

Pack court in Durham Feb. 19-20

Put white supremacy on trial

By Workers World Durham, N.C., bureau

Feb. 12 — The Durham, N.C., defendants invite all those who choose to side against racism and white supremacy to come here Feb. 19-20 to pack the court and show solidarity with ongoing struggles against monuments to racism. The defendants say: “Fighting white supremacy is not a crime!”

Takiyah Thompson and seven other anti-racist activists return on Feb. 19 to Durham district court to stand trial for their actions in toppling a Confederate monument in Durham last Aug. 14.

With Thompson climbing the statue, the #DoIt-LikeDurham freedom fighters’ removal of the Confederate monument took place during a vigil and rally with hundreds present. This was just three days after the violent Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Va., on Aug. 11. Dozens of anti-racist protesters, in Charlottesville to resist the neo-Nazis and white supremacists, were injured. Heather Heyer was killed when a white supremacist member of the American Vanguard Party drove his car into a crowd.

Each Durham defendant is facing three misdemeanor charges on Feb. 19: injury to real property, defacing a public monument and conspiracy to deface a public monument.

But due to a massive outpouring of local, national and international support, those charges are all that’s left of the original outrageous felony charges against the defendants.

Support for them has been wide ranging. On Aug. 17, the day when many defendants were scheduled to turn themselves in, hundreds lined up to do the same, each one saying, “Arrest me too!” because they were also fighting white supremacy.

Community protests Aug. 18

Thousands poured into Durham streets on Aug. 18 and kept them free of white supremacy when the Ku Klux Klan threatened to march in opposition to the freedom fighters. Caravans of activists from around

Continued on page 3

15,000 march against racism



Over 15,000 people participated in the 12th annual Moral March on Raleigh and Historic Thousands on Jones Street People’s Assembly on Feb. 10 in North Carolina’s capital city. The march, which was principally organized by the North Carolina NAACP, brought hundreds of community, labor, civil rights and faith-based organizations from across the state to march on the state legislature. One of the activity’s main themes focused on challenging the racist gerrymandering of election districts in the state. The demonstrators also tackled many other issues of systematic racism. Members of the Durham branch of Workers World Party joined the march, along with the Youth Organizing Institute; United Electrical Workers Local 150, North Carolina Public Service Workers Union; and Democratic Socialists of America.

— Report and photo by Dante Strobino



#DefeatAusterity 3



Zapatista, female, Indigenous

for president of Mexico 11



No to
U.S. war
on Korea 9



BLACK LIBERATION MONTH

To Black students: ‘Become activists!’ 6
Oakland: Socialism & Black Liberation 6
Collette Smith, NFL coach 6
African Americans and Vietnam War 7

Subscribe to Workers World

☐ 4 weeks trial \$4 ☐ 1 year subscription \$30
☐ Sign me up for the WWP Supporter Program:
workers.org/donate

Name _____
Email _____ Phone _____
Street _____ City /State/ Zip _____

Workers World Weekly Newspaper
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl, NY, NY 10011
workers.org
212.627.2994

Can prisons censor WW? 2

Seattle bus drivers win 4

‘Retail apocalypse’ 5

Editorial: Misogynist-in-chief 10

CUBA 10

OSCAR LÓPEZ 3

SYRIA 9

Action needed!

Pennsylvania DOC prison system threatens to ban Workers World newspaper

By Joe Piette

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections is threatening to censor Workers World newspaper from being read by over 300 prisoners in the state system.

The immediate reason given in the DOC's Jan. 29 letter is that "information contained on pages 1 and 6 calls for action that may advocate criminal activity within the correctional facility." The title of the offending article by J. White in the Jan. 18 Workers World issue was "Fla. prisoners launch strike against slave labor." (tinyurl.com/y8f4ntw8)

The DOC letter states that the Jan. 18 WW issue is being denied to inmate Julio Ortiz (FC8863) at State Correctional Institution Coal Township, near Shamokin, Pa. State officials are giving Workers World 15 working days to appeal the denial. If the denial is not overturned, the Jan. 18 issue will not only be refused to Ortiz and other prisoners, but also Workers World will be placed "on the statewide reviewed publication list as 'denied' and it will be banned from all inmates in the Department of Corrections."

Campaign to stop DOC censorship

Four issues of WW were denied to Pennsylvania prisoners in 2017. This time, the DOC is escalating its threat by planning to ban all issues of Workers World to all prisoners.

The DOC was forced to overturn its decision to ban the Aug. 31, 2017, issue of WW after a social media and press campaign urged readers to send letters and make phone calls to the DOC. (tinyurl.com/yb8br2xs)

As a result of the social media campaign, the DOC



Kamau Bectemba and Razakhan Shaheed at a protest at the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections headquarters in Mechanicsburg in 2014. The protest was for health care for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

uncensored that specific issue. But it denied Workers World's demand that each prisoner be awarded \$50 for being refused the time-sensitive publication.

Florida prisoners' demands

The DOC complaint charges that Workers World "advocates and lists demands for prison strike." As is this newspaper's right under the First Amendment, the Jan. 18 WW article does indeed list the demands of the heroic prisoners on strike that week in at least 17 Florida DOC locations. These demands were:

- "1. Payment for our labor, rather than our current slave arrangement
- "2. Ending outrageous canteen prices
- "3. Reintroducing parole incentives to lifers and those with 'Buck Rogers' dates. (fighttoxicprisons.org)
- "Along with these primary demands, we are also expressing our support for the following goals: 1) Stop the overcrowding and acts of brutality committed by officers through the FDOC. 2) Expose the environmental conditions we face, including extreme temperatures, mold, contaminated water and being placed next to toxic sites. 3) Honor the moratorium on state executions. 4) Restore voting rights as a basic human right to all."

The Florida prisoners' strike and their demands were reported in newspapers all over the world. Workers World articles on that event have as much right to be read by prisoners as any other newspaper or magazine, and especially so because its articles are written by activists in that people's movement.

WW urges all readers, activists, writers and reporters to send complaints to Department of Corrections, 1920 Technology Parkway, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050, as well as 717-728-2573 and ra-crpadocsecretary@pa.gov. □



Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it's the only way forward!

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

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it.

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

National Office
147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
PO Box 18123
Atlanta, GA 30316
404.627.0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443.221.3775
baltimore@workers.org

Bay Area
1305 Franklin St. #411
Oakland, CA 94612
510.600.5800
bayarea@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.286.6574
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
335 Richmond Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14222
716.883.2534
Buffalo@Workers.org

Chicago
312.630.2305
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216.738.0320
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313.459.0777
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
804 Old Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27701
919.322.9970
durham@workers.org

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

Huntington, W. Va.
huntingtonwv@workers.org

Indiana
Indiana@workers.org

Los Angeles
5278 W Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323.306.6240

Madison
Madison@Workers.org

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610.931.2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org

Portland, Ore.
portland@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585.436.6458
rochester@workers.org

Rockford, Ill.
rockford@workers.org

Salt Lake City
801.750.0248
SLC@Workers.org

San Antonio, Texas
SanAntonioWWP@workers.org

San Diego
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Virginia
Virginia@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

WORKERS WORLD

this week

★ In the U.S.

Put white supremacy on trial.....	1
15,000 march against racism.....	1
Pa. DOC threatens WW newspaper ban.....	2
Detroit: Anti-austerity activists to meet March 24.....	3
Oscar López Rivera tour begins in LA.....	3
On the picket line.....	4
Seattle: Solidarity sparks school bus driver victory.....	4
Devastation in retail points to deepening crisis.....	5
Syracuse: Tenants organize against cockroach landlord.....	5
NYC: You can't deport a movement!.....	8
NYPD spying on Muslims challenged.....	8
Philadelphia: Solidarity with Muslims.....	8
Philadelphia: Vigil supports Olympic truce.....	8
WWP Editor: Hands off Korea! No war, no sanctions!.....	9
U.S. 'Internet Task Force' exposed.....	10

★ Black Liberation Month

Monica Moorehead to Black students: 'Become an activist'.....	6
Oakland: 'Socialism and the Black Liberation Struggle'.....	6
First Black woman coach in the NFL.....	6
Black Liberation and the Vietnamese struggle.....	7

★ Around the world

Korea: Mass movement rejects U.S. war moves.....	9
Syria: Firm response to imperialist attacks.....	9
Revolutionary Cuba defeated illiteracy in one year!.....	10
Mexico: Indigenous, female, Zapatista, candidate.....	11

★ Editorial

Misogynists in the White House.....	10
-------------------------------------	----

★ Noticias en Español

Indígena, femenina, zapatista y candidata a la presidencia de México.....	12
---	----

Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994

E-mail: ww@workers.org

Web: www.workers.org

Vol. 60, No. 7 • Feb. 15, 2018

Closing date: Feb. 13, 2018

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Kris Balderas Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Minnie Bruce Pratt; Web Editor Gary Wilson

Production & Design Editors: Coordinator Lal Roohk; Andy Katz, Cheryl LaBash

Copyediting and Proofreading: Sue Davis, Bob McCubbin, Jeff Sorel

Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Fred Goldstein, Martha Grevatt, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Terri Kay, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, John Parker, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Gloria Rubac

Mundo Obrero: Redactora Berta Joubert-Ceci; Andrea Bañuelos, Alberto García, Teresa Gutierrez, Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis

Copyright © 2017 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$30; institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl.
New York, N.Y. 10011.



Detroit

Anti-austerity activists to meet March 24

By Jerry Goldberg
Detroit

A National Conference to Defeat Austerity will take place in Detroit on Saturday, March 24, at St. Matthew's-St. Joseph's Church, a historic Black church in the heart of the city.

The call for the conference, initiated by the Moratorium Now! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs, states: "We extend an invitation to all progressive activists and organizations to participate in this important conference, the purpose of which is to map out a strategy for defeating the war being waged by the banks, corporations and government against the workers and oppressed. Capitalism cannot continue unchallenged

while our very lives are being jeopardized by the ruling elites who are determined to grow richer and more powerful at our expense, while whipping up white supremacy, an anti-immigrant offensive, attacks on women and anti-LGBTQ bigotry to keep our class divided."

Austerity means the direct rule by finance capital over cities and even countries, where the banks impose drastic cutbacks in services, wage cuts, destruction of pensions and privatization to ensure the payment of debt service on fraudulent and usurious loans.

The call for the conference further states: "Detroit, along with colonized Puerto Rico, has been at the epicenter of bank-imposed austerity against the workers and oppressed in this hemi-

sphere. But every U.S. city ... has felt the brunt of this attack in the form of cutbacks, school closings, mass transit cuts, water shutoffs, gentrification and destruction of public service unions.

"The Trump tax plan and Pentagon war build-up continue the massive transfer of wealth to the rich at the expense of the poor. This war by the banks on the workers and poor is an international phenomenon spanning every continent. On March 24, we will hammer out a program on how to fight back against the war by the corporations, the banks and their lackeys in government at all levels on the workers and poor."

The Moratorium Now! Coalition has been a leader in the fight against the massive home foreclosures that devastated neighborhoods throughout Detroit. More than 65,000 bank foreclosures — the product of racist, predatory loans — drove a quarter-million residents out of this majority-Black city. The coalition's campaign for a moratorium on all foreclosures and evictions included intervening in the courts and streets to save hundreds of families from losing their homes.

When the city was placed under emergency management and then into bankruptcy in order to guarantee the payment of debt service to the very banks that destroyed Detroit's neighborhoods, Moratorium Now! intervened in the bankruptcy proceedings and was the only community organization to participate in a historic trial that challenged the interest rate swaps that bankrupted the city.

