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WORKERS WORLD

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As capitalist Trump hits new low

People resist racism

By Teresa Gutierrez

Political pundits, the media, politicians and people in general continue to be shocked that billionaire Donald Trump is still in the running for president.

Even members of the Republican Party say they are stunned that Trump is winning in poll after poll and primary after primary. Republican Lindsey Graham said, "My party has gone batshit crazy." (AP, Feb. 26)

It is not known how long the Trump train will continue to charge ahead. But two things are clear: The deep economic crisis has ushered in an unprecedented election year. And the Trump campaign has uncovered a cesspool of white supremacy, which only a multinational mass movement can clean up.

Gonna be a long eight months

It is too soon to determine whether Donald Trump will secure the Republican nomination, run as an independent or whether he can beat Hillary Clinton in a general election, should they each get the nomination. All bets are off this year, as every new development has shown that this election cycle is a game changer.

An avowed "democratic socialist," Bernie Sanders has projected a consistent anti-Wall Street message. Surprisingly, though Clinton was the hands-down favorite, Sanders has made her work for the nomination. The last weekend in February tens of thousands of people marched in over 40 cities around the country under the slogan "Feel the Bern."

That so many would actively support a "democratic socialist" is a progressive development, especially when contrasted to the Trump campaign.

Sanders has said that his message of campaign finance reform has brought in many youth to his campaign, including those who were active in the important Occupy Wall Street movement.

Hillary Clinton has been forced to make a leftward turn in her rhetoric, opportunistic as it may be, and to address the issues of mass incarcerations and police brutality. Much of this change is a result of the Black Lives Matter activists who heroically confront her again and again, challenging the Democratic Party as a whole.

Klan, Mussolini, Trump: birds of a feather

Donald Trump's candidacy has galvanized not only ultra-conservatives but has become a magnet for ultra-racists and fascists.

Trump has opened up the vile, putrid can of worms of institutionalized racism that is part and parcel of capitalist society. His misogynist, anti-disabled, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant tirades and second-grade level rhetoric have given a green light to every reactionary in this country. Whether said explicitly or not, Trump's

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Moorehead-Lilly '16
Abolish Capitalism - Black Lives Matter - Fight for Socialism @wwp2016
WORKERS WORLD PARTY.ORG

Racism can't be voted away!

The following is a statement from Workers World Party 2016 candidates for president and vice president, Monica Moorehead and Lamont Lilly.

We salute the dozens of Black Lives Matter activists who marched through a hostile, overwhelmingly white crowd chanting "Black Lives Matter" at a Trump rally in Radford, Va., on Feb. 29.

These brave Black, Brown and white activists completely shut down the Trump rally for an uncomfortably long time. We send them our love and support.

Like all activists who have disrupted election campaign events of the major capitalist political parties, these BLM soldiers demonstrated that the people cannot leave it up to the capitalist political establishment or the capitalist media to expose and smash racism, sexism and the oppression of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people.

Most of the time, the capitalist establishment and its political parties and mass media generate and legitimatize bigotry because their system needs it to oppress, terrorize, kill, incarcerate, and divide and conquer.

It is hypocritical that the media are acting so surprised and alarmed over white supremacists supporting Donald Trump.

If the anti-racist movement has learned anything from past experience, it is that we cannot rely on the system to expose or stop the Ku Klux Klan or other white supremacist, terrorist groups. The truth is that the system uses these groups when it serves their purposes. Black and Chicano/a youth in Anaheim, Calif., just this past weekend militantly resisted the KKK and were victorious.

We call on all those who truly want to make the world a "No Bigotry Zone" to expand the disruptions. Racism can't be voted away — it must be shut down. It is especially important that our white sisters and brothers join in, so that the task of shutting down racism does not fall exclusively on the backs of people of color. □

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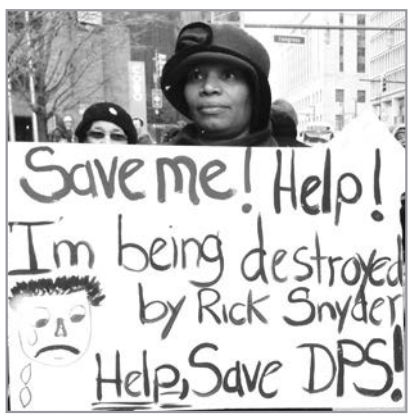
Warnings of 'urban rebellion'

Detroit officials nervous as public anger grows

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire
Detroit



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

Former-Detroit Mayor Dave Bing is warning local corporate leaders that the city could be on the verge of an urban rebellion.

Speaking at the Detroit Chamber of Commerce policy conference held Feb. 24 at the Motor City Casino downtown, Bing said that despite rhetoric about an economic resurgence, the majority African-American population was being left out of key decision-making roles.

Bing said conditions indicated the city was just "one incident" away from an explosion similar to events in Ferguson, Mo., or what happened in Detroit in July 1967. The Detroit Rebellion nearly five decades ago was the largest of such outbreaks in the history of the United States.

"As much as we say or think we are being inclusive, the reality is we are not," said Bing. "There is an undercurrent of frustration and anger that could lead to a negative outcome." (Deadline Detroit, Feb. 25)

The former Pistons basketball star, corporate spokesperson and businessman during the 1960s through the present, Bing noted that he had spent several months talking with African-American businesspeople, students and others in the city. He said many feel "left out" of the so-called revival of Detroit.

"African-American economic empowerment and neighborhood development must be an essential part of Detroit's resurgence. Diversity is about counting people. Inclusion is about making people count," he emphasized.

During Bing's mayoral tenure, the general perception among many people in Detroit was that he was preparing the city for emergency management and restructuring, which occurred under his leadership from 2009 to 2013. Bing never provided any serious opposition to the imposition of emergency management by Republican Gov. Rick Snyder, which forced the city into bankruptcy during 2013-14, the largest in U.S. municipal history.

Bing has been closely allied with the automotive industry, serving as a spokesperson for Buick during the late 1960s, when the African-American liberation struggle was at a high level. This was a period when many professional athletes identified with and joined demonstrations against racism and national oppression.

Obviously Bing is echoing certain sections of the ruling class in Detroit who realize that conditions are worsening for the African-American people. Growing militancy among the masses has been seen in protests against the engineers of emergency management and bankruptcy at three public events in recent months.

Residents blocked parking lots and confronted guests at two gala affairs at the Detroit Institute of Arts that honored federal Judge Steven Rhodes, who presided over the city bankruptcy theft of retiree pensions, health care programs, public assets and massive water shut-offs; the Jones Day law firm, which represented the Snyder administration's restructuring plan in court; and former-Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr.

Bing attacked by Duggan administration

A public forum at Wayne State University in late 2015 was cancelled due to disruptions by people in the audience who denounced Snyder and Orr. Corporate-oriented Mayor Mike Duggan refused to walk onto the stage amid the demonstration. Duggan is the first white mayor in the city since 1973.

Bing's statements were attacked as untrue by Police

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MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

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

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

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

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Black Panther Party's legacy today

By Scott Williams
New York

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Scott Williams, LeiLani Dowell, Kalisa Moore, Lamont Lilly, Teresa Gutierrez, Monica Moorehead and Larry Holmes

In Manhattan's packed Solidarity Center, Workers World Party held its annual Black History Month forum on Feb. 27, paying tribute to the revolutionary legacy of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. This October will mark 50 years since the founding of the Oakland Chapter of the BPP, a landmark in the Black Liberation movement that continues to inspire revolutionaries to this day.

The meeting opened with Kalisa Moore, a leader of the New York People's Power Assembly, speaking about solidarity demonstrations with the people of Flint, who are fighting racist austerity and the genocidal poisoning of their public water supply.

Chair LeiLani Dowell, a Workers World managing editor, read from BPP co-founder Huey P. Newton's 1970 call to forge unity among women, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and the Black freedom struggle.

Monica Moorehead, the 2016 Workers World Party presidential candidate, spoke about her experiences reading and selling the Black Panther Party newspaper in the late 1960s in Virginia. Moorehead highlighted the role of women leaders in the BPP, as well as the lasting importance of the Panthers' 10-point program, a must-read for all serious activists today.

Speaking about the pivotal role of Black women in the BPP, Moorehead said, "BPP women understood that their real liberation as Black people and as women would be realized in a socialist revolution to help systematically eradicate ... backward ideas."

