

Cam Newton & Super Bowl, page 4.

As Palestinians resist Condemn Israel’s terror!

By Kathy Durkin

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s expansionist policies can be seen in Israel’s widening hold on the West Bank. On Feb. 2, Israeli soldiers razed 23 Palestinian homes in the South Hebron Hills, dispossessing 100 people, in the largest single demolition in 10 years in the Occupied Territory. The Electronic Intifada reported that 900 more Palestinians could lose homes in eight villages, many impoverished. (Feb. 7)

Israel claims “national security” as it forces Indigenous people out of their houses and off their land. Last year, the Zionist government destroyed 521 West Bank structures, leaving 636 people homeless.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu’s government gives preferential treatment in land and water access and low rents to pro-Israeli companies operating in the Occupied Territories, benefits denied Palestinians. Some 1,000 factories are located in Israeli-run “industrial zones” set on illegally occupied land. Super-exploitation of Palestinian labor is rampant.

Yet, global pressure is increasing on Israel, demanding an end to the Zionist state’s occupation of the West Bank and closure of the settlements and businesses there. The burgeoning Palestinian-initiated “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions” movement is having an impact — and infuriating Netanyahu’s government.

In November, the European Union ruled that goods produced in the Occupied Territories, Golan Heights and East Jerusalem must be labeled “Made in settlements.” In January, the United Methodist Church pension board was the latest entity deciding not to invest in Israeli banks.

Amidst these developments, some New York Times readers may have been shocked on Feb. 2 when they opened up the newspaper and found that its pro-Israel stance had drastically changed. That’s because a four-page parody edition of the publication was produced by progressive Jewish organizations sympathetic to the Palestinian people. Its slogan was “All the news we didn’t print.”

Above the newspaper’s logo appeared this blurb: “Re-thinking Our 2015 Coverage On Israel/Palestine — A Supplement.”

Volunteers distributed 10,000 copies of the lookalike edition throughout New York City. Printed by the New York chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace and Jews Say No!, the aim was to expose Israel’s violations of international law and Palestinian human rights and to criticize U.S. support for Israel.

Stop U.S. funding of occupation

Organizers also emailed journalists across the U.S. on Feb. 2 under the Times’ name, linking to a website displaying a facsimile of the newspaper’s website. It was removed later that day. However, activists set up an alternative site, so the replica can be viewed at

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PHOTO: ELECTRONIC INTIFADA

A Palestinian woman in the West Bank after occupation forces destroyed her home, Feb. 2.

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A day in Immigration court

By Elena Herrada
Detroit

I accompanied a teenager to immigration court. She is one of the thousands of unaccompanied youth who traveled alone from Guatemala to Detroit. She was detained in Arizona and allowed to come here because she has family members here. All of the family members are also undocumented and none of them speaks much English.

When we got to court the first time, the judge told her that she could apply for asylum. We sought the advice of several lawyers and found that she was not eligible for asylum under the very narrow guidelines. She is not a victim of torture. Fear of starvation is not grounds for relief. Fear of despair. No. Fear of no possibility of an education. No.

We got to court and the judge admonished her for not having filled out the application for asylum. The judge let me speak, although I am not a lawyer, not an official anything. Just a neighbor who was asked for some help. I told the judge that we had sought advice from lawyers whom I could name. She said that the girl should fill out the paperwork and let CIS [Citizenship and Immigration Services] decide if she is qualified.

Imagine your child leaving home, traveling across treacherous lands filled with cartels, a young girl alone. With the cash she would need to pay her way, saved, borrowed, begged from an entire village in abject poverty. While I was thinking about this, I got a call. It was this girl's father. She would not say that she was abandoned. She would not say that she was abused. She told me that her father had fallen off a roof and was disabled and could not support the family and she had come here to support them.

Her father thanked me for accompanying his daughter

to court and for whatever we could do. He asked if I was planning on taking her tomorrow to court. Of course, I said. He told me that it was a great relief to know that his daughter had found someone who speaks English to help her navigate this frightening situation. He wished she did not have to leave and hopes she does not get deported.

It is impossible for us to imagine this terror. The terror of parents who love their children and yet cannot feed them, cannot offer any future to any of them. Everyone there depends on money sent home. There are many reasons for this and most of them lead back to U.S. policy.

The people travelling out of their homelands don't know why they can't live there. Most do not know what NAFTA or CAFTA [trade agreements for North America and Central America that crushed local industry and agriculture] are. Only what Homeland Security is, CIS, ICE. Indigenous people whose native languages and humanity are completely intact are escaping crushing poverty and encountering terror.

In court, the girl was given a brief reprieve to fill out the paperwork. In the process of working on it with her, I learned a lot more about the violence of Guatemala.

I don't have any answers. If someone asks for help and there is nothing you can do, just say yes. Go with them to wherever. Go to court. Go to school. Translate if you can. Help fill out papers if you can. Imagine your child in a strange land, in the hands of strangers. We have only this day and our little gift of U.S. citizenship that we did absolutely nothing to earn.

Amor y lucha
Elena Herrada is a Chicana activist and elected member of the Detroit Public Schools board of education in-exile.

40 years too many Send Leonard Peltier home!

By Anne Pruden
New York

Feb. 6 — African-American, Puerto Rican, Palestinian and other organizations joined with the attorneys for Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier at a meeting at the Martin Luther King Labor Center here this evening

to raise funds for his defense on the 40th anniversary of his imprisonment.

Leonard Peltier is a Native-American activist who was illegally tried and convicted for his participation in a fire-fight on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in 1975 that was part of the continuation of the Native struggle be-

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MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD Who we are & what we're fighting for

Hate capitalism? Workers World Party fights for a socialist society — where the wealth is socially owned and production is planned to satisfy human need. This outmoded capitalist system is dragging down workers' living standards while throwing millions out of their jobs. If you're young, you know they're stealing your future. And capitalism is threatening the entire planet with its unplanned, profit-driven stranglehold over the means of production.

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a handful of billionaires! But we need a revolution to make that change. That's why for 57 years WWP has been building a revolutionary party of the working class inside the belly of the beast.

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

degrading people because of their nationality, sexual or gender identity or disabilities — all are tools the ruling class uses to keep us apart. They ruthlessly super-exploit some in order to better exploit us all. WWP builds unity among all workers while supporting the right of self-determination. Fighting oppression is a working-class issue, which is confirmed by the many labor struggles led today by people of color, immigrants and women.

WWP has a long history of militant opposition to imperialist wars. The billionaire rulers are bent on turning back the clock to the bad old days before socialist revolutions and national liberation struggles liberated territory from their grip. We've been in the streets to oppose every one of imperialism's wars and aggressions. □

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#FlintLivesMatter

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

More than 100 water rights activists from Flint, Mich., and Detroit made the overnight bus journey to Washington, D.C., to attend a Feb. 3 Congressional Oversight Committee hearing on the Flint water crisis. They cheered for Lee Ann Walters and Marc Edwards, whistleblowers who helped force the scandal into the public eye. Walters, a mother of three whose children have been affected by lead in Flint's water, is co-founder of Water You Fighting For. Edwards is the Virginia Tech University professor and water safety expert whose team demonstrated that lead levels in Flint's water spiked after the city began drawing water from the highly polluted Flint River.

The group watched congressional representatives grill state and federal officials. Democrats focused their finger pointing at Michigan state Department of Environmental Quality officials appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder; Republicans went after the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Committee chair Jason Chaffetz, a Utah Republican, threatened to "hunt down" Darnell Earley, Flint's governor-appointed emergency manager at the time that Flint stopped using Detroit's water and failed to add anti-corrosive chemicals to water from the Flint River. This allowed lead to leach from pipes into the tap water. Chaffetz threatened Earley after he publicly refused to testify before the committee and his attorney would not accept delivery of a subpoena.

The subpoena coincided with Earley's resignation as emergency manager of Detroit Public Schools. DPS teachers held numerous sick-outs demanding Earley's firing, calling it outrageous that anyone responsible for the Flint water crisis be entrusted with the safety of Detroit schoolchildren. Under Earley's watch, class sizes have topped 50 students in a room. Buildings lack heat, have mold-covered walls, are rodent-infested and have peeling paint. Falling ceiling tiles have injured at least one student.

Earley has now agreed to appear before the committee, but the big question remains: Why hasn't Gov. Snyder been called to testify? New evidence of his culpability emerges daily.

Snyder aide Harvey Hollins stated he was informed in March 2015 by the DEQ of the uptick in Legionnaires' disease, coinciding with the switch to Flint River water in April 2014. Few believe Snyder spokesperson David Murray's claim that "the issue was not brought to the governor's attention until January of this year." (Detroit News, Feb. 6) For 10 months the

87 cases that resulted in at least nine deaths were hidden from public scrutiny.

Earley, his predecessor Ed Kurtz and his successor Jerry Ambrose share blame for the scandal: for the decision to tap into the polluted Flint River, for the failure to add anti-corrosive chemicals and for the refusal to switch back to the Detroit system after residents complained of hair loss, skin rashes, kids failing school, aching bones and compromised immune systems.

However, every governor-appointed emergency manager answers to Snyder. Rather than admit guilt, Snyder is whining that protestors are heckling him and calling him names. "Wanted" posters are sprouting up in Detroit, Flint and outside the governor's new condo in Ann Arbor. He cannot appear in public without inviting confrontation.

Now that the Flint crisis is an embarrassment to the Republicans, Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders have agreed to hold a debate in Flint. After the revelation of the governor's probable cover-up of the Legionnaires' situation, the Michigan Democratic Party finally called for Snyder's resignation. The people, however, want him behind bars — immediately!

No end in sight to the suffering

Even with the deployment of 200 National Guard, more distribution sites and door-to-door deliveries, people are not

getting the water they need. Nothing has been done to the water to prevent the skin rashes still afflicting Flint residents. People who can afford to are washing themselves with bottled water.

Snyder has proposed spending \$30 million to provide credit to water customers who paid for undrinkable water. This money, however, is not a refund, but only a credit on future bills. Anyone who is behind in their water bill can still have service shut off! Shut-off water means children can be taken from their parents by the state.

People are trapped in Flint. Many are underwater in their mortgages — they owe more than the value of their home — and their homes are unsellable. Renters lack money for a security deposit on a new apartment. Police are knocking on doors, purportedly to deliver filters, but then arresting anyone with an outstanding warrant. If the city is a prison, doubly imprisoned are inmates in the Genesee County jail, who are still drinking toxic tap water. This includes pregnant women.

Human solidarity has brought truckloads of water to Flint; hundreds of volunteers make home deliveries every weekend. Unions, faith communities and youth organizations around the country are joining the effort, along with athletes and entertainers.

What Flint needs, however, is a new water infrastructure that delivers clean,



Wanted poster in Southwest Detroit.

potable water from the tap. Why isn't that happening?

Hip-hop producer Russell Simmons, in Flint to make a donation, called the situation "environmental racism." Institutional racism, endemic to capitalist society, allowed the poisoning of a Black-majority city, one stripped under emergency management of basic democratic rights. The capitalists who impoverished Flint are as racist as the politicians. General Motors' restructuring left Flint without jobs and without a tax base. The banks dealt another blow with mass foreclosures and debt-driven austerity.

Do more than donate. Build a "Flint Lives Matter" movement in your city or town. Demand the arrest of Gov. Rick Snyder! Demand reparations — make GM and the banks pay immediately! □

Protest will demand: 'Justice for Flint! Make GM pay!'

By Kris Hamel
Detroit

General Motors announced Feb. 3 gargantuan profits for 2015. The auto giant netted \$9.7 billion after what little it pays in taxes. Organizers in Detroit with the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions & Utility Shutoffs say that \$4 billion of that sum should immediately go to help the people of Flint rebuild their water infrastructure and for medical needs.

A demonstration is planned for Feb. 10 at 4 p.m. outside the GM world headquarters in downtown Detroit (on E. Jefferson between Brush and Beaubien) to demand the company use \$4 billion — less than one-half of one year's profits — to help the city it used, destroyed and left behind.

So far GM has been silent about the Flint water catastrophe, even though, as activists point out, "It was GM's actions that were responsible for the financial

destruction of Flint, a majority African-American city placed under emergency management, and the disastrous consequences that followed."