National and international support

The National Conference to Defeat Austerity has been endorsed by most of the community organizations and leaders in Detroit who have been fighting mass water shutoffs, tax foreclosures, education cutbacks, union busting, low wages, attacks on basic human needs for the poor, gentrification and the drastic pension cuts imposed on Detroit's retirees. Locally, the conference has forged an excellent relationship with organizers for the National Poor People's Campaign, which is planning mass civil disobedience

in 25 state capitals, including Lansing, Mich., on May 11.

The conference against austerity is also beginning to gather national and international support, including endorsements by the Baltimore Bus Transit Union; Parents to Improve School Transportation in New York City; Dave Welsh, postal worker and San Francisco Labor Council delegate; several representatives of the National Writers Union, UAW; and teachers in Chicago whose union has filed a class action lawsuit challenging the banks' interest rate swaps.

Representatives from the Refund America Project, the preeminent organization that has documented the role of the banks in bankrupting cities and public utilities across the U.S., will be addressing the conference and sharing their terrific research.

A leader of the Puerto Rican electrical workers is expected to attend. Highlighted will be the devastation wreaked on the island by the effects of major hurricanes exacerbated by infrastructure sacrificed to pay for debt service to the banks.

Several international working-class leaders engaged in the fight against austerity are expected to send statements and reports to the conference, which will feature international workers' solidarity in the fight against capitalist austerity, especially solidarity with immigrants inside the U.S. The International League of People's Struggle has endorsed the conference, and speakers from BAYAN will report on the workers' struggle in the Philippines.

The conference will also include workshops and practical training sessions on how to raise an anti-capitalist perspective in the day-to-day struggles of the workers and the poor. It is expected the conference will adopt a series of transitional demands that speak directly to this task.

For more information about the National Conference to Defeat Austerity, go to the facebook organizing page, @DefeatAusterityNationalConference; email moratorium@moratorium-mi.org; or call 313-680-5508. □

Oscar López Rivera tour begins in LA



PHOTO: LAWRENCE REYES

Oscar López Rivera, former political prisoner and heroic Puerto Rican independence fighter, is shown in this photograph between John Parker and Scott Scheffer of the International Action Center and Workers World Party at an invitation-only luncheon in Los Angeles on Feb. 4. In spite of undergoing torture and 35 years of incarceration by the U.S. government, López remains active in Puerto Rico's independence struggle and strongly supports the struggles of working and oppressed people in the U.S. and worldwide.

This activity kicked off López's weeklong tour of southern California, where he will be speaking on "Decolonization, Hurricanes and Solidarity."

—Report by Workers World
Los Angeles bureau

Pack court in Durham Feb. 19-20 Put white supremacy on trial

Continued from page 1

the U.S. traveled to Durham on Sept. 12 to defend the felony-charged anti-racists at their first court date. Solidarity messages poured in from around the globe, with much international press and video coverage.

The result? In January, after six months of mobilizations at court hearings, dozens of solidarity actions and statements, and thousands of phone calls to city, county and state officials, the felony charges of inciting a riot and participating in a riot were dropped. It was a huge victory.

Another four activists had been arrested at the Aug. 18 action in Durham. They were charged with wearing masks or carrying weapons at a demonstration. On Feb. 18, one accepted a plea bargain deal and charges against the other three were dismissed on constitutional grounds.

All charges had previously been dropped against three other activists from the Aug. 14 toppling rally. A fourth activist accepted a plea bargain deal.

The degree of racist oppression overall

in Durham is severe. During early January, a camera recorded two hooded figures posting an anti-Semitic, anti-communist flyer with Nazi slogans on the door of the Durham Solidarity Center.

In the aftermath of the statue removal, Durham Sheriff Mike Andrews raided the homes of local activists and arrested more than a dozen people. Andrews has been singled out by Durhamites, who demand accountability for nearly a dozen deaths in the county jail during his tenure, including 17-year-old Uniece "Niecey" Fennell.

Migrant rights activists have also challenged the sheriff's ongoing collaboration with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which has resulted in dozens of deportation orders, including for high school student Wildin Acosta, who was picked up at his bus stop in 2016.

People's Tribunal puts white supremacy on trial

In response to repression, comrades from Workers World Party, as well as

community members, held a Jan. 13 People's Tribunal to put white supremacy on trial. Takiyah Thompson commented to WW: "The People's Tribunal is really meant to pull together members of the Durham community, to bring charges against the sheriff, the police, the court systems and the various systems of racist oppression in the city."

Throughout the fall and winter, Thompson has been on a U.S. tour to build solidarity for the Feb. 19-20 trial of the Durham anti-racist defendants. Thompson has spoken to large, fiercely supportive crowds in New York, Boston, Chicago and Madison, Wis., as well as given many national and international news interviews.

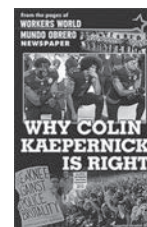
The defendants continue to affirm that removing symbols of white supremacy from public spaces is no crime. They note that the North Carolina Legislature tried to preempt removal of racist monuments by passing a 2015 law prohibiting local governments from taking action to remove any "historical" monuments. The

defendants assert that their alleged role in the actions should be considered a community service, necessary to the health and well-being of their community.

Fighting white supremacy is not a crime!

Defend the Durham freedom fighters!

Pack the courtroom Feb. 19-20! □



WHY COLIN KAEPERNICK IS RIGHT

Articles from Workers World/
Mundo Obrero Newspaper

Find them at: www.workers.org/books

The Klan & Government: Foes or Allies?

Examines the special relationship with the state that has allowed the Ku Klux Klan to exist for over a century despite its criminal history of lynchings, murders, and intimidation.



On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

‘Tip-stealing’ rule of Labor Dept. exposed

The Department of Labor announced a new rule Dec. 4 to allow employers to pocket workers’ tips. Low-wage restaurant workers, predominantly women of color, unions and pro-labor organizations immediately condemned it as unfair to all tipped workers. But internal reports, exposed by Bloomberg Law Feb. 1, showed that DOL suppressed analysis finding workers would lose billions of dollars in income. Denouncing the cover-up, the Economic Policy Institute predicts, based on its analysis, that “tipped workers would lose \$5.8 billion a year in tips, with \$4.6 billion of that coming from the pockets of women working in tipped jobs,” mostly Black and Brown women. (Common Dreams, Feb. 4)

When DOL analysis showed the workers’ loss would give bosses a windfall, staff were ordered to revise the data to decrease the impact. When that still made Secretary Alexander Acosta “uncomfortable,” the White House gave its approval to publish the proposal without economic data. EPI and other pro-worker groups have called for the rule to be rescinded and for an investigation into the cover-up.

Boston airport workers strike for union rights

Hundreds of mostly immigrant baggage handlers, wheelchair attendants, cabin cleaners and skycaps at Boston’s Logan Airport carried out a two-day strike Feb. 8-9 demanding their right to unionize. They called out their bosses — subcontractors ReadyJet and Flight Services & Systems at JetBlue Airways — to protest immediate threats and illegal surveillance.

ReadyJet and FSS have a history of illegal retaliation against the workers’ six-year quest to form a union. The National Labor Relations Board has charged both with wage theft and safety violations at Logan for years. According to Service Employees District 615, intimidation ramped up after the strike authorization vote, with managers calling in police and taking photos of workers talking to union reps. SEIU Local 32BJ alleges that management tried to entice some workers to cross the picket line with promises of full-time hours and benefits. (Boston Globe, Feb. 7)

But other Logan airport workers have been winning unions in droves. Since SEIU began organizing there in 2012, nearly 22,000 airport workers have earned the benefits and equity a union brings. As part-time ReadyJet driver Carlos Morales told the Globe, “I’m happy to be on strike, because there’s a lot of injustice at the airport, and this is what we have to do.”

Grad student workers on the move in D.C. area

Georgetown University announced Feb. 2 that it will recognize graduate student workers’ right to unionize with the Georgetown Alliance of Graduate Employees, affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers. The university agreed to sign a groundbreaking agreement for a third-party union election, affirming it will respect the outcome regardless of whether the NLRB, stacked with Trump appointees, reverses its ruling on the eligibility of graduate students to join a union. GAGE began organizing in mid-2016.

Meanwhile, grad student workers at the University of Maryland, organized in Fearless Student Employees, introduced HB 199 to end the statewide prohibition against collective bargaining of grad employees. “We want the state to recognize us as who we are: employees who deserve collective bargaining rights and employment protections,” FSE President Yvonne Slosarski told dclabor.org on Feb. 5. The Maryland House Appropriations Committee held a hearing on the bill Feb. 6, where FSE presented written and in-person testimony for collective bargaining rights, including demands for better pay and hours.

Virginia labor unions, immigrants unite at pivotal rally

Low-wage workers and immigrants rallied at the Virginia capitol in Richmond on Jan. 24 with a list of demands vital to the interests of all working people. Activists from Take Action Virginia, elected officials, and unions, including Food and Commercial Workers Local 400, SEIU Local 32BJ and Laborers’ International Union of North America, joined together to demand expansion of Medicaid, an increase in the \$7.25 minimum wage to \$15 and the right of undocumented workers to have driver’s licenses. (ABC8 News, Jan. 23)

Kroger worker Dominic said he had “coworkers who can’t afford to get by no matter how many hours they work.” Luis Aguilar, advocate for CASA, an immigrants’ rights group, stated, “Both parties have been failing the immigrant communities by not being able to govern or find practical solutions.” According to Jaime Contreras, vice president of SEIU 32BJ, “If you’re not [aiding workers], I don’t care if you’re a Democrat or Republican, we’re going to come after you.” Though Democrats in the legislature touted Medicaid expansion as a top priority, that has yet to happen. The people’s movement needs to keep up the heat! □

Solidarity sparks school bus driver victory

By Jim McMahan
Seattle, Wash.

Seattle public school bus drivers were ecstatic on Feb. 10 after winning a new advanced contract following a nine-day strike.

The workers overcame years of being stonewalled by their bosses at First Student Inc., who refused them any kind of decent health-care plan or retirement. First Student, a giant school bus monopoly with friends in the Seattle School District leadership, was forced to buckle after a districtwide solidarity walkout on Feb. 7 by 5,000 Seattle school teachers.

The drivers, members of Teamsters Local 174, voted 97 percent for their new contract. The health care and retirement plans they had before the strike were woefully inadequate. Under the new contract, they have a new comprehensive health care plan, affordable for families. They also have a greatly improved pension plan.

“This is life changing,” said Teamsters driver Olivia Moore, who has been struggling with cancer with no health insurance. “This is what we have been fighting for. I can go to the doctor. I can retire someday. I can’t even tell you how much that means.”(teamsters174.net)

The company had promised the Teamsters that a new improved contract would be negotiated once First Students’ \$27 million bus contract with Seattle Public Schools was approved. That promise was made in summer 2017. Months went by without any significantly improved health care or retirement plan being offered.

The Teamsters held a one-day bus strike on Nov. 29 to warn First Student and let everyone in the district know they were ready to strike.

The bus drivers went on strike on Feb. 1. This was the second school bus strike against the company in a month, with one also held in the Pasadena/Glendale/Alhambra, California, area.

In Seattle spirited picket lines were up at both of First Students’ bus lots. The company’s efforts to get drivers to cross picket lines didn’t work, either for picking up students or making a dent in the strike. Drivers were offered eight hours’ guaranteed pay per day to cross the line, though they usually work five hours, as well as \$50 a day and lunch.

It quickly became clear that drivers were going to gain much more by striking than by scabbing.

Then, just when many thought the strike would be an extended action, the school teachers showed solidarity. On Feb. 7, the 5,000 teachers of the Seattle Education Association (SEA) walked out at mid-day, before their required afternoon training sessions. They flooded the Teamsters’ picket lines with hundreds of teachers in both the north and south bus lots.

