

# Prelude to May Day

# Migrants inspire unity

By LeiLani Dowell

**San Diego** is a border city barricaded from its Mexican sister city, Tijuana, by an ugly, metal wall. Recent days here have witnessed a much greater than usual level of activity on the part of La Migra (the U.S. Border Patrol) in the area's poorer communities, on public transportation and at the supermarkets where Spanish-speaking people shop. New immigration checkpoints have popped up on the streets of residential communities.

The unprecedented level of repression is frightening. But the huge outpouring of angry, pro-immigrant San Diegans on Feb. 18 made it clear that President Trump's racist, anti-immigrant program will meet strong resistance here. Thousands assembled at the County Administration Building that morning and marched downtown to the Federal Building, where their numbers filled the open plaza area and packed the street in front from curb to curb. Their message to President Trump was loud and clear: Muslim people and all immigrants are welcome here!

more on  
IMMIGRATION 4

Un Día sin Inmigrantes/A Day without Immigrants in the **Philadelphia** area caused many restaurants and other businesses to shut their doors on Feb. 16. A rally organized by Lucha Pro Licencias PA gathered at noon and marched around City Hall, despite cold, windy weather.

When the kitchen workers at Restaurant Bahama Breeze in the suburban King of Prussia area were fired the next morning for being absent, the Coalición Fortaleza Latina Pennsylvania urged supporters to call the business. The campaign won within hours, when the restaurant called every worker to tell them that they were rehired and would also be paid for the day off.

Many motorists on busy East Jefferson Avenue near downtown **Detroit** honked their horns in support on Feb. 17 as they passed a lively demonstration of 150 people on the sidewalk in front of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement building. The protest received wide coverage in the big-business-owned media.

The newly formed Michigan People's Defense Network called the action in solidarity with immigrants who are being targeted, banned, scapegoated, raided, rounded up and deported across the U.S. An MPDN statement noted, "The attacks on immigrants are intended to divide the working class and distract us from identifying the real threat and our common enemy: hate groups, the corporations and the banks." The network is a multinational and intergenerational organization founded to counter the racist and neofascist policies of Trump and his right-wing supporters. For more information, please like the group at facebook.com/MichiganPeoplesDefenseNetwork/.

Tens of thousands on Feb. 13 joined the Día sin Latinos, Inmigrantes y Refugiados/Strike Against Clarke rally and march to stop **Milwaukee** County Sheriff David Clarke from ordering deputies to act as Immigration

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On to March 8!



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# On the picket line

By Sue Davis

## Puzder withdraws; Acosta also anti-worker

Thousands of workers all over the country led the charge against wage-thief, sexist-pig, anti-minimum-wage, multimillionaire-fast-food-owner Andrew Puzder as Trump's pick for secretary of the Department of Labor. When Puzder withdrew his name from nomination on Feb. 15, it was a great victory for all U.S. workers — and a defeat for sore-loser Trump.

However, Trump's next appointee for the DOL, announced Feb. 16, is no better — and maybe even worse. The Ivy League-educated R. Alexander Acosta, the only son of Cuban immigrants, clerked for Judge Samuel Alito before Alito was appointed to the Supreme Court, was an anti-worker member of the National Labor Relations Board, is currently a Florida law school dean and might be the first Latinx in the Trump cabinet.

It's his actions as an assistant attorney general under President George W. Bush that expose him as a virulent racist. In an Ohio voting rights case in 2007, Acosta sided with Ohio Republicans who engaged in a racially motivated, illegal tactic known as “vote caging” — challenging the credentials of 23,000 mostly Black voters. (Rewire, Feb. 16) Time to mobilize once more to expose and defeat this blatant racist tool of the bosses and enemy of the working class.

## Momentive workers vote for contract

After striking since Nov. 2, the 750 workers at Momentive Performance Materials in Waterford, N.Y., agreed on Feb. 14 to a three-year contract that did not have massive health care or 401(k) cuts that the hedge fund bosses demanded in their “take it or leave it” offer. Even though the workers put up a strong defense, it was not a victory, despite a one-time signing payment of \$2,000 and a 2 percent raise in June and another in June 2018. There were cuts in health insurance and loss of vacation time for current workers and an end to health insurance for retirees. And the agreement did not immediately bring

back 27 workers fired during the strike for alleged misconduct on the picket line or for sabotage inside the plant before the strike. Their cases, to be heard by an independent arbitrator, could drag on for a long time. The vote of IUE/CWA Local 81359 (Electronic Workers/Communication Workers) members was 317-211.

While Dennis Trainor, CWA District 1 vice president, who helped negotiate the pact with Gov. Cuomo officials, issued a statement recognizing that “some members felt they didn't achieve everything they wanted or deserved,” he noted the workers and their families “can be proud of the battle they waged, and ... for the amazing support they received from the labor movement, the community and elected officials.” (timesunion.com, Feb. 14)

## W. Mass Workers Center sets up “Sanctuary in the Streets”

The Pioneer Valley Workers Center just initiated an action network, called “Sanctuary in the Streets: the Rapid Response Team of Western Massachusetts,” to support immigrants and stand against hate and deportation. The center, which works with other labor groups in Western Massachusetts, including Pioneer Valley Jobs With Justice, Pioneer Valley Central Labor Council and the UMass Labor Center, will provide Sanctuary Responder trainings. After filling out a form on its website (pvwc.org), the organization will contact volunteers via email or text to join public actions in support of immigrant communities.

Labor organizations and progressive groups are setting up similar rapid response teams around the country. Taking action showing solidarity is a vital way the labor movement can put the long-standing labor slogan, “An injury to one is an injury to all,” into practice.

## 21,000 AT&T Mobility workers begin contract fight

Members of the Communications Workers rallied around the country on Feb. 11 in solidarity with 21,000 AT&T Mobility workers represented by CWA in California and Nevada whose contract expired that day. The workers are now under an extended contract that can be terminated with 72 hours' notice.

AT&T wants to cut jobs by closing retail stores and shifting work to “authorized dealers,” by moving call center jobs overseas and by cutting commissions, among other demands. CWA announced on Feb. 15 that it is taking a two-week, cooling-off period after negotiations had become increasingly “contentious,” with AT&T making “greedy and retrogressive demands despite their huge profits.” (cwa-union.org) Solidarity is needed. Stay tuned. □

# WORKERS WORLD

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# WORKERS WORLD

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

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a handful of billionaires! But we need a revolution to make that change. That's why for 59 years WWP has been building a revolutionary party of the working class inside the belly of the beast.

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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# U.S. women plan for international women’s strike

By Sue Davis

Women who took to the streets Jan. 21 in the U.S. and around the world in a massive show of solidarity and resistance against President Trump’s anti-woman agenda have been asking: Where do we go from here?

A bold call for women in the U.S. to join a global women’s strike on International Women’s Day, March 8, provided the answer. The call, issued on Feb. 6, was initiated by a diverse group of eight politically active women in the U.S., including Angela Davis and Rasmea Yousef Odeh. It praised the new wave of militant feminist struggle. But they made it crystal clear it cannot be based on so-called “corporate feminism.” It must be inclusive, “feminism for the 99%.” (guardian.co.uk)

The statement noted: “[I]t is not enough to oppose Trump and his aggressively misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic and racist policies. ... Women’s conditions of life, especially those of women of color and of working, unemployed and migrant women, have steadily deteriorated over the last 30 years.”

The call then cited recent struggles for women’s rights around the world: in Poland against the abortion ban, in Latin America against male violence, in Italy for labor rights and in south Korea and Ireland in defense of reproductive rights. “Together, they herald a new international feminist movement with an expanded agenda: at once anti-racist, anti-imperialist, anti-heterosexist and anti-neoliberal.”

Urging women in the U.S. to join with feminist groups in at least 30 countries

who are already organizing the strike, the statement declared: “The idea is to mobilize women, including trans women, and all who support them in an international day of struggle — a day of striking, marching, blocking roads, bridges, and squares, abstaining from domestic, care and sex work, boycotting, calling out misogynistic politicians and companies, striking in educational institutions.”

**Organizing in the U.S.**

Progressive women in the U.S. eagerly responded to the call. Posted on women-strikeus.org is the strike platform: “In a spirit of solidarity and internationalism, in the United States, March 8 will be a day of action organized by and for women who have been marginalized and silenced by decades of neoliberalism directed toward working women, women of color, Native women, disabled women, immigrant women, Muslim women, lesbian, queer and trans women. ... [We are organizing] resistance not just against Trump and his misogynist policies, but also against the conditions that produced Trump, namely the decades-long economic inequality, racial and sexual violence, and imperial wars abroad.”

The platform lists six “common principles”: an end to gender violence both domestic and institutional; reproductive justice for all, cis and trans; labor rights, including equal pay that adequately provides for families; full “social provisioning,” including universal health care, adequate Social Security and free education for all; for an anti-racist and anti-imperialist feminism, which supports

all struggles against police brutality and mass incarceration; and environmental justice for all that seeks to end profits before people.

Though the call was issued only a month before the strike, groups from coast to coast have started meeting and organizing. About 35 groups are already listed on the website, along with the endorsement of the J21 Women’s March on Washington.

In New York City students at the New School have been holding planning meetings to shut down the college. More than 100 young activists met in Brooklyn on Feb. 18 and announced a rally at Washington Square Park at 4:00 p.m., with a march at 5:00 p.m. The route will pass various landmarks including the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire site, where 146 mostly young immigrant women died in 1911; Stonewall Inn, where the fight for LGBTQ rights was elevated in 1969; and the offices of Wall Street icon Goldman Sachs. The march will end at Zuccotti Park, the 2011 site of the anti-capitalist Occupy Wall Street encampment.

In Baltimore the newly organized Women’s Fightback Network has issued a call under the banner of “Women Unite to Fightback.” They are urging women to call in sick to their jobs, don’t go to school and don’t shop. An inclusive rally will start at 3:00 p.m. at the People’s Park, where speakers will address ending racism, sexism, LGBTQ bigotry, all forms of inequality and injustice and demand workers’ and immigrant rights. Activists will then march to the women’s jail to show support for the incarcerated women and call for an end to the prison-in-

dustrial complex. Then they will march to the Douglass Houses, where organizers will discuss their efforts to stop the privatization of public housing.

While the International Working Women’s Day Coalition in New York City plans to participate in the March 8 strike, the group will also continue its yearly tradition of holding a street meeting and an organizing roundtable luncheon, scheduled this year for March 11. Uniting many diverse, multinational, multigenerational progressive women’s groups in New York under the banner “Women in Rebellion: To Resist Is Justified,” the IWWD Coalition will gather at noon in the bustling shopping area of Herald Square. Among their targets will be fast food restaurants, where many working women of color are fighting for \$15 and a union.

After a march down Seventh Avenue past other targets, the activists will gather at a hall at 135 W. 23rd St. for the roundtable luncheon. Speakers from different groups will share their organizing goals, their victories and setbacks, and the lessons they have learned, along with how Trump has ignited their activism. The event is designed to promote the program, which includes demands for union jobs with equal pay; quality, affordable housing; free health care and education for all; the right to reproductive justice, including paid maternity and family medical leave; and an end to racism towards Muslim, Indigenous, Latinx, African American, Arab and Asian women; anti-LGBTQ bigotry; and sexual abuse and violence. Go to Facebook/International Working Women’s Coalition for more information. □

# Scientists go rogue vs. Trump’s gag order

By Lyn Neeley

Less than a week after taking office, President Donald Trump inflamed another section of the population by signing a gag order on scientists working in government agencies. The Environmental Protection Agency; the U.S. Department of Agriculture; the Department of the Interior, including the National Park Service; and the Department of Health and Human Services, which includes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, were all named.

A storm of resistance to Trump’s gag order prompted independent calls for a national March for Science to be held on April 22, Earth Day, in Washington, D.C. Coordinated protests will be held in cities across the country and around the globe. (marchforscience.com)

Moreover, EPA scientists, environmental lawyers and policy experts, and the union that represents the agency’s employees, strongly campaigned to stop the Senate confirmation of Trump-appointed Scott Pruitt to head the agency. Nearly 800 former EPA staff members signed a letter opposing his appointment.

However, the Senate confirmed Pruitt, a friend of Big Oil, even though he has sued the EPA 14 times, often in league with fossil fuel companies, and opposes federal action to reduce pollution. While Oklahoma attorney general, he shut down the state’s EPA department and ignored environmental protection laws.