A statement issued by the Moratorium NOW! Coalition points out:

- In its drive for superprofits, GM eliminated 72,000 union auto jobs in Flint from 1970 to the present, driving out half of the population and turning Flint from one of the wealthiest cities in the U.S. into the poorest. GM closed 24 plants in Genesee County and moved operations all over the globe, seeking higher profits by paying lower wages. In U.S. plants, GM replaced workers with robots. The loss of jobs and plants destroyed Flint's tax base.
- When GM became aware of the toxic, corrosive nature of Flint's water supply in October 2014, it didn't alert the public or call for the end of its use in family water taps. No, it negotiated an exemption for itself to get water from

Lake Huron so its parts would not be corroded, the people be damned.

- GM is the single greatest polluter of the Flint River, using it to dump toxic industrial waste for decades.
- GM promoted lead-based gasoline for 60 years to make its engines more efficient at the least cost, knowing full well the poisonous effects of lead.
- GM got a \$50 billion bailout from the federal government in 2009, on which the government lost over \$11 billion, when GM's mismanagement resulted in losses. The state of Michigan, under Govs. Granholm and Snyder, gave GM \$4 billion in tax credits through 2030, meaning every year that GM is profitable it pays zero state taxes.
- The United Auto Workers and Flint civil rights groups fought GM's racist hiring practices for decades. The closing of over 150 U.S. plants has had a disproportionate impact on the African-American community. □

Send Leonard Peltier home!

Continued from page 2

gun at nearby Wounded Knee in 1973. Two other firefight participants were acquitted on the grounds of self-defense.

Following this acquittal, the FBI went to extraordinary lengths to punish Peltier, the remaining defendant, finally arresting him in 1976 and convicting him the next year. As his defense committee explains it, "Someone had to pay."

Nerdon Kiswani, of the New York City Students for Justice with Palestine, told the audience, "Our struggle is one. We have fundamental beliefs to destroy all oppression! We have to work together." Kiswani showed how Peltier's case was

connected to the incarceration of 670 Palestinian political prisoners by the Israeli state. Of these prisoners, many are youth being held without charges and are among the 7,000 Palestinians currently imprisoned by the Israeli state.

Other speakers included Orie Lumumba, of the MOVE Organization, who supported Peltier's release as well as that of the MOVE 9, who were also unfairly tortured and incarcerated.

Peltier's attorneys, Martin Garbus and Cynthia K. Dunne, also spoke and described Peltier's strength in spite of his ailing health. They listed the numerous constitutional violations against Leon-

ard and said that all legal remedies have been exhausted. What remains, they said, is to apply united pressure to win executive clemency.

Organizers offered cards for signatures that will be sent to President Barack Obama. They urged everyone present to use the cards to build support, along with phone calls, tweets, emails and letters to Obama.

Dequi Kioni-Sadiki, of the Malcolm X Commemoration for Political Prisoners, and Frank Velgara, of ProLibertad, co-chaired the meeting. They welcomed the Red Storm Drum and Dance Troupe



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

Nerdon Kiswani of NYC Students for Justice in Palestine.

and spoke of the need to support Mumia Abu-Jamal, Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera and others. For more information, write to nycfreepeltier@gmail.com or see whoisleonardpeltier.info. □

Cam Newton

A revolutionizing Black quarterback

By Monica Moorehead

Feb. 8 — Cam Newton is the sensation-
al 26-year-old quarterback of the Caroli-
na Panthers, the team that represented
the National Football Conference in the
50th Super Bowl on Feb. 7.

The Panthers succumbed to the Amer-
ican Football Conference Denver Bron-
cos that won the Super Bowl 24-10 to
become the champion of the National
Football League for the 2015 regular se-
ason. The Super Bowl is the most popular
one-day sports event played in the Unit-
ed States and viewed by hundreds of mil-
lions globally.

Newton came under unprecedented
scrutiny from the mainstream media
during the regular season. Why? Not be-
cause he won the prestigious Heisman
Trophy five years ago as the best college
football player, or because he led the Au-
burn Tigers to the National Collegiate
Athletic Association Division I champi-
onship in 2010. And not because on Feb.
6 he won the Associated Press’ NFL’s
Most Valuable Player award and also Of-
fensive Player of the Year award for his
role in leading the Panthers to a 15-1 reg-

ular season record.

No. Instead, Newton has been recently
targeted by the media for being too “po-
larizing” and “playing the race card” —
for proudly saying he is an African-Amer-
ican quarterback, something that “no one
can compare me to.”

If Newton played any other position, he
would not be receiving so much attention,
but the quarterback position is the most
visible and prestigious in college and pro-
fessional football. The quarterback is the
face of the entire team.

Since the founding of the NFL in 1920,
the vast majority of NFL quarterbacks
have been white, a reflection of the rac-
ism and racial segregation in U.S. capital-
ist society.

Black QBs get racist treatment

Many Black quarterbacks who pre-
ceded Newton, including Warren Moon,
Randall Cunningham, Doug Williams,
Steve McNair and Joe Gilliam, were ex-
pected to carry themselves on and off
the field in a manner that was charac-
terized as “nonthreatening” and “nonof-
fensive” in the eyes of racist white fans
and media.

Black quarterbacks were described
by most white sports commentators as
possessing “athletic” abilities, not “intel-
lectual” ability. This was outright white
supremacy. Newton has shattered this
racist myth like no other due to his excit-
ing, brilliant skills as a passer and run-
ner and by calling plays. At 6-foot-5 and
245 pounds, he’s built like a defensive
linebacker.

Newton has without apology creat-
ed so much exuberance with his joy-
ous dancing, especially the popular
dabbing motion in the end zone, and
by giving away footballs to children in
the stands after every Panther touch-
down. His personality has also carried
over to his teammates. The Panthers’
coach, Ron Rivera, of Puerto Rican
and Mexican descent, has defended
Newton’s actions in press conferences.

These actions have drawn negative
criticism of Newton for being too “in-
dividualistic” and “only bringing at-
tention to himself,” although some of
the most prominent white quarter-
backs, like Aaron Rodgers and Tom
Brady, carry out their own celebra-
tions with general acceptance and lit-
tle fanfare.

Despite these racist attacks against
Newton, he has millions of fans, not
just in North Carolina but throughout
the U.S. and the world.

Although the Panthers lost Super
Bowl 50, Cam Newton is still being
touted as the new face of the NFL be-
cause he is revolutionizing the quarter-
back position, along with being closely
identified with hip-hop culture.

*Moorehead is the U.S. presidential
candidate of Workers World Party.*

WW commentary

Is Cam Newton ‘too Black’?

By Lamont Lilly
Durham, N.C.

The glaringly racist barrage regarding
the on-the-field celebrations and cultural
norms of Carolina Panthers quarterback
Cam Newton reminds me a lot of the old
critiques of ground-breaking Black ath-
letes: Muhammad Ali, Jack Johnson, Jim
Brown, Tommy Smith and John Carlos.
It reminds me even more of the current
critiques of worldwide tennis icon Sere-
na Williams — too Black, too cocky, too
confident, too good to be true. It’s too
bad that so many in the U.S. still think
and operate through a white suprema-
cist assimilationist lens. It’s so obvious,
it doesn’t make any sense. To declare
that the current debates around Cam
Newton’s post-touchdown dancing and
on-the-field celebrations have nothing to
do with race is an outright lie, a denial of
the very fabric that created this country:
slavery, racism, genocide.

As conservative commentators and
opposing fans have critiqued Newton’s
“dancing,” let us not forget the histori-
cal dynamics here. When Black men and
Black women were forced to “coon” dance
for nickels and dimes in vaudeville and
“black face” shows just to survive, it was
just fine. As a Black athlete or entertain-
er, as long as you “stayed in your place”
you were all right. They would prop you
up and give you some token Negro pow-
er. And every now and then, they even
paid you well. But dare to be confident,
and they’ll tear you down. They’ll pick
and poke from any hole they can find.

While Cam Newton is currently be-
ing pinned the “poster boy” of “egotism,
arrogance and poor sportsmanship,”
ironically, the U.S. government contin-
ues to bomb innocent civilians all over

the world; corporations continue to rob
the poor; and police continue to terrorize
Black, Brown and Indigenous communi-
ties. Maybe greed, violence and imperi-
alism aren’t considered “poor sportsman-
ship” anymore.

Among all the many voices and com-
ments I’ve seen, heard and read regard-
ing Newton’s on-the-field enthusiasm,
the former Pittsburgh Steeler and current
ESPN analyst Ryan Clark said it best:
“Here’s why he [Cam Newton] rubs you
the wrong way, because you don’t under-
stand it. Because for so many years Black
quarterbacks didn’t have to conform to a
way of playing quarterback, they had to
conform to a way of behavior.”

As Clark further explained on an ESPN
morning show: “He’s disliked because it’s
culturally hard to understand for most
people. Russell Wilson doesn’t have the
hip-hop culture. [Hip-hop artists] Young
Jeezy and Future aren’t going to Russell
Wilson games. For the Caucasian fan, for
the fan who doesn’t understand that cul-
ture, Cam Newton’s culture is too young,
hip-hop, too young brown.” (espn.com)

Personally, I’m glad Cam Newton
isn’t some assimilationist token Negro.
If Cam’s dancing and “culture of confi-
dence” make you sick, chances are you’re
the disease; not him. All I want for Cam
Newton, and any other African American
for that matter, is for them to be free to be
themselves, to be proud of how far we’ve
come — and yes, to be confident in that.
And that’s just the beginning of what lib-
eration looks like. Truth is, as the strug-
gle for Black Liberation continues, we’re
going to need that bold Black confidence.
Stay grounded, but be yourself, Brother
Newton.

*Lilly is the 2016 U.S. vice presidential
candidate of Workers World Party.*

Bay Area racism

Super Bowl fans get dose of reality



On Saturday, Feb. 6, travelers to the San Francisco airport arriving to see the Super Bowl
were welcomed to the Bay Area in an unexpected way. The Anti Police-Terror Project organized
a protest to point out the contradictions between the hundreds of thousands of dollars being
spent on this sports spectacle versus the ongoing killings of Black and Brown people by the
police and the ever-increasing gentrification of San Francisco and Oakland.

Holding a banner saying “Welcome to the Bay Area Where Black, Brown and Poor People Are
No Longer Welcome,” the protesters “mic checked” their message to the arriving passengers,
backed up by a brochure they distributed. They chanted the names of over 50 Black and Brown
people who have been killed by Bay Area police.

The demonstrators moved through the airport, stopping in each terminal to repeat their
message. Their demands were 1) The immediate resignations of Mayors Ed Lee (San Francis-
co) and Libby Schaaf (Oakland); 2) the immediate terminations of (police) Chiefs Sean Whent
(Oakland) and Greg Suhr (San Francisco); and 3) the immediate reallocation of city budgets to
reduce police spending and allocate funds toward affordable housing.

— Report and photo by Terri Kay

Rally to demand parole for MOVE 9

An Evening of Solidarity
for
Parole for MOVE
Political Prisoner's

Fri. February 12, 2016
The Malcolm X & Betty Shabazz Center
3940 Broadway @ 165th St.
NYC -- A,C,1 trains to 168 St. stop

6:30pm: Light Supper
7-10pm: Program

Culture: LC The Poet Raw Life

By New York Workers World Bureau

Many organizations and individuals
in the New York area who support and
defend political prisoners are holding a
rally on Feb. 12 in New York to mobilize
for the upcoming May parole hearings for

MOVE 9 political prisoners Debbie Af-
rica, Janet Africa and Janine Africa and
to win parole for all imprisoned MOVE
members.

The MOVE 9 political prisoners were
arrested Aug. 8, 1978, and charged with
the murder of a Philadelphia police offi-

cer. They were sentenced to 30-100 years
each. Since 2008 they have all been eli-
gible for parole, having served the 30-year
minimum. All MOVE members have so
far been denied parole.

Pam Africa will chair the event. Sched-
uled speakers include Ramona Africa of
MOVE; Amina Baraka, poet and New
Jersey activist; Johanna Fernandez, of
the Committee to Bring Mumia Home;
Imam Al-Hajj Talib, Mosque of Islamic
Brotherhood, Inc.; and others, with pre-
sentations from Raw, LC the poet and

others. There will be updates on the cas-
es of political prisoners Jalil Muntaqim,
Herman Bell and Robert Seth Hayes.