Both unions see themselves as partners in student education and in labor solidarity. Teachers also picketed in the community, at a



PHOTO: TEAMSTERS LOCAL 174

Public school bus drivers in Seattle’s Teamsters Local 174 celebrate their contract victory over First Student corporation.

crossroads in front of Franklin High School. There Seattle City Council member Kshama Sawant joined pickets and criticized the school district while addressing the media.

Back in October, the school district had threatened to fine First Student \$1.2 million a day in damages for any strike it caused. But Sawant said the district hasn’t followed through with that demand.

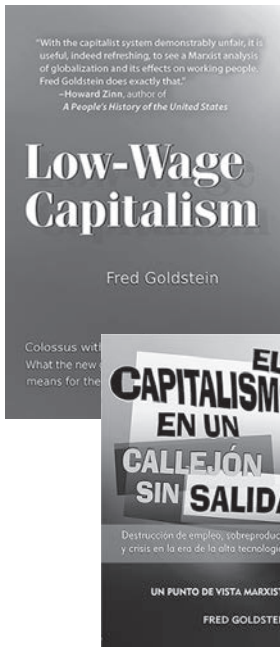
The teachers’ solidarity on Feb. 7 was the turning point in the strike. First Student had stopped negotiating. By the very next day, the company and union were in “marathon” negotiations, and a contract was agreed to a day later, on Feb. 9.

During the strike, many unionists, parents with children and community groups came to the bus drivers’ lines in solidarity. At least two bus drivers’ unions sent resolutions in solidarity with Teamsters 174. These came from the San Francisco school bus drivers, Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers Local 1741, and the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, United Steelworkers Local 8751, which also made a monetary contribution.

This strike was a great struggle waged by low-paid workers, many of them women and workers of color, in a wealthy city. Seattle has 65 giant construction cranes up downtown, more than any city in the country. (Seattle Times, July 11, 2017) Last year the rise in Seattle housing prices was the fourth fastest in the U.S.

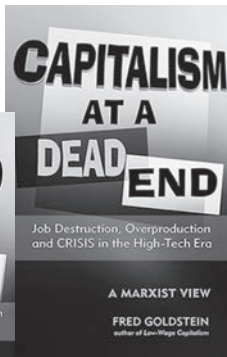
Workers face havoc in their lives, including rising rents and mass evictions. There is an exodus of workers from Seattle, and many bus drivers have to live outside the city. This gentrification goes hand in hand with anti-labor attacks and demands by the bosses for mega-profits. Meanwhile, the necessities of life for the working-class majority are ignored.

The Seattle school bus drivers’ strike by Teamsters Local 174 has national importance, opening up a path of united labor struggle by the working class in solidarity against the corporate monopolies. □



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

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to **LowWageCapitalism.com**

Available at all major online booksellers.

Devastation in retail points to deepening crisis in capitalist economy

By Jeff Sorel

Even after stock market prices dropped over 10 percent in three days, many corporate media pundits dismissed concerns over this volatility by pointing to an allegedly strong economy. The retail sector of that economy, however, is beginning to fracture, indicating a potentially widespread crisis.

The ‘Retail Apocalypse’

What experts are calling a “tsunami of store closings” is imposing “retail carnage” on the U.S. economy. More than 12,000 stores are expected to close in 2018 — on top of some 9,000 closed in 2017 — according to commercial real estate firm Cushman & Wakefield. (Business Insider, Jan. 1)

Retail bankruptcies are snowballing. Last year was “one of the most brutal in the industry’s history in terms of bankruptcy filings and store closings,” according to the Dec. 25 Fortune magazine. Some business commentators are warning of “a retail Ice Age.” (Fox News, July 11)

Dozens of major retailers have filed for bankruptcy in recent months, including Bon Ton, Toys ‘R’ Us, The Limited, Hhgregg, Radio Shack, Payless, True Religion, Vitamin World and Aerosoles. Other major chains, including Macy’s, JCPenney, Sears, The Gap, Banana Republic, Michael Kors and Kmart, have closed many stores.

An economic glut of empty retail stores now threatens the economy much like unpayable mortgages did a decade ago. Mall visits declined 50 percent between 2010 and 2013 and have fallen every year since. No new major shopping mall has opened in the U.S. during the past three years, and 50 percent of the existing 1,200 malls are expected to be out of business within five years.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta has warned about the exposure of financial institutions to these retail failures. Bonds backed by loans to malls and other retail properties are weakening. This recent and ongoing crisis even has its own entry in Wikipedia — “Retail Apocalypse.”

The Amazon onslaught

The collapse of so many retail stores, chains and malls is due in large part to the growing dominance of Amazon. In 2015, Amazon surpassed Walmart as the

most valuable retailer in the U.S. In the last quarter of 2017, Amazon’s profits exceeded \$1 billion for the first time. Daniel Ives, head of technology research at GBH Insights, estimated that 47 percent of all online holiday shopping took place on Amazon’s website. (CNN, Feb. 1)

Amazon started as an online bookstore and later expanded to sell a vast array of other products. It is now the largest seller of clothes online and will soon become the country’s biggest apparel retailer. It takes a percentage of the price of items sold through its website while also charging companies to advertise and feature their products.

Amazon obtained its dominant position by forgoing profits in its early years — aided by favorable bank financing arrangements — and prioritizing growth to establish large-scale sales. It slashed prices to drive out competition and spent billions to expand capacity and become a one-stop shop for consumers.

Amazon is not just an online business. Last year it acquired Whole Foods, a high-end supermarket chain with over 450 stores, for \$13.4 billion. Amazon also owns brick-and-mortar bookstores and, according to some venture capitalists, has its eye on purchasing Target, with its huge chain of discount department stores. (twice.com, Jan. 2)

Amazon also has its own product lines, ranging from clothing to furniture to baby wipes. It recently announced plans to enter the pharmaceutical market and to launch a package delivery service designed to take business from FedEx and UPS.

Amazon’s involvement in multiple related business lines means that many of its rivals are also its customers. Competing retailers often use its delivery services, and many competing companies use its platform or cloud infrastructure. These arrangements enable Amazon to favor its own products over those of competitors.

These interactions also capture market data that get fed into algorithms — computer programs that process this raw data involving the customers’ choices and provide Amazon with additional competitive sales advantages that increase its dominance. And with dominance, Amazon has the power to increase prices, re-

versing its initial position as a discounter.

Amazon and Walmart’s domination of retail commerce goes far to explain the devastation they and others like them have wrought in the traditional retail marketplace.

Replacing workers with technology

According to last June 16’s New York Times, Amazon “is on a collision course with Walmart to try to be the predominant seller of pretty much everything you buy.” This market domination by retail giants does not simply reflect the shift to online shopping. As noted above, Amazon’s brick-and-mortar businesses are growing, and Walmart, which increased its online sales 50 percent last year, operates 4,000 stores.

This domination also reflects an enormous concentration and centralization of capital in the retail sector. Vast accumulations of capital in fewer and fewer hands — including those of enormously wealthy capitalists like Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos — have been a feature of capitalism since Karl Marx described its workings 150 years ago.

What is new is that this tendency toward monopoly is no longer limited to the production side but is now taking over the retail sector as well. This development is already having a profound impact on the U.S. economy and U.S. workers. The retail sector lost over 100,000 jobs in 2017.

Retail jobs face the axe not just from closing stores but also from the competitive compulsion to replace workers with technology. Recent studies show that a majority of the eight million retail salespersons and cashiers in the U.S. workforce face job elimination by advanced technology. And high tech is also displacing warehouse and distribution center workers, with Black, Brown and women workers generally the first to lose out.

Amazon recently opened its first cashierless convenience store in Seattle. It uses an array of sensors and cameras to charge shoppers automatically for items taken from shelves. As Bloomberg News put it last June 16, Amazon “wants fewer employees in each store.”

This developing technology, in which only retail giants like Amazon can afford

to invest, will lead to enormous job losses. Movie theater chains, where online ticket sales have significantly reduced staff, already offer a preview. And employing workers who simply service technology allows employers to reduce wage rates.

This job and wage destruction is perhaps the primary product of the quasi-robotic, mostly part-time labor, anti-union Amazon leviathan. Replacing retail workers with sensors and robots will reduce employment and lower wages for those able to find work. It will ultimately reduce sales as the buying capacity of unemployed and underpaid workers sinks.

To be sure, Amazon’s online and retail businesses require giant distribution warehouses that house large concentrations of workers. But Amazon’s warehouse pay scales are low and declining and tend to cause a reduction in wages at neighboring employers. A recent study found that ten percent of Amazon employees in Ohio are on food stamps.

What’s more, these warehouse jobs are grueling and high-stress and often seasonal or temporary. A reporter who visited several warehouses found that “Amazon puts an incredible amount of pressure on people to continue to work faster and faster.” (Atlantic, Feb. 1) It should be no surprise then that Amazon recently patented a wristband that ultrasonically tracks every move made by its workers, perhaps the ultimate in control technology.

The other side of massing workers in huge warehouses is that it will enable workers to share and discuss the details of their exploitation, learn how essential their role is to the realization of profit and obtain a sense of their formidable power. They can then plan collective resistance and rebellion.

Stock market volatility may continue, or the markets may stabilize for a time. But the march of the most powerful high-tech companies toward retail dominance will proceed and wreak economic havoc until it is stopped in its tracks by its victims and ultimate victors — the workers and oppressed. As Marx explained in “The Communist Manifesto,” the insatiable pursuit of profits by the boss class inevitably produces “its own gravediggers.” □

Syracuse, N.Y.

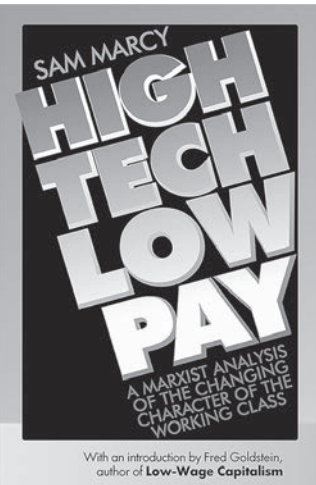
Tenants organize against cockroach landlord

By Michael Kelly
Syracuse, N.Y.

Syracuse Tenants United is leading a campaign to correct flooding, infestation, collapsed ceilings and other ongoing, unsafe living conditions in apartments owned by Syracuse Quality Living, which rents to majority low-income Syracuse University and Lemoyne College students, many international or people of color.

SQL tenants and supporters marched to the company’s office at 215 Cherry St. on Feb. 6 to deliver an updated demand letter about tenant needs and complaints. We marched at 7 p.m. at night in darkness, through snow and sub-20 degree cold. On seeing us pass by, three SQL tenants were moved to rush out of their front doors and join us as we passed their apartments, chanting. The campaign is tenant-led and prioritizes direct action.

Mike Kelly is an organizer with Syracuse Tenants United.



High Tech, Low Pay

A Marxist Analysis of the Changing Character of the Working Class

By Sam Marcy

with an updated introduction by Fred Goldstein, author of *Low Wage Capitalism*.

Books are available at all major online booksellers.



CELEBRATE BLACK LIBERATION MONTH

Monica Moorehead to Black students, ‘Become an activist’

PART 1

This is Part 1 of an edited talk given by Monica Moorehead, WWP secretariat member, at “A Gala Celebrating Black Activism” sponsored by the Pace University Black Student Union in New York City on Feb. 1.

When Karina told me that this program was a tribute to Black activism, I thought what might be of interest is to let you know some of my personal background. Because, as the old saying goes, in order to know where you are headed, you have to know where you come from, right?

And my personal journey has been very much influenced by political events, large and small. There is a Marxist saying that your being determines your consciousness or how you think.