Trump ordered removal of all fact-based studies, press releases, social media and blogs related to EPA research

that show evidence of carbon emissions intensifying global warming. Everything must now be first reviewed by the Trump administration.

Plans are underway to cut the EPA’s budget by \$1 billion and cut thousands of staff members. (Daily News, Jan. 26) Trump ordered the agency to freeze all grants and contracts, which will impact programs that improve air quality, protect drinking water, and dispose of hazardous waste and toxins.

**Mobilizing for ‘March for Science’**

The initial call for the march collected over 60,000 members overnight. Twitter sites are growing as plans develop; see #StandUp4Science and #ScienceMarch.

Hundreds of thousands of science supporters have signed up to help organize and participate in the April 22 demonstrations. Student rallies are being planned at the University of Florida in Gainesville and at the University of Texas in Austin. Science organizations like the American Geophysical Union and the American Association for the Advancement of Science are mobilizing for these protests.

Liz Hostetler, co-founder of the Austin March for Science, said a main goal of their demonstration is diversity — to attract all kinds of scientists and non-scientists. She said, “I believe that when science and the spread of scientific information is blocked, it will lead to the stagnation of that society.” (The Daily Texan, Feb. 8)

Union of Concerned Scientists senior analyst Erika Spanger-Siegfried posted an appeal Jan. 26 at their website: “Re-

sist this: The Trump Administration’s Control+Alt+Delete Strategy on Climate Change.” It explains the White House is trying to “control scientists working in federal agencies, alter science-based policies and delete scientific information.”

The UCS says, “Scientists, universities, nonprofits” and individuals “have teamed up to download and safeguard federal resources — data, reports, tools, etc.” The organization states, “Federal employees, now restricted on Twitter, have secured ‘rogue’ Twitter handles” and are communicating “with the public, to greater followings than ever.” (tinyurl.com/zzbswyb)

**#NotAltWorld**

By silencing agency scientists, Trump has unleashed over 80 rogue Twitter accounts by anonymous federal employees, such as #ungaggedEPA, #StuffEPAWouldSay and #NotAltWorld.

A posting on #NotAltWorld reads, “Can’t wait for President Trump to call us fake news” and “You can take our official Twitter, but you’ll never take our free time!” (Jan. 24)

#RogueNASA stands for “science and climate news and facts. Real news, real facts.” Trump tweeted there, “As your president, I have no higher duty than to protect the lives of the American people.” In response someone posted, “And you can start by protecting and preserving the planet we call home.” (Jan. 26)

Trump favors business interests over protecting the environment. He wrongly blames China for creating the concept of global warming “to make U.S. manufacturing noncompetitive.” (#NotAltWorld,



Jan. 26) He also tweeted: “Any and all weather events are used by the global warming hoaxsters to justify higher taxes to save our planet! They don’t believe it.”

Trump’s ridiculous claims are refuted worldwide. There is a consensus among 97 percent of climate-change scientists that global warming trends from the last 100 years are caused by humans. In January, data from NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration showed that 2016 was the hottest year in recorded history.

While the White House debunks climate-change science, socialist Cuba is planning to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels by building 59 new solar parks. The goal is to increase renewable energy so it produces 24 percent of the country’s electricity by 2030.

Communication and collaboration are cornerstones of scientific inquiry and they are increasing internationally. Sharing research fosters ideas, creativity and facts that the world relies on. Censorship and the promotion of policies that maximize capitalist profits, while ignoring environmental devastation, lead to fake science. That does a disservice to the world’s peoples and is damaging to the planet itself. □



# Day without Immigrants:

# Trump/ICE say ‘get out,’ immigrants say ‘walk out!’

## NEXT STEP: MAY DAY 2017

By Teresa Gutierrez

One day after tens of thousands of immigrants and their supporters walked off their jobs and out of schools, the Associated Press released an ominous plan from the Donald Trump administration that was likely leaked from a White House source.

The “Day Without Immigrants” took place throughout the U.S. on Feb. 16. The one-day strike even shut down the Senate cafeteria in Washington, D.C.

Communities were shut down as businesses and restaurants closed, either in solidarity or because not enough workers came to work. Actions were held in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Houston, Los Angeles, Chicago, Oklahoma City and many other places. At a Tennessee-based painting company, 18 workers skipped work to attend a rally.

“For one single day on a weekday, we must come together and unite in absolute resistance in order to reject the system,” read a social media post promoting the campaign.

The work stoppage, which included thousands of students, is a sign of things to come as the Trump administration implements anti-worker and anti-immigrant policies affecting everyone but the super-rich.

Organizers, activists and progressives from immigrant rights, labor and other struggles are all planning other major actions in the coming months. This especially will culminate with May Day, International Workers Day, May 1, which this year is on Monday.

Throughout the country, diverse activists and organizers are saying that May Day 2017 is likely to be huge. Plans are being made now to shut things down starting at 5 a.m., according to some groups.

### Homeland Security retaliates

The “Day Without Immigrants” was slightly pushed off the headlines Feb. 17 after the White House leak dominated the news.

The Atlantic and other sources reported Feb. 17 on an Associated Press “bombshell” — an announcement that the Trump administration was considering “mobilizing as many as 100,000 National Guard troops to round up unauthorized immigrants.”

The news shocked immigrants and their advocates, even though use of the National Guard is not new. Both former President George H. Bush and former Gov. Rick Perry of Texas called on them, but not in such large numbers. Trump is also asking for more enforcement power than previous officials.

That proposal would further militarize immigrant communities already reeling from racial profiling and the constant threat of deportation.

Gestapo-like raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement have already begun. Advocates report that almost 1,000 people were picked up in recent weeks.

Entire communities are desperate, not knowing if or when they will be deported. U.S.-born children are living with the trauma that they may come home to an empty house because their parents have been seized and deported.

Dreamer activists who won some relief through the Deferred Action for Child-

hood Arrivals program are living in limbo, as the Trump administration aims to undermine that victory. Dreamers are now being picked up and detained, facing possible deportation.

One of those was Daniel Ramirez Medina in Seattle, who is being detained despite his DACA status. When the youth explained his status, an ICE agent told Ramirez, “It doesn’t matter, because you weren’t born in this country.”

Latinx, Black, Muslim and Asian immigrants are besieged under a tidal wave of anti-immigrant diatribe and actions; it’s a wholesale war on people of color.

The leaked proposal aggravates this tense situation.

The memo stated that the National Guard would be used not only in large immigrant communities, but also in areas nowhere near the Mexican border.

According to AP, “The 11-page document calls for the unprecedented militarization of immigration enforcement as far north as Portland, Ore., and as far east as New Orleans, La.” Other states include California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Illinois.

According to the Pew Research Center, nearly half of the 12 million undocumented in the U.S. live in the 11 states targeted.

Within minutes of the leak, Trump officials denied the story.

Press Secretary Sean Spicer told reporters that this was not a White House document. The Atlantic correctly pointed out that this was “intriguing, because Spicer wasn’t denying that the memo was real; he was only saying it came from outside the White House.” According to the AP report, it was written by none other than Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly!

Within two hours the full text of the memo was available online. The Atlantic reported that it was “full of bullet points, legal citations and footnotes.”

It is unknown how far Kelly’s proposal will go. It would require a great deal of money, which must be approved by Congress. One of the memo’s main points, adding 5,000 new border guards, is indeed expected to be implemented.

But whether it is fully implemented or not, it has already served its purpose: to further terrorize the immigrant community and create a climate of fear.

Immigrant advocates say that Trump has set the tone for an era of unprecedented enforcement. “The level of anxiety and fear has increased tremendously,” said Cristina Jiménez from United We Dream. “What is clear under Trump’s executive order is that everyone is a criminal.”

### Trump: the ICE Man

Raids, roundups and “knocks on doors” are all increasing under Trump. An anonymous immigration official told the Washington Post that ICE is flooding “target-rich environments.” (Feb. 11)

An unprecedented development during the 2016 presidential campaign was the endorsement of Trump by the National Border Patrol Council, which represents about 17,000 Border Patrol agents. It had never before endorsed candidates.

The council’s statement declared: “If we do not secure our borders, American communities [read “white people” — TG] will continue to suffer at the hands of gangs, cartels and violent criminals. The

lives and security of the American people are at stake, and the National Border Patrol Council will not sit on the sidelines.”

It continues, “America has already tried an articulate freshman senator. ... We need a person in the White House who doesn’t fear the media, who doesn’t embrace political correctness, who doesn’t need the money, ... who is pro-military and values law enforcement, and who is angry for America. ... Trump will embrace the ideas of rank-and-file Border Patrol agents. ...

“There is no greater physical or economic threat ... than our open border. ... In view of these threats, the National Border Patrol Council ... asks the American people to support Mr. Trump in his mission to finally secure the border of the United States of America, before it is too late.”

Trump is ICE’s man. The NBPC statement is only one example of the vile, racist ideology of those who are rounding up and terrorizing our sisters and brothers.

White House adviser Steve Bannon is also ICE’s man. Bannon was the head of the far right Breitbart News, the website that publishes ICE leaks. Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY), of the Congressional Black Caucus, correctly called Bannon a “a stone cold racist.”

Trump has had the most successful meetings in Washington with the police terrorizing the Black community and the ICE agents itching to pick up and deport us all.

Like police, most ICE recruits are questionable people. According to a former senior Homeland Security official, nearly 60 percent of applicants fail a polygraph test.

The Feb. 17 New York Times wrote that during the George W. Bush administration, “Thousands were hired ... who were accused of taking bribes and providing information to Mexican drug cartels. The former senior homeland security official, James Tomsheck, from the office of internal affairs, said many of the new hires were members of the cartels.” Tomsheck was later removed.

These same agents who refused sensitivity training under Obama want to work with impunity and be able to pick up, detain and deport each and every immigrant despite their status. This amounts to wholesale ethnic cleansing.

In a Feb. 16 New York Times opinion piece, Linda Greenhouse stated that she expects agents to function “with the responsibility of treating unauthorized immigrants not as prey but as human beings entitled to dignity.” This is the opinion of someone who does not have a revolutionary class view, who is unaware of the grim reality for workers of color.

ICE is a racist occupying force that cannot be sensitized; it must be disbanded.

Many well-meaning protesters carry placards stating that current immigration policy does not represent “America.”

But immigration policy has always been repressive and exploitative. The only difference in how much exploitation depends on what the economic needs of the capitalist class are at any moment. Italian, Irish and Jewish immigrants were once rounded up, beaten and jailed.

Greenhouse mentions the case of Guadalupe García de Rayos, a Phoenix mother of two who showed up for her routine check-in at her local ICE office. She was coldly and abruptly deported.

The journalist continues, “I’d like to think we’re better than that. A month ago, we were.” This completely and thoroughly ignores the fact that Democratic President Barack Obama deported more people than any other president in U.S. history!

This liberal thinking must be ripped from the headlines and from every placard at every demonstration. A month ago things were not better at all.

### Racism at all levels

The day before the leaked memo, in a display of extreme racist, colonial paternalism, certain members of Congress — all Latinx — were not allowed into a Feb. 16 Homeland Security meeting on the raids.

Speaker of the House Paul Ryan and acting ICE head Thomas Homan asked Rep. Luis Gutiérrez (D-IL) and Norma Torres (D-CA), two members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, to leave. Others were barred entry altogether.

“In 20-plus years, I have never heard of the Republicans controlling what meetings Democrats can have with officials of the executive branch and never had a staffer ask me to leave a meeting to which I am entitled to attend,” said Gutiérrez, an active defender of immigrants.

The meeting, requested by the CHC to discuss the rise of raids and detentions, was originally scheduled for Feb. 14. But ICE canceled at the last minute, saying too many people wanted to attend. ICE said Homan would meet with a bipartisan group of lawmakers instead.

The Feb. 16 Huffington Post reports, “ICE set the invite list for the meeting and initially excluded the entire Congressional Hispanic Caucus ... before agreeing to include a small number of members.” Gutiérrez and Torres were not on the list.

“Even though they were not invited, Torres and Gutiérrez tried to enter the meeting and several other Hispanic Caucus members stood outside. Members said Gutiérrez was kicked out of the room first, and then Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) asked Torres to leave. Before she left, she asked ICE officials when she could get answers to questions about the raids. She said the officials did not answer; instead, Goodlatte told her that Republican leadership could get information to them.

“I speak English — I don’t need a translator,” Torres told reporters afterward.”

It is no coincidence that those kicked out are from states with not only large concentrations of immigrants but also huge demonstrations and activity.