The meeting is scheduled with a light
supper at 6:30 p.m. and a political and
cultural program from 7 to 10 p.m. at the
Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Center
at 3940 Broadway at 165th Street, Man-
hattan. Take the A, C or 1 subway trains
to the 168th Street stop.

Report based on news release from
move9parole.blogspot.com, where more
information is available. □

PHOTO: "FREEDOM U GEORGIA" FACEBOOK PAGE
Immigrant students fight back in Georgia.



Immigrant students occupy Georgia campus buildings

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

Feb. 2 — Undocumented students and their allies staged dramatic building occupations on three Georgia university campuses on Feb. 1 to press their demands for equal access to higher education.

Feb. 1 was the 56th anniversary of the 1960 Greensboro, N.C., lunch counter sit-ins by Black students to protest segregationist policies. The immigrant youth chose that date purposely and drew inspiration and lessons from that historic bold action by young people. The 1960 sit-ins exposed the crimes of racist laws and helped launch the mass Civil Rights Movement.

Students, professors and community activists held teach-ins and rallies inside buildings on the Atlanta campuses of Georgia State University and Georgia Tech as well as the University of Georgia in Athens.

The well-planned and coordinated actions were organized by Freedom University, a volunteer-based program developed to offer college-level classes and leadership development to youth denied admission and/or in-state tuition to the state's public universities and colleges. In recognition of their academic ability and leadership potential, Freedom University students have received full scholarships at a number of colleges and universities around the country.

In 2011, following a wave of anti-immigrant legislation passed by the Georgia Legislature, the Board of Regents, an unelected body, barred Georgia's undocumented students from admission to the top five state schools and required out-of-state tuition to be paid at the others in the system. Out-of-state tuition can be more than three times higher than in-state tuition.

Even if they graduated from Georgia high schools, undocumented students are also ineligible for the state's HOPE [Helping Others Pursue an Education] scholarship money or federal grants. These policies, identified as 4.1.6 and 4.3.4, effectively deny youth the opportunity to continue their education, even

youth who can graduate at the top of their high school class with honors.

In 2012, the Obama administration instituted a program known as DACA [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals], which provided a form of relief from deportation and a protected legal status to those brought into the country as children who met certain qualifications.

Undocumented youth, both those covered by DACA and others, have engaged in an ongoing struggle to challenge the Board of Regents' exclusionary policies with multiple interventions at meetings as well as educational programs on campuses and in communities.

At the Feb. 1 action, six young people were charged with trespass for remaining in a UGA campus building past closing time on Monday night.

Eight students were arrested in the early morning hours of Feb. 2 after staying in Centennial Hall on the Georgia State campus in downtown Atlanta overnight. GSU President Mark Becker's office is in that building and a key demand of the action was directed toward him to publicly denounce the discriminatory policy.

At Georgia Tech, police used ear-shattering sound horns to remove students from a building where they then proceeded to sing and chant from the outside.

On the very day of this planned action, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled on a lawsuit that attempted to sue the Board of Regents over its refusal to adhere to DACA's legal status for qualified youth. The court ruled that the Board of Regents as a collective body was immune from lawsuits and did not address the issue of DACA protections.

It is expected that the individual members of the board will now face lawsuits.

Freedom University students often wear brightly colored cardboard butterfly wings during their actions as symbols that human rights and freedoms know no borders. As consciousness of the overt and hidden expressions of racism, bigotry and white supremacy grows and unites students and faculty across the country, the Freedom University students are gaining support on many campuses. □

On the picket line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

Fast food workers strike in Iowa

A few hours before the Jan. 28 Republican presidential primary debate in Iowa, fast food workers walked off the job in the state's first fast food workers' strike. Several dozen workers and supporters blocked traffic and marched through the streets of Des Moines to demand a \$15 minimum wage and a union.

Childcare worker Alexis Wright joined the protest to show class solidarity. "I've lived in Iowa my whole life," she said, "and in the past 10 years, our cost of living has gone up so much, but our wages haven't gone up any." Iowa's minimum hourly wage, among the lowest in the country at the federal minimum of \$7.25, leaves even full-time workers unable to afford child care. "Fight for \$15" organizer Terrence Wise addressed the politicians: "If you're not supporting \$15 an hour and affordable child care, you won't get our vote." (thinkprogress.org, Jan. 28)

Airport workers protest on MLK Day

Airport workers, including baggage handlers and janitorial workers, predominantly people of color, commemorated Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Jan. 18, with protests in at least 10 cities. They demanded \$15 an hour, benefits and a union. Joined by the Service Employees union, workers blocked traffic in Washington, D.C., to call attention to widespread poverty wages in the industry — the minimum hourly wage is \$6.75. David Tucker, who, after 54 years working as a skycap at Reagan National Airport, only makes \$3.77 an hour, explained, "All my children are grown, so it's not like I need a whole, whole lot of money, but \$15 an hour is not a whole, whole lot of money." (wusa.com, Jan. 18)



D.C. Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton joined the action and stated: "Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis, where he had gone to stand with sanitation workers who faced inhumane conditions at work and poverty wages. I want to carry on the King legacy by standing with airport workers ... whose jobs have been contracted out to companies paying shamefully low wages." (dclabor.org, Jan. 18) Statistics show that the average hourly wage declined 45 percent after the airlines, which 10 years ago employed these workers, outsourced jobs to contract companies.

Bill to protect dairy workers in Wash. state

Washington state dairy workers, supported by the United Farm Workers and state labor and faith groups, held a vigil on Jan. 18, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, at the state Capitol in Olympia to announce the introduction of House Bill 2484. The landmark dairy safety bill is needed to end deaths and rising injury rates at Washington dairies.

During a hearing on the bill, Alberto Garcia, who worked in the dairy industry for 20 years, described being trampled by a bull for 30 minutes with no one around to help him. He ended up in a coma in a Seattle hospital with severe internal injuries and barely survived. Since then, he has suffered physically and psychologically, and his family has suffered financially. "I don't want that to happen to other families because there is no safety and training for the workers," Garcia told the House committee. (The Stand, Jan. 19)

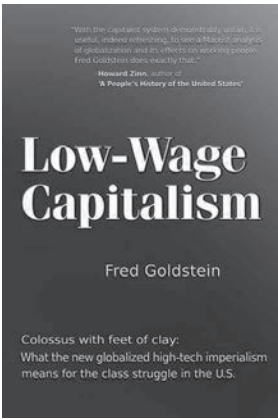
Fight for Nabisco jobs in Chicago

In July 2015, Nabisco, a subsidiary of global snacking powerhouse Mondelez International, announced it would invest \$130 million in a plant in Salinas, Mexico, instead of investing in its historic South Side Chicago Nabisco bakery, unless the workers came up with \$46 million in annual savings in perpetuity. To do that, the workers, members of the Bakery union (BCTGM), would have to take wage and benefit cuts of \$22 to \$29 an hour every year. If the company, which raked in more than \$30 billion in 2014, moved Oreo and eight other product lines to Salinas, Chicago would lose 600 good-paying jobs.

Join the fight to keep Nabisco jobs in Chicago by signing the BCTGM petition at tinyurl.com/hnbnvln. The petition is addressed to Mondelez CEO Irene Rosenfeld, who banked \$21 million in 2014, for a total of \$170 million over the past eight years.

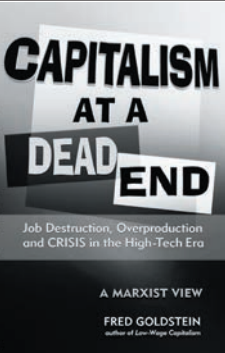
Equal pay for all women workers

Because the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was signed on Jan. 29, 2009, that date is commemorated by women's, union and legal groups to mark the continuing struggle for equal pay for women workers. Ledbetter successfully sued Goodyear Tire for discrimination, but the Supreme Court overturned the ruling in 2007. The fight for equal pay persists. Today women make only 79 cents for every dollar a white man makes, with women of color making much less. The struggle for the Equal Rights Amendment continues. □



Low-Wage Capitalism

describes in sweeping detail the drastic effect on the working class in the United States of new technology and the restructuring of global capitalism in the post-Soviet era. It uses Karl Marx's law of wages and other findings to show that these developments are not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval.



Capitalism at a Dead End

Job destruction, overproduction and crisis in the high-tech era

El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

Fred Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tasa decreciente de ganancia, para demostrar por qué el capitalismo global ha llegado finalmente a un punto de inflexión.

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com
Available at all major online booksellers.

HATTIE MCDANIEL

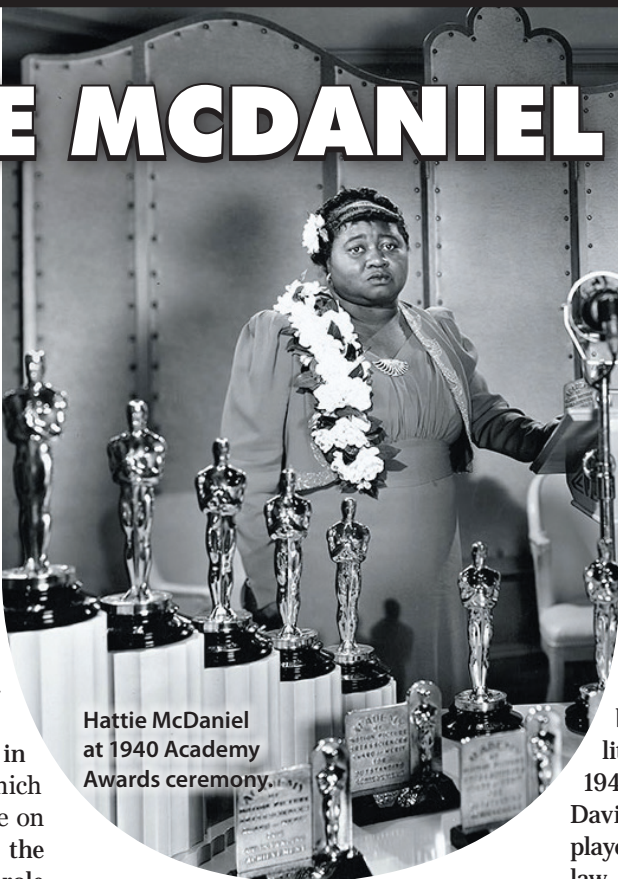
By Dolores Cox

Hollywood's 2016 all-white Academy Award acting nominations carry on the tradition of excluding, more often than not, Black achievement in films. Hollywood is a reflection of mainstream society's historical policies and practice of institutional racism, exclusion and elimination.

From time to time, however, there are exceptions to rules of law and custom, even while racial discrimination persists. One exception was an Academy Award given to Hattie McDaniel. It was the first Oscar awarded to a Black actor in 1940.

She won for best supporting actor in the 1939 film "Gone with the Wind," which glorified slavery. The story takes place on an Atlanta, Ga., plantation during the U.S. Civil War. McDaniel played the role of "Mammy," a house servant to Scarlett O'Hara. Other Black actors in the movie, such as Butterfly McQueen as Prissy, were also house servants. Despite winning the Oscar, McDaniel and the other Black actors were barred from attending the film's premiere in apartheid Atlanta. The Oscars ceremony was held in a white-only hotel where McDaniel was relegated to a segregated back banquet table.

McDaniel was born in 1893 in Wichita, Kan. She was her parents' thirteenth child. Both parents were former slaves. Her father was a Civil War veteran who suffered severe injuries in the war. Her mother was a domestic worker. In 1901 the McDaniel family moved to Denver, Colo., where she was only one of two Black students in her class.



Hattie McDaniel at 1940 Academy Awards ceremony

McDaniel had a career in singing and dancing professionally before she became a film star. While in high school she began performing with her brother's troupe and later formed an all-women's minstrel show. When she was 18 she married and eventually became an established blues singer and sang with bands. She was also one of the first African-American women to be on the radio. In the 1920s she toured with vaudeville troupes, as well as performing on a Denver radio station.

In 1931 McDaniel moved to Los Angeles where two of her siblings managed to obtain minor movie roles. Her brother also appeared on the radio there, where McDaniel too appeared. That same year she landed a tiny film role as an extra in a Hollywood musical. The following year she de-

First Oscar-winning Black actor

buted as a maid in the film "Destino Rubio" and was featured as a housekeeper in the film "Gold West."

