

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Time's up for Patrarchy, Whit Supremacy, Capitalism

Grand Central today - 4pm to see what time it

Page 4 Jan. 25, 2018 workers.org
Women in ICE detention attempt suicide the "1804 Movement for All Immigrants." members of the Haitian community in legally live and work in the United States, Salvadorans, and hundreds of other ref- forms of racial profiling and police ter- ror; and an end to the U.N./U.S. occupa- tion of Haiti. But the 1804 Movement didn’t stop with issuing a set of demands. Eight days after it was formed, it took them to the streets in a long march from Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn, down Flatbush Avenue, across Eastern Parkway, past the federal building in Lower Manhattan and ending at the Trump Tower on Wall Street. It was a long, cold, militant march that grew as it passed through Flushing, and especially as it came up to the Brook- lyn Bridge. People driving by honked and cheered, which, along with a few rays of sun and horns, made the mood of the march. The collection boxes for the 1804 Movement said, “Time is up, Trump — For your race, anti-immigrant words & policies!” A popular Workers World Party placard with a portrait of Jean-Jacques Des- salines read, “Jean-Jacques Desalines defeated all the Trumps — reparations for Haiti!” A homemade sign simply read, “Trump Must Go.” Once the march reached Manhattan, where it was significantly larger than it was at its start and was animated by the Che has a pied DJA-Rara. It went past the federal building in Foley Square, which Rally supports activist facing deportation By Jim McMahan Seattle An emergency rally/press conference was held for immigrant and prisoners’ rights defender Maru Mora Villalpando on Jan. 16. In late December, after years of organizing for justice, Villalpando re- ceived notice of deportation from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The rally in front of the ICE courts in downtown Seattle drew more than 100 protesters from many groups, and lots of press. Since the start of the new year, Trump and the capitalists have bitterly stepped up a war against immigrants. They have carried out deportation threats against 800,000 young formerly protected under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, El Salvadorans and others formerly under temporary protected status (TPS). Trump has also engaged in racist hate speech against Haitians, Latinx and Af- rican people. Trump and the bosses are now target- ing immigrant rights leaders. Villalpando is the latest, along with activist leaders Sihan Tinhinan Byah in Boston and Ravi Ragbir and Jean Montrevil in New York City. Rally organizer and chair Angelica Cházaro said supporters and advocates are fighting for a cancellation of the deportation order. Villalpando, from Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 25 years. She said she came out as undocumented in 2014, when she supported a hunger strike in the North- west Detention Center, which started af- ter activists on the outside blocked a bus- load of immigrants being deported. Villalpando was not deterred from showing up and speaking out at this rally, right in front of the ICE offices. She has been a vocal leader for years in the detention center. She has backed them up by organizing rallies, summoning the me- dia and getting the prisoners legal help. Also speaking at the rally was Nestura Salgado, who was imprisoned in Mexico for leading an Indigenous police force against gang violence in Mexico. Solgado charged that Villalpando would not be safe as a woman if deported to Mexico. Michelle Vendlida, a Native woman from the organization Red Line Salish Sea, also spoke. She said that Native na- tions should determine who is allowed to stay in this country. “We will defend the derec” she said. 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Bay Area reclaims King's radical legacy

By Terri Kay Oakland, Calif.

For the fourth year in a row, the Anti Police-Terror Project supported the national call to reclaim King’s radical legacy, Bay style. APTP didn’t just have a huge, multinationaled, spiritual and militant march on the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday on Jan. 15. APTP held its fourth annual 96 Hours of Direct Action to Reclaim MLK.

The overall theme for this year was “#EndCompliance with the Trump/Oakland Mayor Libby Schaff corporate agenda.” This started Jan. 12, with a day themed for actions against state-sponsored violence and alarmed against displacement, for housing for all. Jan. 14, was Indignous and international solidarity day.

Jan. 15 was the grand finale, with ev- eryone joining in on the fourth annual March to Reclaim King’s Radical Legacy. About 2,000 people rallied and marched from Oscar Grant Plaza in downtown Oakland, past the Oakland Police Department headquarters and the department’s new buildings and jail, through the Acorn housing projects in West Oakland and ending at the West Oakland Bay Area Rapid Transit station, where a BART police officer had shot and killed Shaleem Tindle, a Black man, only a few weeks ago.