My journey began with being born under racist segregation in Tuscaloosa, Ala. My mother, Consuela Lee, a jazz pianist and composer, was raised in Snow Hill, Ala., located between Selma and Montgomery, important battlegrounds during the Civil Rights Movement, and my father, Isaac Thomas Moorehead, a college basketball coach, was born in Suffolk, Va., not far from the heroic slave rebellion led by Nat Turner. My mother’s grandfather, William James Edwards, founded a school in Snow Hill for former slaves in 1893, predicated on the philosophy of Booker T. Washington.

My dad grew up under extreme poverty. It was rumored that his father, who migrated from the Virgin Islands, was lynched before my dad was born. So my grandmother was a single parent who was forced to become a domestic worker for



PHOTO: PACE BSU

Monica Moorehead and Karina Ross, vice-president of Pace University’s BSU, Feb. 1.

whites all her adult life, starting at the age of 12.

When I was three years old in 1955, my parents joined the Montgomery Bus Boycott, four months after the lynching of 14-year-old Emmett Till in Mississippi. The boycott was sparked by Rosa Parks’ refusing to give up her seat to a white man. My parents, professors at Alabama State University, a historically Black college, were part of a tiny minority of Black people who owned cars, so they volunteered their time to drive boycotters to and from work. My parents also attended

Dr. King’s church.

I, along with all Black children at that time, was being psychologically traumatized living under this extreme level of white supremacy. At the age of 12, I experienced my mom being physically “escorted” out of a white bathroom in Talladega, Ala., by a white cop. These are experiences you never, ever forget, no matter how old you are.

Early days of activism

The turning point in my life, where my political and personal journeys started to mesh, came around 1967, when I attended Koughtan High School in Hampton, Va. I was one of only 200 Black students out of 1,500. This was a cultural shock for me, after attending all-Black schools for most of my life.

When I joined the high school band, I found myself in the precarious position of having to choose or not choose to play the school’s fight song, which included a refrain from the pro-Confederate song “Dixie.” When I publicly refused to play the song, I was kicked out of the band. This was my first, modest, defiant act. It was a big deal for me because growing up under segregation played a major role in my being a shy, introverted person.

I started working with a community group that was providing services to the Black community, like tutoring children. Being exposed to how the rest of the local

Black community was being treated led to my expanding my political outlook, both nationally and internationally, because of the tumultuous political period that was erupting.

And what do I mean by tumultuous? The Black Liberation struggle burst on the scene in 1967, just two years following the assassination of Black Nationalist Malcolm X, who was evolving into an internationalist when his life was tragically cut short. The Black Panther Party, founded by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, was advocating the right to self-defense against police brutality and all forms of racist state repression, and creating self-reliance programs in Black communities nationwide. There were the struggles against colonialism and neocolonialism and for national liberation on the African continent, in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, inspiring movements here. U.S. imperialism was being challenged abroad and at home, and direct connections were being made.

An important part of the national liberation movements inside the U.S. was taking place in the prisons. The Black Panther Party was recruiting prisoners inside the walls, like Soledad Brother George Jackson who had been sentenced to life in prison without parole for taking \$70 at the age of 17. When his brother Jonathan Jackson attempted to free George by arming himself and other prisoners on trial in a Marin County, Calif., courtroom, Jonathan, along with two other prisoners

‘Socialism and the Black Liberation Struggle’

By Terri Kay
Oakland, Calif.

“Socialism and the Black Liberation Struggle” was the topic of a forum held in Oakland on Feb. 11, which opened the Black History Month California Tour sponsored by Workers World Party. Monica Moorehead, WWP’s 2016 presidential candidate and a managing editor of WW newspaper, is the tour’s featured speaker.

Moorehead explained: “Capitalist bourgeois democracy in the U.S. has proven incapable of resolving the 20th century crisis of the ‘color line,’ to quote W.E.B. Du Bois, which is white supremacy as well as other forms of oppression. Capitalism had the opportunity to redeem itself a century and a half ago since Black Reconstruction but failed miserably.”

Discussing the current situation, Moorehead said: “The productive forces are overripe for socialism in the U.S. but have to be extracted from private hands. Winning socialism in the U.S., through revolutionary solidarity with the most oppressed, will cause a huge rippling effect throughout the world in terms of washing away all forms of inequality, war and exploitation worldwide.”

Pierre LaBossiere, leader of the Haiti Action Committee, opened the forum. He talked about the historical role Haitians played in the struggle to overturn slavery, not just in Haiti, but throughout the Americas. He expressed concern about how the ongoing struggle for democracy



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

From left, Monica Moorehead, Pierre LaBossiere, Jeremy Miller.

in Haiti — with daily demonstrations in the streets — is largely ignored by mainstream media and much of the “progressive” media, too.

LaBossiere pointed out that Haitians in the U.S. have been involved in the working-class struggle here, but now face deportation because Trump rescinded the temporary protected status agreement. TPS was originally provided after the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

Jeremy Miller, of the Idriss Stelley Foundation and the Last 3 Percent of San Francisco, closed the forum. He described the influence of Black socialist leaders in the struggle in the U.S., including in Black churches in the late 1800s. Miller raised the role of Black workers in the workers’ struggle here and explained how the absence of higher-paid jobs for Black workers affected their role in that struggle.

The tour moves on to Los Angeles on Saturday, Feb. 17 at 4 p.m. at the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice, 5278 W. Pico Blvd.; and then to San Diego on Sunday, Feb. 18 at noon at UNITE HERE Local 30 at 2436 Market St. □

FIRST BLACK WOMAN COACH IN T

By Dolores Cox

Black history includes the hiring of the first and only Black female professional football coach in the U.S. She is Collette Smith, who signed on with the New York Jets in 2017, the team’s first female coach. Smith made her coaching debut at the Jets’ preseason training camp in the summer of 2017. She is the third female coach in NFL history. The first was Jen Welter, who the Arizona Cardinals hired in 2015.

Jets coach Todd Bowles stated: “Her football knowledge is outstanding. It’s all-male interns so far. I thought it would be a good idea to bring in a female intern, strictly off her skill set, not because she’s female. She’s a hell of a football coach and she fits in with the guys.” (espn.com, July 29) Smith says the players were welcoming and accepting. She says she’ll criticize them for errors, but unlike some coaches will praise them for their good moves, or as she puts it, “I’m motherly to them.” (“Here and Now,” WABC, Feb. 5)

Prior to joining the Jets, Smith played with the New York Sharks in an independent women’s football league for three years until having to retire due to repeated knee injuries. She played in the defensive backfield as a safety. Afterwards, she became the Sharks’ defensive back coach.

The Sharks play at the Floyd Bennett football field in Brooklyn in the spring. Only the coaches get paid, not the players. The games are attended by only 100 to 300 people, a small turnout. They play in near obscurity. There are no corporate sponsors; however, the league is openly looking for sponsors. So far, only the New York Giants and the New Orleans Saints

have shown interest in the women’s league for training purposes.

Advocates for women’s football want to empower inner-city, low-income young girls and help them believe in themselves, know their self-worth, and love and respect themselves and others. They also want to teach boys that they and girls are equal. However, perceived stereotypes still exist. Sports also helps keep kids off the street.

Collette Smith grew up in Queens, N.Y. As a child, she watched football games with her father and became a lifelong Jets fan. She started playing football at age 42. Previously, she was a ballet dancer. Since passage of the 1972 Title IX Education Amendments, civil rights legislation covering athletics and gender equity, two out of five females now participate in sports, she adds.

Smith states: “Women’s games are not involved in ‘taking a knee,’ but they understand that Colin Kaepernick and others are taking a knee to protest police brutality of Black men; and that’s a positive thing. And, contrary to projections, people still are watching NFL games. Also, President Trump should not be commenting on taking a knee.”

Upon being hired by the Jets, Smith said: “I’m on top, I’m humbled and I’m proud. This could’ve happened with any NFL team. But it just so happened that it was my beloved Jets; this is bigger because of that. God forbid it would’ve been with the Patriots. But I still would’ve done it. While I recognize the enormity of my accomplishments and what it means to sports, I’m also looking forward to the day when a woman being hired by a pro-

African Americans reject imperialism

Black Liberation and the Vietnamese struggle

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

One of the earliest developments in the Civil Rights Movement in the South related to Vietnam was a campaign by the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in the summer of 1965. A flyer and petition were circulated calling for African Americans to refuse induction into the military to fight in Vietnam since they were not given equal rights in the U.S.

By early January 1966, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee issued an official statement opposing the war and the draft. This intervention took place in the immediate aftermath of the racist murder of SNCC member Sammy Younge Jr. for his defiance of segregation laws in Alabama.

The SNCC statement read in part: “The murder of Samuel Younge in Tuskegee, Ala., is no different than the murder of peasants in Vietnam. For both Younge and the Vietnamese sought and are seeking to secure the rights guaranteed them by law. In each case, the United States government bears a great part of the responsibility for these deaths. Samuel Younge was murdered because United States law is not being enforced. Vietnamese are murdered because the United States is pursuing an aggressive policy in violation of international law. The United States is no respecter of persons or law when such persons or laws run counter to its needs or desires.”

Julian Bond, a longtime SNCC organizer, ran successfully for the Georgia state legislature in late 1965. However, the authorities denied him the right to take his seat after he said publicly that SNCC’s position on Vietnam was his own as well.

In August 1966, the SNCC chapter in Atlanta embarked on a campaign to expose the racist character of the Vietnam War both domestically and in Southeast Asia. Women and men organizers in and around SNCC set up picket lines outside the induction center located near the heart of the African-American community.

These demonstrations soon prompted attacks by hostile mobs of whites along with police officers. Protesters were called racist slurs; had cigarettes, water and other objects thrown at them; and faced outright physical assaults.

1966 was the year there was a radical change in the character of SNCC’s leadership with the takeover by Stokely Carmichael (later known as Kwame Ture) as chairman. Carmichael had direct organizing experience in Mississippi in 1964 and Alabama in 1965-66, where the Lowndes County Freedom Organization was formed and became known as the Black Panther Party.



Gwen Patton of SNCC speaking at the University of Havana in Cuba during the 1960s.

There was an intensification of antiwar work and the linking of the African-American liberation struggle with global developments in Vietnam and other regions of Asia along with Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean and Latin America.

Black women oppose war on Vietnam

SNCC activists such as Diane Nash, a veteran of the Nashville Civil Rights Movement and the Freedom Rides of 1960-61, traveled to North Vietnam in 1966 to call for the end of U.S. aggression through addresses over Radio Hanoi.

Gwen Patton, a graduate of Tuskegee University, was instrumental as well in organizing efforts to build the antiwar movement among African Americans.

In a report by Ashley Farmer on Patton’s contributions, she notes: “Patton constantly centered Black women within her pro-Black, anti-imperialist politics, making her a foundational figure in late 1960s Black feminist theorizing. Living and working alongside SNCC organizers like Faye Bellamy and Ethel Minor foregrounded the importance of developing emancipatory projects that were gender-inclusive. Patton was largely responsible for creating the Black Women’s Liberation Committee (BWLC), a women’s collective within SNCC. This group engaged in central questions about the ideological underpinnings of women, gender roles, and revolution.”

SNCC viewed the struggle for Black Liberation as part and parcel of the revolutionary movements sweeping Asia, Africa and other areas of the world. An International Section was created and directed by James Forman, the former executive secretary.

By 1967, Forman was presenting papers in national and international forums expressing solidarity with the Vietnamese and independence movements in Southern Africa, among other geopolitical areas.

By early 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was rapidly becoming outspoken about his opposition to the Vietnam War through newspaper columns, speeches, an antiwar

march in Chicago in late March and the famous Riverside Church address, dubbed “Beyond Vietnam,” on April 4, just one year to the date before his assassination in Memphis. On April 15, King spoke alongside Carmichael outside the United Nations in New York to thousands of anti-war opponents.