McDaniel: A pioneer for African-American actors

In 1934 she got a big break in the film "Judge Priest" where she sang a duet with Will Rogers. In the 1935 film "The Little Colonel" starring Shirley Temple and Lionel Barrymore, McDaniel played the role of Mom Beck. The following year she played Queenie in the film "Showboat." One of her most powerful but little known roles was in the anti-racist 1942 drama "In This Our Life" with Bette Davis and Olivia DeHavilland. McDaniel played a grief-stricken mother of a young law student falsely accused of a hit-and-run fatality.

During WW II McDaniel entertained U.S. troops and promoted the sale of war bonds.

To say that nonstereotypical roles for Black actors were hard to come by is an understatement. Throughout the mid-1940s Black actors mainly played roles that progressive Black people referred to as "offensive." In some quarters the media also attacked McDaniel for accepting roles that perpetuated negative stereotypes of Black people. She was unjustly criticized for being satisfied with playing servants and slaves. She was not politically active, but in her Oscar acceptance speech she said she hoped to be a credit to her race.

McDaniel defended her right to accept whatever roles she chose. She also inti-

ated that characters like Mammy demonstrated they were more than just meeting their employers' standards. She responded that her choice was to either make \$700 a week in film, TV and radio portraying a servant or to actually work as a servant for \$7 an hour.

The NAACP pleaded with African-American actors to stop taking such roles seen as degrading to Black communities. And they pressed Hollywood to begin creating characters that portrayed Black people as being unable to attain much more than cleaning, cooking and caring for white people.

During the Civil Rights Movement those denigrating movie roles for which Black actors were typecast began to disappear. In 1947 when her offers dried up, McDaniel accepted the starring role on the radio program "The Beulah Show," in which she played a maid again. But she used her talents to shatter racial stereotypes, not reinforce them.

In 1951 while filming the TV version of "Beulah," who was initially played by another Black actor and singer, Ethel Waters, McDaniel suffered a heart attack and was later diagnosed with breast cancer. She was replaced by actress Louise Beavers.

Hattie McDaniel died of cancer in 1952 and was inducted into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame in 1975. The then-Hollywood Cemetery, where many acting legends are buried, denied her request to be buried there due to their white-only policy.

McDaniel was a great actor who brought dignity to her roles, stereotypical or not.

Source: biography.com/people.

'BIG MAMA' THORNTON and reparations

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

You have probably heard of Elvis Presley and perhaps even heard him sing, "I ain't nothin' but a hound dog." This was "the signature song" that propelled him to fame and estimated lifetime earnings of \$4.3 billion.

It is less likely you have heard of Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton. She first recorded "Hound Dog" in 1952 and received \$500 in payment, her only earnings from the song.

The discrepancy between their fates has been described as "perhaps the most notorious example of the inequity that often existed when a black original was covered by a white artist," says the Encyclopedia of Alabama. But the difference between Thornton and Presley is more than "inequity."

This is injustice — pointing to the need for reparations to African-American people for the theft of Black music. An article titled "For Old Rhythm-and-Blues, Respect and Reparations," published in the New York Times on March 1, 1997, describes the theft so shameful and pervasive that the Rhythm & Blues Foundation has been forced out of music corporations like Atlantic Records and Time-Warner.

The foundation money — far less than "reparations" — assists older African-American R&B artists who received few or no royalties from corporations and are now unable to pay medical bills and rent.

This meager money came years too late for Willie Mae Thornton. Her song, "Ball 'n' Chain," made famous by Janis Joplin, was named by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as one of the "500 Songs that Shaped Rock and Roll." But in 1984, the year Thornton was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame, she died in poverty in Los Angeles.

Thornton was born in 1926 in tiny Arton, Ala., on land seized from the Creek Nation for the slaveocracy's large and small cotton plantations. Thornton was a descendant of Native peoples and enslaved Africans who labored under brutal conditions for no wages at all — and then were returned to virtual slavery as sharecroppers by racist, post-Civil War Jim Crow laws.

Thornton began to sing at an early age in the church where her father was the preacher. When her mother died, Thornton quit school and worked as a cleaner at a local tavern or "juke joint." At the age of 14, she left home for good to sing on the road. She had a big voice, a big personality and was dubbed "Big Mama" by an Apollo Theatre emcee in New York after appearing there.

Many songs Thornton wrote, like "Willie Mae's Blues," have a strong woman's perspective. (glbtqarchive.com) Some accounts say during her early years in the South, Thornton gave birth to a son who was taken away from her by the state.

Despite her gendered nickname, Thornton was thoroughly gender-transgressive. Once her career was more established, she usually performed wearing "men's clothes" — workshirts, slacks and straw fedoras. Rumors flew that she was a lesbian, but her best friend said without judgment he'd "never got a handle" on her sexuality, having seen her with neither men nor women. (George Lipsitz, "Midnight at the Barrel House: The Johnny Otis Story," University of Minnesota Press, 2013)

Nowadays Thornton might be considered trans* — but there is no way to know how she defined herself or what pronoun she might choose now. (Trans* is currently used with an asterisk to indicate the spectrum of all the different sexes and gen-

ders of people who do not conform to the either/or of male/female or masculine/feminine.) The pronoun "she" is used here as that was the pronoun Thornton used publicly during her life.

'My singing comes from my experience'

Only 26 when she recorded "Hound Dog," Thornton said this of her music: "My singing comes from my experience. I never went to school for music or nothin'. I taught myself to sing and to blow harmonica and even to play drums by watchin' other people!" (tinyurl.com/jjop3rw)

The music Thornton made came out of the collective work and experience of African-American people. In "Father of the Blues: An Autobiography," W.C. Handy described the music he and other Black workers made with their tools at a Florence, Ala., foundry in the 1890s. They pulled and beat shovels against different metal parts while waiting for the furnace to process ore. (Da Capo Press, 1969)

Handy wrote: "With a dozen men participating, the effect was sometimes remarkable. ... It was better to us than the music of a martial drum corps, and our rhythms were far more complicated. ... The [African-American worker-musicians] accompany themselves on anything from which they can extract a musical sound or rhythmical effect. ... In this way, and from these materials, they set the mood for what we now call blues."

Big business has stolen — and continues to steal — huge profits from music made by Thornton and other Black per-



Thornton singing in New York City, 1971.

PHOTO: JAN VAN RAAY

formers. Those huge profits are just one example of the wages that have been stolen from African-American people in the U.S. over the centuries.

Every worker knows that unpaid labor is theft — and thus demands reparations.

The issue of reparations has been raised in the current U.S. presidential campaign. "Socialist" candidate Bernie Sanders said he thought reparations would be "divisive." He recommended actions that apply to the general population,

such as rebuilding cities, decent-paying jobs and free tuition for higher education.

But there was nothing more "divisive" to working-class unity than legal enslavement by the ruling class and later peonage of people of African descent — while using minimal economic bribes to get white workers to turn their backs. This divisive system of racism continues to the present day; this is especially apparent in the disproportionate number of African-American people incarcerated in the for-profit prison system.

Working-class solidarity in the U.S. requires that white workers show unity with African Americans in demanding reparations. That would be a step forward in exposing the crimes of capitalism. A demand for reparations reaches deep into U.S. history and shows that the foundation of the current economic system — the banks, railroads, agribusiness and cultural products — has been built on the sweat, blood, knowledge and songs of oppressed peoples.

Hear Thornton sing at tinyurl.com/hkk9ud8.

150 YEARS OF BLACK LIBERATION STRUGGLES

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

On Jan. 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which ostensibly eliminated chattel slavery in the antebellum South. However, the Civil War, fought over the secession of the slave-holding states from the Union, was far from resolved. It took another two years for the Confederacy to collapse.

In the Civil War's concluding months, the question arose of how the nearly 4 million enslaved Africans and some 500,000 others designated as "free" were to be treated when the states rejoined the country under Washington's leadership. This was a major cause of concern to the ruling class. Even Lincoln was not convinced that Africans should be given full citizenship rights, and questioned if they should be deported to Africa or Haiti.

As a result of the heroic role Africans played in the plantation system's breakup and the Confederate military's defeat, the demand for land and reparations emerged from the advanced ranks of the African resistance forces. They were not willing to accept a form of neoslavery after Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered.

Therefore, prior to Gen. William T. Sherman's issuance of Field Order No. 15 on Jan. 16, 1865, and subsequent military, administrative and legislative actions, Africans sought to liberate themselves from human bondage and national oppression.

'Black Reconstruction in America'

W.E.B. Du Bois' seminal work was titled "Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880." Published during the Great Depression, the book reflects on the liberation process initiated by African people. (Harcourt Brace, 1935)

In a key chapter titled "The General Strike," Du Bois writes: "This was not merely the desire to stop work. It was a strike on a wide basis against the conditions of work. It was a general strike that involved directly in the end perhaps a half million people. They wanted to stop the economy of the plantation system, and to do that [Africans] left the plantations. At first, the commanders were disposed to drive them away, or to give them quasi-freedom and let them do as they pleased with the nothing that they possessed. This did not work. Then the commanders organized relief and, afterward, work."

The chapter continues: "The Negroes were willing to work and did work, but they wanted land to work, and they wanted to see and own the results of their toil. It was here and in the West and the South that a new vista opened. Here was a chance to establish an agrarian democracy in the South with peasant holders of small properties, eager to work and raise crops, amenable to suggestion and general direction."

"All they needed was honesty in treat-

ment, and education," states Du Bois. "Wherever these conditions were fulfilled, the result was little less than phenomenal. This was testified to by Pierce in the Carolinas, by Butler's agents in North Carolina, by the experiment of the Sea Islands, by Grant's department of Negro affairs under Eaton, and by Banks' direction of Negro labor in Louisiana. It is astonishing how this army of striking labor furnished in time 200,000 Federal soldiers whose evident ability to fight decided the war."

From Reconstruction to peonage

Sherman met with several African leaders, many of them ministers of churches in Savannah, Ga., to facilitate the transfer of 400,000 acres of land to formerly enslaved people. These meetings occurred after the "March to the Sea" from Atlanta to Savannah — which led to the clearing out of Confederate troops across the coastlines of Florida, Georgia and South Carolina, including in the Sea Islands.

Radical Republicans in Congress had discussed land redistribution plans aimed at disempowering the planters and creating a political base for their party after the war. Nonetheless, after Lincoln's assassination and Vice President Andrew Johnson's ascendancy to head of state, Sherman's order was nullified and the confiscated land was returned to the former slave owners.

After Congress passed the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution early in 1865

— which supposedly eliminated involuntary servitude — the legislative body passed a series of Civil Rights acts beginning in 1866. From 1866 to 1875, the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution were passed, along with other civil rights legislation.

Nonetheless, these laws were not enforced, as the Ku Klux Klan and other white terrorist organizations arose and reinstituted conditions quite similar to slavery, known as peonage. Lynching African Americans became a routine mechanism of social control aimed at superexploiting Black labor.

Starting with the Federal Hayes-Tillman Compromise of 1876 and continuing through the close of the 19th century, reactionary legislation passed by Southern state governments largely excluded African Americans from voting and holding public office. These measures kept all political power under white ruling-class control.

Despite widespread, institutionalized repression of the African-American masses, resistance movements sprang up from the later years of the 19th century through the early 1950s. A vibrant independent press developed. The Black Women's Club Movement and the Niagara Movement were established. Du Bois co-founded the NAACP. Marcus Garvey formed the Universal Negro Improvement Association. Thousands of African Americans joined the Communist Party and other left organizations between World War I and World War II. These movements represented a continuation of the rebellions that arose during slavery and the Civil War.

Although these efforts mobilized millions of African Americans and their allies, progress was limited during the whole period following Reconstruction's failure through the end of World War II. After 1945, with the rise of national liberation struggles and socialist revolutions internationally, the movement against racism in the U.S. surged, sparking unprecedented decades of gains after a century of strife.