This year’s march was led by children and differently abled people, to set the pace. Right behind was a contingent from Third World Resistance, which included banners proclaiming “Black Lives Matter from Haiti to the Bay” and “Hands Off Sacred Land, from Shellmouth to Jerusalem, Palestine.”

“From the federal government to local agencies, our most marginalized communities are being attacked, surveilled, confined by state and local governments. It’s been exactly 50 years since Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood with striking Memphis, Tenn., sanitation workers who were fed up with low pay and dangerous conditions. UE Local 130, the North Carolina Public Service Workers Union statewide municipal council, is launching a Municipal Workers Bill of Rights campaign to establish standards for public sector collective bargaining, a violation of international human rights law. On Jan. 12, the campaign kicked off when members of the newly formed Durham Workers Assembly, which includes the Durham City Workers Union, Domestic Workers Alliance-We Dream in Black, Raise Up for $15 and the Duke Graduate Assistant Union, staged a press conference at City Hall in Durham. “We are fighting for a City Workers Bill of Rights, including the right to meet and confer with the City Manager about our workplace conditions and safety issues and an end to discrimination on the job,” stated sanitation equipment operator and UE150 Steward Daryl Brunson.

UE150 Municipal Council members plan to spend the time until the anniver- sary of Dr. King’s assassination on April 4 building a statewide coalition to fight for higher wages, grievance protections, safety and union rights. North Carolina law prohibits collective bargaining for public sector workers. For a decade, Local 150 has been pushing to repeal it — and organizing municipal workers to fight for improved conditions even without bargaining rights.

City workers march across the state

On Jan. 15, the Dr. King holiday, city workers and laborers in marches and parades across the state, including in Greensboro, Raleigh, Greenville and Rocky Mount. The community and many in left groups joined in behind the city workers as they marched.

As cities draft their yearly budgets this spring, UE Local 150 members will ask to confer with the City Manager about our workplace conditions and safety issues and an end to discrimination on the job,” stated sanitation equipment operator and UE150 Steward Daryl Brunson.

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Days of Rage tackle Trump regime

By WW New York bureau

New York

Hundreds of anti-racist demonstrators marched to Hell’s Kitchen here on Jan. 20 to confront white supremacists celebrating the anniversary of President Donald Trump’s inauguration. The venue, a din-

gy corner of the West Side Highway, was announced to the public only two hours before the event.

Attempts to building sur-

rounded by anti-fascists chanting, “Nazi scum! Off our streets!”

It was one of a string of victories during the Days of Rage (5x8/Day/Rage), inspired by the resistance in Palestine. From Mar-

tin Luther King Jr. Day to the anniversa-

ry of the Trump inauguration, militant actions took place across the U.S., with at least 16 in New York City, opposing the endless attacks on working-class and op-

pressed people.

One year into a regime of deportation, repression and warmongering, the Dem-

ocratic Party in Houston, along with oth-

er Democratic Party politicians, spent three days later.

who tossed candy to children along the street, the march raised the struggle against police brutality at home, imperialist war abroad, referencing King’s opposition to the Vietnam War.

Every Monday for the past two and half years, NYC Shut Down has orga-

nized a Black Lives Matter protest known as People’s Monday, at which the sto-

ry of a person killed by the state is told.

On King’s birthday, NYC Shut It Down marched through Harlem, telling the story of King’s assassination. Police at-

tempted to violently suppress the protest, arresting three marchers.

Labor: On Jan. 15 a rally in NYC’s Co-

lumbus Circle showed solidarity with striking Spectrum workers as well as striking Florida prisoners demanding an end to slave labor. When Dr. King was as-

sociated in Memphis, Tenn., he was sup-

porting striking Black sanitation workers.

Transportation: Thousands of New Yorkers, overwhelmingly Black and Brown, arrested every month because they cannot afford subway fare. An action at a station in the Bronx raised aware-

ness of these racist arrests and other working conditions. The action, led by Bronxites for NYDD [New York Police De-

partment] Accountability (Why Account-

ability) as part of the Swipe It Forward campaign, encouraged commuters with unlimited subway passes to swipe anoth-

er rider in when leaving the subway.