One of those allowed in, Joaquin Castro (D-TX), tweeted, “After attending the ICE meeting it’s hard not to conclude that President Trump has started his mass deportation plan. Only Dreamers with no offenses (including traffic tickets) or perceived gang affiliations seem exempt.”

That is one of the reasons why the Democrats are in motion now. The threat is that they will once again misguide the movement into the electoral arena.

What good is it to be elected if you can’t even get into the meeting you need to be in?

### Tasks for the movement

The wave of anti-Trump protests from all levels — liberal or revolutionary,

*Continued on page 11*



# Behind ouster of Flynn

## Ruling class rejects Trump rapprochement with Russia

By Fred Goldstein

Feb. 19 — What is behind the ouster of Donald Trump’s national security adviser, retired Army General Michael Flynn, and the surge in attempts to generate panic over Trump’s “ties to Russia”? And what concerns do the working class and the oppressed have in this matter?

A major struggle is going on over the diplomatic/military orientation of U.S. imperialism. It is between the Trump White House, on the one hand, which has been seeking a rapprochement with Russia, and, on the other hand, the mainstream capitalist class, large sections of the military, both Democrat and Republican political establishment, and the media, all of which have a firmly anti-Russia orientation.

### Struggle over two imperialist war policies

This struggle is basically over two different policies for imperialist aggression. The Trump grouping, which includes Steve Bannon, his strategy advisor, and Michael Flynn (now fired), wants to use a realignment with Russia against China and is for an expanded war in the Middle East, allegedly against Islam.

The working class, the oppressed and the progressive movement should oppose both camps and seek an independent policy in opposition to Washington’s aggressive stance toward Russia while at the same time not being lured into Trump’s so-called “peace” camp.

For the working class and progressives to get a clear view of the matter, it is best to set aside all speculation about what Flynn and others might have said to Russian officials, who may have hacked into whose emails or affected the election. It is not necessary to know any of that to understand this struggle.

But, for clarity, we will cite Time magazine of Feb. 27-March 6. In an article titled “What’s Wrong with Russia?” Time gave its version of the conflict with Russia and then continued:

“Perhaps the most important front in this new conflict has been unfolding in the West Wing. Over the course of the past three months, according to senior Trump administration officials and others who have participated, quiet but consequential talks have taken place there over whether the U.S. should resist Putin in his new campaign or cede to Russia a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe [and,] in return for an alliance against ISIS, work to reduce nuclear-weapons stockpiles and help constrain China.

“Donald Trump has publicly enunciated parts of such a grand bargain, as have top advisers Steve Bannon and National Security Adviser Michael Flynn. The White House officials who have advocated such a deal ... see nationalism as the basis for all-important fights against Islamic extremism and China’s rise.

“Opposing a Russia deal are such Cabinet secretaries as Defense Secretary James Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson ... backed by virtually the entire foreign policy establishment.

“Flynn’s ouster makes it politically more difficult for those who would like to advance a pro-Moscow strategy.”

### Trump called for realignment during entire campaign

Whether or not the Time article is correct in its details or its formulations, it is not difficult to understand the axis of the

struggle. Trump has been saying it out loud since his campaign began.

He has constantly pleaded from the platform, in between his racist, misogynist and anti-immigrant diatribes and his wild attacks on the media: “Wouldn’t it be a good thing if we got along with Russia. We could join together and fight ISIS ... and terrorism.”

He’s been saying for over a year, “We could reduce nuclear weapons,” etc. And each time he says it, it sets off alarm bells in the Pentagon, in the spy agencies, in the anti-Russian mainstream media, in the political establishment and in the board rooms of military corporations.

### Bannon, the ideologue behind Trump

Trump’s attempted political maneuver with Putin, which may already have failed, is promoted by his political guru, right-wing ideologue Steve Bannon. Bannon has an apocalyptic worldview that calls for war against Islam and China.

The South China Morning Post reported on Feb. 17 about Bannon’s outlook: “The United States and China will fight a war within the next ten years over islands in the South China Sea, and ‘there’s no doubt about that.’ At the same time, the U.S. will be in another ‘major’ war in the Middle East.”

This attempt to reorient Washington’s foreign policy, however, is a completely naive move by Trump. His overblown ego leads him to believe that it is possible to tear up all the Pentagon, State Department and CIA plans to subdue Russia.

That is why the biggest hawks in the Senate, pro-Pentagon Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham, have led the charge to investigate Flynn and the White House. Meanwhile, Secretary of Defense Mattis, Secretary of State Tillerson and Vice President Mike Pence were in Europe defending NATO, warning Russia that there would be no military collaboration and pledging support to Ukraine.

### Military high command wants Bannon out

It is significant that retired Vice Admiral Robert Harward twice turned down the Trump administration’s request that he take Flynn’s place as national security advisor. Harward was a Navy SEAL, the deputy commander of U.S. Central Command, the representative of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the National Counterterrorism Center, and the director of strategy and policy on the National Security Council staff.

For such a former high-ranking officer to turn down the president is almost unprecedented. Harward explained his objections: Trump and Bannon refused to let him have his own staff. Beyond that, Harward told the White House that “he wanted a clear chain of command reporting directly to the president, and most importantly, to restore the NSC structure of prior administrations ... so that political advisors like Steve Bannon would not have a seat on the Principals Committee.” (“All In with Chris Hayes,” MSNBC, Feb. 17)

The military high command are opposed to Bannon telling them where and when to make war. Additionally, returning to the previous NSC structure would mean returning the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to a standing position on the NSC Principals Committee, a steering committee of sorts that meets frequently and is the most powerful organ in the foreign and military policy structure.

The workers, oppressed and progressive forces of this country must follow the Leninist dictum that “the enemy is at home.” We must be against our own ruling class trying to subordinate Russia to U.S. imperialism.

Trump forces reorganized the NSC to put Bannon on the Principals Committee and at the same time removed the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the head of National Intelligence, reducing them to members who would be invited at “appropriate times.”

It is clear why the Joint Chiefs and the head of National Intelligence were removed. They would be opposed to a rapprochement with Russia.

The entire Pentagon, Wall Street and the political establishment have been geared up to threaten Russia ever since Washington failed to completely take over Ukraine. The fascist coup in 2014 was engineered by the Clinton State Department and the CIA and begun by the European Union. Its progress was halted by the resistance in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine.

Washington and the Pentagon were furious when the Putin government moved with lightning speed to take Crimea back for Russia. (Crimea, which has a majority Russian population, was originally part of the Soviet Union separate from Ukraine.) Russia then effectively supported the insurgency in the east against the pro-Western imperialist government in Kiev, backed by fascist storm troopers.

Russia was seeking to prevent NATO from advancing further east to its borders. The taking of Crimea can be understood as a strategic move to block the Pentagon and CIA from seizing Russia’s only Black Sea port at Sebastopol.

The seizure of Ukraine by Washington had been preceded in 1999 by the incorporation of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO, in violation of Washington’s pledges not to do so.

### For workers and oppressed ‘the enemy is at home’

In the struggle between Russia and Washington, the workers, oppressed and progressive forces of this country must follow the Leninist dictum that “the enemy is at home.” We must be against our own ruling class trying to subordinate Russia to U.S. imperialism.

The Democratic Party leadership is vigorously promoting the anti-Russia line to explain their loss in the presidential election, thereby adding their weight to Washington’s aggressive, warlike policy toward Russia. The masses of activists who are mobilizing to resist the racist, anti-immigrant and reactionary Trump agenda should not fall into the Democrats’ trap.

By the same token, the workers, small farmers and oppressed peoples in Russia, while defending their country against U.S. imperialism, must fight Putin and their own oligarchic ruling class.

### Who is Putin?

Putin represents the oligarchs who engineered the destruction of the Soviet Union, divided up socialist property to enrich themselves, and turned the country into a capitalist nightmare.

Putin wants to expand Russia’s control into the “near abroad,” meaning the former Soviet republics that have also gone capitalist. Putin is supporting the right

wing in Europe, most of which is racist, nationalist and anti-gay. The right is opposed to the European Union and some also oppose NATO, but on reactionary, nationalist grounds.

Moscow funded Marine Le Pen’s racist National Front with bank loans in 2014. (Politico, Jan. 4) Le Pen just called the masses who rebelled against police brutality in Paris “scum.” The Russian government in December signed a long-term agreement of cooperation with the right-wing Freedom Party in Austria. And conferences of the European right wing have been held in Moscow.

Putin espouses Christian “morality,” Russian nationalism and anti-gay laws against public display of affection between members of the same sex on the grounds of protecting children.

Most important, since Putin came to power after pro-U.S. Boris Yeltsin was ousted, Russian billionaire oligarchs have consolidated Russia’s finance and industrial corporations; their overseas direct investments have expanded from \$40 billion in 2000 to \$406 billion in 2013. They have holdings all over the world, from Latvia to Africa to Europe. There are over 100 billionaires in Russia.

### Trump and the press

Trump has been attacking the press ever since his campaign began. Trump and Bannon have called the press the “opposition party.” And recently Trump called the press “the enemy of the American people.” This is an ominous pronouncement from an authoritarian figure.

The capitalist press represents various factions of the ruling class. It is actually an informal part of the capitalist state, sometimes called “the fourth estate.” The media are the modern means of ideological compulsion. They promote the general line of the ruling class, informing the bourgeoisie of trends and events important to them. They are also used to persecute leaders of the workers and the oppressed or radicals.

But at times, when the interests of large sections of the bourgeoisie are endangered by a part of the capitalist government, the press is used to help enforce the discipline of the ruling class.

Trump knows this and is trying to counter the current press campaign, which is not only against his attempted reorientation to Russia, but also against his racist, authoritarian Muslim ban, and in general his threats to upend the basic foundations of bourgeois stability.

He knows the media were used in the struggles against Joseph McCarthy, against the Pentagon’s Vietnam War, against Nixon in Watergate. His attacks on the media are preventive measures against attempts by the bourgeoisie to discredit his regime.

The working class needs freedom of the press both to protect its own press and because it can get valuable information from the capitalist press to carry out the class struggle. The venal, anti-working class capitalist media are no friend, but freedom of the press is a democratic right that the working class must defend. □



# Du Bois’ ‘BLACK RECONSTRUCTION’ and the lessons

*The following is based on a talk given by WW Managing Editor LeiLani Dowell on Feb. 16.*

By LeiLani Dowell

W.E.B. Du Bois’ “Black Reconstruction” is part of the effort that Black History Month engages in — the attempt to rectify the erasure and maligning of the lives and struggle of enslaved, formerly enslaved and immigrant Black people in the U.S. from the very founding of this country on stolen land.

Du Bois was born in Great Barrington, Mass., in 1868. He studied at Fisk University, Humboldt University in Berlin, and Harvard, where he was the first African American to earn a doctorate. He became a professor of history, sociology and economics at Atlanta University in 1897. In 1931, he began the research and writing of “Black Reconstruction.”

The book showcases a turn to Marxist analysis. Du Bois had visited the Soviet Union in 1928, and while he had some critiques he was also impressed by the emphasis on workers there.

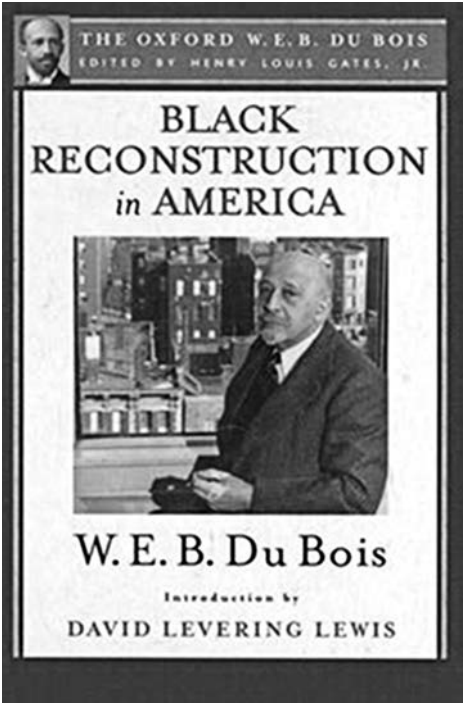
With “Black Reconstruction,” Du Bois was correcting the historical record. Almost all histories produced at that time either negated the Black role in the Civil War and Reconstruction, or defended the overthrow of Reconstruction as the fault of Black people.