Modern Civil Rights era

Starting in 1957, Congress approved another cluster of Civil Rights legislation,

Continued to page 10

SEKOU ABDULLAH ODINGA: 'Support political prisoners'

By Gloria Verdieu
San Diego

Former political prisoner Sekou Abdullah Odinga was the featured speaker in a panel discussion at the Malcolm X Library in San Diego on Feb. 3. The panel included Dr. Johanna Fernandez, professor in the Department of Black and Latino Studies at Baruch College in New York City; Hank Jones, of the San Francisco 8; and Brandon Duncan and Aaron Harvey, leaders of a local grassroots campaign against Penal Code 182.5. The discussion was chaired by University of California at San Diego Professor Dennis Childs, author of "Slaves of the State: Incarceration from the Chain Gang to the Penitentiary."

The University of California at San Diego's African-American Studies Minor Program hosted Odinga as a part of his national tour in support of political prisoners. Professor Childs arranged for the panelists to speak at the Malcolm X Library.

The evening was truly a history lesson on political imprisonment, the prison-industrial complex and radical resistance. The room was filled with students, community members and leaders who listened intently as each panelist spoke.

The Malcolm X Library welcomed Odinga. The San Diego Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and All Political Prisoners honored Odinga with a "Justice for Mumia" medallion to commemorate over one year of his freedom and his continued work to free all political prisoners.

Panelists Duncan and Harvey are two young men from Southeast San Diego who were jailed under California Penal Code



WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

182.5, a racist statute that has been used to arrest a number of young Black men for crimes committed by supposed "gang members." Both men were facing life in prison. Since their exoneration, they have been working to free others jailed under CPC 182.5

Professor Fernandez wrote and produced a film entitled "Justice on Trial: The Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal," and is currently working on a book, "When the World Was Their Stage: A History of the Young Lords Party, 1968-1974," about the Puerto Rican counterpart to the Black Panther Party.

Jones, one of the San Francisco 8, was very instrumental in getting Odinga to San Diego. Professor Childs said that without his help, Odinga may not have been able to attend.

Odinga stated during his passionate narrative, "My work has been and continues to be, since I've been home, advocating for political prisoners. That's the main thing I want to say to you tonight." He explained the difficulty of doing a national tour. He is currently on probation and has to get permission from two probation officers to travel.

Odinga explained in detail the ways we can support the many political prisoners and prisoners of war who are spending decades in prison, sacrificing their livelihood

defending the rights of the masses. Many, like Mumia Abu-Jamal, are suffering from medical neglect. "We need to support them because they support us," said Odinga.

There was a petition to free the 71-year-old, ailing, Native-American hero Leonard Peltier. Now is the time — Free them all! □

Remembering YUVETTE HENDERSON, killed by cops

By Terri Kay
Oakland, Calif.

About 75 people gathered to honor the memory of Yvette Henderson on the one-year anniversary of her death at the hands of the Emeryville, Calif., police on Feb. 3, 2015. Henderson was a 38-year-old Black mother and grandmother who was accused of shoplifting by a security guard at a Home Depot store in Emeryville. She ended up with a head wound, presumably from the security guard, and asked him to call for an ambulance. Instead, the police came and Henderson ran in fear. She was killed a few blocks away.

The Anti Police-Terror Project, which organized this vigil, has been mounting a campaign in Emeryville, demanding that all AR-15 military-grade assault weapons, which were used to kill Henderson,



WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

be removed from the Emeryville Police Department's arsenal.

This night, however, was reserved for paying respects to Henderson's memory and supporting her grieving family. Her brother Jamison, sister Antrinette and other family members were in attendance. Supporters started the vigil at the Home Depot store, which closed down before 6 p.m. after hearing of the plans for the 7 p.m. vigil gathering in front of the store. People then marched in a candlelight procession to the Extra Space Storage facility, a few blocks away in Oakland, where Henderson was killed. □

Record auto profits leave workers insecure

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

On Feb. 3, General Motors announced its profits for 2015. Even after taxes and interest, the company posted the highest profits in its 108-year history, a whopping \$9.7 billion. This announcement follows the news Jan. 28 of Ford's all-time record 2015 profits of \$7.6 billion.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles had a less-robust performance, which FCA attributed mainly to “product realignment” costs. Without those one-time charges, FCA would have made \$5.7 billion profit.

These three companies did not make \$23 billion being nice to their workers or to the environment. They have a long, sordid history of putting profits before people and the planet.

With the Flint water scandal occupying the headlines, people are making the connection between Flint's impoverishment and GM's decades-long restructuring. The company and its spinoffs have closed 24 plants in Flint and surrounding Genesee County since 1979. That change has robbed Flint — GM's birthplace — of 72,000 jobs, leaving only 8,000 workers in the city.

The whole state of Michigan has struggled due to the closing of over 170 GM, Ford and Chrysler plants. Now part of FCA, Chrysler was once the largest private employer in Detroit, with Dodge Main alone employing 100,000 workers. Now there is one, highly automated Chrysler assembly plant, which was only built after Detroit gave Chrysler a huge tax break.



Abandoned high school in Flint, Mich.

After Michigan, Ohio and Indiana have been the hardest hit states. In all three states the biggest job losses have been in urban areas, which have had a devastating impact on Black working-class families. With the introduction of the divisive two-tier pay system and a rebound in sales driven by easy credit, the companies began to hire thousands of African-American youth, but no longer at a wage that could support a family.

The contracts just negotiated between the Detroit Three and the UAW raised wages substantially for newly hired workers. The problem now facing these workers is that in the near future, what the company calls “product realignment” could mean indefinite layoffs.

On Jan. 27, the day FCA's Chief Executive Officer Sergio Marchionne an-

nounced the earnings results, he also indicated that FCA would stop building cars in the U.S. He plans to discontinue two models, the Dodge Dart and the Chrysler 200. The company plans to build only trucks and sport utility vehicles in its present plants with UAW members. These vehicles yield the highest profit margin.

During the contract vote FCA workers were presented with projected job losses and gains in each plant. Based on these estimates, the Detroit area would lose about 750 FCA jobs.

Meanwhile, Ford has indicated that it will move production of small cars to Mexico, where low wages will generate huge profits. GM's Orion assembly plant, which makes subcompacts, was reopened in 2010 with fewer workers, many of whom are lower paid. Orion has seen a big drop in employment levels. GM will close another assembly plant during the life of the current union contract.

The record profits of today have come at a cost of hundreds of thousands of jobs over the years — yet the restructuring continues. How will these young, recently hired workers fare in the event of an economic downturn?

Profits vs. safety

At least one GM family won't be toasting the bosses' record profits. On Feb. 2, Terry Bodenbender, a GM electrician in Defiance, Ohio, fell to his death.

Worldwide, auto workers suffer high rates of injury. In Bogota, Colombia, the Association of Injured Workers and Ex-workers of GM Colmotores has been fighting for more than four years to win justice for workers injured and illegally fired. GM workers in India, where first-tier workers make 92 cents an hour and second-tier workers 47 cents, also have a high rate of injury.

The driving public fares no better when it comes to safety. GM caused hundreds of deaths with a faulty ignition switch, which management elected to use because it was cheaper to make. For many years Chrysler fought airbag requirements to avoid the added cost.

Environmental recklessness has defined the industry's behavior from its early days. FCA's over-reliance on gas-guzzlers is contributing to climate change. To make its engines run smoothly, GM pioneered the use of lead, long a known toxin, in gasoline in the 1920s. With the near-abandonment of Flint, GM left behind a polluted river and contaminated soil.

When Flint began using water from the Flint River, GM realized the water would corrode its engines. Quietly, the company arranged to get water from an alternate source. Had GM gone public with its corrosion concerns, an entire city might have been saved from lead poisoning.

These reasons and more make the auto industry ripe for workers' takeover under a planned socialist economy, where people and the environment come before profits. □

How Black workers were decimated by racism

By Stephen Millies

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder isn't the only criminal who should be punished for lead poisoning Flint's children. General Motors impoverished the Black majority city of Flint, Mich., by closing nine of the 10 plants it had there. GM owes billions in reparations.

Flint was the center of what was once the world's largest manufacturing corporation. So why did GM slaughter Flint?

GM and other industrial giants wanted to end their dependence on Black labor. Forty-five years ago a quarter of the workers in U.S. steel mills and auto plants were African American. (“Organized Labor and the Black Worker,” by Philip Foner)

Malcolm X had worked at Detroit's Lincoln-Mercury plant. So had Berry Gordy, the founder of Motown Records.

Deindustrialization wasn't just the result of automation and superexploiting workers in other countries. It was also a political decision targeting Black workers.

Wall Street never forgot how African Americans shook auto plants in the 1960s and 1970s. The League of Revolutionary Black Workers led wildcats in Detroit. There was a Black Panther Party caucus in GM's Fremont, Calif., plant.

“Like a tremendous explosive charge, the irresistible drive for Black freedom, a drive which necessarily includes all oppressed nationalities, is being brought into the plants,” was how Vince Copeland described this period in “Southern Populism and Black Labor.” Copeland was the founding editor of Workers World newspaper.

On July 24, 1973, two Black workers — Larry Carter and Isaac Shorter — turned off the power at Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue plant in Detroit. This was the first big

sit-down strike in 36 years.

Capitalism's answer was to build most of the new auto plants away from large Black communities. This became standard practice starting in 1968, when GM opened its Lordstown, Ohio, plant.

The capitalist class economically destroyed Detroit, just as it let Black people drown and starve in New Orleans.

Chrysler got rid of 35,000 workers in Motown. From 1979 to 1982, Chrysler's entire workforce went from 70 percent African-American to 30 percent.

Jails, not jobs

The wholesale destruction of heavy industry in the Midwest caused the median income of African Americans to drop by 36 percent between 1978 and 1982. (Census Bureau, Historical Tables) A reverse migration began back to the South.

The firing of hundreds of thousands of Black workers in auto, steel and other unionized occupations was accompanied by their wholesale incarceration.

Capitalism closed the factories and poured in drugs and guns. The 2.3 million prisoners in the U.S. are workers, too.

The racist character of new capitalist investment can be seen in Wisconsin.

Milwaukee County has large Black and Latino/a communities. Some 55,000 manufacturing jobs were destroyed there between 1977 and 1992, before the North American Free Trade Agreement was implemented. But the rest of the state, which with few exceptions is overwhelmingly white, gained 66,000 of these factory jobs. (Census of Manufactures)

Milwaukee's Black community has never recovered from the closing of the A.O. Smith auto frame plant, American Motors and many other factories. One out of 25 African Americans in the Badger State is now in prison.

When Black workers matter, all workers matter

The attacks on Black workers were a defeat for the entire multinational working class. The United Auto Worker contracts that Black workers helped win through strikes became a standard for workers coast-to-coast.

Even workers in nonunion offices and other workplaces were to receive dental insurance and other benefits that came to be expected as part of the wage package.

The biggest reason for declining union membership was thousands of closed factories, many of which had large numbers of African-American workers.

The number of strikes involving more than a thousand workers fell from 424 in 1974 to a mere five in 2009. That's a drop of 99 percent. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Militant labor organizer Al Stergar told this writer that 16 Black workers were the key to winning an organizing strike in his small Milwaukee sweatshop. Stergar was a Workers World Party leader who died in 1996.

Bosses knew that African Americans were the bedrock of union organizing campaigns. Clarence E. Elsas — owner of Atlanta's now closed Fulton Industries bag and textile mills — admitted in 1962 that he didn't hire Black workers in order to keep unions out. (“Hiring the Black Worker,” by Timothy Minchin) So even in the deep South of 54 years ago, bosses feared African Americans leading whites to a union.

The 1973 Detroit sit-down strike at Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue plant sparked a revolt of Black and white, largely Polish-American, workers against unsafe working conditions at Chrysler's Lynch Road Forge plant. (“Detroit: I Do Mind Dying,” by Dan Georgakas and Marvin Surkin)

Bosses put new factories and warehouses in locations like rural Wisconsin or just a mile beyond the last bus stop to avoid hiring Black workers. These tactics go hand-in-hand with staging ICE deportation raids against immigrant workers during union campaigns.

For decades, the largest private employer of African Americans was the Pullman Co., with its sleeping car porters. Later, U.S. Steel and then General Motors opened up their hiring and moved to first place, with Ford and Chrysler close behind. That was a quantum leap forward.

It's a big step backward that the biggest employer of African Americans today is Walmart, with its poverty wages. Yet these “big box” stores represent a new concentration of workers that will inevitably force a union contract out of the Walton family and its \$149 billion fortune. □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead.