The state’s MLK Day holiday rally and rally at Union Square raising the lack of accessibility in New York’s subways. The action raised four demands: 100 per-

cent accessibility; defend transit workers against attacks; cops out of the subway; and reduce the fare to $0.

Anti-imperialism, international soli-

darity: MLK Day in Philadelphia and Pale-

stineian Prisoner Solidarity Network held its weekly afternoon rally here protesting Israeli detention of Palestinians. This ral-

ly focused on Abu Akram, a 67-year-old Palestinian jailed for resisting occupation.

On Jan. 18, G-REBELS distributed lit-

erature and subways and subways here detailing the crimes of U.S. imperialism. Later that day, the International League of Peoples’ Struggles held a demonstra-

tion in Union Square. The demonstration demanded “U.S. out of everywhere!” and raised struggles against imperialism in Palestine and the Philippines. (tinyurl.

com/ygoccw)

On Jan. 10, the Haitian community and supporters marched to protest Trump’s racist inventive towards Haiti and Af-

rican nations, led by the newly formed 1804 Movement for All Immigrants.

Defend J20 and Durham: The Com-

mittee to Stop FBI Repression held a fo-

rum at NYC’s Solidarity Center on Jan. 16 that included updates on legal pro-

ceedings against activists arrested at last year’s protests in Washington, D.C., and against ac-

tivists in Durham, N.C., who were shot at a Confederate statue in August. (tinyurl.

cn/csmvqfh)

Opioid epidemic: Workers World Par-

ty organized a demonstration inside the Sackler Wing of the Metropolitan Muse-

um of Art here to raise awareness of more than 20,000 people who died in the U.S. from prescription drug overdoses last year. The Sackler family has made bil-

lions off the opioid OxyContin while the “War on Drugs” has imprisoned millions of Black and Brown people for selling or possessing recreational drugs.

Women’s liberation: On Jan. 18, the Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Labor: Speakers raised Marx-

ist feminism, which sees patriarchy as a foundational component of capitalism, from bourgeois feminism, which sees it as an isolated struggle.

A contingent organized by Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network mobilized for the NYC Women’s March on Jan. 20 to demand the release of freedom fighter Abed Tamimi. The People’s Power Assembly and WWWWPW: See full article at workers.org.

workers.org Jan 21, 2018
Florida organizer: ‘Help sustain prisoner strike!’

By J. White

White interviewed Karen Smith from the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee on Jan. 20. See full interview at tinyurl.com/y9phv8wd.

JW: Can you provide some back- ground on why this struggle is taking place now?

KS: This strike is a reflection of a prison movement that has been growing since the Sept, 9, 2016, nationwide prison strike on the anniversary of the Attica rebellion. Prisoners have been organizing in Alabama and Ohio movements. Prisoners in Texas have now organized the first ever IWW [Industrial Workers of the World] branch on the inside. Support networks on the outside have been growing. Florida prisoners participated in the 2016 action.

Things are very tense inside the pris- ons, and the goal is to harness this frus- tration to develop a long-term strategy, as opposed to spontaneous actions.

In November, Operation PUSH reached out to support IWOC [the Incar- cerated Workers Organizing Commit- tee]. The prisoners developed a list of demands and asked help to get the word out. It is our role to support the demands and keep them alive by those on the inside. There is heavy censorship inside the prisons.

JW: What is it about this particular time that the prisoners chose to act now?

KS: The people, inside and out, are being pushed beyond limits. Inside Florida, the prisoners are crowded, the food is inad- equate and rotten, they are undernourished— not because they need more guards. It’s because they need fewer prisoners. Prisoners are charged four times as much for commissary items as the cost on the street.

The brutality and abuse is overwhelm- ing. Florida has the second-highest death rate in U.S. prisons. It has the third high- est per capita segment of the population in prison. One in three African-American men is in the system. Abuse by guards is rampant. In Lake Butler Camp, prison guards, who were KKK members, were plotting to kill inmates before and after they were in prison. One prisoner was found dead on the sidewalk.