Heavyweight internationalists

Muhammad Ali, the heavyweight champion of the world, was one of the most widely known personalities internationally. Ali

had changed his name from Cassius Clay when he went public with his conversion to the Nation of Islam after winning the championship in early 1964.

During this period in early 1964, Ali was close to Malcolm X, who left the NOI by late March. This caused an irreparable breach between the two men, with the heavyweight champion remaining with Elijah Muhammad.

By 1966, Ali was being hounded by the draft board. He officially refused induction in early 1967, citing religious grounds. Ali also emphasized that he did not feel obligated to wage war against the Vietnamese people based upon the lack of freedom for the Black man in the U.S.

Both Dr. King and SNCC supported Ali in his decision. This opened the way for broader alliances in opposition to the Vietnam War.

By May 1967, Stokely Carmichael had completed one year as chair of SNCC and turned over the leadership to H. Rap Brown (later known as Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin). He would later go to Cuba and address a summit of Latin American liberation organizations, attracting the attention of Premier Fidel Castro through his speech.

Carmichael also traveled to Hanoi and met with Ho Chi Minh. He subsequently reported that Ho encouraged him to focus more attention on the African Revolution. While in Hanoi, the former SNCC chairman requested a seminar on the building of a united front such as the NLF.

In recounting this event, Carmichael revealed that the U.S. began bombing Hanoi after the seminar started. Vietnamese party leaders then moved Carmichael into a bunker in order to continue the course. One bomb struck near the location of that session, causing some debris to fall on the instructor’s notes. Carmichael recounted how the dust was wiped away quickly and the class continued without interruption

“When I saw this I knew that the Americans would be defeated,” he jovially said. (Lecture delivered at Wayne State University in Detroit, March 13, 1992)

Next: The Black Panther Party, international solidarity and state repression.

and the judge, were slaughtered in a van as they attempted to flee. The FBI issued a warrant for the arrest of well-known political activist Angela Davis, who was accused of being complicit in this attempt to free George Jackson.

This was August 1970. As an 18-year-old teenager traveling from Houston to Atlanta the day after the warrant was issued, I was detained by the police at the Houston airport and then by the FBI once I arrived in Atlanta.

In fact, thousands of Black women with large Afros were detained for “resembling” Angela. This was my first direct encounter with the repressive state — with cops on a local and federal level. Angela Davis became a hero of mine, not because she was also a native of Alabama like me; not because she was a communist, since at the time I didn’t know what that entailed; but because she was an international symbol of resistance against a racist repressive system.

My activism continued at Hampton Institute in Virginia, now Hampton University, another historically Black college, founded during the Reconstruction period. Even though Hampton was a politically conservative campus, that did not stop students from being active on and off campus. I joined the Urban Center, which involved the most politically conscious students, whose ideologies ranged from Pan-Africanist to socialist. In spring 1971, when I was a freshman, students shut down the Hampton campus to defend a radical student government and were expelled by the administration. Students were constantly walking out of class, which led to the school shutting down before final exams. It was such an exciting time to come into activism. □



professional sports team is a non-history.” (newyork.cbslocal.com, May 26)

Smith sees her new opportunity as “a way for me to empower women. Don’t dream small, play big and go for it. One day a woman will come to a football team and it won’t be a big story. It’ll just be football. When that day comes I’ll be more honored and even more proud. We as women carry a lot on our shoulders. Right now, it happens to be football for me.”

Sources: “Here & Now,” WABC, Feb. 5; “Black America,” CUNY TV, Nov. 22; ESPN, July 29; Rich Cimini, newyork.cbslocal.com, May 26.

IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH —

FIGHTING RACISM In February 2018, Black History Month, means starting at the top and denouncing the openly racist, white supremacist in the White House. It means opposing and exposing the bigot in chief’s racist policies, like ramping up Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids on 7-Eleven stores all around the country and deporting Haitian and Salvadoran workers after slandering them and the entire African continent in vulgar terms.

Workers World makes a big deal of Black History Month because racism permeates and corrodes every aspect of life in this country today. Everything, from fighting for living-wage jobs to

ending mass incarceration, to having affordable housing and decent schools, is rooted in the centuries-long struggle to end this country’s brutal history of slavery and racism.

That’s why every month, not just Black History Month, this newspaper chronicles the struggles of African Americans to eradicate institutionalized racism, root and branch. Like the work stoppage in Florida prisons and the Black youth murdered by police, whose crimes are not brought to justice. Like Workers World Party members in Durham, N.C., last August when they took matters into their own hands and toppled the statue of a Confederate soldier in response to the

neo-Nazi, KKK rampage in Charlottesville, Va., that injured dozens and killed a courageous anti-racist protester.

WW bases our weekly coverage of the ongoing Black struggle here and our coverage of the struggles in Africa to throw off imperialist chains on the principle of self-determination: that oppressed people have the right to fight to end all forms of inequality and injustice — by any means necessary.

If you appreciate such coverage, it’s time to join the Workers World Supporter Program. We established it in 1977 so readers could help us publish anti-racist, working-class truth and build

SUPPORT WW

campaigns needed to make revolutionary change that crushes capitalism and fights for socialism.

For a donation of at least \$75 a year — and much more if you can — members receive a year’s subscription to WW, a monthly letter about timely issues and five free subscriptions to give to friends. Write checks (either monthly or once a year) to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or sign up to donate online at workers.org/donate/; it’s easy to set up monthly deductions. Know that we’re grateful for your help in building Workers World — for today and for the future! □

You can’t deport a movement!’

Within hours before a scheduled deportation on Feb. 9, immigrant rights organizer Ravi Ragbir won a temporary stay of removal on First Amendment grounds. Ragbir, who has lived for 27 years in the United States, said, “Like so many people who are living in this country under the threat of deportation, I know how important it is to raise our voices against the injustices in the system.”

Some 500 immigrant rights supporters had just raised their voices, rallying in the early morning outside the Manhattan Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) offices to cheer speakers brought out by the New Sanctuary Coalition. Speakers included religious, political and legal representatives as well as multinational community leaders, who defend their Muslim, Latinx, Haitian, Asian and African communities. All here joined the cry, “The

movement united will never be deported!”

Ragbir’s new suit charges the Trump administration and ICE officials with “selectively enforcing the immigration laws against immigration rights activists on the basis of their protected speech.”

Ragbir — from Trinidad and Tobago — is co-director of the New Sanctuary Coalition along with Jean Montrevil of Haiti. Montrevil was deported to Haiti on Jan. 3 after being seized as he was on his way to work in Queens, N.Y. Montrevil’s ex-spouse Jani Cauthen spoke at a rally the next day of the pain and strength of their children, whom ICE is forcing to live apart from their father. Montrevil has a legal date with ICE in April.

Many of today’s rally messages reflected on how the laws against immigrants are racist. With speakers demanding support and justice for DACA (Deferred



Ravi Ragbir speaking at a rally outside the Manhattan Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office.

Action for Childhood Arrivals) youth and defense for all needing a protected extended stay, with fair immigration laws and sanctuary for all and an end to family separations.

Ragbir has a follow up court ruling that

is expected by mid-March. As he spoke of the growth of the faith-based sanctuary movement, he said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are interwoven. This is an explosion of love!”

— Story and photo by Anne Pruden

NYPD spying on Muslims challenged

By Chris Fry
Albany, N.Y.

Two Muslim men have challenged the New York Police Department’s cloak of secrecy over NYPD surveillance of Muslim mosques and student groups. The men’s case went to the New York Court of Appeals here on Feb. 6, with more than 30 supporters filling the spectator seats.

The men’s lawyer demanded to know why New York state’s Freedom of Information Law request for the spy documents was met with an evasive NYPD response that it could “neither confirm nor deny” that such documents even existed.

The NYPD has a long history of spying on civil rights organizers and anti-war activists, as well as leftist organizations and members. A 1971 federal lawsuit put in place guidelines that supposedly prohibit the NYPD from collecting information on political speech unless it is related to “terrorism.”

News reports in 2011 and 2012, including from the Associated Press, exposed a combined CIA/NYPD program to spy on Muslims in the New York area: “The Demographics Unit is at the heart of a

police spying program, built with help from the CIA, which assembled databases on where Muslims lived, shopped, worked and prayed. Police infiltrated Muslim student groups, put informants in mosques, monitored sermons and catalogued every Muslim in New York who adopted new, Americanized surnames.” (ap.org, Aug. 21, 2012)

Police admit: not one “terrorism” case

Police officials in legal depositions had to admit that they did not open even one “terrorism” case based on this spy unit.

Suspecting that they were targets of this police surveillance, former Rutgers student Samir Hashmi and Manhattan Imam Talib Abdur-Rashid filed FOIL requests seeking any NYPD records pertaining to surveillance of the two men or of any organizations they were affiliated with.

By state law, agencies like the NYPD must respond to FOIL requests in one of three ways: Either the documents are produced; the documents do not exist; or the request is denied for a narrow set of possible reasons, and the agency must explain why the request is denied. The NYPD did none of those things.

Instead, they used the bizarre “Glomar doctrine” to declare that the two men had no right to know if there were any spy documents. The Glomar was the Howard Hughes-built ship that the Navy and CIA used to raise parts from a Soviet submarine that sunk in 1968. When a journalist in 1974 tried to obtain documents about this venture, the CIA declared that national security permitted them to respond that they “could not confirm nor deny” the existence of documents about the Glomar.

The NYPD citation of the Glomar doctrine is the first time that a local police force has ever used national security to deny a FOIL request. If the denial is up-

held in court, the doctrine could be used by any police agency to spy on progressive organizations and individuals with complete secrecy and impunity.

After the Feb. 6 hearing, the plaintiffs, lawyers and supporters held a press conference outside the courthouse. “What the NYPD is trying to do is to foster secrecy, which is actually detrimental to the public,” said Omar Mohammedi, the lawyer for the two men.

“Obviously [the denial] was a result of the NYPD surveillance against the Muslim community, which we believe was illegal surveillance — and they know that — and that’s why they don’t want to release the documents.” □

Solidarity with Muslims



Philadelphia

A social justice-focused synagogue named Kol Tzedek — a Voice for Justice — and the West Philly Coalition Against Islamophobia organized a gathering outside the Masjid Al-Jamia mosque on Feb. 9 to show support for their Muslim neigh-

bors and stand in solidarity with them. The noontime rally was held a week after a group of right-wing thugs threatened and harassed people entering their mosque for Friday prayers.

— Report and photo by Joe Piette

Vigil supports Olympic truce



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Activists held a vigil Feb. 9, the opening day of the PyeongChang Winter Olympics, in front of Philadelphia City Hall. The event, called by the Coalition for Peace Action, was held to demand “Diplomacy not war” and “Support the Olympic Truce.”

Co-sponsors for the Philadelphia Candlelight Vigil for the Olympic Truce included the Brandywine Peace Community; the Coalition For Peace Action, Pennsylvania; the Germantown Friends Meeting; the Granny Philadelphia Peace Brigade; the International Action Center; the Philadelphia Committee for Peace and Justice in Asia; Physicians for Social

Responsibility; Saint Joseph’s University Students Chapter; the Shalom Center; and the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia.

At the end of the rally, Workers World Party and the International Action Center announced a Feb. 27 forum titled, “Why Does Trump Want to Bomb Korea?” (tinyurl.com/y7eqscez)

The 7 p.m. event at 801 S. 48 St. in Philadelphia will feature Deirdre Griswold, editor of Workers World newspaper, and Hyun Lee, managing editor of ZoomInKorea.org, an online resource for critical analysis on peace and democracy in Korea.