Moorehead connected the importance of Black women leaders in the Panthers, such as Elaine Brown and Erica Huggins, to the Black women-led uprising of the Black Lives Matter movement. She dedicated her campaign to defending the Black Lives Matter movement, saying, "The people cannot allow the Black Lives Matter movement to be isolated. Just as the Panthers had the potential to grow with broader class solidarity, the Black Lives Matter movement has the same potential. We want to use these bogus elections to build deeper solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement so that it can continue to grow."

Lamont Lilly, WWP's vice presidential candidate, elaborated on the ideological contributions of the Black Panther Party. Lilly spoke to the guiding role of Marxism-Leninism, which gave a "science to the rage" of the Black nation terrorized by police killings, economic exploitation and racist oppression in all spheres of society. Lilly connected the revolutionary ideology of the Black Panther Party to the Marxist-Leninist analysis and action of Workers World Party.

The Moorehead-Lilly 2016 presidential campaign manager, Teresa Gutierrez, discussed the important role of the Panthers as a revolutionary vanguard in solidarity with Latino/a revolutionary youth organizations like the Brown Berets and the Young Lords. Gutierrez announced efforts to make the Moorehead-Lilly campaign a fighting campaign that will take on racism at the Republican and Democratic national conventions and be a struggle-oriented campaign in the spirit of the Black Panther Party.

WWP First Secretary Larry Holmes spoke on why the Black Panther Party was so special to the Black liberation struggle, particularly because of its potential as the political and ideological vanguard of the entire working-class movement. Holmes underscored the importance of fighting racism and national oppression as the central task for all who identify as socialists, including those in the Bernie Sanders campaign, in order to continue to build solidarity with the Black Liberation movement.

"That's why our campaign is dedicated to defending the oppressed unconditionally, especially in the context of the elections and the global capitalist crisis," stressed Holmes. "This is the only road to uniting our class and the only road to socialist revolution."

The talks can be seen at youtube.com/watch?v=tDlD1XuoUpQ. For more campaign information, go to workers.org/wwp.

The writer is the media coordinator of the Moorehead/Lilly campaign.

What We Stand for. What We Fight For.

1. We want an end to the war on Black lives and ALL people of African descent worldwide. Reparations NOW!
2. We want an end to the capitalist system and its robbery and exploitation of the poor and working class worldwide. Revolutionary socialism that puts people before profits and abolishes all forms of exploitation and oppression NOW!
3. We want an end to ALL forms of racism and national oppression. Support unconditional self-determination for all oppressed nationalities, including Black, Latino/a, Indigenous, Asian and Arab peoples!
4. We want an end to the raids and deportations of immigrants. Full rights for undocumented workers. End Islamophobia now! Open the borders. Don't build walls.
5. We want basic human rights: quality food, water, housing, clothing, health care, education and childcare that is free or affordable. End all forms of austerity worldwide! Cancel debt!
6. We want FULL liberation and equality for women, including reproductive justice, and FULL liberation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people. Stop killing trans women of color!
7. We want an end to the capitalist and corporate destruction of the Earth and its natural resources. Free the land!
8. We want an end to U.S. imperialism. Pentagon out – from Palestine to Latin America to Haiti! Build international working-class solidarity, end occupations!
9. We want full employment and decent jobs and/or income for all, regardless of race, religion, age, gender, criminal background or disability; free from racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, patriarchy, ageism and ableism. Support the $15 and a union movement!
10. We want an end to the prison-industrial complex and mass incarceration. Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Assata Shakur, Rasmea Odeh, Rev. Edward Pinkney, Leonard Peltier, Ana Belen Montes, the MOVE 9, Aafia Siddiqui, Oscar López Rivera and ALL political prisoners!

To contact the campaign,to book the candidates to speak at your campus, union hall, community group or house meeting, or for more information, contact Moorehead/Lilly Campaign Manager **Teresa Gutiérrez at 917.740.2628.** Visit **workers.org/wwp/** or **facebook.com/WorkersWorldParty/** or **email wwp2016@workers.org.**

As capitalist Trump hits new low People resist racism

Continued from page 1

campaign is appealing to those who would like to turn back the clock to a "golden age" of imperialism: before the civil rights and national liberation movements won major gains and before the working class, unions and the women's and lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-queer movements made major advances.

Trump has summoned the poison of white supremacy. It is a poison that only the mass movement can overcome. History has shown that only mobilizations from below make fundamental change.

No candidate would be addressing police brutality were it not for the movement for Black Lives Matter.

The weekend of Feb. 27-28 was the racist weekend from hell. Not only was it the weekend of #OscarsSoWhite, but several reported racist incidents can be clearly attributed to Trump's tirades.

In both Iowa and Indiana, white high school youths taunted Latino/as at basketball games, with chants of "Trump, Trump, Trump" in an attempt to intimidate them.

A Ku Klux Klan mob attacked anti-Klan protesters in Anaheim, Calif., mainly Chicanos/as and Latinos/as, and even stabbed them as the Latinos/as attempted to push these racist scum back. In typical police fashion, the cops defended the Klan against the anti-racists.

These hateful incidents occurred as police continue to beat and murder youth of color, especially Black men, as tragically witnessed in Utah this weekend.

Lesson #1 about the role of cops in capitalist society is: They uphold racism while protecting the private property of the capitalist class.

How can this racism not be expected when the Klan endorses the Trump candidacy, and Trump quotes fascist Italian dictator and mass murderer Benito Mussolini, all in the same weekend?

CNN headlines on Feb. 29 read, "Trump tweets fascist dictator's quote." The picture with the caption was of Trump and Mussolini facing each other with Nazi-like arm salutes. Trump used the quote, "It is better to live one day as a lion than 100 years as a sheep." When asked by CNN reporters, "Doesn't it bother you to quote a fascist?" he basically said no.

The media also reported that infamous Klansman David Duke announced his endorsement of Donald Trump just before Trump quoted Mussolini.

Problem for bourgeoisie

The developments, rhetoric and posturing of the 2016 presidential election cycle are all a result of the current economic crisis.

The ruling class needs racism and anti-immigrant bashing when jobs are scarce. The bourgeoisie needs workers fighting and blaming each other instead of them. This is why Trump is dangerous.

But it is still not clear if Trump can serve the interests of the ruling class.

It is useful to Wall Street and the Pentagon for Trump to incite white people, many of whom are completely insecure about their own economic status. His pandering serves the ruling class's age-old divide-and-conquer ploy. Dividing Black against white, Muslims and Latinos/as and so on means the working class is fighting each other instead of the capitalist class.

But there are indications that the ruling class may be worried about being able to control rogue demagogue Trump and the opposition to him. A Washington Post editorial calls on the Republicans to stop Trump. Former CIA director Michael Hayden said that the military "would refuse to follow" Trump's orders.

Hated billionaires, the Koch brothers, have indicated they lean more toward Marco Rubio.

But whatever develops in the long eight months ahead, one thing is definitely gestating: The working class and the oppressed will have a revolutionary option, the Moorehead/Lilly presidential campaign.

This campaign in the next eight months will raise revolutionary class consciousness with the aim to abolish capitalism, shut down the Pentagon, disarm the police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, defend the Black Lives Matter movement and build revolutionary socialism. This is the best counter to the racist, neofascist forces gathering behind Trump. ☐

Lessons of the Boston School Bus Drivers' victory

After more than two years of hard-fought struggle, last year the militant, fighting rank and file of the Boston School Bus Drivers Union — United Steelworkers Local 8751 — won a historic victory against global giant Veolia/Transdev, one of the most notorious capitalist union busters, as well as Boston Public School bosses, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh and their media mouthpieces.

PART 1

Four fired union leaders, out of work since October 2013 on bogus charges of leading a wildcat strike, went back to work on Dec. 23, 2015. Transdev bosses were bound and determined that the four would never return. But at 4 p.m. on Dec. 18, after a marathon 25-hour negotiating session, Veolia and city bosses signed comprehensive settlement agreements with the union that reinstated President Andre François, Vice President Steve Kirschbaum, Financial Secretary Steve Gillis and Grievance Chair Garry Murchison.

In addition to reinstatement of the four with full seniority rights and a substantial monetary payment, the local won a contract with economic justice and the protection of 40 years of the collective bargaining process.