JW: How do you see this struggle in relation to growing movements like Black Lives Matter, the struggle against police brutality and immigrant rights?

KS: These are all related. The book “The New Jim Crow” by Michelle Alex- ander, which is banned inside the pris- ons, exposes the racist role of the prison system in the U.S. In 1865, slavery was abolished. In 1865, the prison system in Florida figured out how to perpetuate it through policing the Black communi- ty.

A strike support statement from Hai- tian prisoners cited the exploitation of workers through immigration: “They use all im- migrants for free labor and then deport them.”

JW: What has been the role of families?

KS: Families have felt so isolated. This is such an important part of the struggle. We have been showing support to families, to surround them when loved ones are incarcerated and build solidari- ty. We often have to do extra legwork that public defenders cannot do.

We went to demonstrate on June 16 in Tallahassee [the state capital] at the convenience of Florida’s Corrections [The Depart- ment of Corrections]. It was the Afri- can-American women, families, members, and the leaders to confront the state and demand justice.

JW: What information has been able to get to you regarding the situation in- side?

KS: We are finally starting to get some feedback regarding the participation and the retaliation of the FDOC. So far we have heard there is some activity in 17 camps across the state.

Participants are put in confinement and interrogated, told they will be subject to retaliation if they continue to correspond with support organizations. They are “un- der investigation” as a security threat, la- beled gang members and then investigat- ed by the “Security Threat Group.”

Those designated as leaders are put in confinement or transferred. Phones have been shut down at camps. They are replacing the striking workers with new prisoners.

The goal of this struggle is to have an organized economic boycott. There are three ways prisoners work in the sys- tem. Pride Industries is a convict leasing system by outside companies (including Whole Foods). Prisoners are paid pennies, $1 a day after room and board is deducted.

They work in facilities like water treat- ment, often in toxic environments. They may be at a work camp where they are

Even in light of this victory, the J20 Re- sisters continue to stand in resistance to the current presidential administration — and work toward justice for all activ- ists arrested fighting for social justice.

The J20 Resisters will host a victory party in Oakland, Calif., to fundraise for Not Bombs Solidarity. The meeting high- lights included impromptu speeches by

By Workers World Philadelphia bureau

On Jan. 17, Philadelphia’s Criminal-Jus- tice Center was packed with scores of ac- tivists and friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Both outside and inside the courthouse, people from as far away as France gath- ered to back up the world-renowned po- litical prisoner’s current legal challenge, which was affirmed and expanded.

Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker had ordered the district attorney’s office to produce testimony regarding a takedown memorandum from former Phila- delphia DA Ron Castille. The document could help prove that Castille unconstitutionally played a decisive role when he denied Abu-Jamal’s appeals, both as DA and later as a judge on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

At the hearing, Abu-Jamal was repre- sented by Sam Spinola and Judith Ritter of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Tracey Cavanaugh, interim supervisor of the PCRA [Post-Conviction Relief Act] Unit, and Nancy Winkelman, interim supervi- sor of the Law Department, representing the DA’s office, asked Judge Tucker for a postponement to allow the new DA, Lar- ra Krauer, and his staff to develop a con- sistent approach to all Williams v. Penn- sylvania-related cases.

In 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court, in the Williams v. Pennsylvania case, found it unconstitutional that Castille was both the DA and the judge hearing Williams’ appeals. Abu-Jamal’s appeal is one of 16 remaining.

Judge Tucker scheduled a status conference for Feb. 26 and postponed Abu-Jamal’s trial hearing to March 27, the next organizing date for his support- ers. The jury is out on whether or not Krauer will stand firm with the people in his approach to Abu-Jamal’s interna- tionally condemned incarceration.

After Ritter explained what had hap- pened in court to the waiting crowd outside, participants gathered at the Arch Street Memorial Church around the corner for hot food provided by Not Bombs Solidarity. The meeting high- lights included impromptu speeches by

Continued on page 9
Hondurans protest fake election

By John Catalinotto

When people answered the call for a week-long political strike across Hondurans beginning on Jan. 20, to protest the fraudulent results of the Nov. 26 election, police and soldiers attacked crowds with tear gas. They injured former President Manuel Zelaya in Tegucigalpa, the capital city. TelesUR report-ed on Jan. 21 that people took to the streets and squares and blocked traffic in many cit-ies and towns. In some cases, they fought back police attacks by burning tires and throwing stones. Police injured at least 30 people and killed a 60-year-old man in the city of Sabá.