— Workers World Philadelphia branch

In south Korea

Mass movement rejects U.S. war moves

By Deirdre Griswold

None of the major U.S. news outlets has dared to even hint at it, yet there it was, as plain as the nose on your face: the people of south Korea showing that they don't want to be dragged into any U.S. war against their northern compatriots. They want a lessening of tensions, even as the U.S. is openly discussing carrying out an attack on the north — a course of action that could quickly escalate into a horrendous war.

This was made abundantly clear to the whole world during the opening ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games on Feb. 9, when the stadium in Pyeong-Chang, south Korea, rocked to the cheers of the immense crowd as, for the first time, a united north-south team of Korean athletes marched onto the field.

The one person in the bleachers not to stand for this was U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, who grimly hunkered down in his seat as everyone around him jumped for joy. Pence wouldn't get up, not even for the national anthem of the host country.

For decades, the argument given by the U.S. government and military for the now 73 years of U.S. military occupation of south Korea has been that they are there to protect the south from the north. This is the rationale given for the continued U.S. military occupation of the south, which has been opposed again and again by the Korean people.

U.S.-imposed military dictatorships

A good part of that time, south Korea was under the draconian rule of military dictatorships. The U.S. has never signed, nor even agreed to discuss, a peace treaty with the north since the end of the brutal 1950-53 Korean War. This formal continuation of a state of war has left the U.S. in ultimate command of the south Korean armed forces. The U.S. therefore



South Koreans protest against President Trump's nuclear war threats.

bears ultimate responsibility for the long and tortured history of repression carried out against the people of south Korea by the military.

The first general to rule over south Korea was Park Chung-hee, who took power in 1961 in a military coup and ruled until his assassination in 1979 by the head of the Korean CIA in an internal power struggle.

Here's how the Encyclopedia Britannica describes Park's rule:

"At home Park maintained a policy of guided democracy, with restrictions on personal freedoms, suppression of the press and of opposition parties, and control over the judicial system and the universities. He organized and expanded the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA; now the National Intelligence Service), which became a much-feared agent of political repression. Park claimed that all his measures were necessary to fight communism. In foreign affairs, he continued the close relations his predecessors Syngman Rhee and Yun Po Sŏn had maintained with the United States. Park was responsible in large part for South Korea's 'economic miracle'; the programs he initiated gave his country one of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

"On Oct. 17, 1972, Park declared martial law, and one month later he installed a repressive authoritarian regime, the

Yushin ('Revitalization Reform') order, with a new constitution that gave him sweeping powers. He grew increasingly harsh toward political dissidents. After Park's dismissal (1979) of popular opposition leader Kim Young Sam from the National Assembly, Korea erupted with severe riots and demonstrations."

People's struggles rock the south

After Park's assassination in 1979, there was a very brief period of nominal civilian rule, but the military again openly took power in 1980. Gen. Chun Doo-hwan, who ruled until 1988, is best remembered for the 1980 massacre of an estimated 2,000 students and workers in the southern city of Gwangju, who had risen up in protest of martial law.

This writer visited Gwangju in 2000 and marched with thousands of Koreans to commemorate the anniversary of the massacre. We later went to the cemetery and placed flowers on the graves of many of the young people brutally killed in 1980. (For a detailed description of the Gwangju Massacre, see tinyurl.com/y9s3a32x.)

The military did not openly rule south Korea after 1988, but General Park's daughter, Park Geun-hye, became president in 2013. She is now in jail for flagrant corruption. She was a darling of the notorious chaebol — the family-run corporations like Samsung and Hyundai that control much of south Korea's economy.

Park Geun-hye was finally deposed in 2017 after a solid year of weekly demonstrations throughout all the cities of south Korea. Millions of people participated in these protests.

It is this courageous mass movement of the south Korean people that has given the present government of President Moon Jae-in the backbone to stand up to

the U.S. occupiers and pursue a course of engagement with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north. □

WWP Editor Deirdre Griswold:

Hands off KOREA! No war, no sanctions!



WW Editor Deirdre Griswold reached an estimated 2.9 million television viewers Feb. 12 with a strong anti-war message in defense of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Korean people's right to self-determination. She spoke directly to the viewers of the Tucker Carlson show on the virulently right-wing, racist Fox News channel, owned by far-right media mogul Rupert Murdoch. As a result, more than a quarter-million people logged on to workers.org, where readers can also follow news of ongoing anti-war mobilizing. The video segment, which includes Carlson's anti-communist rants, is available at tinyurl.com/yaaxljxr/.

Syria

Firm response to imperialist attacks

By G. Dunkel

Feb. 11 — In the past week, the U.S. military opened a new bombing attack on forces loyal to the government in Damascus and the Israeli Air Force targeted what it called "Iranian bases" in Syria with a massive attack. These assaults raise the possibility of another chapter in the U.S.-NATO-Israeli aggression against Syria, which has been going on for nearly seven years.

The Syrian government of Bashar al-Assad, along with its allies Russia, Hezbollah and Iran, has been gaining the upper hand against the many-sided imperialist intervention that has turned

more than half of Syria's 25 million people into external and internal refugees and killed at least 220,000 of them.

An Israeli F-16 flying a raid on alleged drone bases in central Syria was shot down by the Syrian Air Defense Force. According to Reuters on Feb. 10, quoting a former commander of Israel's air force, this was the first time an Israeli F-16 had been shot down since the 1980s.

Israeli planes frequently attack targets in Syria. A spokesperson for the Lebanese-based liberation organization, Hezbollah, said in the same report that the shoot-down marked "the start of a new strategic phase" to limit Israel's ability to enter Syrian airspace. Demonstrators in Damas-

cus handed out sweets because they were so thrilled at this sign of Syria's ability to punish the Israeli killing machine.

Currently, there are about 2,000 U.S. troops inside Syria. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has said the U.S. intervention has no end date and the size of the U.S. force will increase.

That's the reason Israel stepped up its air attacks on Feb. 10, focusing on what it called "Iranian bases," and why the United States has announced it will maintain and increase its troop levels in Syria.

Also on Feb. 10, according to the Israeli paper Haaretz, Kurdish fighters backed and armed by the U.S. shot down a Turkish attack helicopter. NATO-member Turkey, whose President Recep Tayyip Erdogan describes the YPG (People's Protection Units) as terrorists, is carrying out an offensive directed at the Kurdish-majority town of Afrin in Syria.

Earlier in the week, a Russian SU-25 was shot down in Idlib province, relatively close to the Turkish border, by a reactionary Islamist group, using U.S. weapons.

The same day, the headquarters of a group of so-called "Syrian Democratic Forces," a joint Arab and Kurdish force

backed by the U.S., came under attack. It appears that U.S. advisers were working there. According to U.S. Army Col. Thomas Veale, a spokesperson for the U.S.-led coalition, about 500 troops, using artillery, mortars and Russian-made tanks, were involved in the attack.

The U.S. claimed 100 of the attackers were killed in the strikes, which were countered by U.S. F-22 stealth jets, F-15 fighters and MQ-9 drones, as well as a U.S. High Mobility Artillery Rocket System.

The Syrian state news agency, SANA, described the action as "an aggression" by the coalition against "popular forces" that were fighting the Islamic State group and the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces.

Whatever the differences in goals and tactics of the imperialist and reactionary militaries intervening against Syria's people — which include the U.S., its European NATO imperialist allies, Turkey, Israel and various reactionary sectarian militias — the people of Syria have the right to fight and to make their own alliances to preserve their independence and national sovereignty against any and all of these forces. □

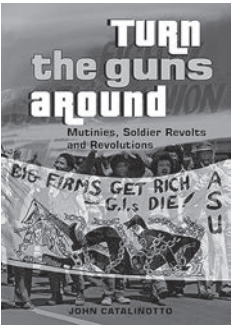
Turn the Guns Around

Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions

"If schools in the United States really wanted to impart historical truth, John Catalinotto's 'Turn The Guns Around' would be required reading. He tells the true story of this epoch. Few participants know more about the massive GI rebellion against the Vietnam War, the anti-war veterans' movement or the history of soldier revolts from the Paris Commune to the Portuguese coup."

— Pvt Larry Holmes

GI resister and organizer for the American Servicemen's Union 1972-74. Available at online booksellers



WORKERS WORLD editorial

Misogynists in the White House

It's no surprise that the misogynist in chief resides in the White House. Nor is it a surprise that Republican leaders and sectors of the ruling class can't contain their glee about pro-corporate, anti-worker policies and legislation the Trump administration is pushing through.

They are cheering the administration's all-out assault on rights won by people's movements over generations, including those won by women for equality.

Now two White House staff members, Rob Porter, staff secretary, and David Sorenson, a speechwriter, have been accused of domestic abuse by their former spouses. The president praised and defended these two, calling for "due process" for them.

Where is due process for the women they assaulted and for the dozens of women who charge that Trump is guilty of sexual misconduct? Trump, who calls those women "liars," has a history of standing with abusers.

Who in the White House knew about these abusers and when did they know? Chief of Staff Gen. John Kelly, a racist and anti-immigrant bigot, supposedly one of "the adults in the room," knew. The FBI reported on both men's histories months ago. Yet no one in the White House -- where policies are created that profoundly affect women -- denounced this violence against women.

The strength and scope of the #MeToo Movement and the Time's Up campaign forced Porter and Sorenson to resign. This movement of courageous women has swept the country like a tidal wave and brought down powerful men for workplace sexual misconduct. The resignations also show the strength of anti-Trump marches by millions of women over the last two years.

Capitalism breeds misogyny

By attacking the #MeToo Movement and defending women's abusers, Trump and his staff are signaling approval of the degradation, sexual harassment and physical assault of women. Their attitudes reflect how deeply misogyny and patriarchy are embedded within capitalist society.

The government is the executive committee of the wealthy ruling class, which owns the corporations and banks. The chief of the executive branch is in the White House, as a representative of the capitalists and a promoter of their reactionary views. Trump, his aides and his cronies spout and reinforce racism, sexism and hostility to workers, immigrants, LGBT and gender nonconforming people, and those with disabilities. This backward ideology is spread by politicians and the corporate media, especially the right-wing press.

By promoting sexism, the White House is aiding and abetting business owners who profit from maintaining the sexist gender pay gap. The current administration reversed the prior administration's rule aimed at closing that gap.

While sexual harassment is used to dominate and intimidate women workers, their economic exploitation is a cornerstone of capitalism. Women overall are paid 80 percent of what men earn, but even more exploited are African-American, Latinx, Indigenous, immigrant and disabled women who are paid even less.

Trump, Kelly and the entire cabal in the White House should resign. However, even that won't eliminate patriarchal misogyny. Nor would it eliminate racism, xenophobia, homophobia or classism, all intrinsic to capitalism. The super-rich seek to divide and control workers by every means they can -- and now they are intensifying their reactionary attacks to try to save their declining system.

It is crucial to continue to build the fightback power that the #MeToo Movement and the women's marches have shown. As women continue their fightback, it is imperative that they show solidarity with and join those in struggle against racism and police violence, deportation of immigrants and attacks on the LGBTQ community, workers and disabled people -- to push back the entire reactionary Trump agenda.

A united fightback is what's needed to oust this rotten capitalist system that sows bigotry, inequality and exploitation.

□

U.S. 'Internet Task Force' Exposed as attack on Cuban sovereignty

By Cheryl LaBash
Washington, D.C.

This Workers World reporter was able to intervene in favor of socialist Cuba as the new Cuba Internet Task Force held its inaugural public meeting on Feb. 7 in the U.S. State Department headquarters here.

The task force's conclusions are set up to promote the same violations of Cuba's sovereignty practiced since Cuban revolutionaries toppled the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959.