What are the lessons that can be learned from this victory? How can they be put to use to help the working class push back against the decades-long anti-labor offensive? How can we reverse the tide of concessions, setbacks and the decline in union density that Ronald Reagan's breaking of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization instigated? We can learn a lot from this small union — smaller than PATCO — that used the weapon of solidarity to push back the evil capitalist monster that the workers call "Transdevil."

Below are excerpts from the first part of a conference call dialog between Team Solidarity and Workers World Party, held Feb. 14, 2016, on "harvesting the lessons of the Boston victory." More of the dialog will be published in future issues, and the full discussion will be online at workers.org.

Garry Murchison, Steve Kirschbaum, Andre François, and Steve Gillis.

PHOTOS: TEAM SOLIDARITY

'A gravity-defying victory':

Larry Holmes
First Secretary, Workers World Party

The big question before us is how on earth was the Boston School Bus Drivers Union able to compel this incredible, gravity-defying victory in the present global environment — where capitalism is so strong and so concentrated that the odds of workers winning in any given struggle are, at best, challenging, especially a relatively small local of about 900 members, United Steelworkers Local 8751.

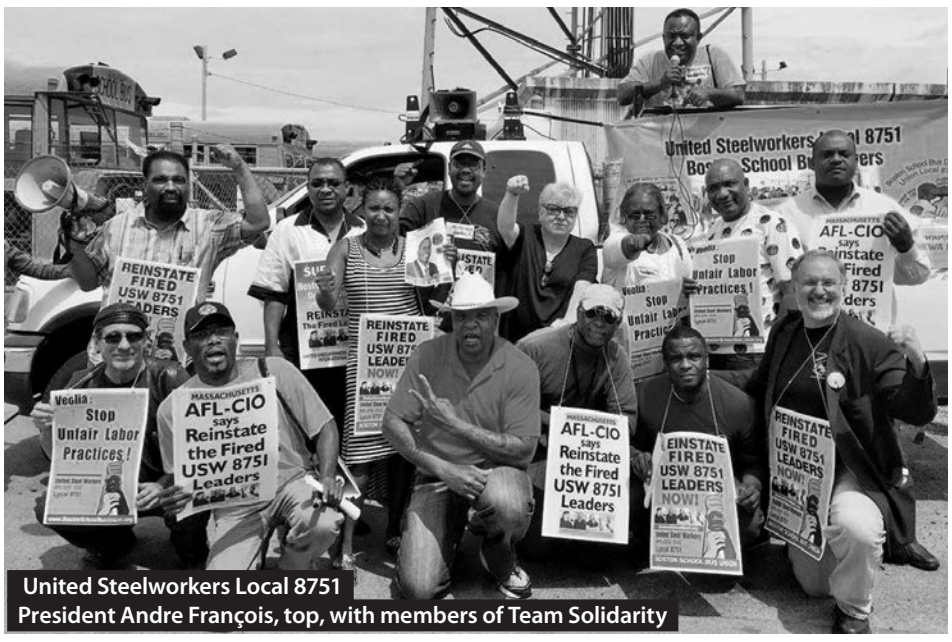
Workers World Party's role was important. And the reality of the union's long history in the struggle against racism — its ties to leaders and organizations in the Black community in Boston — was indeed an important factor. And there was solidarity from those outside the union, whether from other unions or other progressive people.

Solidarity is a complex issue. Certainly there was a lot of solidarity on paper and financial contributions, necessary when you have four people who are not getting salaries for two years. But there is a difference between a union passing a resolution supporting another union and a union sending 10 or 20 workers to join a picket line.

There are different levels of solidarity. In this capitalist crisis, more material forms of solidarity, as opposed to symbolic forms of solidarity, will become more and more necessary.

But any trade unionist, any militant worker, looking at what happened in Boston, might ask themselves: How did this union, this local, often at odds with its international, often at odds with the union hierarchy, how did it take on a monstrous, multibillion-dollar transnational corporation that prides itself on its expertise in decapitating and busting unions — take it on and prevail?

How is it that this company could not separate a handful of leaders from the rest of the union? One would think that, in these days, the rank and file might hang on and support the leaders for a little while, a few months, a half-year, maybe a year — but two years! Day in, day out, months, coming through on everything!



United Steelworkers Local 8751 President Andre François, top, with members of Team Solidarity

What was most decisive — though not the only factor — is the fact that the Boston School Bus Drivers Union is not a union where a few people represent the workers. It is a rank-and-file union; it is a union where the workers run the union. They are empowered by it, and this is unusual in many places, but very unusual in this country. Many trade unionists will tell you that, in most instances, union leadership and union staff become separated from the rank and file, even well-meaning, progressive union leaders and staff. Months and years and decades go by, and they have very little contact and very little political and social interaction with the rank and file. If workers come to a couple of meetings a year, that's significant. Sometimes workers forget they are even in a union, and that reflects their relative alienation from the leadership.

But the Boston School Bus Drivers Union is the opposite of that. It's a different kind of union, and that takes work — not only one meeting a week in a yard, but meetings every day, especially if the union's under attack. This is important in how to analyze what was decisive in this victory. Other unions are not like that. When the company comes down, the union and the workers are not prepared, and then the company prevails, usually quite easily, no matter how much symbolic solidarity the union gets.

But in a union like this one, hard work, concentrated day-in, day-out work, makes it a union of the workers, not just for the workers with a few people far away who exert power. That is a big lesson from this victory. I hope we can share this revolutionary way of organizing that's the antithesis of "business unionism."

'If you stick together and you don't waver':

Andre François
President, USW Local 8751, and one of the Four

There's no other solidarity than this since I've been born, since I've been working, You've been there with your money, you've been there in person, you've been there with your ideas. And I couldn't thank you enough for your solidarity. All I can say is that I guarantee it's going to stay with me until the day I die. I'll take that to my grave. I'll tell my children about it, I'll tell my grandchildren about it. I went from being a fired worker, a fired recording secretary and unemployed, to being an employed union president because you gave solidarity and help.

It's a victory that we will take back to the school — that we were able to pull it off without a strike. That says a lot in this day and age. You don't have a strike, and you have a struggle like that. Right now, Boston Public School administration has actually let the company know, "Once you failed to get rid of these drivers, now you have to work with them." That's a real testament on how strong and tough you can be if you stick together, and you don't waver for this long.

'Building a movement':

Chuck Turner
Former Boston City Councilor and community activist

Firstly, if Team Solidarity—and the Four who were fired—had not stayed together, had not continued to do the work that was necessary to keep the membership together, if they had not been willing to make the tremendous sacrifices that they made, it would have been impossible for the victory to have happened. So the willingness of people to sacrifice and endure and persist is to me a driving force in the victory.

Secondly, USW 8751 is a different type of union. The leadership are workers, and the workers are leaders. While the Four who were fired are seen as Team Solidarity, the reality is that the union is Team Solidarity. That solidarity, combined with the sacrifices, courage and persistence of the Four, created the momentum that enabled the victory to take place.

The third factor is that not only had this union throughout its history focused on the needs and concerns of its members, it has recognized its members are part of a larger community under siege. The union has been in solidarity, not only with its own members, but in solidarity with the community. There are innumerable struggles that we could talk about — from coming together with the community to save a key post office, to the coming together with workers in other unions, to the struggle around education. Because the bus drivers got very involved in organizing around education — not just the question of jobs, but the question of the quality of education, the actions of the school administration that were not in the best interests of our children. The bus drivers did the work over the decades of creating the bond of support with the community. That meant when there was this crisis, there was a level of support in the community, despite all the attempts by the city and Veolia to break down that relationship.

There's a word that gets misused and not understood but there was a love — and there continues to be an outpouring of love — that is a recognition of our need to be together, to appreciate each other, to stick together with each other, that the union leadership has shown throughout its history. It's that spirit of love that the solidarity has been built around and that has enabled a tremendous victory, not only for the rights of workers — and particularly Black workers — but for the example that through solidarity and loving relationships we can overcome even the greatest of odds.

To be continued.

Six-month lockout ends at ATI

By Martha Grevatt

The specialty steel company Allegheny Technologies Inc. has ended its lockout of the workers. After demanding the Steelworkers union hold a vote on an extremely concessionary contract, ATI locked out 2,200 workers at 12 plants in six states on Aug. 15, 2015. The company didn't even give the union time to schedule a vote.