Zelaya told Te-leSUR: “We are the masters of our tear gas, but we will continue here, we’ll keep on fighting.”

Zelaya is secretary general of the LIBRE Party and a leader of the opposition to Juan Orlando Hernandez (JOH), who was declared winner of the Nov. 26 elec-tion. The vast majority of Hondurans say JOH’s win is electoral fraud.

With 70 percent of the vote count-ed, Salvador Nasralla, candidate of the Opposition Alliance against the Dicta-torship coalition, was far enough ahead that there was no chance to overtake him.

On Nov. 27 the JOH regime simply shut down the vote count for three days and fixed the outcome. Even the Organiza-tion of American States had to ques-tion the vote count. Washington gave it full backing, with the U.S. president con-gratulating Orlando Hernandez.

Washington treats Zelaya as an enemy. They backed a 2009 military coup that removed him. Then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton played a key role by giving the coup makers diplomatic and political support.

According to election observers, the 2013 election that put Orlando Hernan-dez in office was also marked by irregu-larities that hurt the opposition LIBRE Party. JOH’s client regime has served the Honduran oligarchy and U.S. imperial-ism through an international Congran limits presidents to one term, even Or-lando Hernandez’s participation in the latest election was illegal.

The current demonstrations should continue until Jan. 27. On that day, Or-lando Hernandez is scheduled to be sworn in for a second term. From the scale of the popular opposition that has confronted killer police and soldiers since November, it is apparent that only the brute force of the state apparatus is keeping him in office.

Gilberto Roso Grillo, national director of the LIBRE party, told Alex Anfruns of Invest/Action in an interview on Jan. 15: “I, who was a candidate in the elec-tion, and his more [political] support than we had during the election campaign. And that’s taking into account there are now more sectors of the population that want Juan Orlando out of office.

“The national stoppage that has been declared for Jan. 20-27 will be a full week of seizures of highways, blockades of streets, consumer blockade, etc. ... We believe it will have a much greater impact than any of the prior demonstrations.”

Cuban brigade anniversary celebrated

By Cheryl LaBash

Havana

The 40th anniversary of the founding of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, which has worked tirelessly in Miami and South Florida to end the U.S. blockade of Cuba and U.S. travel restrictions, and for Cuba’s right to develop in peace, was sal-uted in Havana from Dec. 18-22.

Today, poll after poll shows that Cubans living in the U.S. — like the ma-jority of U.S. residents — support ending the commercial, financial and economic blockade of Cuba. But it was very differ-ent in 1977, when the 55 youths who made up the first brigade rebelled against the seemingly monolithic U.S. hostility to-ward revolutionary Cuba, just to set foot in the land of their birth.

Migration as a weapon

In tribute a huge Cuban flag, donat-ed by the U.S. veterans, was raised at the oceanside statue and park honoring Ma-ceo. Ricardo Alcérin, the Cuban negoti-a-tor of migration agreements with the U.S., explained how the brigade was a response to the U.S. government’s use of migration as a weapon against the Cuban Revolution.

In particular, before the Cuban Adjust-ment Act of 1966 and the “wet-foot/dry-foot” policy that enabled migration to the U.S. with the promise of a fast track to benefits and U.S. citizenship, there was Operation Peter Pan.

Some 14,000 children arrived by plane in the U.S., victims of this little-known operation. Influenced by CIA and Catho-lic Church propaganda claiming that the revolutionary government would welcome all children away from parents and send them to the Soviet Union, families sent unaccompanied children to the U.S. in what appeared to be a spontaneous mi-gration process. They were then placed in orphanages or foster homes.

In 1999, 55 youths who formed the Antonio Maceo Brigade were among these Cu-ban born children and those who were brought to the U.S. by their families. Uprooted from their native land without their consent, and then radicalized by the tumultuous U.S. struggles of the 1960s, they voluntarily returned to revolution-ary Cuba.