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes

Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance Leilani Dowell

The Struggle for Socialism Is Key Monica Moorehead

Domestic Workers Demand a Bill of Rights Imani Henry

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Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion John Parker

Available at major online booksellers.

Why Zika virus crisis is hitting Brazil

By Lyn Neeley

Zika, a mosquito-borne virus, is spreading quickly in 33 countries. The virus was identified in Brazil for the first time last May and is suspected of being responsible for an explosive rise there in infants born with microcephaly, a neurological disorder that causes abnormally small brains and heads and mental disabilities.

The Zika-carrying mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, is in the same family with mosquitoes that can carry yellow fever, West Nile virus, chikungunya and dengue fever. So at first doctors were relieved that Zika appeared to be benign. Only 20 percent of those infected show any of its mild flu-like symptoms: fever, rash, headaches, muscle aches and red eyes. Once infected, the incubation period is likely to be only a few days and symptoms last less than a week, after which a person has developed immunity to the virus.

Since its outbreak however, evidence has mounted that the Zika virus may cause microcephaly in infants born to women infected during pregnancy. Children with microcephaly who survive birth can face a lifetime of symptoms such as mental disability, seizures, hyperactivity, short stature, delayed motor and speech functions, facial distortions and coordination problems.

Scientists now fear Zika may also be associated with a rise in Guillain-Barré, a syndrome caused by any of several microbes in which the immune system attacks the nervous system.

On Feb. 1, the World Health Organization called Zika “a public emergency of international concern,” putting it in the same category as the 2014 outbreak of Ebola. Since October 2015, more than 1 million cases of Zika and over 4,700 cases of microcephaly have been reported in Brazil. Before this outbreak, Brazil reported about 163 cases of microcephaly each year.

WHO says that up to 4 million people in the Americas may soon become infected with the Zika virus.

The first outbreak of the virus was reported in northeast Brazil in early 2015. By September, the number of children born with microcephaly had sharply increased, so a Brazil Ministry of Health task force was set up to study 35 of those infants.

Infants are considered microcephalic if their head circumference is less than two standard deviations (SD) from the norm. The condition can have many causes, including exposure to drugs, environmental toxins or viral infections during the first 12 weeks of fetal development. The Brazilian task force found that the group it was studying had heads three SDs less than the norm. Neuroimaging showed that out of 27 infants tested, all had neurological abnormalities.

A Microcephaly Epidemic Research Group was quickly assembled to study 1,000 pregnant women with Zika symptoms and no history of alcoholism, family health issues or other factors thought to contribute to microcephaly. (New York Times, Feb. 6)

The virus is mainly spread through mosquito bites, but new evidence shows Zika may also be spread through sexual activity. Dallas health officials reported in early February that a woman in Texas had contracted Zika from an infected partner recently returned from Venezuela. New, unsubstantiated fears have arisen about contracting Zika through kissing.

The countries most hard-hit by Zika, besides Brazil, are in Central and South America and the Caribbean and have high rates of unemployment and poverty. Women in these countries are being asked to put off getting pregnant for six to eight months. El Salvador has advised women to wait two years before having children.

But poor women have little choice over their pregnancies, since abortion

and contraception are expensive and not widely available. Abortions are illegal in most largely Catholic Latin American countries. In Brazil, it is legal only if the life of the woman is in danger or if the pregnancy is the result of a rape.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation says that contraception and abortion must be included in the fight against the Zika virus. But the Vatican will not comment on whether it will alter its position on contraception or abortion in the light of Brazil’s dramatic rise in microcephaly.

Global warming and disease

The Zika outbreak is a tragic example of what effects global climate change can have. Mosquitoes carrying the virus are prolific breeders in warm fresh water. Warming temperatures have triggered above-average rainfall, an exceptionally strong El Niño and the most severe flooding in South America in 50 years. In Brazil and Paraguay, floods in December caused 150,000 people to evacuate their homes.

Women living in poor Latin American countries who are being asked to stop having children will suffer the most from the Zika outbreak. But it is polluting corporations in imperialist countries like the U.S. that are the most responsible for the crisis of global warming.

As Betsey Piette wrote in *Workers World* over two years ago: “Half of these [carbon dioxide] emissions were produced over the last 25 years, after it was generally accepted by scientists that climate change resulted from burning coal and oil. ... It was found that roughly 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions were produced by just 20 of these companies.” (Dec. 12, 2013)

At every international conference on climate change, the U.S. government has refused to commit to any curb on this country’s high output of carbon dioxide emissions.

The female *aegypti* mosquito is an aggressive biter that feeds during the day, so mosquito bed netting doesn’t help prevent the infection. WHO says the best form of protection against Zika is to prevent mosquito bites: Stay inside with air conditioning and screens on the windows, use insect repellents and wear thick clothing that covers arms and legs. For people living in poverty in a hot climate, air conditioning and thick clothing are not options.

What Brazil is doing

Brazil is a poor but developing country that during centuries of colonial rule followed by imperialist penetration has been plundered of its raw materials and labor. Its efforts to modernize have left it with a \$270 billion national debt and a steady decline in economic growth since 2010.

The government of President Dilma Rousseff is mounting a “mega-operation” to kill as many mosquitoes as possible before hosting the 2016 Olympics in August. Health officials are trying to inform the people about the danger while government troops are being employed to chlorinate and eradicate stagnant water where *aegypti* mosquitoes breed, as well as spray insecticide in the neighborhoods.

The British company Oxitec, associated with Oxford University, has developed mosquitoes with a genetically modified gene that prevents future larvae from becoming reproducing adults. This gene was inserted into male mosquitos that were then released in the city of Piracicaba, Brazil. Only the males are released, since they don’t bite humans. The company reported an 82-percent decrease in the number of people contracting Zika in that area, compared to a nontreated area 1.5 kilometers away.

Whether this technique can control the outbreak of Zika remains to be seen, however. □

Peace talks collapse, aggression continues against Syria

By Joe Mchahwar

As the war against Syria draws closer to entering its fifth year, peace talks have once again fallen apart, as anticipated. The Western powers, right-wing regional regimes such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia, and the terrorist-ridden opposition refuse to recognize Syria’s sovereignty in the fight against such reactionary forces as the Islamic State group (I.S.), Al Nusra and the Islamic Front. Those seeking to overthrow the Syrian government call for a ceasefire while they themselves continue to bomb and destroy Syria.

Russia and Syria, on the other hand, have continued to fight against these reactionary terrorist elements and have recently made major gains. With all the strife at the negotiating table, some governments have made serious threats, which, if taken to their conclusion, could make this regional war a global one.

The Russian Ministry of Defense said Jan. 31 that Turkey is building up forces on its border with Syria, possibly with the intention of invading. Kurdish forces on the Syrian side of the border say that Turkish forces have crossed the border and are building fortifications on Syrian land. (presstv.ir)

Turkey’s President Erdogan made provocative statements Feb. 7 that are only building upon these fears. “We don’t want to fall into the same mistake in Syria as in Iraq,” Erdogan said to jour-

nalists when returning to Turkey from a trip to Latin America. (bloomberg.com) The statement references the Turkish Parliament’s 2003 decision not to let the U.S. use Turkish land for the invasion of Iraq.

Turkey is making these threats while the Syrian government makes military advances in the north near the border with Turkey. The Erdogan regime responded to these advances by shelling the Syrian Army and killing one soldier on Feb. 1.

Spokespeople for both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates stated Feb. 6 that they are prepared to send troops to Syria to combat I.S. (cnn.com) This is despite their ideological ties to I.S.; in fact, many sources say these two countries directly support I.S.

Another factor complicating the proposed military operation against I.S. is that both Saudi Arabia and the UAE still openly seek the fall of the Syrian government, an objective they share with I.S.

With the help of Russia and Lebanon-based Hezbollah liberation fighters, the Syrian government has been making tremendous military gains in Aleppo, Syria’s largest city, and in several other areas. These gains have prompted recent threats of aggression against Syria. Syria and Russia have not taken these threats lightly.

Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem warned, “Any ground inter-

vention in Syria, without the consent of the Syrian government, will be considered an aggression that should be resisted by every Syrian citizen. I regret to

say that [any foreign soldiers] will return home in wooden coffins.” He repeated this statement three times. (Al Jazeera, Feb. 6) □



Tens of thousands of people have come out onto the streets in Port-au-Prince and other Haitian cities to demand fair and free elections, held under the rules of the Constitution, now that the mandate of President Michel Martelly has expired. It is reported that Martelly has left the country. Big marches were held on Feb. 4.

— G. Dunkel

In defense of north Korea

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea achieved another scientific-technological breakthrough on Feb. 7, lofting a space satellite into orbit. It was propelled by a powerful rocket and, predictably, the U.S. government reacted as though sending up a satellite were an act of war.

Washington has been trying to line up support for more sanctions against the DPRK because of its satellite launch. When that hasn't worked, it just ratchets up the accusations and insults against the people of socialist Korea, especially their leaders.

Now, forgive us for not forgetting history, but which country is it that stations its troops right on the other's borders and carries out huge military exercises there every year? And which country has flown nuclear-capable bombers close to the other in recent months? And which country invaded the other soon after World War II, killing millions and bragging that its bombers reduced all the cities and towns to rubble?

Oh, right. It was the United States that invaded the north of Korea, and not the other way around. It is the U.S. that has had its troops in Korea since 1945, and not the other way around. It is Washington that refuses to sit down and negotiate a peace treaty to end the 1950-53 war against the DPRK, and not the other way around.

It is only because of the vile and fantastic character of U.S. anti-Korean propaganda that many people here are confused. They see melodramatic movies about Korea invading the U.S. Talk about turning reality on its head! The Holly-

wood garbage machine worked overtime on that one. But it's not just Hollywood, it's the entire web of the capitalist-owned press and electronic media that marches in lockstep, assuming that everyone will automatically believe their endless hostility against the DPRK. The propaganda mill never says a word about the terrible war crimes committed against the people of Korea when some 6 million U.S. military personnel were ordered to participate in the war against the DPRK.

Like all the rest of the world, socialist Korea has the right to develop its scientific-technological capabilities, which includes utilizing space satellites for communications, weather observation, mapping and defense. That this small country has progressed so far despite all the threats and sanctions imposed on it, all the efforts to cut it off from the rest of the world, all the attempts to starve its economy, is a testament to the ingenuity, creativity and unity of its people.

Since the beginning of their revolution against Japanese colonialism, the Koreans have shown the greatest determination to follow their own path to development, not by following the dictates of a capitalist class dependent on foreign imperialism, as existed during the 35 years of Japanese colonial rule over Korea, but by applying socialist principles to the growth of the economy while guarding their sovereignty and independence.

It's time for all who are sick and tired of predatory imperialism and capitalism to speak up in defense of the DPRK. □

As Palestinians resist Condemn Israel's terror!

Continued from page 1

tinyurl.com/htyhuh6.

A front-page illustration shows the annual U.S. gift of \$3.1 billion to Israel. One article tells of a Nobel Prize awarded to a Palestinian village. Two others are titled "IDF Generals Blame Israeli Government for Recent Violence" and "Congress to Debate U.S. Aid to Israel."

A satirical editorial portrays the Times admitting that a disproportionate number of its articles center on Israelis' viewpoints, while only a few cover Palestinians' experiences and opinions. A correction reads, "Past articles fail to include the names of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces." A list follows with the names and ages of 165 Palestinian children and adults killed by the Israeli army or settlers since October. Their names do not appear in U.S. newspapers, while Israeli deaths are often covered.

Activist Jane Hirschmann explained that the two organizations wanted to tell the truth about Israel's brutal occupation of Palestine and expose Israel as an apartheid state. They also intended to show the pro-Israel bias of not only the Times, but the U.S. media in general.

"We're saying that after 67 years of violence, of stealing people's homes, people's water, not letting them cross a border, having checkpoints to go to work, not getting to hospitals, that this is violent," stressed Hirschmann. "People

don't know that our government is complicit, [giving] \$3 billion a year to Israel, [not] for social services, education, or research; we give it to them for military reasons. It's the largest contribution [the U.S.] makes to any country in the world. So we're funding the occupation." (democracynow.org, Feb. 3)

The Times' replica contains fake ads, too. Headlined "The Perfume of Power Eau de I.D.F. Skunk," one states: "Since 2008, the Israel Defense Forces have routinely sprayed 'toxic skunk water' on and into Palestinian homes and schools. Its smell has been described as 'worse than raw sewage' and 'like a mixture of excrement, noxious gas and a decomposing donkey.'" The IDF also sprays this concoction to disperse demonstrations.