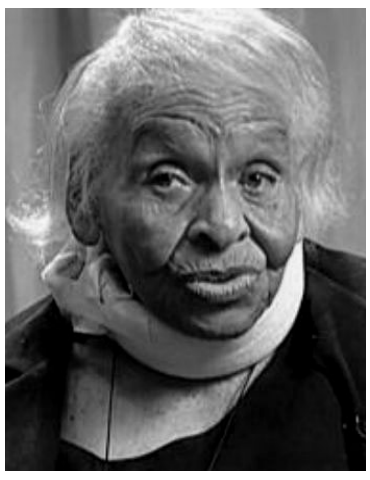
When bargaining started last spring, ATI's "final offer" included almost 145 givebacks. Agreeing to the company's demands would have cost each worker thousands of dollars annually and "eroded decades of collective bargaining gains." (usw.org)

In all 12 plants, including seven in Pennsylvania, solidarity on the picket line remained strong as the lockout dragged on. The company mistakenly thought it could starve the workers into submission. The union members knew they were fighting an illegal lockout, a fact affirmed in December when the National Labor Relations Board charged ATI with just that, requiring that ATI pay the workers for lost wages and return to the bargaining table.

Details of the new agreement have not been released, but the union revealed in January that ATI was backing off from major health care cuts and an inferior pension plan for future workers. ATI workers have yet to vote on the tentative agreement and also on terms to return to work. If they approve the new contract, it will not be long before they are collecting a paycheck again.

Throughout the fight, "picket line heroes" emerged and were honored on the Steelworkers' website. Members were profiled for their dedication of time and energy well above their expected duties on the picket line. The end of the lockout came about because the workers "showed us all the strength that we can have when we stand together in unflinching solidarity," according to Steelworkers International President Leo Gerard. ☐

Dr. Olivia Hooker
Survivor of 1921 Tulsa race riot



By Dolores Cox

Dr. Olivia Hooker is a 101-year-old survivor of the horrific racist attack on the African-American community in Tulsa, Okla., known as the Tulsa race riot. To this day, she remembers the devastating, traumatic experience of rioters coming onto her family's property on May 31, 1921.

Throughout U.S. history, there have been deliberate efforts to keep African Americans at the bottom of society. Black people have consistently been the targets of racial hatred and violence. The law of the land continues to be white supremacy and privilege. This country is rife with racism, which is exported worldwide through imperialist propaganda and war. Due to centuries of social, economic and political disenfranchisement, the Black population has much catching up to do.

Just two generations after the abolition of slavery, descendents of enslaved people in the Greenwood section of Tulsa created a thriving, self-sufficient community that was a center for business and wealth. Greenwood was known as "Black Wall Street." Residents built and cultivated homes, schools, churches, restaurants, banks, theaters, hospitals, hotels and stores. Its residents were among the best educated African Americans in the country.

Racists razed Greenwood

However, African Americans' attempts to rise up and move beyond oppression were defeated. Greenwood was prosperous, but its growth was short-lived. Those who dared to dream — and substitute commercial success for segregation — were shoved back down to the status quo. Racial hatred kept the entire community from reaching their goals in a country which deprived them of their basic rights and dignity.

Resentment by hostile whites who were determined to maintain white dominance exploded into mob violence. Acts of hatred lasted throughout the day into the night in Greenwood. Rifle shots were fired from planes; firebombs were dropped.

White rioters ransacked and looted homes and businesses before burning them down. They destroyed more than 1,000 homes, leaving 10,000 Black people homeless. The racists murdered an estimated 300 people and injured 800; others died trapped in the fires. Even the police shot residents. Within 16 hours, the entire community of 35 city blocks was obliterated.

Martial law was declared. The National Guard did not arrest the racists, but rounded up and detained thousands of African Americans, some for several days. Men and boys were placed in internment camps. All the weapons they had for self-protection were confiscated and given to whites. Lynching was prevalent then throughout the South.

Hooker family attacked

Dr. Hooker was born in Muskogee, Okla., in 1915. When she was three years old, the family moved to Tulsa. When the riot occurred, Dr. Hooker was six. Racists burned the doll clothes her grandmother made that were hanging on the clothesline. Inside the house, the assailants broke or stole the family's possessions. They even destroyed the food on the stove. Then they took away her father and eight-year-old brother.

After the racist attack, Dr. Hooker's mother and five children moved to Topeka, Kan. Her father stayed behind to try to rebuild his department store. A year later, the family moved back to Tulsa, attempting to pick up the pieces of their broken lives. After two years, the family moved to Columbus, Ohio, as Dr. Hooker's father had been offered a job there. Both parents had been teachers.

While living in Columbus during the Great Depression, Dr. Hooker earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education at Ohio State University in 1937. In 1945, she was the first African-American woman to join the U.S. Coast Guard. She had applied to the U.S. Navy WAVES, but was rejected because of her ethnicity. She disputed the rejection and was later accepted, but chose instead to join the Coast Guard to break the color barrier there. After basic training in Brooklyn, N.Y., she headed to Boston, where she was assigned administrative duties in the Women's Reserve (SPARS) and earned the rank of petty officer second class.

Dr. Hooker received a master's degree from Columbia University's Teachers College in New York City in 1947. She received her doctorate in psychology from the University of Rochester in 1961 and then worked as an in-house psychologist at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women. In 1963, she began working as a senior clinical lecturer in psychology at Fordham University and became an assistant professor there until 1985.

Dr. Hooker co-founded the American Psychological Association's Division of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. At 87, she retired in 2002. At 95, she volunteered with the Coast Guard Auxiliary in Yonkers, N.Y.

The NY City Council and NYS Senate honored Dr. Hooker with proclamations in 2011. She received the APA Presidential Citation and the NYS Veteran's Hall of Fame award. In 2015 Congress honored her, and the Coast Guard named a Staten Island dining facility and a training facility in Washington, D.C., after her. President Barack Obama also recognized her Coast Guard service and legacy at the academy's annual commencement that year.

City, state, courts deny reparations

It wasn't until 2001 that the city of Tulsa formally apologized for destroying Greenwood. Two years later, Dr. Hooker and other survivors founded the Tulsa Race Riot Commission and filed a lawsuit against Tulsa and Oklahoma, demanding reparations for millions of dollars in damages. Their demands included health care for descendants living in Greenwood and scholarships for area students to attend Historically Black Colleges.

Attorneys Charles Ogletree and Johnnie Cochran represented the commission, whose requests were denied. Appellate courts upheld the decision. The Supreme Court refused to hear the case. No victims or their descendants received compensation. Mentions of the riot were omitted from local and state histories, books and classrooms for decades.

Riot survivor Ophelia Johnson Livingston, 101, was six years old during the racist attack, but doesn't remember it. Other members of the commission included Otis Clark, who died at age 109 in 2012, and Lucille Figueres, who died a year later at 104. Few survivors remain.

Dr. Hooker has been a psychologist, humanitarian and women's rights advocate, despite the difficulties she faced due to her skin color. She is resilient and asserts that everyone must strive toward preventing other catastrophic violence like the Tulsa attack. She has devoted much of her life to educating young people, so that subsequent generations will be more tolerant of racial diversity than previous generations. □

Helen Keller
Socialist, anti-racist, disability rights activist

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Helen Keller is perhaps remembered by most people in the U.S. for one moment in her life, dramatized in the play and movie "The Miracle Worker." Seven-year-old Helen, without sight or hearing because of an illness at 19 months, stands with arms outstretched as her teacher, Annie Sullivan, pours water over her hands and finger-spells W-A-T-E-R over and over into her palms. As consciousness of the connection between word and substance comes to her, Helen is transformed.

That dramatic moment is typical of how Helen Keller's complex radical life has been reduced to a stereotypical symbol of "heroic disability" and also distorted by the sexist and ableist notion that she was only a blank slate for others to write their ideas upon.

Keller was decidedly a person who thought for herself. She was born in 1880 near Tuscumbia, Ala., to a Confederate veteran — a plantation owner who had previously enslaved people of African descent. Keller was raised on the farm during the violently racist post-Reconstruction era when Southern plantation owners and Northern capitalists were striking deals for de facto re-enslavement of recently freed Black people.