A celebratory program

At a gala event, the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) was presented with a bust of Antonio Ma-ceo. Fernando González, ICAP president and Cuban 5 hero, explained how the brigade’s work helped build a new rela-tionship between the revolutionary gov-ernment and Cuban emigré communities in the U.S. and elsewhere. These emigrés support the revolutionary government, and the nearly 50-member brigade delega-tion presented with a bust of Antonio Mella, who founded the Federation of Antiimperialist Youth in 1929.

That night, the nearly 50-member brigade delegation came from Miami and Key West, Fla., and Europe, including a represen-tative of Cubans living in Marseilles, France. Solidarity activists from the U.S. included representatives of Workers World Party; Party for Socialism and Liberation and Socialist Workers Party.

The brigade came to celebrate re-construction after Hurricane Irma, and a discussion about current U.S.-Cuba relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Center of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology amazed guests with Cuba’s pharmaceutical and medical advances.

There was also a bonfire at the Julio Antonio Mella International Camp, where Andrés Gómez, filled with emotion as he recalled the first brigade arriving to the camp, carried one of the torches that lit the bonfire.

Continued from page 8

Estela Vazquez, executive vice president of 1959SEU, and French activists Claude Guillaume-Fopuj and Jacky Hortaut, of theCollectif Francois “Liberons Mumia,” and Mireille Fanon-Mendès-France from the Frantz Fanon Foundation.

The Fanon Foundation revealed how extensive Abu-Jamal’s support is around the world by collecting hundreds of signs to an open letter to DA Krasner and Police Files Rele-signers to an open letter to DA Krasner

Max Lesnik and Andrés Gómez, center, at Havana’s International Press Center.

Workers.org Jan 28, 2018 Page 9
Typically Olympic Games are spectacles designed to fill the coffers of hotel chains, media moguls, sports equipment and clothing companies, and construction companies. Yet the cost of these extravaganzas is borne by the workers and poor in the cities and countries that host them. But sometimes through the corporate buzz of flag waving and medal counts, a message of struggle appears. In the Mexico City games of 1968, two champions, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, mounted the victory platform, bowed their heads and raised their gloved fists in the iconic Black Power salute while the band played “The Internationale.” This symbolic act inspired millions of Black youth, many of whom had just faced thousands of cops, National Guard and federal troops when they rebelled in hundreds of cities across the country.

Two-party DACA cruelty

Continued from page 1

dent Barack Obama. It allowed more than 800,000 immigrants, who were brought here by their parents when they were children, to stay, provided they went to school, joined the military or otherwise conformed to government guidelines.

These Dreamers came out of the shadows of living without papers, revealed themselves to the immigration authorities and registered for Dreamer status. They all now have work permits and have the legal right to be in the U.S. They all now have work permits and have the legal right to be in the U.S.

This present government shutdown crisis was set off when Trump cancelled the last snow day. Kelly had destroyed the protected status of DACA immigrants. Trump gave Congress until March 5 to “fix” DACA. This was Trump’s way of duc ing immediate responsibility for the mass deportation of 800,000-plus Dreamers while appealing to the right-wing base of the Republic Party and his own base of “whiteáveis.”

In the shutdown struggle, Trump has been guided by his military handler, John Kelly, the Marine general and chief of staff. Kelly and Stephen Miller, a right-wing Trump adviser, have blocked the way for any deal on DACA to reach the White House. They continue to carry out raids, round up immigrants, prepare for military aggression, and spy on and hound progressives, the poor and the oppressed.

From a broader social point of view, it is the Pentagon and the Trump regime that is the real obstacle to peace on the Korean peninsula. South Korea and the DPRK, were not invited to this meeting. The DPRK is still in “hair-trigger” nuclear attack mode, despite the peace in Panmunjom. Some in South Korea for nearly seven decades.

The south Korean liberal leadership accept the offer. The provocative joint U.S.-

Josep Borrell, the European Union foreign policy chief, said on Jan. 17 that the Denizyazigari Zone separating the two states of Korea, which has recently fortified its defenses, depicted the Korean peninsula in blue on a white background. The women’s hockey team will be made up of members from both north and south Korea. According to a report in the Jan. 20 USA Today: “North Koreans will compete in figure skating, short and long track speed skating, Alpine skiing and cross-country skiing after being given exceptional late entries by the International Olympic Committee.”