Du Bois’ book is also a plea for labor unity on the eve of the 1930’s Great Depression. He uses a specifically Marxist analysis to serve as an admonition. He writes, “The rebuilding, whether it comes now or a century later, will and must go back to the basic principles of Reconstruction ... —Land, Light, and Leading for slaves black, brown, yellow and white, under a dictatorship of the proletariat.”

### Black workers, poor whites, planters

So Du Bois begins his book with a chapter entitled “The Black Worker.” And with this title and this placement as the first chapter, Du Bois is laying the stakes. He wants his readers to know the importance of Black labor to the developing system of capitalism on a global scale.

He writes: “Cotton grew so swiftly that ... with this increase, walked economic revolution in a dozen different lines. ... Black labor became the foundation stone not only of the Southern social structure, but of Northern manufacture and commerce, of the English factory system, of European commerce, of buying and sell-



ing on a worldwide scale; new cities were built on the results of black labor.”

But if Black labor was foundational to the system, it is also foundational to the resistance as well. Du Bois states that “of all human development, ancient and modern, not the least singular and significant is the philosophy of life and action which slavery bred in the souls of black folk.”

Next, Du Bois discusses the poor white of the South, whom he says was used as a “special police force” to create “an armed and commissioned camp to keep Negroes in slavery and to kill the black rebel.” How and why were poor whites able to be used this way?

Well, Du Bois notes that “the new labor that came to the United States ... was not willing, after it reached America, to regard itself as a permanent laboring class. ... The more energetic and thrifty among the immigrants caught the prevalent [U.S.] American idea that here labor could become emancipated from the necessity of continuous toil and that an increasing proportion could join the class of exploiters.”

It’s what Du Bois calls the American assumption, and what we might think of in today’s terms as the American Dream. In pursuit of the American Dream, these poor white workers in the South allied with the planter in the hopes of ultimately becoming one.

In contrast, Du Bois notes that “the black worker was the ultimate exploited; ... had neither wish nor power to escape from the labor status, in order to directly exploit other laborers, or indirectly, by alliance with capital, to share in their exploitation.”

These divisions resulted in, according to Du Bois, two labor movements — one seeking the abolition of slavery, the other focused on bettering the condition of white workers. And each, Du Bois notes, either ignored or was unsympathetic to the other.

The third of the cast of characters in the South is the planter. For the planter, slavery represented not just profits, but political power via the “three-fifths” compromise, which was “used not only to degrade Negroes in theory, but in practice to disenfranchise the white South.”

Planters were desperately holding on to an outdated mode of production. Du Bois says that “slavery was the economic lag of the 16th century carried over into the 19th century and bringing by contrast and by friction moral lapses and political differences.”

### Harpers Ferry, cotton and war

This all came to a head in 1860, when the cotton crop reached an all-time high in production. A year previous, John Brown had led the raid at Harpers Ferry, and the threat of further social upheaval coupled with the greed of the planters forced a crisis. Beginning with South Carolina, Southern states began seceding. The Civil War had begun.

Du Bois quotes Frederick Douglass, who said the war was begun “in the interests of slavery on both sides. The South was fighting to take slavery out of the Union, and the North fighting to keep it in the Union; the South fighting to get it beyond the limits of the United States Constitution, and the North fighting for the old guarantees;—both despising the Negro, both insulting the Negro.”

Today, Lincoln is celebrated as the president who “freed the slaves.” But Lincoln was, in the beginning, intent on making clear that the war was not one of liberation for the millions of enslaved people. Lincoln even ordered Union troops to return enslaved people back to their “owners.” His motivation for war was to support the burgeoning Northern industrial system of capitalism, which needed a large geographical market and did not want to compete with seceded Southern states for international markets.

But in what Du Bois calls “a general strike,” droves of enslaved Black people began leaving the plantations and arriving at the Union encampments. The South, it was believed, had the advantage in the war because its white laborers were freed up to fight, since enslaved labor would supply food and supplies to the troops.

The enslaved, however, made excellent spies and saboteurs for the Union side. And once they had turned the war into a war of liberation, they would fight until the very end, even while enduring the racism and discrimination of the Northern troops.

It wasn’t until the enslaved forced upon Lincoln the consciousness that this was, in fact, a war against slavery, and that, in fact, it would not be won by the Union unless the Union emancipated

them, that Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

And so the period of Reconstruction begins, and Du Bois once again highlights the centrality of Black struggle. In an article that was the precursor to “Black Reconstruction,” entitled “Reconstruction and Its Benefits,” Du Bois writes: “How to train and treat these ex-slaves easily became a central problem of Reconstruction. ... Three agencies undertook the solution of this problem ... : (a) the Negro church, (b) the Negro school, and (c) the Freedmen’s Bureau.”

Here, Du Bois highlights Black leadership and organization. A whole chapter in “Black Reconstruction” is dedicated to the founding of the public school in the South, which he attributes directly to the desire of Black people to learn and develop intellectually. But in addition, he notes the importance of the federal Freedman’s Bureau, which he calls “an attempt to establish a government guardianship over the Negroes and insure their economic and civil rights.”

Its eventual rejection, and the eventual overthrow of Reconstruction as a whole, was, as Du Bois states, “chiefly because the new industry, the money-making financiers and organizers of a vast economic empire, hesitated at a government guardianship of labor and control of industry on a scale that might embarrass future freedom of exploitation.” Northern and Southern capital shook hands, and the federal government pulled its troops out of the South, leaving Black people defenseless, particularly in the face of Ku Klux Klan terror and violence.

### The Trump era

I’ve been trying hard to consider what “Black Reconstruction” means in the Trump era. Certainly the connection between the overthrow of Reconstruction and the need for the Black Lives Matter movement to challenge the continued legal and extralegal murders of Black people is obvious.

Perhaps the “general strike” is one of the greatest lessons we can take. It is clear that voting the Lincoln/Johnson ticket did not result in the end of slavery. What ended it was the mass of enslaved people taking to the streets and withholding their labor.

I’ve also been thinking about the retreat of the Northern army. And in some ways, I think we can see this election as the beginnings of a retreat of the government on the issue of democratic rights. I don’t think it’s overblown to say that anything is up for grabs right now, unless we resist.

And I think that, rather than dismissing Trump and his crew as “evil,” “wrong” or “stupid,” Du Bois’s careful delineation of the motives of both sides of capital in the Reconstruction struggle encourages us to think about what this political moment says about the dead-end crisis of capitalism as a whole. Like then, the politicians of the two-party system, with dif-

## In honor of Black History Month ‘Black Reconstruction in America’ tour

Led by WW Managing Editor LeiLani Dowell, political discussions on W.E.B. Du Bois’s 1935 sweeping analysis of the Civil War and Reconstruction Period, its relevance to Black Lives Matter and the need for class solidarity will be held in the following cities:

- **Feb. 25 in Boston** at 4 p.m., The Action Center at the Brewery, 284 Amory Street, Jamaica Plain, 617-522-6626
- **Feb. 26 in Baltimore** from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Harriet Tubman Solidarity Center, 2011 N. Charles Street, 21218, 443-221-3775
- **Feb. 27 in Philadelphia**, 6:30 p.m. at Calvary Church, 801 S. 48th St., 19143, 610-931-2615



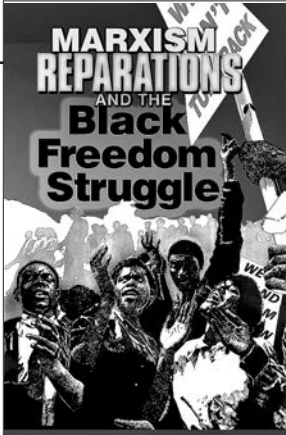
LeiLani Dowell

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

## MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

- Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination** Larry Holmes
- Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy
- Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell
- The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead
- Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights** Imani Henry
- Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad



GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON



# for today

ferent tactics, have one goal in mind — the preservation of the system of capitalism.

There is also, of course, a lesson about working-class unity. Du Bois notes that it was precisely the failure of Black-white unity that led to the overthrow of Reconstruction. Class unity “failed to work,” according to Du Bois, “because the theory of race was supplemented by a carefully planned and slowly evolved method, which drove ... a wedge between the black and white workers.”

Du Bois recognized that working-class unity could have resulted in a real dictatorship of labor in the U.S., that there was serious revolutionary potential that was thwarted at the time by the machinations of the Southern planters and the Northern industrialists.

We must continue struggling for unity, and we must realize that the capitalist ruling class inculcates and promotes the racism of whites to foment divisions that are custom-made to preserve capitalism and imperialism. And we must organize ourselves for the general strikes of the future, with a clear-headed understanding of the maneuverings, opportunism and outright lies used to preserve capitalism.

Comrades and friends, we must study and we must fight. And we must continue the struggle for Black liberation, and for workers’ liberation, that was waged by Black folk and their collaborators during the Civil War and Reconstruction. □

# Police assail Black Resistance March

**By Betsey Piette Philadelphia**

A Black Resistance March in Philadelphia on Feb. 17 to protest police terror in the era of Trump’s law-and-order policies was brutally confronted by Philadelphia police near Temple University campus at the end of the action.

When demonstrators attempted to enter Morgan Hall, a symbol of the university’s expanding gentrification of neighboring African-American communities, police pushed back and tried to kettle them using bicycles as weapons. In reaction, protesters then shifted their focus to a Bank of America across the street, at which point the police began to pepper spray protesters.

Four protesters were subsequently arrested while several others were injured by the police, who pepper sprayed them at close range, pushed them to the ground and pulled some by their hair. One older woman, who was pepper-sprayed and pushed by police, suffered multiple injuries including a broken nose.

Police continued their brutality against activists Feb. 18, when they suddenly arrested seven people who were doing jail solidarity for three of the men initially arrested who were still being held.

While Philadelphia police have a history of violently confronting activists, this

may be the first time in recent memory that pepper spray was used. Since police were not wearing gear to protect themselves against the caustic spray, three officers required treatment as well, victims of “friendly fire.”

To cover their mistakes and injuries of fellow officers, Temple University police officer Glen Ehly claimed that demonstrators “sprayed the officers in the face with some kind of chemical irritant like pepper spray.” (The Temple News, Feb. 18) This lie was picked up by mainstream media stations, which made no mention of the injured demonstrators.

However, Megan Malachi, one of the organizers of the Black Resistance March, countered with: “We were attempting to continue our protest, continuing to assert our rights to protest and police did not want us to go certain places and they decided they were going to stop us by being violent. There is no such thing as a peaceful protest when police are present.” (NBC News, Feb. 18)

Some demonstrators who witnessed the confrontation told Workers World that Temple police officers were the first to use the pepper spray. Just before the confrontation, the demonstrators had called out Temple police for covering up the murder of 24-year-old Joyce Quaweay, who was beaten to death by two former Temple University police of-

ficers in August 2016.

The rally and march organized by the Philadelphia REAL (Racial, Economic and Legal) Justice Coalition started earlier in the afternoon at Thomas Paine Plaza near City Hall in front of a bronze statue of Frank Rizzo, notoriously racist former Philadelphia mayor and police commissioner. Rally organizers seek to have the statue removed.

Speakers denounced Philadelphia’s current mayor, Jim Kenney, for backing down on his campaign promise to end the policy of Stop and Frisk. As the march of around 200 people made its way north on Broad Street, it paused outside the school district headquarters, where speakers addressed a crisis of toxic water in West Philadelphia High School.

Further north on Broad Street at the site of the Divine Lorraine Hotel, a historic building now being converted to condominiums, others addressed the crisis of gentrification. At Broad and Girard, a U.S. flag was burned as REAL Justice organizer Erica Mines described the flag as a symbol of the long history of U.S. wars and imperialist invasions of other countries.

The REAL Justice action was one of hundreds of protests held across the U.S. as part of the Strike4Democracy, under the theme of resistance to the Trump administration. □

# Behind the attack on Charles Oakley

**By Monica Moorehead**

The brutal assault on former New York Knicks basketball player Charles Oakley at Madison Square Garden on Feb. 8 profoundly illustrates once again the central issue of institutionalized racism in sports, particularly the relationship between Black male athletes in the National Basketball Association and the billionaire white team owners.

Oakley, an African American and a very popular Knicks player from 1988 until 1998, was dragged out of the arena by at least half a dozen majority white MSG security guards and New York City police officers during a nationally televised game. He was arrested and charged with criminal trespassing and three misdemeanor counts of assault for “hitting” security guards. None of the security guards or police were charged with assaulting Oakley, although the head of MSG security was subsequently fired.