Yet Keller as an adult became a staunch anti-racist, an outspoken supporter of the recently founded NAACP and writer for its magazine, "The Crisis." She demonstrated through the 1950s, into her elder years, in anti-segregation protests and rallies. ("Helen Keller: Selected Writings," 2005)

Her growth as a thinker and activist was no miracle. It was rooted in her access to the extensive political library of Annie Sullivan's socialist spouse, John Macy. By 1908, after her graduation from college, Keller was reading Marx, Engels, socialist publications and Marxist economics, often in German Braille. (tinyurl.com/ntwp4gd)

Keller called Rockefeller a 'monster of capitalism'

In 1909 Keller joined the American Socialist Party and campaigned for its candidates, including Eugene Debs, the SP leader who ran for U.S. president from his prison cell in 1920. She supported striking workers, including those murdered in 1914 in the Colorado Ludlow Massacre by hired mercenaries, and called owner John D. Rockefeller a "monster of capitalism." She defined herself as a "militant suffragist," campaigning for women's right to vote because she believed this was linked to the struggle for socialism. (D. Hermann, "Helen Keller," 1999)

Throughout her life, Keller continued to be a dedicated socialist, over time shifting her focus to the mass-based Industrial Workers of the World after becoming dissatisfied with the SP's electoral tactics. She celebrated the triumph of the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution, named Vladimir Lenin one of the three greatest men of her era and regularly wrote articles for Communist Party newspapers and journals. (tinyurl.com/h6dt7y4)

"I am a Socialist because only under socialism can everyone obtain the right to work and be happy." – Helen Keller, in black hat, supporting actors' strike, 1919.

Keller identified her Marxist analysis and her socialism as deeply interconnected with her disability activism. As she studied economics, she visited factories and felt the very vibrations of the brutal industrial conditions that resulted in worker injuries. She concluded that the main causes of disability in the U.S. were industrial and workplace accidents and sickness from owners placing profits above worker safety.

In her writing Keller indicted capitalism for causing most disabilities and for amplifying the misery of disabled people through increased poverty and isolation. Her 1913 "Out of the Dark: Essays, Letters, and Addresses on Physical and Social Vision" articulated this analysis. Other political writings included "Social Causes of Blindness" (1911) and "The Unemployed" (1911).

Contemporary critics lambasted Keller for her socialism. In a 1924 letter to social reformer U.S. Sen. Robert La Folette, she replied: "So long as I confine my activities to social service and the blind, they compliment me extravagantly, calling me 'arch priestess of the sightless,' 'wonder woman,' and a 'modern miracle.' But when it comes to a discussion of poverty, and I maintain that it is the result of wrong economics — that the industrial system under which we live is at the root of much of the physical deafness and blindness in the world — that is a different matter!"

The U. S. government took her seriously. By the time Keller died in 1968 at 87, the FBI had kept her under surveillance for most of her adult life.

In Women's History Month, let us honor Helen Keller for her anti-racist, disability rights activism — and her socialism. At the height of McCarthy anti-communism, she affirmed in an interview that she was still a socialist. She hastened to add that she still owned a copy of Marx and Engels' "Communist Manifesto" — in Braille. (New York Times, June 25, 1950) □

Performers, artists hold #JusticeforFlint event

By Cheryl LaBash
Flint, Mich.

In the tradition of Black actors and artists like Harry Belafonte who used their celebrity to help advance the Civil Rights Movement, Blackout for Human Rights organized a free public event, #JusticeforFlint, at Flint's Whiting Auditorium on Feb. 28, as well as an online fund drive. A surprise appearance by Michigan-born Motown music legend Stevie Wonder capped the performances by artists from Michigan and around the country.

On-stage testimony by Flint residents and young organizers highlighted a spirit of resilience and struggle, but also the personal cost imposed on them by the state government. A high school student who was told only a few weeks ago that water at her private school was unsafe said students had originally been directed to buy water from vending machines. Elementary school students talked about skin eruptions and other illnesses from washing with lead-laden water and of bathing with baby wipes.

Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, the Flint pediatrician who sounded the lead poisoning alarm, pointed out that Flint families have been fighting for justice for almost two years, but no one heard their voices. "They needed evidence that our kids were being poisoned. And our water is still not safe. The 18 months of corrosive untreated water damaged our infrastructure, and we still cannot drink from our taps. That is not justice."

Dr. Hanna-Attisha continued: "Lead, even before this, was an environmental injustice. Our Flint kids had higher lead levels than those kids in the suburbs, even before this. And after this, those disparities significantly widened. That is the last thing our kids need. They already have too many obstacles for success." She cited Flint's 40 percent poverty rate and lack of nutrition sources. "Our work is just beginning. It will continue for decades to come." She thanked the performers for providing the best medicine — laughter and enjoyment.

Latino/a community representatives sat on stage with actor and author Hill Harper and explained that without Spanish language information many Latin American families attempted to make the water safe by boiling it — which only concentrated the lead levels. Undocumented residents are fearful of bringing their children in for testing because of the climate of repression. Harper spoke strongly for Black-Brown unity against common oppression.

PHOTO: BLACKOUT TEAM PHOTOS
Filmmaker Ryan Coogler opens #JusticeforFlint Feb. 28.

WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH
Clarence Thomas and Stacey Rodgers, ILWU Local 10.

Fighting to stop human rights violations

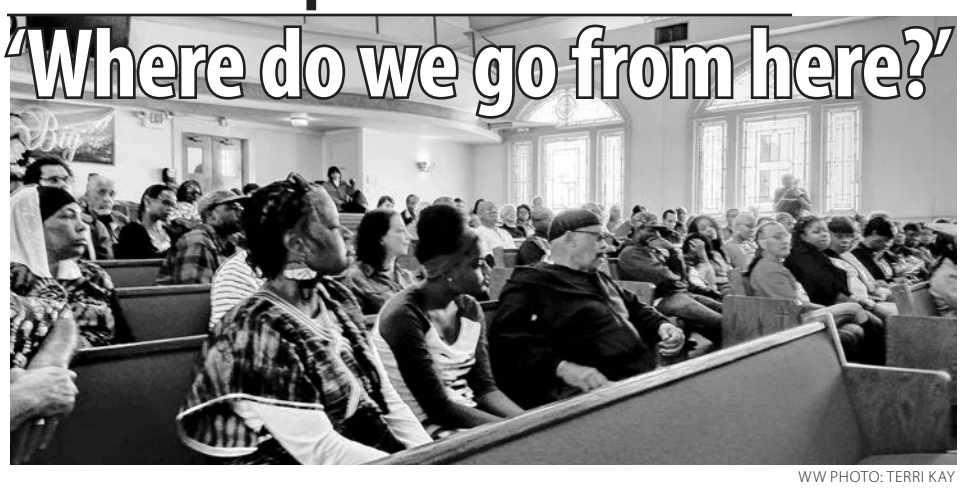
Filmmaker Ryan Coogler, the founder of Blackout for Human Rights, is from Oakland, Calif., the home of militant International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10. A delegation from Local 10 came to Flint, including its past Secretary-Treasurer Clarence Thomas and Stacey Rodgers, who authored a resolution "For Labor Action to Stop Flint's Poisoned Water Crisis and Hold Michigan's Governor Snyder Accountable." It was passed unanimously by not only Local 10 but the San Francisco Labor Council. Read the full resolution at tinyurl.com/j6gx2ao.

Coogler's first film, "Fruitvale Station" (2013), followed by the critically acclaimed "Creed" in 2015, was made to expose and stop blatant police killing like that which took Oscar Grant's life in 2009, captured for all to see on cellphone video. As the videoed killings of Black and Brown men, women and children have continued and accelerated, Coogler and his colleagues founded Blackout to use their considerable creativity and talent for the same purpose.

According to a press release for the event, Blackout for Human Rights is a collective of filmmakers, artists and activists "devoting their resources to address the staggering number of human rights violations in the United States." The collective includes Michael B. Jordan, Ava DuVernay, David Oyelowo and many others. In January Blackout hosted #MLKNOW at Riverside Church in Harlem. That event didn't shy away from the revolutionary words of slain Black Panther leader Fred Hampton, which were also heard in video clips shown on the Flint screen.