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According to reports, reports, Kelly was with Trump in the hours before he met with Sens. Dick Durbin, a Democrat, and Lindsey Graham, a Republican, about a compromise resolution. It would have offered full status for Dreamers in return for a downpayment on funding for Trump’s wall on the southern border with Mexico. While Trump was reportedly friendly to the proposal, Kelly thought it too moderate.

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At the call of the All Workers Militant Front (PAME), a labor federation affiliated with the Greek Communist Party, there was a general strike Jan. 12. This was the 25th before the referendum vote on a proposal to limit the right to strike. As lawmakers debated, protesters from PAME chanted “Hands off strikes!” during a march of about 20,000 people. Others held banners reading “Uprising!” and “No to modern slavery!”

Workers protested because, to get the latest and last portion of the bailout from international banks, the Greek parliament had to agree to limit the right to strike, extend electronic auctions and seizures for short duration led the Greek and European bourgeoisie to discount their strength and impact. Production would quickly recover; a day of stoppage now and then would hurt little.

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Workers.org
Jan 25, 2018
Page 11

By G. Dunkel

This was not the first mention of new U.S.-commanded ISF to the strategic Joseph Vogel, commander of U.S. Central Command, said on Dec. 24 that a training program was being established for Kurdish YPG forces to become a permanent U.S. occupying force in Syria. Vogel de- clared, “What we don’t want to do is leave a mess.” (us.pressfrom.com, Dec. 24)

In fact, U.S.-term long-term plans are to per- manently divide Syria and Iraq and ex- pand their imperialist “mess” into Iran. Since Dec. 24, news reports around the world reported U.S. plans to create a new “border force” in Syria on the borders of Turkey and Iraq and they would separate the oil-rich northern region from the rest of Syria, create a mini-state and close the borders.

Washington said it would help Syrian Democratic Forces, an alliance of mili- tias in northern and eastern Syria led by Kurdish YPG militias, to set up a new 30,000-strong border force.

A flurry of other U.S. statements drew out this plan more explicitly. The State Department Office said: “The base of the new force is essentially a realignment of approximately 15,000

**U.S. spreads chaos in the Middle East**

**By Sara Flounders**

U.S. imperialism’s deteriorating position in the Middle East was confirmed on Jan. 16 by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson’s talk at the Hoover Institution on Stanford University confirmed that the only hope of maintaining U.S. domina- tion is another desperate attempt to close all borders and dismember the entire re- gion. But the latest plan has also created a rupture in NATO, the oldest and largest U.S.-commanded military alliance.

Meanwhile, Turkish planes bombed 100 positions in Syria of U.S.-backed Kurdish YPG forces (the Kurdish acronym for Peo- ple’s Protection Units) on Jan. 21.

The Kurds are a historically oppressed Arab Republic government.

It has become a racist political barrier dic- tion, exploitation and death squad govern- ment, numbering over 30 million people. They are the largest nation without a state. They live in the underdeveloped, mountainous region spanning four coun- tries: southern Turkey and northern Iraq, Iran and Syria.

Some 72 Turkish jets bombed U.S.-backed Kurdish militias in Syria on Jan. 21. The Turkish news agency Anadolu re- ported that jets bombed more than 100 targets, including an air base, in the first day of air operations against YPG mi- litias. The operation targeted YPG bar- racks, shelters, positions, weapons, vehi- cles and equipment.

Each U.S. maneuver has created great- er destruction, but the U.S. has been un- able to insert itself in the region in the re- gion or gain stable allies.

U.S. divide-and-destroy tactics

Since 2011 the U.S. has covertly armed a whole series of conflicting militias and mercenaries. With a wink and a nod from U.S. forces in the region, which were arming numer- ous extremist militias, Saudi Arabia and Turkey armed the fanatical IS army. This became an excuse for open U.S. bombing of Syrian infrastructure.

The military command pulled 19 other NATO and Gulf countries into the war in Syria. This inclusion was of itself by selling government bonds instead of arranging support through the Europe- an Union. If the Greek government enters itself by selling government bonds instead of arranging support through the Europe- an Union. If the Greek government enters

In the first place. Production would quickly recover; a day of stoppage now and then would hurt little.