The Knicks’ white owner, James Dolan, had given orders to the security guards to remove Oakley from the Garden. Oakley had been a longtime critic of how Dolan was running the team, which has had a losing record for several years.

Once the assault of Oakley went viral on social media, many Knicks fans came to his defense. They expressed their anger by responding to the popular Twitter hashtag #FreeOakley. Other Nation-

al Basketball Association players, like LeBron James and Dwyane Wade, expressed support for him. Even at a New York Rangers hockey game held at MSG, predominantly white fans were heard chanting, “Free Charles Oakley!”

On Feb. 10, Dolan attacked Oakley on ESPN radio, implying that he was an “alcoholic” with “anger issues” who “needs help.” Dolan then declared that Oakley would be banned indefinitely from attending any Garden activities. Dolan arranged a photo-op by sitting next to two former Knicks players, Larry Johnson and Latrell Sprewell, who are Black, at a Feb. 12 game.

When NBA Commissioner Adam Silver set up a face-to-face meeting between himself, Oakley and Dolan, with Michael Jordan on speakerphone, Dolan, under mass pressure, was forced to apologize to Oakley and rescind the ban on him. Oakley, dissatisfied with the meeting, told the media that nothing less than a public apology is acceptable.

Oakley stated in The Undeclared, an online sports magazine that takes up social issues, “I wouldn’t be respecting what my grandmother and grandfather put their lives on the line for when they were growing up. They were getting beat up, never having a right to speak up. We didn’t have a voice back in the old days. Did we have a voice back in the ’50s and ’60s?”

“Man, all this stuff happenin’ around the country with police and the black community the last couple of years. They say things have changed. They haven’t changed. Only the spotlight change — green, yellow, red.” (Feb. 17)



**Charles Oakley**

and choked to death, Thabo Sefolosha’s leg being broken by NYPD, tennis star James Blake being tackled to the ground by NYPD and countless other cases, there was a disturbing racial component seeing security and police surrounding Oakley in the Garden, dragging him out of view and tackling him to the ground,’ Thomas said.” (The Undeclared, Feb. 17)

Dolan has been compared to the former owner of the Los Angeles Clippers, Donald Sterling, who was forced out as owner after making racist remarks against NBA Hall of Famer Magic Johnson and the Clippers’ Black fan base in 2014.

Draymond Green, an African-American forward with the Golden State Warriors, compared Oakley’s relationship with the Knicks as a player then and now in his Feb. 16 “Dray Day” podcast on Uninterrupted. Green said: “You doing it for me, it’s all good. You doing it against me ... you speaking out against my organization, it’s not good anymore? That’s a slave mentality. A slavemaster mentality. That’s ridiculous. It was all fine and dandy when he was laying people out, taking fines and all this stuff for your organization. But now all of a sudden when he says something that he feels, it’s a problem.” Oakley agreed with Green’s statement.

Green stated that a “slavemaster mentality” can generally apply to any relation-

ship between a player and an owner, especially when race is at its core. In the case of the NBA, at the end of the 2015-2016 season African Americans comprised 74.3 percent of players and only 30 percent of coaches. Out of 30 NBA teams, Michael Jordan was the only African-American owner.

The slavery comparison is so appropriate when it comes to the NBA. The only difference is that the players are highly paid workers. They are superexploited commodities that can be bought and sold. The players can never have the same power as the owners, but they can control some of their destiny. They can secure the proceeds from some of their stolen labor through contract agreements and free agency with collective bargaining.

An NBA team is like any other market in terms of how much teams are worth, especially if they have an expensive home base. For instance, the New York Knicks and Los Angeles Lakers rank number one and two as the most-valued NBA teams, at \$3.3 billion and \$3 billion respectively, mainly because of their wealthier fan base and exorbitant ticket prices.

According to Forbes, “The league’s 30 teams generated \$5.9 billion in revenue last season, up 13 percent from the 2016 valuations and another record high for the league.” (Feb. 15) Much of this revenue is rooted in a \$24 billion media deal to broadcast games on the ESPN and TNT media networks over many years.

When these players make millions for raking in so much profit for the billionaire bosses, they can come under scrutiny if they speak out forcefully or take action — and especially when racist oppression is the main issue. The fact that Green, who grew up poor in Saginaw, Mich., dared to say that white owners have the propensity for a slavemaster’s mentality, which the brutality against Oakley exposed, struck a powerful chord that cannot be denied. □



# Protest demands justice for Jaron Thomas

By Josh Link  
Columbus, Ohio

A demonstration was held in Columbus, Ohio, on Feb. 18 to demand answers from the Columbus Police Department about the death of Jaron Thomas, a 36-year-old Black man, the previous month. The event began with a musical performance by three young girls commemorating the Black lives lost in recent years to police violence.

Friends, family and outraged members of the community then marched from Battelle Riverfront Park to the steps of the Columbus Police Department. The building itself, which is typically open 24 hours a day, was inexplicably closed and its doors locked at 2 p.m. — coinciding with the start time of the demonstration. Friends and family, including Thomas’

children, recounted memories and demanded answers for what happened on that night that led to his death.

Thomas called 911 for help on Jan. 14 while suffering from a mental health episode. He had been instructed by mental health professionals to do so whenever he felt such an episode coming on, and he had done so several times in the past without incident.

On the night of Jan. 14, no mental health experts or medical personnel were dispatched to Thomas’ residence. This time, twelve CPD officers were sent. What happened next is unclear, but Thomas suffered multiple serious injuries and brain damage that put him into a coma. On Jan. 23, the 36-year-old father of three died in the hospital.



WW PHOTO: JOSH LINK

While the police and city government in Columbus have remained silent, the people of Columbus showed up to the Feb. 18 demonstration to speak out and demand accountability. Signs proclaiming “Black Lives Matter” and “What Happened to Jaron?” were carried, while slogans and chants for justice were shouted through the streets. The makeup of the demonstration was predominantly young and racially diverse. Activists from multiple organizations, including Workers World Party, were in attendance. □

# Philadelphia gathering confronts health and water crisis

By Joe Piette  
Philadelphia

A People’s Assembly to “Confront Toxic Water & Hep C Crisis Threatening Lives of Mumia Abu-Jamal, other Prisoners and our Communities” was held on Feb. 18 in Philadelphia.

Contaminated water is plaguing prisoners in several prisons in Pennsylvania. The state is responsible for the health and welfare of people behind bars. But the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections is refusing to provide clean water to prisoners that is not “dirty, brackish, turbid, even black” — as described in a grievance filed by Mumia Abu-Jamal, a political prisoner at State Correctional Institute Mahanoy.

The water contamination poses a serious threat to Abu-Jamal’s life because of his severe skin ailment, a symptom of untreated hepatitis C. On Jan. 3, a federal judge ordered the DOC to treat Abu-Jamal with drugs that would cure hepatitis C within 21 days, a decision that could affect more than 6,000 other prisoners



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Mama Gail speaking

afflicted with that condition in Pennsylvania prisons. Despite the court order, the DOC so far has continued to deny Abu-Jamal and other prisoners the life-saving medicine.

At SCI Frackville, prisoner Bryant Arroyo complained in a grievance that “inmates should not be forced to drink the contaminated water while staff is provided bottled spring water.” Ernestine Burn-

side told the People’s Assembly that her son, who is imprisoned at SCI Mahanoy, has complained about the bad water too.

Access to clean water is a human right, but it has to be fought for in Flint, Mich., in Standing Rock, and in other Black and Brown communities.

Community organizer Mama Gail of Reclaiming Our Children described how contaminated water is a danger to children at West Philadelphia High School. Students and their parents in the predominantly Black school fought to get the school system to find out why the drinking water was brown in a school that was just built in 2011. They forced the school district to replace the pipes causing the problem, but will there be future cancers or other illnesses for the children who ingested the contaminated water? A community meeting and march to demand answers will be held later this week.

After the assembly, participants marched to Gov. Tom Wolf’s Philadelphia office to demand he provide prisoners with clean bottled water and the health care that all state residents deserve. □

# Immigrants and supporters protest

Continued from page 1

and Customs Enforcement agents under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Protesters also demanded an immediate end to raids and deportations, to any Muslim or refugee bans, to walls between the U.S. and Mexico and to attacks on workers’ rights. The protest was organized by Voces de la Frontera.

“We have to remember to stay strong, not fear,” said Gutiérrez Ayala. “What else can we do? Just sit there? We’re not going to take it. We’re going to organize as best as we can as a family and a community.”

Participants on Feb. 13 came to Milwaukee from at least 25 cities around the state for what Voces called a daylong strike. Many Latinx workers from business sectors such as the dairy industry, restaurants and meat packing in Wisconsin stayed away from work or joined the actions in Milwaukee. Thousands of students, including many members of Youth Empowered in the Struggle, also joined the protest, as did numerous labor-community supporters from unions, the Muslim community and others.

Beginning at the offices of Voces on the southside of Milwaukee, the 50,000 protesters marched to the Milwaukee County Courthouse in a militant display of people’s power.

“Following Monday’s ‘Day Without Latinos, Immigrants, and Refugees in Wisconsin,’ we are witnessing a spontaneous groundswell of immigrant workers, small business owners and our supporters taking similar bold action to demand an end to Trump’s deportation raids,” said Christine Neumann-Ortiz, executive director of Voces de la Frontera on Feb. 16.

Added Neumann-Ortiz: “We applaud the leadership of immigrant workers and business owners around the country in using their economic power, and we call on community organizations to follow their lead. We invite organizations and the public to join us in coordinated, escalated actions nationwide leading up to a mass general strike on May 1. Monday, May 1, 2017, must be a national Day Without Latinos, Immigrants, and Refugees to demand Trump rescind all of his executive orders on immigration.” To support and for more information, visit facebook.com/VocesdeFronteraWI and vdlf.org.

Kris Hamel, Bob McCubbin, Joe Piette and the Workers World Wisconsin bureau contributed to this report.

# Trump’s shock-and-awe against protest

By Taryn Fivek

The Philadelphia Coalition for REAL Justice took to the streets on Feb. 17 to declare themselves “ungovernable” under a Trump administration. Former Philadelphia police commissioner Frank Rizzo’s memory was honored by cops, who met the revolutionaries with mace and police batons. Four were arrested, and three charged with felony riot — though no riot took place.

The next day, activists crouched in the street to write messages in chalk in support of those being held at the police headquarters on 21st and Hamilton. In response, cops arrested them.

“I tried to pull my comrades back from the cops, but there were so many of them,” said one Workers World member. Six were arrested.

One of those kidnapped for showing solidarity for their comrades was a local leader of Black resistance against killer cops. She was especially brutalized.

“They always throw her on the ground. They hate her and want her dead,” said our Philadelphia correspondent.

The unprecedented response to protesters — to levy such heavy felony charges and to target jail support — is part of the Trump regime’s general strategy to terrorize and intimidate protesters.

Far from the eyes and ears of national interest on Jan. 20th, 16 resisters in New Orleans were arrested for protesting Trump. They were also charged with felony riot.

At a status hearing for the J20 resisters in Washington, D.C., Judge Lynn Leibovitz, described as “D.C.’s toughest judge” by local media, joked with Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer Kerkhoff that there were so many defendants facing 10 years in prison for protesting Donald Trump on Jan. 20th that they might need to hold the trial at the convention center.

Different defendants have admitted to Workers World that their attorneys advised them not to speak to other defendants or organize united responses. The

state has further stressed that defendants should have individual attorneys to avoid “conflict of interest” — meaning that the state expects defendants to snitch on one another.

Fear is the most effective way to break resistance. Points of solidarity and unity are the first joints for the state to try and crush. Targeting jail support is targeting solidarity. Targeting Black and Brown comrades is targeting unity.

In past years, when the cops attacked protests, the usual charge was a ticket, or even a bit of community service. The cops regularly gunned down Black and Brown people with impunity, but the state seemed like it was playing it easy with protesters. Now, several states are considering following in North Dakota’s footsteps by legalizing vehicular homicide against protesters.

As our Workers World correspondent in Philadelphia noted: “Unlike the co-optation tactics commonly used by the Democratic Party and NGOs [nongovernmen-

tal organizations], outright repression and terror is the name of the game here. They’re issuing these serious charges because they want to scare activists away. The state wants nothing more than for the movement to exhaust its energy and resources into jail support, bail funds, and just keeping everyone alive and healthy. They want to neutralize all resistance and drain activists of their fighting spirit.”