As of Feb. 29, #JusticeforFlint raised more than $145,000 in donations to help Flint organizations. A Flint People's Hearing is planned for March 5, sponsored by Flint Rising, Flint Democracy Defense League and Michigan Faith in Action. □

Parents of police victims ask 'Where do we go from here?'



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

By Terri Kay
Oakland, Calif.

The Oscar Grant family hosted an "Oscar Grant Legacy Weekend Birthday Celebration" on Feb. 27. It started with National Victims of Police Terror panels on "Where do we go from here?" Held at the First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Oakland, the event was organized into separate mothers' and fathers' panels. Grant had been shot and killed by Bay Area Rapid Transit Police Officer Johannes Mehserle in the early hours of Jan. 1, 2009.

Cephus "Uncle Bobby" Johnson, Grant's uncle, opened the meeting and then quickly turned it over to Jazz Hudson, a spoken-word artist. Wanda Johnson, Grant's mother, introduced longtime Black Panther Party members Erica Huggins and Tarika Lewis, who each spoke. Huggins, a leader of the Los Angeles branch of the BPP, was later imprisoned for two years on conspiracy charges. During her talk, Huggins suggested that there should be a national march, going from city to city, on behalf of victims of police terror. Lewis was the first female member of the BPP. She opened singing Stevie Wonder's "Happy Birthday" song to Grant.

There were so many mothers present, which in itself spoke to the horror of the police terror that has been wreaked on Black and Brown communities from coast to coast. Included among them was Samaria Rice, mother of Tamir Rice. She talked about how her daughter had been handcuffed and forced to watch as her brother lay dying. Rice said, "I'm feeling the rage and anger. I know that the government is not here for us."

Gwendolyn Carr, Eric Garner's mother, said, "They are killing us on the regular! They keep killing us, and as mothers they expect us to do nothing." She pointed out that despite "the videos we had, we still didn't get an indictment!"

Then Valerie Bell, mother of Sean Bell, stated, "We need everyone to fight and stand with us." Marion Hopkins-Gray, mother of Gary Hopkins who was killed in 1999, said of the police, "We need prosecutions. Stand with these mothers for change in 2016."

Geneva Reed-Veal, mother of Sandra Bland, declared, "They tell us we don't see what we see, then indict but don't convict. ... I'm so angry I'm about to ignite something across this country! This fight will take everybody!"

Other family members included Gwendolyn Woods, mother of Mario Woods; Jeralynn Blueford, mother of Alan Blueford; Dolores Piper, grandmother of Derrick Gaines; Lesley McSpadden and Michael Brown Sr., parents of Michael Brown Jr.; Miriam Tolan, mother of Robbie Tolan; Teresa Smith, mother of Cesar Cruz; the mother of Phillip Watkins; the mother of Kevin Cooper, on death row in San Quentin, Calif.; the aunt of Corey Jones; mother of Darrell Graham; and Krystal Brown, the spouse of Marlon Brown.

Davey D, of KPFA's Hard Knock Radio, moderated the fathers' panel, which included Cephus Johnson, Michael Brown Sr., Nation of Islam Minister Keith Mohammad and Richard Perez, father of Pedie Perez. The day was closed out by a chant of "It's all about the children!" A Remembering Oscar Grant III dinner was held that evening by the Oscar Grant Foundation. □

Wisconsin Black Lives Matter

Still n

By Workers World Milwaukee Bureau

Black Lives Matter activists and allies in Milwaukee and Madison, Wisc., are holding a series of events in March and April to demand justice for those killed and brutalized by police. Wisconsin has some of the worst genocidal conditions for people of African descent in the United States.

In Milwaukee, where unemployment for Black youth between the ages of 18 and 35 has ranged from 50 percent to 70 percent for years, an Empowering Youth Sound Off, sponsored by the Coalition For Justice, will take place March 4.

The coalition is led by the Hamilton family, whose loved one, Dontre Hamilton, was shot 14 times and killed April 30, 2014, by officer Christopher Manney in broad daylight at Red Arrow Park. Both Milwaukee and federal officials have declined to charge Manney with anything, and he now receives "disability" pay.

The Coalition For Justice is also organizing Dontre Day at Red Arrow Park on April 30, the two-year anniversary of Hamilton's killing. This community event will bring together those demanding justice for Hamilton and all victims of police terror and also raise such issues as the need for union jobs, housing, education and other human needs.

March 6 is the one-year anniversary of

Petition says 'Treat prisone

A coalition of groups is collecting signatures on an appeal to Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf "to see to it that everyone with the hep C virus should get the cure — those in prison, too." The organizations are all active in the movement to free renowned political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is suffering from the effects of the hepatitis C virus, as are thousands of other prisoners. An estimated 22.1 percent of women and 12.8 percent of men in New York State prisons are infected with HCV, according to the Women in Prison Project. Signed cards and letters will be delivered to Wolf's office at the end of a protest march in Philadelphia on Friday, April 22.

To Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf:

We call on you to make the cure for hepatitis C possible for thousands of Pennsylvanians infected with this virus, including up to 10,000 in Pennsylvania prisons and 45,000 in Philadelphia. There is a cure that is 95 percent effective, but Gilead Sciences charges up to $94,500 for the 12-week-long treatment with Sovaldi or Harvoni. Thousands are being denied the hep C cure by Medicaid, the Veterans Administration, personal medical insurers and the PA Department of Corrections. In 2015, while many people were suffering and dying from cirrhosis or cancer of the liver because they didn't have the means to pay the steep price for the cure, Gilead made an obscene $17 billion in profits.

As we informed you in petitions last year, political prisoner Mumia Abu-Ja-

BLM activist calls out Hillary Clinton

By L.T. Pham

Video footage of Black Lives Matter activist Ashley Williams went viral on Feb. 26 after Williams disrupted a private Hillary Clinton campaign event in South Carolina.

In the video, Williams is seen holding a banner quoting Clinton: "We have to bring them to heel." It referred to a 1996 speech Hillary Clinton made in New Hampshire during Bill Clinton's presidential re-election campaign, in which she defended the 1994 crime bill. The bill advocated for tougher policing of gang members. In the speech Hillary Clinton demonized Black youth, calling them "superpredators" and adding, "We have to bring them to heel." The Clintons' characterization of Black youth with that racist term served to promote the prison-for-profit industry.

Williams demanded an apology to the Black community and questioned Clinton about the disconnect between her racist past and her present stance, pointedly asking: "Which Hillary Clinton is running for president?"

Clinton did not address Williams' questions and ultimately had a Secret Service agent remove her from the event. Clinton then returned to speak to other guests, who had berated and shamed Williams throughout the disruption.

In the past year Clinton's campaign has gone back and forth on the question of Black Lives Matter. After public pressure from activists and organizers across the country, her campaign came out as prioritizing communities of color and ending structural racism. Yet an examination of the biggest contributors to Clinton's campaign shows that she continues to receive donations from private prison industry lobbyists. The private prison industry and corporations play a key role in electing politicians who will allow them to continue to incarcerate Black communities and exploit Black labor.

The hashtag #WhichHillary trended on social media for 24 hours following the disruption. The confrontation made a significant impact in pushing the masses to discuss Clinton's questionable track record when it comes to Black lives.

On Feb. 27, the day of the South Carolina primary, Hillary Clinton still emerged with 73 percent of the votes, many cast by Black voters who also favored Barack Obama in the 2008 election. This contradiction is important and showcases the power of capitalist media propaganda to misconstrue and repress important historical facts that shed light on the role Hillary and Bill Clinton have played in the oppression of Black communities.

Clinton's win in South Carolina also indicates that this stage of capitalism has demoralized the masses and limited what is perceived as possible for changing the material conditions of the working class. As more Black lives are stolen, Clinton's campaign has positioned itself as the reasonable voice representing different working-class communities.

Even some who may be more truly aligned with the Sanders agenda are led to believe by the corporate media that Clinton has the best interests of Black and working-class communities in mind. Meanwhile, the Sanders campaign in no way represents a true socialist program, as he remains reactionary on the demand for reparations for Black communities, as well as on the U.S. military presence in Africa, where imperialism continues to extract superprofits.