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FEMA y el Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército de EUA está a cargo de la restauración de la electricidad, pero son bien conocidos por su lentitud.

Tanto la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA por las siglas en inglés) como las acciones del Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército de EUA han sido criminales. Después del huracán, FEMA inmediatamente tomó el control de todos los contenedores llenos de ayuda para la isla con material de ayuda y suministros, dificultando la entrega de los bienes. La lentitud de ambas agencias en la evaluación de los daños y el pedido de materiales - desde los toldos azules hasta postes eléctricos - son actos genocidas contra el pueblo puertorriqueño.

Cuatro meses después de la tormenta, todavía hay casas destruidas en las zonas rurales y montañas, sin azules alarmas ni electricidad. El Cuerpo de Ingenieros ni siquiera ha construido un solo puente en Puerto Rico.

Las condiciones posteriores a María han causado una crisis humanitaria. Al menos un cuarto de millón de Boricuas han emigrado a EUA en la solidaridad, y más de 2000 personas han muerto y miles siguen sin hogar. Hay hambre. La comunicación es un caos, y varios barcos y buques para exportar el agua potable a EUA están quedando varados en la entrada en puerto. Naciones Unidas ha emitido un informe sobre la falta de electricidad. Miles de pequeñas empresas han cerrado y el agotamiento de la economía está aumentando.

Y mientras el gobierno estadounidense retiene ayuda crucial al pueblo, impide que otros países ayuden a la isla. Estados Unidos ha financiado la solidaridad, evitando que Cuba envíe una unidad de salud móvil con médicos, personal de salud y electricistas, y que España envíe un barco con diesel y que México envíe trabajadores eléctricos capacitados. Lo que EUA ha impuesto en Puerto Rico es una aspiration, al menos claramente una especie de esclavitud.

Lo que estamos presenciando en Puerto Rico no es solo la devastación de dos huracanes y el “fracaso” de la reconstrucción, sino la explotación, el monopolio y la solidaridad, lo que generó más ingresos para el gobierno de EUA y el grupo de empresas inglesas -desde los toldos azules hasta postes eléctricos-.

La lucha por las escuelas

Las/os maestros, maestras y sus comunidades han estado llevando a cabo compañeros y estudiantes activos en Puerto Rico, para exigir que se abran las escuelas de su comunidad rápidamente.

¿Qué podemos hacer aquí? ¿Cómo podemos ayudar al pueblo Boricua?

Muy poco se dice sobre el sufrimiento y la necesidad de ayuda y suministros para aliviar las horrendas condiciones. Pero muy poco se dice sobre la responsabilidad del gobierno de EUA hacia el pueblo Boricua, quienes no estarían en esta situación si no fuera por la maniobra dictatorial. Sin soberanía, Puerto Rico no puede revertir cualquier proyecto de privatización. La incapacidad de EUA para ayudar al pueblo Boricua, con el objetivo de hacer de Puerto Rico una base para la economía de Estados Unidos, ha causado la desaparición de miles de vecinos, la desaparición de la industria azucarera, la desaparición de la industria de la electricidad, etc. Para evitar esto, la lucha por la reconstrucción y la reclamación de los derechos del pueblo Boricua debe ser una lucha continua en toda la isla. Las/os trabajadores, las/os trabajadoras, las/os estudiantes y las/os trabajadoras de la educación deben una lucha continua y organizada para exigir que se abran las escuelas de su comunidad.

La lucha por la energía

La destrucción causada es solo comparativa a la causada por el huracán San Cristóbal en 1999, según EUA y otros organismos de la ayuda internacional. EUA y otros organismos de ayuda internacional, han sido involucrados en la ayuda desde el principio. EUA y otras agencias, como el Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército, han estado formando por toda la isla, ayudándose unas/os a otras/os, recolectando alimentos y abasteciendo a la población con un sistema de energía.

La lucha por la energía se debe a que la electricidad es un derecho ciudadano. EUA ha impuesto el control de la electricidad, pero son bien conocidos por su lentitud.

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