However, as more activists find their ways into parties like Workers World and mass organizations such as the Philadelphia Coalition for REAL Justice, the state’s wave of intimidation and terror will break against a wall of solidarity. The state has resorted to shaking heavy charges at both new and seasoned activists who, shaped by the struggles at Standing Rock and by the Movement for Black Lives, are prepared in an unprecedented and historical way to take action by building a revolutionary movement that will smash the capitalist state and fight for socialism. □





By Teresa Gutierrez

The Fiscal Control Board of Puerto Rico learned a valuable lesson in Philadelphia at a forum organized by the University of Pennsylvania School of Law on

# Mundo Obrero editor disrupts Puerto Rico fiscal board meeting

Feb. 16.

The lesson is that the saying, “There is no place in the world where there is not a Boricua,” is absolutely true.

Most importantly the fiscal oversight board, which is imposing onerous austerity measures on Puerto Rico, learned there is no place where there is not a Boricua fighting for the islands’ self-determination and independence.

Berta Joubert-Ceci, managing editor of Mundo Obrero/Workers World, learned of the forum with two-hours’ notice. Nonetheless, she became the sole but bold voice at the forum against the vicious austerity measures that are destroying Puerto Rico.

Joubert-Ceci tried to organize others

to go with her, but due to the short notice, she went by herself, with placards in hand.

At the forum she let the conservative, reactionary forces know what is really going on in Puerto Rico. She took the floor armed with the placards that stated the board’s role was solely to benefit rich bondholders and bring more misery to the Puerto Rican people.

She told the board, the students and others in attendance, “What this board has said are half-truths that hide what is really going on in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is a colony, and we do not have any sovereignty. The U.S. does what it wants with us, and this fiscal board is the tool to bring misery to the people.”

She spoke truth to power for seven minutes and stayed for another hour, commenting loudly about some of the board members’ statements. As she exited the meeting, standing behind them, she shouted to the board, “Why don’t you go and tell these lies in the PR community? You are cowards, that’s why!”

A picture taken by an anonymous person who posted it on Facebook — which has gone viral on Boricuas’ social media — shows Joubert-Ceci exiting the meeting with board members obviously upset about her truth telling. It has sent a clear, bold message to Washington: Puerto Ricans will fight back at every level until their island nation is free. □



## Philadelphia protest

In response to the Donald Trump administration’s decision giving the go-ahead to construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, the Standing Rock Sioux called for a week of global actions in solidarity with the tribe. Cities and tribes across the U.S. demonstrated their opposition to Trump’s approval of the environmentally unsafe project being constructed on Indigenous lands.

Philly with Standing Rock—Sioux Defenders organized a demonstration

on Feb 14. More than 100 protesters marched in the streets to five separate Wells Fargo Bank branches in Center City during the morning rush hour, holding short rallies at each one, tying up traffic and educating pedestrians. The bank accounts for \$120 million in a \$2.5 billion credit agreement funding the pipeline project.

The Standing Rock Sioux continue to fight the pipeline in court, while water protectors put their lives on the line in North Dakota.

— Photo and story by Joe Piette

# New evacuation order, calls to resist

By John Steffin

Tensions are rising after North Dakota’s governor issued an order demanding that water protectors evacuate the Oceti Sakowin camp by Feb. 22. The Standing Rock Sioux Nation has protested construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline for well over a year, joined by thousands of supporters, including military veterans.

The DAPL violates Indigenous sovereignty and Native land and water rights. Oil leakage from the pipeline threatens to pollute the water supply relied on by up to 18 million people.

The pro-Big Oil Trump administration approved resumption of the pipeline’s construction, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers granted the easement permitting Energy Transfer Partners to do so.

A statement from Gov. Doug Burgum’s office argues that rapid snowmelt in the area is creating a risk of flooding that is dangerous to activists and could lead to pollution if waste from the camps is pulled into the river.

This isn’t the first time the state has cited dangerous weather conditions as a reason for evacuation. Back in November, the state expressed concern about activists’ safety in the freezing winter temperatures. Of course, that didn’t stop the state from using water cannons to violently remove activists.

The concern about pollution is an added irony, given the state’s continued attempts to drill an environmentally destructive oil pipeline under Lake Oahe.

The water protectors have refused to move and have begun a systematic camp cleanup in an effort to appease officials.

Meanwhile, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has a hearing set for Feb. 28 to continue the fight through the courts. Activists across the country are also continuing their solidarity and demand-

ing divestment from the pipeline. They have met some success, notably in Seattle, where the city broke ties with Wells Fargo for offering financial support to the pipeline. Now, 120 investors, whose combined assets amount to \$653 billion, are feeling the pressure and have urged banks to support rerouting the pipeline.

A call by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and Indigenous grassroots leaders has also been made for a march on Washington, D.C., this March 10. More than an action against the Dakota Access Pipeline, the march will be an act of solidarity with all Indigenous peoples and a stand to protect Unci Maka (Grandmother Earth).

As of right now, the march has three demands, as found on standwithstandingrock.net:

“#TakeTheMeeting // President Trump must meet with tribal leaders to hear why it’s critical that the U.S. government respect tribal rights. This administration must work with us.

“#ConsentNotConsultation // Tribal interests cannot continue to be marginalized in favor of the interests of corporations and other governments. Consultation is not enough — we must require consent.

“#NativeNationsRise // The Standing Rock movement is bigger than one tribe. It has evolved into a powerful global phenomenon highlighting the necessity to respect Indigenous Nations and their right to protect their homelands, environment and future generations. We are asking our Native relatives from across Turtle Island to rise with us.”

Local actions will also be planned for those who cannot go to Washington.

Workers World Party stands with the Standing Rock Sioux Nation and supports the self-determination of Indigenous peoples everywhere. We look forward to rising in solidarity this March. □

# War, lies and NGOs

By Sara Flounders

Amnesty International released a 48-page report on Feb. 6 to wide publicity and commentary from U.N. officials and U.S. politicians.

The report, explosively titled “Human Slaughterhouse: Mass Hangings and Extermination at Saydnaya Prison, Syria,” claims that attacks by the Syrian government on civilians are part of its systemic state policy.

The report has now been thoroughly debunked as fraud and calculated U.S. war propaganda. The Syria Solidarity Network forces in the Hands Off Syria Coalition and other antiwar researchers have exposed glaring fabrications.

But these exposés have received no coverage in the corporate media.

The impetus of antiwar forces to immediately scrutinize this latest report was based on the well-known role, at pivotal historical moments, of earlier AI and Human Rights Watch reports on Iraq, Libya, Yugoslavia, Iran, Sudan, Cuba and Venezuela. All too often these reports appear to be coordinated with U.S. war plans. They are quoted to justify U.S. plans to intensify sanctions or blockades.

These war crime charges become the excuse for intervention and war against an entire population. In Iraq, Yugoslavia and Libya they became the justification for tearing down the entire government structure, its protective legislation and nationalized industry, and the kidnapping and execution of the top leadership.

The newest AI report was followed days later by a CNN news report that the U.S. Defense Department might be sending ground combat forces into northern Syria.

Its release also came after the Syrian government had made significant gains against the U.S.-orchestrated effort to overthrow it and less than two weeks before the next round of peace talks in Geneva. Is that a coincidence?

The role of these “human rights” reports raises a larger issue. Well-funded nongovernmental organizations play a major role in U.S. war plans. Although these NGOs claim to be “independent,” they are well-funded by imperialist governments through the U.S. Agency for International Development and the British Foreign Office. Foundations that represent powerful U.S. corporations, such as Ford, Rockefeller and Soros, are major donors.

Both AI and HRW assert that their reports are impartial, fact based, balanced to include testimony from both sides and that all sources are thoroughly checked and cross-checked. But the very title of the latest Syria report, with the words “slaughterhouse” and “extermination,” exposes the claim of impartiality as a lie.

### ‘Soft power’ tools of U.S. policy

The Pentagon war machine can hardly claim that its wars are based on self-defense. So finding “evidence” to justify each war is politically necessary.

The total systematic demonization of the targeted government and its leaders by NGOs, then by the corporate media and next by other funded media is a way of disorienting, silencing and overwhelming domestic opposition.

This demonization has become a mainstay of each war. It is an effort to

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# WORKERS WORLD

## editorial

### Establishment fake news

Trump has labeled as “fake news” everything that doesn’t fit his bigoted, right-wing agenda. In a recent press conference he called the establishment media “the enemy of the American people.” The New York Times, Washington Post, CNN and other indignant voices of the establishment are exposing his gross inconsistencies and wildly false sources.

So where does this leave those of us who see the establishment media not as impartial crusaders for the truth, but as an arm of the capitalist ruling class that tailors the news to fit the interests of the exploiters?

Not agreeing with Trump, of course. Climate change not real? Muslims a bunch of blood-thirsty criminals? His accusations of a liberal media conspiracy come straight out of Breitbart fake news.

#### ‘News’ serves capitalist rulers

That should not obscure the fact that the “news” presented to us each day by the leading media outlets is carefully filtered to serve the interests of those who rule over this capitalist society.

The mechanism for this is not held secret by a narrow group of conspirators. The methods are taught in every college course on journalism.

Most reports on politically sensitive topics come from press briefings by government officials or “think tanks.” How many articles about what’s going on in the world are datelined Washington? That’s because that district abounds in agencies that craft U.S. policy and regularly feed it to the media. Even when reporters go abroad, they check in with U.S. embassies for their take on what’s happening.

On the economic front, the news comes mainly from outlets based in Wall Street or from government agencies like the Federal Reserve.

But there’s another very important step between the gathering of news — most of it based on press releases, press conferences or interviews with prominent figures — and what gets aired or into print. While it’s reporters who gather the news, it’s the editors who decide how it will be presented to the public.

An article in the Feb. 4 New York Times about how the paper functions stated: “Right now, there are more editors in the newsroom than reporters, photographers and other journalists in the field.” It explained that an article might go through the hands of as many as six editors before appearing in print. Some of these editors check facts and style, but others make more political changes. What comes out at the end conforms to the editorial opinions of the paper, for the most part.

Of course, the U.S. ruling class is not all of one mind. There can be important differences and conflicts of interest on both domestic and international questions. This is so obvious with the Trump administration.

It is the job of politically savvy bourgeois editors to understand this and present the differences in a way that they believe promotes the interests of the system as a whole. And on what are those interests ultimately based? The efficient and reliable exploitation of the masses of workers and oppressed. That’s what capitalism is all about — and capitalism is the religion of this country.

Editorial terminology reflects this. When there was a socialist bloc of coun-

tries, the media here universally referred to the capitalist West as “the free world.” Not the freedom to have food and shelter, or a guaranteed right to education and medical care. Racist segregation was part of the “free world.” So was the freedom of bosses to lay off workers and break their unions.

For the establishment media, “freedom” was all about the freedom of a few to get rich exploiting the labor of the many. Any country that restricted that “freedom” — especially if U.S. corporations and banks were involved — automatically became the enemy.

For how many decades did the U.S. media repeat the mantra that Cuba wasn’t “free” and that Fidel Castro was a “dictator” because the Cuban Revolution had kicked out U.S. corporate exploiters?

It is only since Wall Street finally realized the U.S. could never overthrow Cuba’s government that the strategy in Washington changed, allowing a few more objective reports about life in Cuba to appear in the media.

#### No news of south Korea uprising

Here’s another example. For almost a year now, millions of people in south Korea have been demonstrating against the government. The protests have been held every week, even in the brutal cold. The parliament finally voted to impeach the president, who is embroiled in a huge corruption scandal. The head of Samsung, the largest corporation in south Korea, has been arrested for bribing the president, who refuses to resign.

If this isn’t sensational news, what is? But where are the headlines here? Yes, there are articles about this in some U.S. newspapers, but no sense of urgency. It certainly isn’t top of the news on CNN or any other electronic outlet.

If this were Syria or Libya or some other country the U.S. imperialists wanted to invade, wouldn’t we see screaming headlines every day?

But the U.S. military is already in south Korea. It invaded in 1945 and has never left. Washington has been behind every head of state since then, including several generals who took over through coups d’etat. The current president is the daughter of one of them.

The media here — both liberal and alt-right — get the message. Don’t inflame passions against the rulers of south Korea. They’re “our” friends. Instead, go after north Korea, which refuses to give up its socialist system.

It’s not a conspiracy. It’s business as usual for the capitalist media. □



Indonesian workers say, ‘Capitalists make Americans poor and jobless, not Muslims and immigrants.’