Last summer a historically Black church in South Carolina was the scene of a white supremacist's gun violence that killed nine people. Just a few months ago, a South Carolina police officer was filmed assaulting a Black student. In South Carolina and across the U.S., the bourgeois agendas of capitalist candidates do not address the destructive development of capitalism that continues to harm and kill Black communities. Instead, their agendas try to turn the masses against each other in a competition to prove that one candidate is better than the other — when none is truly aligned with the plight of workers and oppressed people.

Williams' bold action calls into question not only Clinton's intentions but the validity of the entire capitalist system. Black communities are entitled to an end to racist violence from cops and vigilantes; to not be criminalized and scapegoated as capitalism crumbles; and to control the wealth that is created by the labor now stolen from Black workers.

To learn about Workers World Party's 2016 Election Campaign, visit workersworldparty.org. Our candidates, Monica Moorehead for president and Lamont Lilly for vice president, are fighters for a true socialist revolution for workers and oppressed people everywhere. □

Baltimore rally demands: Justice for Aaron Winston!

By Steven Ceci
Baltimore

Activists from the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly and the Baltimore Southern Christian Leadership Conference marked the anniversary of Trayvon Martin's death with a protest and rally at the corner of Pennsylvania and North avenues. The site had been ground zero for an uprising in Baltimore after young Freddie Gray sustained fatal injuries while being transported in a police van.

The rally turned into a call for justice for Aaron Winston. Winston is a 24-year-old longshore worker who was brutally beaten by police and later arrested at the Power Plant Live, a night club and tourist destination in Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

While attending a birthday party, Winston had asked police why his brother was being arrested. The police put him in a chokehold and beat him so badly that his arm was broken in several places and his rotator cuff torn. He had to have surgery and metal screws to repair his right arm. Right after surgery, Winston was transferred from the hospital to the notorious Central Booking Jail, where he was denied pain medication despite protests from his family. Winston's family attended the rally and both his brother and father spoke out.

ShaiVaughn Crawley, a Baltimore activist who chaired the rally, pointed out the hypocrisy of Baltimore City Police Commissioner Kevin Davis, who has stated that people should intervene when they see police acting brutally. Crawley explained that any encounter with Baltimore police could become deadly.

The Rev. C.D. Witherspoon, a PPA organizer and president of the Baltimore SCLC, drew the connections between the death of Trayvon Martin and the treatment of Aaron Winston.

Youth from Freddie Gray's neighborhood took the microphone to speak out, at times calling out to the large crowd of police who came to monitor the event, pointing out individual cops who had brutalized the neighborhood. □

WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Aaron Winston's brother speaks at Trayvon Martin rally, Feb. 26.

Aaron Winston in hospital after beating by police.
PHOTO: FACEBOOK

o justice, no peace

the killing of Tony Terrell Robinson Jr., a 19-year-old African-American youth, by officer Matt Kenney in Madison. The killing sparked mass protests organized by Robinson's family, the Young Gifted & Black Coalition and others. The Madison district attorney announced just weeks after Kenney killed Robinson that the killer cop would not be charged with anything.

A celebration of life and community dinner memorial for Robinson Jr. will take place in Madison on March 5. A candlelight vigil and #JusticeForTonyAwareness march is planned for March 6.

Organizers state: "It is one year later and there is still No Justice and No Peace. If we allow MPD [Madison Police Department] to take Tony Terrell's life without accountability, change and a stop to state violence, it will continue to occur. Please bring your families, friends and co-workers and raise your voice so that Tony's death at the hands of the City and State will not be forgotten. He — and we — are now part of the national conversation about lives taken by police every 24 hours, about how#BlackLivesMatter and that Terrell's life matters on March 6th and every day. What's His Name? #TONYROBINSON #WeAreTR"

For updates and more information, go to facebook.com/justicefordontre and facebook.com/fergusontomadison. □

ers with hep C'

mal almost died from hepatitis C complications. The DOC spent over $160,000 treating Abu-Jamal's hep C symptoms but refuses to provide him with the available cure. The cost of the DOC's refusal to cure the disease when first detected is not only immeasurable in suffering and loss of lives of state prisoners but leads to higher financial expenses as the disease is allowed to develop into cirrhosis or cancer of the liver. We ask you to make the DOC's hep C protocol a guide for treatment and eradication of HCV, not a manual for the denial of care. Prisoners with untreated hep C unknowingly bring this deadly disease back to their communities — often to neighborhoods with poor access to quality health care.

HCV is a greater threat to Pennsylvania residents than HIV, Ebola or Zika. Countries such as Egypt and India are providing the hep C cure to their patients for a tiny fraction of the cost in this country. Why not Pennsylvania? Governor Wolf, it is your job to see to it that everyone with the hep C virus should get the cure — those in prison, too.

For prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal, untreated hepatitis C is a death sentence. The Pennsylvania DOC's refusal to fully treat Abu-Jamal and other prisoners is a clear violation of the U.S. Constitution's Eighth Amendment prohibiting cruel and unusual punishment. In light of the PA DOC's refusal to provide the cure to HCV, we therefore call on you to release Mumia Abu-Jamal and all other prisoners needlessly suffering from untreated hepatitis C. □

A historical evaluation

Iran's left and nationalist forces

From a talk by Kazem Azin, co-founder of Solidarity with Iran, at a meeting in New York on Feb. 22.

The Islamic revolution triumphed in Iran on Feb. 11, 1979. Some people hesitate to name it an Islamic revolution. But after more than eight decades of competition between left, nationalist and religious forces, what happened was that this competition ended with the clerics, led by Imam Khomeini, being in complete leadership of one of the greatest and most popular revolutions in the Middle East, as well as in the world, in the 20th century.

The Islamic leadership and especially the clerics will be held accountable for the accomplishments and failures of the past 37 years, as well as in the foreseeable future.

Many forces from the leftist and nationalist tendencies who failed to accept this historic fact made serious mistakes. For example, the "Sazeman Mojahedin Khalgh" (People's Mujahedeen) ended up uniting with imperialist forces against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Why were the bourgeois nationalists unable to win the leadership of the great revolution of 1979?

The nationalists represent the national bourgeoisie, that is, those who sought independence from the imperialists with the hope of transforming Iran's society from a feudal mode of production to a modern capitalist society.

This political force had been overthrown by the imperialists following both what was called the "Constitutional Revolution" of 1905-1911 and the "Movement to nationalize the oil industry" in 1952 by coup d'état.

There is a scientific, socioeconomic reason for the defeat of these movements.

Disrupting the natural pace of national economic development, Iran's native industrial capitalism became subservient to colonial relations, such as the imposition of one-sided trade arrangements. This led Iran's economy to be underdeveloped and dependent on the imperialist-dominated world economy.

Iran's national industry was like an infant with one foot in the cradle and the other prematurely in the grave. Under this condition, the efforts of the native industrial capitalist class for national development were squashed. We illustrate this with several tangible examples.

In 1903, Sani'odoleh started a textile manufacturing industry that produced quality products. However, in competition with foreign interests, the industry was undermined and its proprietor was assassinated. A crystal factory launched by Monsieur Lange, another crystal factory started by Amin-o-Zarb in Isfahan, a china factory launched by Mo'tamed ol-Soltan, brick oven factories, sugar, matches and paper manufacturing in Tehran and Isfahan — all faced similar fates.

Historically, the popular, democratic King Karim Khan Zand, and later premiers such as Amir Kabir, Gha'em Magha Farahani and Mohammad Mosaddegh, were all national leaders attempting to aid the development of native national industries, but every one of them was undermined and blocked.

Therefore, the forces of the nationalist camp were weak and not radical enough to confront imperialist aggressiveness. Any anti-imperialist struggle in reality divided the nationalist forces into three sections: the majority would collaborate with imperialists, a minority would turn to the left and a moderate centrist grouping would take an inactive position. This is exactly what happened both in the Constitutional Revolution of the early 1900s and later in the oil nationalization movement. For example, most of Dr. Mosaddegh's ministers in the National United Front of Iran abandoned him and collaborated with the 1953 coup d'état.

The majority of the people of Iran lost confidence in the bourgeois nationalist leadership through hard historic experience, in which thousands sacrificed their lives.

Considered on the left were all those who supported economic and social justice and government intervention on behalf of the people. Historically, there were leftist tendencies within all the nationalist and religious forces. Among them were communists, who called themselves the vanguard of the industrial working class. Their guiding ideology was Marxism-Leninism, that is, scientific socialism.