Some articles are real, portraying what would be truthful coverage. The publication also has genuine quotes from the bellicose Netanyahu: "At this time we need to control all of the territory for the foreseeable future." and "We will live forever by the sword."

But the Palestinian struggle will not be stopped. The BDS campaign will continue — no matter how fierce the intimidation from Israel and its U.S. ally. The world's people support the courageous Palestinian people in their determined fight for sovereignty and freedom.

The writer's grandparents fled anti-Semitic pogroms in czarist Russia in 1907.

Free Julian Assange

The United Nations panel that heard the case that Julian Assange's attorneys brought before it hardly ever decides against the wishes of the imperialist powers. Usually this panel speaks out only if governments that the imperialists want to discredit or destroy have imprisoned a journalist.

Thus, it was all the more impressive that the panel found against Sweden and Britain, and implicitly against the United States. It found that Britain's threats to arrest Assange and his forced three-and-a-half years in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London amount to "arbitrary detention." This detention left the Wikileaks head without judicial review and deprived him of the presumption of innocence.

While this decision fails to open the door for Assange to leave the embassy and Britain, it opens the path to broaden the struggle to free him. And it reminds the world once more of the crimes of imperialism and why the U.S. and its European allies are targeting the Australian journalist.

Wikileaks has done the world a service by exposing imperialist diplomacy, and especially U.S. and British diplomacy, as a combination of spying, extortion, murder and lies.

While this exposure may not be shock-

ing to anyone out of kindergarten, it was specific enough to reveal serious U.S. war crimes in Iraq, for example, with the videos attributed to imprisoned whistleblower Chelsea Manning.

Wikileaks provided a dropbox for soldiers and workers who think like human beings — and not like robocops — to expose imperialist war crimes along with routine imperialist crimes that fall short of outright murder.

For providing this outlet for whistleblowers, Assange has been targeted by the combined spy, foreign relations, military and police agencies of the U.S., Britain and Sweden. The charges brought against him were obviously contrived to force him into a position where he could be extradited — or kidnapped — into U.S. hands.

Considering how Manning was sentenced to 35 years, one can only imagine what the U.S. authorities have in store for Assange. These are the same people who made Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib new symbols of concentration camps and turned waterboarding into "an enhanced interrogation technique."

What the imperialists consider his crime is in reality a service to humanity.

Assange should be freed immediately and allowed to travel to wherever he feels safest! □

150 years of Black liberation struggles

Continued from page 7

including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Civil Rights Act of 1966, which focused on fair housing, failed to pass, amid the rise of the Black Power movement and urban rebellions. However, it was enacted as the Fair Housing Act in 1968 after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination.

Since the late 1970s up through today, many federal court decisions, as well as governmental failure to enforce existing anti-racist laws, have led to tremendous setbacks for African Americans.

This election year of 2016 is marked by the absence of discussions and debates by the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates over the status of African Americans and other oppressed peoples in the U.S. Should there be a

renewed push for legislation or a greater emphasis on mass civil disobedience, boycotts, urban rebellions and general strikes? Or should all of these tactics be combined to aim at full equality and complete national liberation? Obviously, the declining capitalist system and concurrent imperialist militarism offer no future for African Americans and the entire working class.

Only the realization of socialism — where the people own and control the means of production — can bring the possibility of eliminating racism, national oppression and economic exploitation. Full freedom for oppressed peoples can only come with the expropriation of the capitalist ruling class and the radical redistribution of wealth to the workers. □

EUA alivia restricciones, pero pone muchas

Continúa de página 12

el bloqueo estadounidense por el gigante económico a solo 90 millas al norte, aún está vigente.

El único lugar en el mundo al cual las/os residentes estadounidenses no pueden viajar libremente todavía es Cuba. Todas/os los viajeros que salgan en vuelos charter o que regresen de Cuba a través de México o Canadá, están obligadas/os a indicar qué categoría de licencia tienen autorizando su viaje. La legislación propuesta en la Cámara y el Senado — HR664 y S299 — finalmente podrían poner fin a estas restricciones,

pero hay que exigir para que esto ocurra. Retadores de esta política de viaje que han ido con la Brigada Venceremos y Pastores por la Paz han luchado por estos derechos durante décadas.

Las autoridades cubanas dicen que para normalizar completamente las relaciones con Estados Unidos, Washington debe levantar el bloqueo económico, devolver el territorio que hoy está ocupado ilegalmente por la base naval estadounidense de Guantánamo, detener las transmisiones ilegales de radio y televisión a la isla, y suspender las acciones destinadas a subvertir el orden interno de la nación caribeña. □

IVORY COAST

Oil workers strike as economy weakens

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Hundreds of oil workers from a state-owned petroleum corporation in the West African state of Ivory Coast walked off the job in a three-day strike on Feb. 2. They were protesting layoffs of nearly 10 percent of the firm’s employees.

Some accounts of the situation say that as many as 200 workers could lose their jobs, out of a workforce of approximately 600. Company officials are offering a severance package that has been rejected by the union.

Reuters reported, “Petroci offered to pay 10 dismissed managers six months of their salaries while the 40 other laid-off employees were to receive eight months. However, a member of the company’s management said the union was demanding 20 months.” (Feb. 5)

“That’s not possible. We don’t have all that money,” an unnamed company official said.

Workers at Petroci announced Feb. 5, after three days of striking, that they would extend the strike another 72 hours in the hope that their demands would be met.

Petroci is a relatively small oil and natural gas producer but controls 36 percent of domestic petroleum distribution in French-speaking West Africa’s largest economy, along with 30 filling stations. It

has joint operations with companies engaged in production and exploration operations and manages a base for logistical support for offshore production blocks. The union, SYNTEPCI, represents workers at 16 companies in addition to Petroci.

Efforts are underway by the union leadership to win the cooperation of workers at other companies who could be called upon to strike out of solidarity. This includes workers at the state-owned Societe Ivoirienne de Raffinage, which manages a refinery with the production capacity of 65,000 barrels per day.

Ivory Coast is suffering from the overproduction of oil globally, which is also impacting other developing states in Africa. After substantial direct foreign investment in the oil and natural gas exploration industries, prices have drastically declined, driving down currency values and bond prices in so-called emerging economies not only on the continent but in the Middle East, Asia and Latin America as well.

In the aftermath of the war of regime-change led by France resulting in the overthrow of former President Dr. Laurent Gbagbo and the installation of the current leader, Alassane Ouattara, transnational oil and gas firms began to increase their investment in production. Ouattara is a former functionary of the International Monetary Fund based in Washington, D.C.

International Criminal Court serves imperialists

This oil workers’ strike is taking place while former left-leaning President Laurent Gbagbo and youth leader Charles Ble Goude are standing trial in the Netherlands at the pro-imperialist International Criminal Court at The Hague.

Gbagbo and Goude have pleaded not guilty to a host of charges which their defense lawyers say have no merit. The leader of the Popular Front of Ivory Coast (FPI) is the highest-ranking government official ever tried by the ICC.

Illustrating the incompetency of the ICC, the names of witnesses who may be called against Gbagbo were inadvertently released to the press, further complicating the political atmosphere surrounding the legal proceedings. The ICC claims that the protection of witnesses’ identities is essential to their prosecutorial conduct.

An article in Daily Nation noted, “[A] closed session of Gbagbo’s ... trial was mistakenly broadcast on the court’s public channel,” the incident “will be investigated,” according to the ICC’s director of public information. (Feb. 7)

The article continued, “A clip of the hearing, widely circulated on social media ... shows ICC Judge Cuno Tarfusser calling for the trial to go into a closed session at the request of lead prosecutor Eric MacDonald. But the microphones are left open and MacDonald can be heard saying that he wanted to raise the issue of witness protection.”

On Feb. 3, the prosecution’s initial wit-

ness, labelled “P547,” accidentally blurted out his name. Tarfusser suspended proceedings and ordered reporters not to use the witness’s name. Journalists were then required to give their names to ICC security agents.

Reeling from pressure generated from inside the African Union and other organizations, Western-installed President Ouattara told French President François Hollande that Ivory Coast was now capable of handling its own legal issues.

During the course of a brief visit to Paris, Ouattara told Hollande, “The ICC has played the role it should. Coming out of the electoral crisis, we did not have justice, the country was completely in tatters. Now we have a justice system that is operational and has begun to judge everyone without exception.” (africanews.com, Feb. 5)

Nonetheless, Simone Gbagbo, spouse of the former president, was sentenced to 20 years in prison under biased and legally questionable conditions. The former first lady is a political figure in her own right, having served as president of the Parliamentary Group for the FPI.

Simone Gbagbo was arrested alongside the former president in April 2011. She was tried and convicted of “undermining state security” for defending the country against the Western-backed seizure of power.

Although Ivory Coast has been lauded for its foreign direct investment from the capitalist states, economic problems persist, prompting workers’ unrest. The trial of Gbagbo could destabilize the state since the former president maintains broad support inside the country. □

Rallies say NO to anti-worker agenda



By WW West Virginia Bureau

Rallies were held in three cities across West Virginia to fight the “right-to-work” (in unsafe conditions for less) legislation passed by the state House on Feb. 4. The bill goes next to the governor’s desk, where it is expected to be vetoed. The Republicans, however, have the power to override the veto.

Called by the Service Employees union (SEIU-1199), the rallies took place on Feb. 1 and Feb. 3 in Huntington, Morgantown and Parkersburg. They were attended by community supporters as well as members and staff of SEIU-1199, SEIU/NCFO-32BJ, United Steelworkers Local 8-957, Food and Commercial Workers Local 400 and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Activists from such organizations as the Appalachian Workers Alliance, Marshall University Native American Students Association and Left Alliance at West Virginia University also participated.

Another anti-worker initiative to repeal the prevailing wage was also passed by the legislature. It will likely be vetoed by the governor and overridden by the Republicans as well.

Some recent words and actions of right-wing state legislators have deeply offended working people. Sen. Robert Karnes fantastically claimed that West Virginia workers’ wages were “too high because of prevailing wage.” This ultra-reactionary senator previously stated that union workers who protested at the Capitol were “free-riders.”

Senate President Bill Cole, who is running for governor, spent the last weekend in January at a Palm Springs, Calif., resort, where he spoke at a retreat of about 500 high-spending donors. Organized by right-wing mega-donors Charles and David Koch, the annual retreat is hosted by the Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce, a nonprofit affiliated with the Koch brothers, which requires an annual membership fee of \$100,000. □

Activists stop sexist events

By Colleen Gillan and David Card
Baltimore

The Baltimore chapter of Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST), a radical youth organization, led a militant protest Feb. 6 to combat the meetups led by Daryush “Roosh” Valizadeh. He is a racist, sexist, anti-feminist organizer who has written several books detailing his rape of numerous women. His website not only spreads hatred about women, but people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans* and queer people. (Trans* is used with an asterisk to indicate the spectrum of all the different genders of people who do not conform to the either/or of male/female or masculine/feminine.)

Followers of his website, Return of Kings, were scheduled to meet up in person on Feb. 6 in 43 cities around the world in order to organize and share tips on how to get away with raping women.

When this was picked up by the news and social media, feminists around the world were outraged and organized counterdemonstrations to disrupt and prevent these meetings of so-called “men’s rights advocates” (MRA). FIST took up the call to action and organized a demonstration in front of South Baltimore’s Cross Street Market where the meetup was scheduled to take place.

News broke on Feb. 3 that Valizadeh was forced to cancel the worldwide meetups after he declared that he and his followers did not feel safe due to radical feminist counterprotests. This was ironic given the fact that their terrorism

against women contributes to the lack of safety that women feel every day.

Several dozen activists, mainly women and LGBTQ people, gathered a half hour before the proposed 8 p.m. sexist meet-up. In between militant chants such as “MRA, KKK, f—k with us and you will pay,” many courageous women and survivors spoke out and shared their stories of the trauma that women endure living in a capitalist, patriarchal society.