Those U.S. tactics, aimed at regime change, have failed. The mission description of the State Department's task force admits its goals in euphemistic language: "The task force will examine the technological challenges and opportunities for expanding internet access in Cuba including through [U.S.] federal government support of programs and activities that encourage freedom of expression through independent media and internet freedom." This means the U.S. aims to encourage those hostile to the Cuban government to use the internet for these goals.

It's no surprise the U.S. Agency for International Development sits on the task force. USAID contracted Alan Gross to install military grade covert communication devices in Cuba in 2009. Gross was arrested in December 2009 and spent 5 years of a 15-year sentence in a Cuban prison.

The U.S. government initiated and funded the TV/Radio/Internet propaganda media, given the misappropriated name of Cuba's national hero, José Martí. This media group has a seat on the task force, as does its oversight agency, the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

Initially, 10 slots for 3-minute public comments were planned for the Feb. 7 public meeting. Five speakers of the original 10 opposed the task force objectives and its attack on Cuban sovereignty.

WW reporter speaks at meeting

Besides covering the public meeting, Workers World participated; this reporter's remarks are published here:

"Even after the last presidential election, Pew Research polls demonstrated that 75 percent of people in the U.S. support diplomatic relations with Cuba and 73 percent support ending the U.S. blockade of Cuba. I am one of them. The statis-

tics hold for Cubans in the U.S., too. One hundred and ninety-one of 193 countries voted to oppose the blockade just last November at the United Nations General Assembly.

"The Federal Register announcement says the purpose of the Cuba Internet Task Force is 'to examine technological challenges and opportunities for expanding internet access in Cuba.'

"Have any of you been to Cuba? When you go, you will see as I have with my own eyes the Cuban people communicating using smartphones at the expanding number of hotspots. They are talking with friends and relatives in the U.S. and other countries. Home internet is beginning. Public notice is given about the plans for reducing internet prices. And the prices really do go down. Cubans use Facebook and Twitter and email.

"In 2009, I was with a group of British union officials in Havana when their cell phone rang -- their phones worked in Cuba, but mine did not. Canadian phones worked in Cuba. Now my phone works in Cuba, too. The Cuban telecom company ETECSA has agreements with AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, Verizon and Google. Those agreements became possible when this government -- not the Cuban government -- this government stopped blocking them.

"After 120 years, the United States must come to grips with the fact that Cuba does not belong to the United States. How is it proper to sit in the U.S. State Department and discuss this matter as though Cuba is not a sovereign country?

"Do you want to assess challenges and opportunities for expanding internet access? Let's start with my city, Detroit. The FCC reported as recently as 2015 that 40 percent of my city's residents have no access to the internet. Let's use the budget for this Task Force and the previous radio/TV and internet regime change projects dreamed up in Washington for infrastructure to bring quality, affordable internet access to all in cities like Detroit and rural areas, too.

"So to improve internet access in Cuba, negotiate with the Cuban government in a respectful and equal way, end the blockade and travel restrictions, and return the occupied Guantánamo territory to the Cuban people." □

Revolutionary Cuba defeated illiteracy-- in



By Sara Catalinotto
New York

Cuban educator Griselda Aguilera Cabrera, who at 7 years old was the youngest instructor in her country's 1961 literacy campaign, has been touring the U.S. Two of her New York City stops were on Feb. 10: first, an event hosted by the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party in the Bronx; and then, one sponsored by the New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition in mid-Manhattan.

The latter involved over 100 participants and was chaired by IFCO/Pastors for Peace Director Gail Walker. Aguilera began by citing Fidel Castro's 1953 courtroom self-defense titled "History Will Absolve Me." She said in Spanish: "Fidel stated the program that the new govern-

ment would carry out -- and one of the first matters was educating the people." Aguilera added that after the revolution triumphed in 1959, preparations began for how to impart basic reading and writing skills to farming families in the countryside, workers in the factories, and urban homemakers and elders.

"Maestra," a film directed by Catherine Murphy, illustrated how life-changing and dynamic the one-year literacy campaign was for so many Cubans. Over half of the teaching volunteers were teenage women. Between Jan. 1 and Dec. 22, 1961, not only did 700,000 people become literate, but an entire generation realized their ability to develop a new society.

Aguilera elaborated that reading lessons included such topics as preventative hygiene, how to form farming coopera-

tives, why a one-crop economy had made Cuba poor, and that everyone has the right to housing, health care and education. The campaign went forward despite the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, hatched in the U.S., and other counterrevolutionary attacks, including the murder of one literacy teacher. After the United Nations declared Cuba a "territory free of illiteracy," the teachers held a victory march in Havana, carrying giant pencils.

The Manhattan meeting also heard from two activists from Mothers Cry for Justice. Hawa Bah spoke of witnessing how her son Mohamed Bah, an African immigrant, was killed by the New York Police Department in 2012. With the support of the movement, she has pursued justice through several court cases, which have finally resulted in some civil

Indigenous, female, Zapatista – and running for president of Mexico

By Teresa Gutierrez

This year’s presidential campaign in Mexico is already making history — no matter the outcome.

María de Jesús Patricio Martínez, an Indigenous woman supported wholeheartedly by the Zapatista National Liberation Front (EZLN) is running for president of Mexico. The elections will take place on July 1 of this year. The EZLN campaign could not come at a better time, as the struggles for Indigenous rights as well as against misogyny rightfully take center stage the world over.

Martínez, popularly known as Marichuy, is the spokeswoman for the National Indigenous Congress (CNI), the political wing of the EZLN. Marichuy was selected to be the group’s candidate in May 2017. The process of Marichuy’s selection took six months, as Indigenous communities were first consulted about whether to support a candidate in the presidential elections.

Marichuy of the Nahuatl people is originally from the state of Jalisco in western Mexico and is an herbal medicine healer. She has worked in the CNI for over 20 years.

Two representatives of the Indigenous movement in Mexico spoke at a New York City meeting on Jan. 20 as part of a U.S. tour to gain support for the EZLN and the CNI. Lucila Bettina Cruz and Francisco Grado Villa, representing the CNI, testified to the dire need for Indigenous people to have a voice in Mexico after decades, indeed centuries, of oppression and exploitation by the dominant class. They called for the entire movement to unite and get stronger because capitalism is wrecking the planet and people’s lives.

The two also participated in the Jan. 20 Women’s March in New York City and issued a statement calling on “all Mexicans, Latinx, and im/migrants to march” with them in the massive demonstration.

When the EZLN opened an anti-capitalist movement

The EZLN burst onto the world scene on Jan. 1, 1994, making a declaration of war on the same day that the dreaded North American Free Trade Agreement came into force. That day, the sight of Zapatista Indigenous women and men in armed gear and covered faces deeply inspired those in Mexico and in the world fighting against oppression.

one year!

charges. Juanita Young, mother of Malcolm Ferguson, who was also slain by the NYPD in 2000, described learning about the Cuban Five and going to Cuba to meet their mothers. Young observed that the values of the literacy campaign are still in effect in Cuba today.

Cuba’s contributions to world literacy include the “Yo Sí Puedo” campaign, which, according to Aguilera, has spread literacy to 10 million people in over 30 countries, including in Indigenous languages. Revolutionary Cuba has also made unique developments in medicine and health. Aguilera emphasized that an end to the U.S. blockade against Cuba would boost health care in both countries.

Watch Aguilera’s full speech and get details of her other U.S. tour stops at tinyurl.com/y9j93puo/. □

The EZLN’s declaration shook the ruling classes from Wall Street to Mexico as well, and was a key element in the spreading movement against capitalist globalization.

Despite difficulties, the Zapatistas have persevered in their organizing, especially in southern Mexico, creating schools, health centers and other important services for the Indigenous communities of Chiapas and elsewhere. Their participation in the 2018 Mexican presidential election demonstrates to the powers that be that, far from disappearing, the EZLN is still a force to be reckoned with.

The Marichuy campaign is clear that it is not running to support the system fraught with corruption, but is, indeed, against that system. The Zapatistas and the CNI released a joint statement, “The Time Has Come,” after their May 2017 meeting. It reads in part: “We do not seek to administer power; we want to dismantle it from within the cracks, from which we know we are able. We trust in the dignity and honesty of those who struggle: teachers, students, campesinos, workers and day laborers, and we want to deepen the cracks that each of them has forged.”

The Mexican political scene is in turmoil and not just because the Zapatistas are running. The traditional bourgeois parties are in chaos, caught between a rock and hard place. On the one hand, white supremacist U.S. President Donald Trump takes every opportunity to bash Mexico and its migrants, declaring that a wall on the southern U.S./northern Mexico border will be built to halt the tide of “criminals.”

On the other hand, current Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto, a pro-capitalist member of the ruling elite, is not able to defend his country’s reputation or even its nationalism. Under his administration, 43 students from a rural teachers’ college in Ayotzinapa were “disappeared” in 2014 on their way to a political demonstration, with strong suspicion that national and state police were responsible. The case garnered worldwide news and exposed the thoroughly repressive nature of Mexican society.

Repression made in Washington

Mexico is widely characterized in the mainstream press as a violent society. But it is U.S. imperialism that promotes, trains and funds violence and repression in Mexico in the drug industry. It’s so lucrative for U.S. banks that it will not be ended. The cartels may be Mexican, but imperialism benefits the most from profiteering in illegal drugs.

And it is Washington that funds violence and instability in Mexico through policies like Plan Mérida, described on the U.S. State Department website this way: “The Mérida Initiative is an unprecedented partnership between the United States and Mexico to fight organized crime and associated violence while furthering respect for human rights and the rule of law. ... The United States has a partnership with the Government of Mexico to disrupt organized criminal groups, institutionalize reforms to sustain the rule of



PHOTO: ADOLFO VLADIMIR

María de Jesús Patricio Martínez, escorted by two women, spoke to massive crowds during a six-month 2017 process through which Indigenous communities nominated her as their candidate for president of Mexico.

months later, Valdez was pulled from his car and murdered ... just blocks from the offices of his newspaper in Sinaloa. No one has been charged in the case of either Breach or Valdez.”

U.S. funds femicide

This U.S.-made violence especially affects women. One publication states that seven femicides a day occur in Mexico. (Vice, November 2017) The murders of women have been linked to the intensification of the drug war by many media and government sources.

The Guardian writes that of the more than “50,000 killings of women since 1985, nearly a third took place in the last six years.” At one of Marichuy’s events in Chiapas she stated, “Women are the ones who feel the deepest pain due to murders, disappearances and imprisonments committed in the country.” (Dec. 14)

She continued: “But it’s precisely because we are the ones who feel the deepest pain ... the greatest oppressions, that we women are also capable of feeling the deepest rage. And we must be able to transform that rage in an organized way to go on the offensive to dismantle the power from above, building with determination and without fear, the power from below.” (Vice, November 2017)

Marichuy’s campaign will be traveling throughout Mexico to get support. Her tour will end in Tijuana on Feb. 18 and will have a binational gathering at Friendship Park there for Mexican and U.S. supporters.

It does not matter if Marichuy wins the election or not. What her campaign reflects is that women and Indigenous people are no longer sitting idly by while the authorities, especially monied men of European descent, are destroying both human society and the planet.

Marichuy’s campaign is providing a platform not only for women, LGBTQ people and migrant workers, but especially for the Indigenous people of Mexico, whose voices will no longer be silenced. □

WAR Without Victory

by Sara Flounders

“By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds insight on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity.”

– Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann,
President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009;
Foreign Minister of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government.

Available at all major online booksellers.
PentagonAchillesHeel.com



PHOTO: RAFAEL CASTILLO

Thousands received Marichuy in La Garrucha, in the state of Chiapas, during her 2017 campaign.

law and support for human rights, create a 21st century border, and build strong and resilient communities.”

The U.S. Congress has appropriated a whopping \$2.5 billion for this “initiative” — a tremendous amount of money that could be used for health care and education in the U.S. or to deal with the effects of unemployment in Mexico caused by NAFTA.