# Hundreds across U.S. protest Trump-Netanyahu meeting



Protest in New York City, Feb. 15.

PHOTO: MICHELA MARTINAZZI

By Joe Catron  
New York

Hundreds of Palestinians and their supporters across the U.S. demonstrated on Feb. 15 to protest a meeting and press conference between U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington, D.C. It was the first such meeting since Trump’s election.

In New York, dozens gathered for a rally organized by the NY4Palestine coalition outside Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue before merging with a march from Grand Central Terminal and proceeding, several hundred strong, to Trump International Hotel and Tower on Central Park West.

New York City Students for Justice in Palestine Co-chair Nerdeen Kiswani and activist Mohammed Abdel with American Muslims for Palestine, New Jersey led chants of “It is right to rebel! Netanyahu, go to hell!” and “There is only one solution: Intifada, revolution!”

“We’re here alongside our Palestinian brothers and sisters, and all oppressed nationalities of the world, to demand sovereignty and self-determination,” Nina Macapinlac, BAYAN USA northeast regional coordinator, told the crowd. (fightbacknews.org, Feb. 18)

Outside the White House, 200 people chanted “Bibi, go home!” and dozens more rallied at Boston’s Government Center before marching to the offices of the Israeli Consulate General. (middleeasteye.net, Feb. 16)

“Simply because of my religion, I am denied entry to the city where I grew up for the first 13 years of my life,” Yamila Shannan, a Palestinian native of Jerusalem now living in Dorchester, told protesters in Boston. (bostonglobe.com, Feb. 16)

In Chicago, 300 protesters marched on that city’s Trump International Hotel and Tower. “To be committed to social justice

means to consistently stand up for those values,” said Eli Massey, a member of Jewish Voice for Peace, Chicago. “One cannot attend a protest against Trump’s Muslim ban on Monday and be conspicuously absent from the Palestine protest on Tuesday and claim to be an agent for social change.” (chicagomonitor.com, Feb. 16)

At least 16 demonstrations were held throughout the country to protest the meeting. Many targeted common elements of the two leaders’ policies, particularly their support for torture of “enemy” prisoners, the use of walls to restrict movement and bans on the entry of citizens from a number of predominantly Muslim countries.

Israel’s Magal Security Systems, which helped build the occupying state’s walls around the Gaza Strip and through the West Bank, is even angling for new business as Trump moves to expand existing barriers along the border with Mexico. “We have the right product and we have the experience in Israel that helps in showcasing our product,” said company CEO Saar Koursh on Jan. 26. (bloomberg.com, Jan. 29)

“President Trump is right,” Netanyahu tweeted two days later. “I built a wall along Israel’s southern border. It stopped all illegal immigration. Great success. Great idea.”

Trump used his own notorious account on that social media platform to cite Israeli policies — and Democratic politicians’ hypocritical support for them — in defense of earlier proposals. “Hillary Clinton said that it is O.K. to ban Muslims from Israel by building a WALL, but not O.K. to do so in the U.S.,” the then-presidential candidate tweeted on Jan. 2, 2016.

*Catron is a member of Al-Awda New York: The Palestine Right to Return Coalition and an organizer with Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network.*

# Protest in Indonesia hits U.S. at

*The following edited excerpt is from a Feb. 6 press release by the Indonesian Front of People’s Struggle (Front Perjuangan Rakyat — FPR).*

U.S. President Donald Trump has issued an executive order prohibiting the entry of citizens of seven majority-Muslim countries to the United States for 90 days, and suspending admission of refugees. The decision clearly hurts the long-suffering people of Muslim-majority countries, which bear the stamp of “terrorism.”

Earlier, Trump issued a decree regarding the construction of a U.S.-Mexico border wall at a cost of more than \$8 billion. The construction is a continuation of the Border Security Act of 2006, which was supported by [President Barack] Obama and [Senator] Hillary Clinton. Trump wants to proceed more intensively and is

threatening people who offer protection to undocumented workers and refugees.

Trump’s immigration policy criminalizes immigration and scapegoats refugees, immigrants and Muslims. In fact, the U.S. is the main source of the crises of war and aggression, poverty, unemployment and refugees. Refugees and immigrants are the victims of aggression and plunder by the U.S.-led imperialists, and destabilization and neoliberal economic policies of both Democratic and Republican U.S. governments. It is the root of the global refugee crisis and forced migration.

The Trump regime is supported by entrepreneurs of the world oil monopoly, which earned huge profits from invasion during the George H.W. Bush regime. Trump is continuing the anti-Islamic

*Continued on the next page*



Day without Immigrants:

Trump/ICE say ‘get out,’ immigrants say ‘walk out!’  
NEXT STEP: MAY DAY 2017

Continued from page 4

working class or more privileged — is a welcome development. An upsurge in struggle is helpful.

But it is the task of class-conscious revolutionary fighters to take advantage of the split in the ruling class and the “she-nanigans” in Washington to look for ways to take the movement forward.

When it comes to the struggle of immigrants, it is important for the movement to develop a plan of action, a program to defend undocumented workers. It cannot be forgotten that the Democratic Party leads in deportations.

This should include defending the workers fired from the Tennessee paint company for missing work on the Day Without Immigrants. Unions and the community should go to that factory and demand they be rehired with back pay.

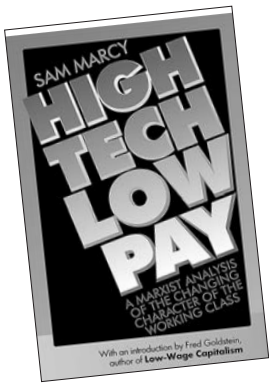
The same for the workers from the I Don’t Care Bar and Grill in Catoosa, Okla., whose owners texted those who walked out, saying, “You and your family are fired. I hope you enjoyed your day off, and you can enjoy many more. Love you.” The community should show “love” by boycotting!

The Jewish community should form anti-gestapo brigades to stop ICE from carrying out raids and to demand that 287(g), the 2006 law giving enforcement officials the right to stop immigrants, be repealed.

These kinds of actions are already happening. It is another sign of a new day of struggle.

Polls show that a majority of people in the U.S. support the rights of the undocumented to remain, which is remarkable given the hyperbole against immigrants. This solidarity was seen at the end of January at many airports in support of the Muslim community.

That solidarity must be seen tenfold on May Day 2017. Workers born here, whether in unions or fighting for one, from the community and every sector, those fighting police and ICE terror, Black, Brown and white — all must come out on May Day 2017 and shut shit down. □



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War, lies and NGOs

Continued from page 9

put the criminal U.S. intervention beyond debate.

These NGOs are often referred to as “soft power” tools of U.S. policy. While they produce hundreds of reports on human rights and political prisoners that help establish their credibility and gain a sincere following, a few key reports, crucial to U.S. war plans, are released with great fanfare.

In both Democratic and Republican administrations, these politicized reports are the most powerful form of war propaganda.

U.S. State Department officials cycle in and out of these NGOs. The former executive director of AI, Suzanne Nossel, arrived directly from the U.S. State Department.

Much to the frustration of U.S. policy makers, U.S. war crimes are well known and have been extensively documented with video and photo images. Consider the U.N. reports on the impact of starvation sanctions and Chelsea Manning’s courageous release to WikiLeaks of thousands of video images, diplomatic cables and suppressed reports of U.S. crimes in Iraq. Horrific images also came from U.S. prison guards, who traded and posted online photos of torture, humiliation and abuse at the U.S. Army Detention Center at Abu Ghraib, Iraq.

It is essential to paper over those searing images of U.S. war crimes by creating charges that the countries targeted for destruction are guilty of even more horrendous crimes.

Manufacturing evidence

Amnesty International admits that since no photos, videos or concrete testimony exist of Saydnaya Prison, they were forced to devise “unique ways with interactive 3D models and digital technology, animations and audio software” to fabricate entirely in London what they are sure is happening in Syria. The graphic “evidence” in their report was all crafted by a team of architects, filmmakers and special effects designers in a company

called Forensic Architecture.

The wide range in the number of prisoners they claim were executed at Saydnaya Prison — from 5,000 to 13,000 — is based on hearsay of anonymous people living outside of Syria. Evidence was also provided by totally discredited organizations such as the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. This notorious one-man operation is run by Rami Abdul Rahman from his clothing shop in Coventry, Britain.

Of course, this report and earlier AI reports on Syria make no mention of the U.S. role in funding and arming tens of thousands of mercenary and opposition forces. There is no condemnation of the impact of two years of U.S. bombing in Syria.

Past frauds

This report is not much different from the totally fraudulent report AI verified and helped to promote on Oct. 10, 1990, to fire up the first U.S. war on Iraq. Claiming to be a Kuwaiti nurse, a young woman identified only as Nayirah testified before the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. She claimed to have witnessed Iraqi soldiers tear hundreds of babies from hospital incubators and leave them “scattered like firewood across the floor” at Kuwait City Maternity Hospital. It turned out the woman giving testimony was the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador in Washington, D.C., and had not actually been in Kuwait.

After the report had been thoroughly exposed and after the destruction of Iraq, AI quietly issued another report stating they had found no evidence for the incubator claims.

Amnesty International played the same role lending credibility to reports that Col. Muammar Gadhafi was using mercenaries to kill peacefully protesting civilians in Libya. Later, after the brutal lynching of Gadhafi and the U.S. war had destroyed the country, AI issued a report refuting the accusations.

Both AI and HRW reports also gave great credibility to reports of war crimes and genocide in Yugoslavia in 1999. The reports justified the U.S. bombing, dis-

memberment and occupation of Yugoslavia and the kidnapping of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milošević, who was charged with war crimes in a trial at The Hague. The International Criminal Tribunal exonerated Milosevic of the charges this August — a decade after his mysterious death in custody.

After each war, the vicious propaganda that overwhelmed all political discourse is quickly swept aside.

Sophisticated disinformation

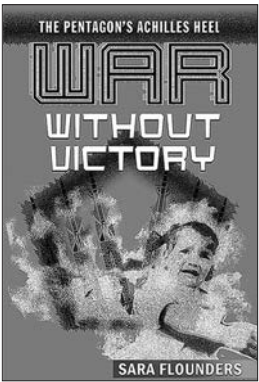
U.S. war propaganda has become even more sophisticated. The best example is a U.S.- and British-funded organization, set up by British mercenary James Le Mesurier, of supposed Syrian “first responders” called the White Helmets. An international publicity campaign promoting these “angels on the front line” was rolled out in 2012.

In front of the camera, the White Helmets desperately demanded increased U.S. intervention, safe zones and no-fly zones in Syria. They have been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. A documentary praising them premiered at film festivals in 2016 and is nominated for an Oscar.

U.S. war propaganda focuses on distorting every form of resistance and defense. The U.S. brags of its powerful weapons, from bunker busters to radio-active depleted uranium, napalm, white phosphorous and millions of anti-personnel, razor-shredding cluster bombs. U.S. drones openly circle entire countries, striking at will. Massive destruction is flaunted by terms like “shock and awe.”

Yet the only weapons denounced as inhumane are rather simple explosives, such as barrel bombs, supposedly used by the Syrian government, or roadside explosives used by resistance forces.

The continued level of war propaganda demonizing Syria means the threat of a rapidly expanded war is a real and present danger. Exposing and rejecting all propaganda designed to justify the criminal role of the U.S. in Syria must continue as a priority. □



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.

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tack on immigrants

panic and the War on Terror championed by the U.S. during the Bush administration since the events of 9/11.

The seven countries banned entry to the U.S. have been vandalized and bombed by the U.S. to master those countries’ natural resources. The attack recently carried out in Yemen is part of a U.S. scheme to take control of Yemen.

Trump, along with a handful of the elite and the giant corporations, is trying to divert popular anger in the U.S. to Muslims, Mexico and immigrants. It is a way of creating multiple benefits for elites and corporations on the shoulders of the working class and the exploited and oppressed people all over the world.

In Indonesia, Trump has a resort and amusement park in Tanah Lot Bali and Lido, West Java. Naturally, Trump will

build on community land. His policy will speed up the expropriation of land in Indonesia and other semicolonial countries trying to save themselves from the crisis in monopoly capitalism.

The Front of People’s Struggle (FPR), which consists of anti-imperialist, democratic mass organizations and is a member of the International League of People’s Struggle Indonesia chapter, conveys this statement:

We condemn the immigration policies of the U.S. imperialist government under Donald Trump, and demand:

Exempt the citizens of the seven countries that are still detained by U.S. immigration and give them permits to visit, study and go back to school and work. Give refugees the right to live and be protected.