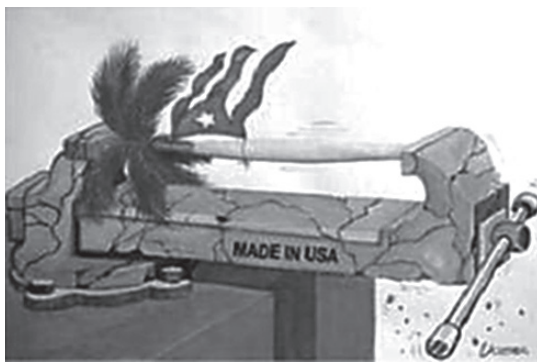
Other participants spoke about the racism, xenophobia, homophobia and transphobia they face. In addition to protesting against the violence that self-identified “men’s rights advocates” perpetuate against women, activists also called out the cops, pointing out that their history of rape and sexual abuse proves they are no friends of women.

This courageous action, joined by activists all over the world, prevented the MRA sexists from gathering and being able to turn their online hatred into real life violence. It will require militant responses like this in order to ensure that the women’s liberation struggle continues to smash patriarchy and rape culture wherever it occurs.

In this period of reaction against the past victories of women’s struggles, especially for reproductive justice, we must continue to fight back while at the same time acknowledging that the only way to end the oppression of women is with the revolutionary overthrow of the system that perpetuates it: capitalism.

Long live working-class unity against misogyny. Build a workers world! □





Lo que Iowa expresa

Editorial WW-MO, 2 de febrero 2016

Sería precipitado el tratar de predecir los resultados de las elecciones presidenciales de Estados Unidos basado en lo que pasó en Iowa el 1 de febrero. Iowa no es típico del país. Si las/os participantes se hubieran movido políticamente hacia la derecha, podría ser desestimado como algo no representativo de las grandes masas populares concentradas en las grandes ciudades. Todo el país en su totalidad es mucho más multinacional, con muchas más personas de color que en Iowa.

Pero las/os votantes no se inclinaron a la derecha. Las/os de la asamblea del Partido Demócrata casi seleccionan a Bernie Sanders como su candidato, y las/os republicanos optaron por no elegir a Donald Trump, cuyo veneno racista y antiinmigrante es superado en cantidad sólo por su inmensa fortuna.

Trump se ha posicionado como alguien ajeno al pútrido establecimiento y como guerrero que lucha en contra de ese sistema — como si sus miles de millones no lo pusieran en el mismo centro de ese nido de víboras.

Desde el punto de vista que refleja la lucha de clases, todo el proceso electoral es muy sesgado. Algunas de las acciones más militantes tomadas por las/os trabajadores de bajos ingresos en estos días involucran a las/os inmigrantes, muchas/os de ellos indocumentados a quienes no se les permite votar. Por eso, el impacto que tienen sobre los sindicatos y en la conciencia de clase en general, no se refleja en las elecciones —salvo que ha — levantado una conciencia general sobre la opresión y la necesidad de un cambio, particularmente entre las/os jóvenes.

Sin embargo, considerado todo esto, no podemos ignorar lo que parecen ser señas perceptibles de un cambio en el ambiente político, reflejado en los votos de Iowa.

El hecho de que Sanders, el senador de Vermont que se describe a sí mismo como un socialista democrático, quedara a tres décimas de punto porcentual detrás de Hillary Clinton, una veterana del establecimiento político del Partido Demócrata, merece un análisis. Probablemente fue una sorpresa para muchos que han vivido toda su vida en un ambiente político donde el socialismo ha sido considerado como una traición o hasta satánico.

En Europa, donde el capitalismo ha sido igual de corrupto y asesino como en EUA, desde los días de puro colonialismo hasta el dominio imperialista de hoy sobre las finanzas del mundo, un “socialista democrático” en la política no es gran cosa. Las clases dominantes de allá saben cómo coexistir con los partidos que “pacíficamente” transan con el sistema, con la esperanza de poder extraer algunas concesiones. Pero en EUA, la expresión de apoyo al socialismo de cualquier tipo por las/os votantes ha estado totalmente suprimida desde los días cuando Eugene Debs se postuló para presidente desde la cárcel en 1920.

Sanders en realidad no representa ningún partido, lo que puede ser parte de sus fortalezas en este punto de la carrera, cuando el establecimiento político es

altamente sospechoso. Él es un independiente, pero corre como demócrata en las primarias.

No hay duda de que el profundo dolor sentido por grandes sectores de la clase obrera y muchos en la clase media, también haya influido en este resultado electoral. Ya sea por la salud, el desempleo, las deudas, el encarcelamiento, por depresión y desesperación, por el deterioro de la infraestructura o la creciente crisis climática — la mayoría de la población se ha venido desencantando con el sistema. Esto se está convirtiendo en ira contra los súper-ricos y sus peones políticos. En muchos casos, ha llevado al activismo en torno a un mar de causas sociales, la mayoría de ellas progresistas, aunque no todas.

En ninguna parte el dolor se siente con más intensidad que en los pueblos oprimidos — negro, latino, indígena, musulmán, y en las/os inmigrantes documentados e indocumentados. Todos los índices sociales muestran los efectos devastadores del racismo y la discriminación en este país.

Aquí es donde Sanders ha mostrado debilidad. Y las encuestas de Iowa lo revelaron. El voto negro allí, de acuerdo con informes preliminares, favoreció mayormente a Clinton.

El enfoque de Sanders sobre las/os trabajadores — o “clase media” — en su conjunto, deja de lado las enormes desigualdades que existen, incluso después de siglos de lucha por las/os negros, latinos e indígenas contra la opresión e incluso contra el exterminio a manos de los colonizadores europeos y sus descendientes. Está bien que Sanders hable de mejorar la economía, atacando la enorme disparidad de ingresos y luchando contra los criminales corporativos, pero no es suficiente.

Sin solidaridad no puede haber un avance real por la clase obrera en EUA en contra de la explotación y la opresión despiadada impuesta todos los días por los patronos capitalistas y su estado represivo. En este país, el mayor obstáculo para la solidaridad ha sido el racismo y la opresión nacional.

Fue bueno que el movimiento Las Vidas Negras Importan no esperó por las elecciones para salir a las calles y movilizarse contra el terror racista de la policía y todas las otras injusticias de este sistema. Aquí es donde va a ocurrir el avance real—por lo mismo que tomó un movimiento de derechos civiles para acabar con la segregación como sistema legal.

El Partido Workers World-Mundo Obrero está corriendo sus propios candidatos en esta elección presidencial—Monica Moorehead para presidenta y Lamont Lilly para vicepresidente, ambos afroamericanos—para hacer hincapié en que la lucha contra el racismo y la opresión nacional es la clave para derribar con éxito este decadente sistema capitalista. Creemos que este es un buen momento para llegar a las masas, no sólo para conseguir votos, sino para inspirar a aquellas/os que ya están hartos del capitalismo y necesitan saber que construyendo solidaridad multinacional de clase desatará el poder que necesitamos para ganar ese cambio revolucionario. □

Señales contradictorias sobre Cuba

EUA alivia restricciones, pero pone multas

Por Cheryl LaBash

El 27 de enero, los departamentos del Tesoro y de Comercio de Estados Unidos emitieron conjuntamente unas revisiones que facilitarían más las restricciones comerciales y de viaje impuestas a Cuba. Sin embargo, sólo una semana antes, la Oficina de Control de Activos Extranjeros (OFAC, por las siglas en inglés) había anunciado la primera multa de este año por violación del bloqueo estadounidense de Cuba.

Así que, a partir del 27 de enero, Cuba puede oficialmente comprar a crédito de EUA algunos materiales — aunque no mercancías agrícolas prohibidas por ley. Pero, ¿qué banco se arriesgaría adelantar dinero si el brazo regulador del bloqueo continúa impartiendo multas por comerciar con Cuba?

Sólo desde el 17 de diciembre de 2014, cuando una nueva política de EUA hacia Cuba fue anunciada por primera vez, Washington ha multado a seis entidades estadounidenses y extranjeras por un valor acumulado de \$2,8 mil millones por hacer negocios con Cuba. Yendo más atrás, al comienzo de la administración de Obama en 2009, ha habido 47 multas impuestas por violaciones de las normas contra Cuba y otros países, con un valor acumulado de \$14,3 mil millones. (PL, 29 de enero)

La primera multa impuesta este año ofrece un asombroso ejemplo del detallado alcance extraterritorial de la guerra económica estadounidense contra Cuba. Es una multa de \$140.400 sobre una obra de arquitectura y diseño valorada en \$284.515 y realizada en 2009-2010 para una compañía de Qatar por una filial británica de la WATG Holdings Inc., de Irvine, California.

Para una empresa que la OFAC caracteriza como “una empresa multinacional de diseño arquitectónico relativamente grande y sofisticada”, este era un pequeño proyecto que involucra el contrato de hotel de una empresa de Qatar, pero uno “en las que Cuba o sus nacionales tienen intereses”. En opinión de la OFAC, “las violaciones aparentes originaban un daño significativo a los objetivos del programa de sanciones contra Cuba porque WATG-UK proporcionó ... servicios de arquitectura y diseño en apoyo a la industria turística de Cuba”.

Quizás más importante para la OFAC que la multa, es el auto-monitoreo internacional impuesto en WATG para asegurar el cumplimiento futuro de las sanciones económicas unilaterales estadounidenses.

Por primera vez, sin embargo, las nuevas regulaciones permiten la aprobación de exportaciones a empresas estatales, agencias y organizaciones de Cuba que proporcionan bienes y servicios a la población cubana. Sin embargo, esta relajación de las restricciones excluye explícitamente el turismo — enfatizado por la multa al hotel qatari — como también a la minería y otras extracciones consid-

eradas como generadoras de ingresos.

El bloqueo estadounidense de Cuba, una red de leyes y regulaciones tejida a lo largo de más de 50 años, ha fracasado en su objetivo de hacer pasar hambruna al pueblo cubano para que se rebelara en contra de la revolución socialista. Pero cada hebra que se desenreda parece encontrarse con otro nudo. Ahora habrá turismo estadounidense, supuestamente prohibido, junto a intentos simultáneos por obstruir la construcción de hoteles.

Lo que Obama puede hacer y lo que no

El Presidente Obama está impedido de hacer cambios en cuatro áreas. No puede 1) permitir que subsidiarias estadounidenses en terceros países comercien con Cuba, lo que violaría la Ley Toricelli; 2) permitir viajar a Cuba de turista, prohibido por la Reforma de Sanciones Comerciales y la Ley de Fomento de las Exportaciones de 2000; 3) eliminar los requisitos para que Cuba pague en efectivo y por adelantado por los productos agrícolas estipulados por la Reforma de Sanciones Comerciales y la Ley de Fomento de las Exportaciones de 2000; y 4) eliminar la prohibición de transacciones con propiedades estadounidenses nacionalizadas, establecida por la Ley Helms-Burton.

Sin embargo, Obama puede ejercer su autoridad en las siguientes áreas: 1) autorizar el uso del dólar en transacciones internacionales; 2) permitir a Cuba importar productos con más de 10 por ciento de componentes estadounidenses, de terceros países; 3) permitir que entidades cubanas abran cuentas en bancos estadounidenses; 4) terminar la política de persecución financiera contra Cuba; 5) no impedir la concesión de créditos u otras facilidades financieras; 6) permitir la importación de productos o servicios exportables de Cuba; 7) autorizar a aviones y barcos cubanos para el transporte de pasajeros, carga y correo entre los dos países; 8) autorizar las exportaciones directas de productos estadounidenses a Cuba; 9) autorizar a las empresas invertir en Cuba (empresas internacionales han presentado más de 400 propuestas de inversión en la Zona Económica de Mariel); 10) eliminar el límite de los productos cubanos que pueden ser importados por visitantes estadounidenses a Cuba; 11) autorizar que ciudadanas/os estadounidenses puedan recibir tratamiento médico en Cuba; y 12) permitir la distribución de crédito, préstamos y financiación para la adquisición de productos en el mercado estadounidense. Aunque parece que las nuevas regulaciones permiten este último punto, al no permitir que Cuba utilice el dólar en el comercio internacional, la implementación real es cuestionable debido al riesgo de multas de la OFAC y el mantenimiento de registros.

Con el aumento del flujo de viajes abiertos a Cuba, anunciados y reportados en los medios corporativos, en Facebook y en las redes sociales, hay una ilusión de normalidad y oculta el hecho de que

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