The money is earmarked “to fight organized crime,” but, in reality, it cultivates organized crime. Cartel crime not only destabilizes the country, but is used to stifle protest and resistance. The violence — the beheadings, the torture, the missing students — are all made in Washington.

Almost 30,000 homicides occurred in Mexico in 2017, according to Mexican government data. A Jan. 25 NPR report noted: “More than a decade after Mexican soldiers deployed in the streets and mountains to fight a U.S.-backed drug war, Mexico has something to show for it: more killings than ever” — the highest number of homicides on record.

Journalists who report on government corruption or who attempt to expose the collusion between the cartels and the government are especially targeted. The Committee to Protect Journalists points out that 42 journalists were killed in 2017 worldwide and six of those were in Mexico, making the country third after Iraq and Syria. (AP, Dec. 22)

Reporters Without Borders puts the number higher, at 11 journalists killed in Mexico. And Mexican groups say even that number is too low. In fact, the numbers gloss over the tragedy. For example, one reporter was “gunned down while attending a Christmas party at his son’s elementary school.” (NPR, Dec. 22)

Also covered in that NPR report is the case of Miroslava Breach, a correspondent for the progressive national newspaper La Jornada: “Gunmen shot her in her car ... with one of her three children sitting next to her. At the time, reporter Javier Valdez, one of Mexico’s most acclaimed chroniclers of the country’s drug war, defiantly wrote about Breach’s killers: ‘Let them kill us all, if that is the death penalty for reporting this hell. No to silence,’ he wrote. Less than two



Partidarios de María de Jesús Patricio Martínez. Popularmente conocida como Marichuy, es la portavoz del Congreso Nacional Indígena, el ala política del Frente Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN).

Indígena, femenina, zapatista y candidata a la presidencia de México

Por Teresa Gutierrez

La campaña presidencial de este año en México ya está haciendo historia, sin importar el resultado.

María de Jesús Patricio Martínez, una mujer indígena apoyada de todo corazón por el Frente Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) se postuló para la presidencia de México. (Reuters, octubre de 2017) Las elecciones se llevarán a cabo el 1 de julio de este año. La campaña del EZLN no podría llegar en un mejor momento, ya que las luchas por los derechos de los indígenas, así como también contra la misoginia, ocupan un lugar central en todo el mundo.

Martínez, popularmente conocida como Marichuy, es la portavoz del Congreso Nacional Indígena (CNI), el ala política del EZLN. Marichuy fue seleccionada para ser la candidata del grupo en Mayo del 2017. El proceso de selección de Marichuy tomó seis meses, ya que las comunidades indígenas fueron consultadas por primera vez sobre si apoyar a un candidato en las elecciones presidenciales.

Marichuy del pueblo náhuatl es originaria del estado de Jalisco en el occidente de México y es un sanadora con hierbas medicinales. Ella ha trabajado en el CNI por más de 20 años.

Dos representantes del movimiento Indígena en México hablaron en una reunión en la ciudad de Nueva York el 20 de enero como parte de una gira por los Estados Unidos para obtener apoyo para el EZLN y el CNI. Lucila Bettina Cruz y Francisco Grado Villa, en representación del CNI, dieron testimonio de la necesidad imperiosa de que los pueblos indígenas tengan voz en México después de décadas, y hasta siglos, de opresión y explotación por parte de la clase dominante. Pidieron que todo el movimiento se uniera y se fortaleciera porque el capitalismo está arruinando el planeta y las vidas de las personas.

Los dos también participaron en la Marcha de Mujeres del 20 de enero en la ciudad de Nueva York y emitieron una declaración llamando a “todos los mexicanos, latinx e im/migrantes a marchar” con ellos en la manifestación masiva.

Cuando el EZLN abrió un movimiento anticapitalista

El EZLN irrumpió en la escena mundial el 1 de enero de 1994, haciendo una declaración de guerra el mismo día en que entró en vigencia el temido TLCAN (Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte). Ese día, la visión de mujeres y hombres indígenas zapatistas con equipo armado y caras cubiertas inspiró profundamente a aquellos en México y en el mundo que luchan contra la opresión.

La declaración del EZLN sacudió a las clases dominantes desde Wall Street hasta México también, y fue un elemento clave en un movimiento de propagación contra la globalización capitalista.

A pesar de las dificultades, los zapatistas han perseverado en su organización, especialmente en el sur de México, y han creado escuelas, centros de salud y otros

servicios importantes para las comunidades indígenas de Chiapas y otros lugares. Su participación en las elecciones presidenciales mexicanas del 2018 demuestra a los poderes fácticos que, lejos de desaparecer, el EZLN sigue siendo una fuerza a tener en cuenta.

La campaña de Marichuy es clara en cuanto a que no se está ejecutando para apoyar al sistema lleno de corrupción, sino que, de hecho, está en contra de ese sistema. Los zapatistas y el CNI publicaron una declaración conjunta después de su reunión de mayo de 2017: “The Time Has Come”, (El Momento ha llegado).

Se lee en parte: “No buscamos administrar el poder; queremos dismantelarlo desde dentro de las grietas, de lo que sabemos que somos capaces. Confiamos en la dignidad y la honestidad de aquellos que luchan: maestros, estudiantes, campesinos, trabajadores y jornaleros, y queremos profundizar las grietas que cada uno de ellos ha forjado”.

La escena política mexicana está en crisis. Los partidos burgueses tradicionales están en caos, atrapados entre la espada y la pared. Por un lado, el presidente de la supremacía blanca Donald Trump aprovecha cada oportunidad para golpear a México y sus migrantes, declarando que se construirá un muro en la frontera sur de Estados Unidos y el norte de México para detener la ola de “delincuentes”.

Pero, por otro lado, el actual presidente mexicano, Enrique Peña Nieto, miembro procapitalista de la elite gobernante, no puede defender la reputación de su país o incluso su nacionalismo. Bajo su administración, 43 estudiantes de un colegio de docentes rurales en Ayotzinapa fueron “desaparecidos” en 2014 en su camino a una manifestación política, con fuertes sospechas de que la policía nacional y estatal eran responsables. El caso obtuvo noticias mundiales y expuso la naturaleza completamente represiva de la sociedad mexicana.

Represión hecha en Washington

México se caracteriza ampliamente en la prensa dominante como una sociedad violenta. Pero es el imperialismo de EUA, el que promueve, entrena y financia la violencia y la represión en México, en la industria farmacéutica, son tan lucrativas para los bancos estadounidenses que no se acabará. Los cárteles pueden ser mexicanos, pero el imperialismo es el más beneficiado por las drogas ilegales.

Y es Washington quien financia la violencia y la inestabilidad en México a través de políticas como Plan Mérida, descritas en el sitio web del Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos de esta manera: “La Iniciativa Mérida es una asociación sin precedentes entre los Estados Unidos y México para luchar contra el crimen organizado y la violencia asociada a la vez que fomenta el respeto de los derechos humanos y el estado de derecho. ...

Estados Unidos tiene una alianza con el Gobierno de México para desarticular grupos delictivos organizados, institucio-

nalizar reformas para mantener el estado de derecho y el apoyo a los derechos humanos, crear una frontera del siglo XXI y construir comunidades fuertes y resilientes”.

El Congreso de los EUA se apropió de \$2.500 millones para esta “iniciativa”: una enorme cantidad de dinero que podría utilizarse para la atención médica y la educación en los EUA o para lidiar con los efectos del desempleo en México debido al TLCAN.

El dinero está destinado a “luchar contra la delincuencia organizada” pero, en realidad esta cultiva el crimen organizado. El crimen de carteles no solo desestabiliza el país, sino que se usa para sofocar las protestas y la resistencia. La violencia -las decapitaciones, la tortura, los estudiantes desaparecidos- todos se producen en Washington.

Casi 30.000 homicidios ocurrieron en México en 2017, según datos del gobierno mexicano. Un informe del 25 de enero de NPR señala: “Más de una década después de que los soldados mexicanos se desplegaran en las calles y montañas para luchar contra una guerra antidroga respaldada por Estados Unidos, México tiene algo que mostrar: más asesinatos que nunca”, el mayor número de homicidios en el registro.

Los periodistas que informan sobre la corrupción del gobierno o que intentan exponer la colusión entre los cárteles y el gobierno son especialmente un objetivo. El Comité para la Protección de los Periodistas señala que 42 periodistas fueron asesinados en 2017 en todo el mundo y seis de ellos en México, lo que hace que el país sea el tercero después de Irak y Siria. (AP, 22 de diciembre de 2017)

Reporteros sin Fronteras eleva el número, con 11 periodistas asesinados en México. Y los grupos mexicanos dicen que incluso ese número es muy bajo. De hecho, los números pasan por alto la tragedia. Por ejemplo, un periodista fue “abatido mientras asistía a una fiesta de Navidad en la escuela primaria de su hijo”. (NPR, 22 de diciembre)

En el caso de Miroslava Breach, corresponsal del diario nacional progresista La Jornada: “Pistoleros dispararon”. Ella está en su auto ... con uno de sus tres hijos sentados a su lado. En ese momento, el periodista Javier Valdez, uno de los cronistas más aclamados de México sobre la guerra contra las drogas en el país, escribió desafiante sobre los asesinos de Breach: “Déjalos que nos maten a todos, si esa es la pena de muerte por informar este infierno, No al silencio”, escribió. Menos de dos meses después, Valdez fue sacado de su automóvil y asesinado ... a solo unas cuadras de las oficinas de su periódico en Sinaloa. Nadie ha sido acusado en el caso de Breach o Valdez”. (NPR, 22 de diciembre)

EUA financia el femicidio

Esta violencia creada en los EUA está afectando especialmente a las mujeres. Una publicación indica que siete femicidios por día ocurren en México. (Vice, noviembre de 2017) Los asesinatos de



María de Jesús Patricio Martínez, escoltada por dos mujeres, habló ante multitudes masivas durante un proceso de seis meses en 2017 a través del cual las comunidades indígenas la nominaron como candidata a la presidencia de México.



Miles de personas recibieron a Marichuy en La Garrucha, en el estado de Chiapas, durante su campaña de 2017.

mujeres se han relacionado con la intensificación de la guerra contra las drogas por parte de muchos medios y fuentes gubernamentales. The Guardian escribe que de los más de “50.000 asesinatos de mujeres desde 1985, casi un tercio tuvo lugar en los últimos seis años”. En uno de los eventos de Marichuy en Chiapas, declaró: “Las mujeres son las que sienten el mayor dolor debido a asesinatos, desapariciones y encarcelamientos cometidos en el país”. (14 de diciembre)

Ella Continuó: “Pero es precisamente porque somos las que sentimos el dolor más profundo ... las mayores opresiones, es por eso que nosotras las mujeres también somos capaces de sentir la ira más profunda. Y debemos ser capaces de transformar esa ira de una manera organizada para pasar a la ofensiva para dismantelar el poder desde arriba, construyendo con determinación y sin miedo, el poder desde abajo.” (Vice, noviembre de 2017)

La campaña de Marichuy viajará a través de México para obtener apoyo. Su gira terminará en Tijuana, México, el 18 de febrero y tendrá una reunión binacional en el Puente de la Paz para los partidarios de México y Estados Unidos.

No importa si Marichuy gana las elecciones o no. Lo que su campaña refleja es que las mujeres y los indígenas ya no están sentados ociosamente mientras los poderosos, especialmente los hombres adinerados de descendencia europea, están destruyendo tanto la sociedad humana como el planeta. La campaña de Marichuy proporciona una plataforma no solo para las mujeres, personas LGBTQ y trabajadores migrantes, si no especialmente para los pueblos indígenas de México, cuyas voces ya no serán silenciadas. □