Revoke the Executive Decree, which

discriminates and promotes anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiment. Revoke immediately the development of the U.S.-Mexico border wall. Stop all forms of criminalization of refugees and immigrants conducted by the U.S. government.

Reject all forms of U.S. imperialist intervention and war aggression. The imperialists evoke anti-Muslim sentiment to grab these countries’ natural wealth and to completely dominate politically, economically, culturally and militarily.

We demand that the Jokowi government [of Indonesian President Joko Widodo] provide protection for Indonesian citizens who live in the U.S. but are threatened by the discriminatory policies of Donald Trump. The Jokowi administration must also provide protection for Indonesian migrant workers in various

countries, most of whom work to improve their livelihood amid a worsening chronic crisis in Indonesia.

FPR calls for all Indonesian people from various ethnic groups, races, and religions and all people of the exploited and oppressed workers, peasants, semi-proletariat, intellectuals, professionals and others to:

Unite and give solidarity to Muslim and immigrant brothers and sisters who face the policies of the U.S. imperialists.

Fight against all schemes and U.S. imperialist policies to grab and plunder the nation’s sovereignty through intervention and wars of aggression.

Oppose all policies of the Jokowi-JK government that implement U.S. neoliberal schemes that attempt to dominate the homeland of Indonesia. □





## Liberación agridulce de Oscar López

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

En una acción sorpresiva, el pasado jueves 9 de febrero, regresó el prisionero político puertorriqueño Oscar López Rivera a su tierra natal, Puerto Rico, luego de que la pasada Administración Obama le conmutara su sentencia a mediados de enero. Pero lo que tantas personas ansiaban, recibirlo entre abrazos, banderas boricuas y consignas libertarias, dejándole saber su amor y agradecimiento, fue impedido por las órdenes crueles y vengativas del imperio estadounidense.

López Rivera llegó al Aeropuerto de San Juan acompañado de su hija Clarisa López, su hermano José López, su abogada Jan Susler, y las/el funcionarios electos Carmen Yulín Cruz alcaldesa

de San Juan, la presidenta del consejo municipal de la ciudad de Nueva York Melisa Viverito y el congresista Luis Gutiérrez, representante demócrata por Chicago.

Las personas que se habían congregado para recibirlo en el terminal donde llegaría Oscar, quedaron asombradas por la rapidez de los eventos y la absoluta imposibilidad de saludarlo. Quienes acompañaban a Oscar en su viaje desde Carolina del Norte a donde fue trasladado de la prisión Terre Haute en Indiana, caminaban rápidamente tratando de ocultarlo rodeándolo y poniéndole una gorra para tapanle el rostro.

Esta escritora pudo ver a través de las cámaras de un programa televisivo que pudo captar — no sin objeciones

de los acompañantes de Oscar quienes intentaban tapan el lente — parte de la caminata por las galerías del edificio del aeropuerto. Esas tomas, que lograron un acercamiento al rostro de Oscar, despertaron una inmensa alegría a la vez que una enorme indignación, sentimientos que fueron compartidos por muchas personas a juzgar por los múltiples comentarios en las redes sociales.

Rafael Cancel Miranda, héroe boricua y ex prisionero político, al ser entrevistado por los medios sobre el arribo de Oscar, comentó sobre la importancia que tuvo ser recibido por miles de boricuas en el aeropuerto en 1979 a su arribo a PR junto a Lolita Lebrón, Irving Flores y Andrés Collazo luego del indulto por el presidente Jimmy Carter. Habló de la

extraordinaria alegría — euforia aclaró — que fue ver a miles de personas congregadas con la bandera boricua al llegar a suelo boricua luego de 26 años en mazmorras yanquis.

Esta bienvenida sin embargo, le fue prohibida a Oscar. Su abogada Jan Susler dijo: “Está bajo una supervisión estricta ... Está bajo custodia del Negociado de Prisiones. Él, si quiere estar en Puerto Rico, tiene que ser en confinamiento domiciliario. Él tiene que cumplir con las condiciones. Cuando me hablaron de las condiciones, la mayor, aparte además de cumplir con la ley, es mantener un perfil bajísimo”. (endi.com)

Este “perfil bajo” incluye arresto domiciliario en casa de su hija Clarisa, de la cual sólo podrá salir para visitas médicas y al Negociado de Prisiones; no puede hablar con personas con antecedentes en prisión, estar en ninguna vista pública, ni ser entrevistado por los medios; además de llevar un grillete electrónico hasta el 17 de mayo que al cumplir 36 años prisionero, le será finalmente finalizada su sentencia.

### Contexto político

No hay razón alguna dentro de los parámetros de la “justicia legal” estadounidense para que la conmutación de su sentencia en enero pasado no estuviera acompañada de su inmediata liberación. No sólo ha sido una crueldad manifiesta, sino un acto sumamente político donde se previene que Oscar sea sujeto activo en la lucha independentista y elemento cohesivo de la lucha boricua.

La lucha por su liberación ha tenido el aval de las más diversas fuerzas puertorriqueñas, desde el ahora gobernador pro-estadidad Ricardo Roselló, hasta todas las tendencias independentistas y socialistas, pasando incluso por la comunidad religiosa de todas las creencias y todos los movimientos sociales. Oscar significa la voluntad de unión de un pueblo para luchar por lo que considera justo. Tal y como lo fue la victoriosa lucha de Vieques para sacar a la Marina de Guerra de EUA.

Ahora es un tiempo crítico para el archipiélago borincano donde acontecen peligrosos sucesos. Primero está la imposición de una avasalladora y dictatorial Junta de Control Fiscal que busca sangrar a la clase trabajadora para pagar a los bonistas de Wall Street, entre los cuales se encuentra la firma de fondos buitres del ya famoso John Paulson, uno de los principales consejeros del presidente Donald Trump. Acompañando esta imposición, se ha establecido otra administración perjudicial a la clase trabajadora puertorriqueña, la de Roselló que avanza imponiendo reformas precarizadoras que buscan complacer a la JCF. Encima, hay otra fútil propuesta para un plebiscito de estatus a celebrarse el 11 de junio.

Nunca antes la lucha por la verdadera soberanía boricua ha sido tan crucial. Una encrucijada que se encuentra enmarcada dentro de esta fase terminal del capitalismo que busca sus ganancias a merced de la misma vida de la clase trabajadora eliminando todos los logros obtenidos a través de decenas de años de lucha. □

## Enseñanza de la nominación de Sessions

Por Deirdre Griswold

La incapacidad del Partido Demócrata para detener o por lo menos ralentizar el dramático giro hacia la derecha, representado por la llegada de Donald Trump y su banda de fanáticos a la cabeza del gobierno, se demostró una vez más cuando las/os demócratas del Senado no reaccionaron a la invocación de una oscura orden de mordaza para callar a la senadora Elizabeth Warren por el líder de la mayoría Mitch McConnell.

Warren había estado leyendo para que constara en las actas, una carta escrita en 1986 por Coretta Scott King [viuda del Dr. Martin Luther King], en la cual la líder de los Derechos Civiles denunció la historia racista del senador por Alabama Jefferson Beauregard Sessions. Sessions en ese momento era candidato para juez federal. King había escrito que Sessions “usaba el asombroso poder de su oficina para impedir el libre ejercicio del voto de los ciudadanos negros”.

Como más prueba aún del propio racismo de Trump, el multimillonario agente inmobiliario nombró a Sessions para dirigir el Departamento de Justicia. Warren estaba en el punto de la carta de King donde mostraba que Sessions era reconocido como un consumado racista y que no debería ser confirmado por el Senado, cuando McConnell la calló.

Mientras Warren defendía su derecho a hablar, las/os otros demócratas permanecían sentados, paralizados en sus asientos.

### Deberían saber mejor

Todos los medios más liberales de comunicación capitalista están de acuerdo en que el conjunto que Trump ha reunido para dirigir las diversas ramas del gobierno tratará de retroceder el reloj en todo, desde los derechos civiles, derechos de las mujeres y los derechos de las/os trabajadores, hasta la protección del medio ambiente y la educación pública. Y todo el mundo sabe que Trump no obtuvo el voto popular, perdiéndolo a su oponente por casi 3 millones de votos.

La elección no fue de ninguna manera un mandato para arrancar los logros obtenidos durante décadas de lucha por los

movimientos progresistas de masas.

La gente lo sabe. Saben que deben actuar, deben ir más allá de las estrategias habituales de escribir al Congreso o enviar peticiones o cartas de protesta. Han salido a las calles por millones para oponerse a esta banda ultra reaccionaria. La masiva y global Marcha de Mujeres del 21 de enero fue un repudio directo a este gobierno de extrema derecha, a su misoginia, al crudo sexismo, racismo y el culpar a inmigrantes y refugiadas/os como chivos expiatorios, particularmente a musulmanes.

Lo menos que las/os demócratas del Senado hubieran podido hacer era negarse a quedarse indolentemente sentadas/os mientras a su colega la forzaban abandonar el podio. En decenas de países, tal afrenta habría causado un alboroto, incluso algunos puños. Pero aquí, el malleté sonó, y todo continuó como de costumbre. Así es como funciona el sistema de dos partidos en los Estados Unidos, con ambas partes inclinándose ante el poder de Don Dinero.

### DeVos, Puzder, Perry: más de lo mismo

En la misma semana, otra persona nombrada que burla la institución a la que se le faculta correr, fue rápidamente aprobada. Betsy DeVos, enemiga de las escuelas públicas, se convirtió en jefa del Departamento de Educación el 7 de febrero. DeVos nunca fue maestra y ni siquiera estudiante en una escuela pública. Su conocimiento de la educación proviene de ser cabildera a favor de las escuelas ‘chárter’, que al igual a las prisiones privadas, sirven para generar ganancias.

Los sistemas de escuelas públicas en muchos lugares ya han sido privados de fondos, especialmente en las ciudades que pierden empleos y población. Con DeVos como jefa, se espera que el Departamento de Educación adopte medidas que benefician a las escuelas chárter privadas, mientras que golpea tanto al magisterio como al estudiantado de las escuelas públicas.

Aunque la nominación de DeVos no encontró ninguna oposición efectiva en el Congreso, no fue lo mismo en el mundo real. Cuando la nueva Secretaria de Educación trató de ingresar a la Escue-

la Jefferson Middle School Academy en Washington, D.C., el 10 de febrero, fue bloqueada por manifestantes en la entrada de la escuela. Algunas/os llevaban pancartas que leían “Queremos nuestras escuelas públicas”, “BlackLivesMatter DC, el Black Youth Project y otros grupos habían enviado mensajes a los medios de comunicación social instando a la gente a protestar en la escuela”, reportó CNN.

En los próximos días, otros nombramientos cuya tarea es socavar las instituciones a las que se nominan, se espera que sean confirmados por el Senado. Particularmente odiosos son Andrew Puzder para Secretario de Trabajo y el ex gobernador de Texas Rick Perry para dirigir el Departamento de Energía.

Puzder es CEO de CKE Restaurants, Inc., la empresa que controla las cadenas de comida rápida Carl's Jr. y Hardee. ¿Sus credenciales para dirigir el Departamento de Trabajo? Ser el jefe en un negocio notorio por su súper-explotación de trabajadoras/es de bajos salarios, muchas de ellas madres de color solteras.

Perry, la selección de Trump para el Departamento de Energía, es odiado en Texas por su uso de la pena de muerte y por su sumisión a la industria del gas y del petróleo. El Instituto Nacional sobre el Dinero en la Política Estatal informó en 2011 que Perry “incluso antes de establecer súper PACs para recaudar contribuciones ilimitadas de los multimillonarios de Texas para su carrera presidencial, ha sido uno de los políticos mejor financiados en la historia. Desde su candidatura en 1998 al cargo de teniente gobernador bajo George W. Bush, Perry ha recaudado \$117,091,642 en contribuciones de campaña, siendo la industria de petróleo y gas el principal contribuyente”.

Esto es lo que se llama gobierno de los multimillonarios, por los multimillonarios y para los multimillonarios.

Y cómo los multimillonarios realmente corren ambos partidos en el Congreso, no esperen que la lucha venga de allí. Debe venir de aquellas/os que no tienen ningún interés en este sistema capitalista y que tienen todas las razones para resistir el odio y la intolerancia que fomenta este sistema para mantenernos divididas/os. □