In the West, when there was no imperialist force dominating from the outside, the industrial working class was born with the creation of the capitalist mode of production and there were revolutions that put the capitalist classes in power.

When the imperialists were suppressing Iran's native capitalist development, did they also prevent the working class from playing its historic role?

The industrial working class in Iran was born even before the national capitalist class. The imperialists suppressed and caused the continuous disintegration of Iran's native industrial capitalists, forcing the closing of native factories, while increasing taxes drove the superexploited peasants from rural areas to the cities, creating an army of unemployed and poor.

These workers had only two choices: emigrate to the south of czarist Russia or remain in Iran and sell their labor to the comprador capitalists, who were subservient to the imperialists.

Therefore, the Iranian working class developed two specific characteristics:

Number one, they were among the first social forces whose life experiences taught them the role of imperialist exploitation and imperialist political intentions and showed them that imperialism was the main enemy of all Iranian people.

And number two, the Iranian workers in south Russia under czarist rule engaged in the Russian working-class movement before the October 1917 revolution and became Bolsheviks with an unprecedented level of political consciousness. The main leader of this group was Haider Khan Omo Aoughlo, who co-founded the Communist Party of Iran, which later became the Tudeh Party. Haidar Khan was the first leader to advocate the formation of a national united front as the main political organization capable of defeating imperialism.

In brief, it is important to mention that the imperialists treated this force as their major enemy. It is a historic fact that all the coups orchestrated by Anglo-American imperialism to overthrow nationalist governments were followed by massacres of the left, especially communists. Communists were never able to win the leadership in a national united front but had the most direct and indirect political influence on all these movements, including the 1979 revolution.

There were three reasons why the 1979 revolution was led by revolutionary democrats. Two involve Iran's socioeconomic characteristics.

First, Islam — especially the Shiite branch — which was integrated with Iranian culture as an old civilization — played an active role in political struggles throughout history.

Second, Iran was a source of energy which the imperialists could not afford to let go. Just look what the imperialists have done all over the Middle East since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

And third, Imam Khomeini played a historic role in Iran's contemporary history, starting with taking a revolutionary position on the so-called "White Revolution," carried out by the regime of the shah to prevent an agrarian revolution in Iran.

Imam Khomeini was able for the first time to unite all religious groups and the majority of the people under the banner of Islam. It is ironic that the will of the communist Haidar Khan could only be carried out by revolutionary Islam, headed by Khomeini, who took an uncompromising position against the autocratic regime of the shah and his master, U.S. imperialism.

Following the nuclear deal with the imperialists, the road to Iran's independent industrial development has entered a new historical stage. Whether the Islamic Republic of Iran can achieve this goal, which Iran's national bourgeoisie failed to complete, is to be seen in the future. □

Imperialists provoke crisis for refugees

By G. Dunkel

Even though the Aegean Sea in winter is cold and rough, conditions for migrants in Turkey are so harsh that over 102,000 of them have crossed the narrow waters from Turkey to the Greek islands since Jan. 1, according to an estimate of the International Organization of Migrants.

This is just a small part of the nearly 5 million Syrians who are refugees from the violent war that the United States and its NATO allies — like France, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Turkey — and its allies in the Gulf region — like Saudi Arabia and Qatar — have fomented, instigated and manipulated.

Now NATO, at the request of the European Union, has sent a flotilla of ships to the Aegean Sea to restrict and control this flux of refugees.

In the Balkans, Macedonia closed its border with Greece to all but a handful of refugees each day, beginning mid-February. Since between 1,000 and 2,000 refugees a day enter Greece, the Greek government has turned its passenger terminals in Piraeus, the port where the ferries dock, into temporary reception centers. Videos and photos show thousands of people — families with children, elders, youth, men and women — stretched out on the floors or waiting on long lines for a meal.

As the refugees keep on coming, they have spread out to the squares, traffic circles and sidewalks of Athens. The Greek authorities estimate that as of Feb. 27 there were 20,000 refugees on the streets and in temporary shelters in the capital city.

Small states like Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia and Albania — countries in the western Balkans on the refugees' route north — are virtual colonies of the wealthy powers of the European Union, especially the big imperialist powers like Germany. If pressured by the big powers to prevent the refugees from continuing their trip, they have few options but to close their borders.

Many refugees — at least 2.6 million, according to UNHCR [U.N. Refugee Agency] estimates — who are fleeing from the fighting that the war on Syria has engendered have wound up in Turkey. Those in western Turkey need to cross just a few miles of water to reach islands belonging to Greece. Many attempt the crossing.

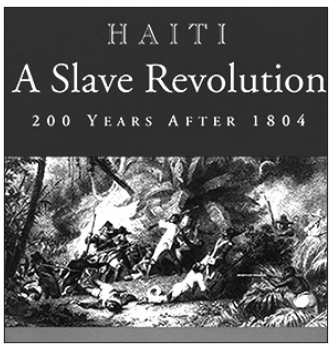
Greece, one of the poorest countries in Europe, has been quickly giving this massive flux of refugees travel documents and sending them on to the wealthier countries they aim to reach. This strategy depends on a friendly reception for the refugees in much wealthier Germany, England and France. These last two countries have accepted only a minuscule number of refugees.

AKEL, which is the Progressive Party of Cypriot Workers, released a statement Feb. 10 on the situation of the refugees and the NATO intervention:

"NATO's involvement in the management of flows of refugees in the Aegean Sea, following the objectives of Turkey and Germany, is a dangerous development. The new measures and mechanisms that the European Union and NATO are providing pose blatant threats to the sovereignty of their member states. At the same time, the intensification of repression against refugees and the militarization of the crisis foretells other tragedies in the Aegean and the Mediterranean."

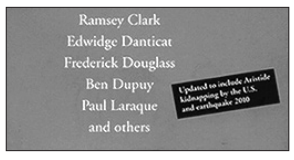
The statement concludes:

"AKEL reaffirms that there is no other definitive solution to the refugee crisis than the end of the bloody civil war in Syria." □



HAITI A Slave Revolution

Updated to include the Aristide kidnapping by the U.S. and the earthquake in 2010.



Available at major online book sellers.

The Clintons' role in Haiti

By G. Dunkel

Seething mass protests throughout Haiti in late January and early February drove President Michel Martelly from office on Feb. 7. Martelly had been selected to run for president through the personal intervention of then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2010.

Clinton had visited Port-au-Prince to personally overturn the decision of the Haitian electoral commission to select a different candidate — Jude Célestin — for a spot in the runoff.

In the context of the 100 years of direct U.S. intervention in Haiti, which most Haitians see as an occupation, for Washington to select a candidate is business as usual. But it throws light on the negative influence Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton have had on Haiti.

Back in 1915, U.S. Marines moved the gold in the Haitian treasury to First National City Bank of New York, now Citibank, and soon after dissolved the Haitian Parliament. In 1919, they imposed a U.S.-written constitution on Haiti. They ran up the U.S. flag as the Marines fought a vicious war against an insurgency led by Charlemagne Peralte. The Marines didn't leave until 1934, when Washington was short of money and the Marines had trained a military force — La Garde d'Haïti — to replace direct U.S. rule.

More recently, U.S. imperialism has supported a United Nations "peacekeeping" military force called Minustah to occupy Haiti. Because it dumped human waste from one of its bases into Haiti's largest river, Minustah is responsible for bringing a devastating cholera epidemic to Haiti, which caused over 8,000 deaths and 800,000 illnesses. The presence of Minustah keeps the U.S.'s domination of Haiti intact.

For Secretary of State Clinton, choosing Martelly was an essential step in "Opening Haiti for Business," one of her slogans. Martelly, a nightclub owner and performer with solid ties to the repressive, ruling-class grouping known as the Macoutes, would be much more open to deals than Célestin. Célestin's forces were oriented toward trying to push the U.N. and the multitudinous nongovernmental organizations in Haiti into building up the country's infrastructure rather than simply providing cheap labor to sweatshops.

Beginning in 2008, the State Department closely monitored Haitian efforts to raise the country's legal minimum wage from $1.75 a day to $5.00 a day. When Hillary Clinton was appointed secretary of state in 2009, she maintained pressure on Haiti's government to keep wages low for workers in the assembly plants and those sewing garments for U.S.-based clothing companies like Levi's, Hanes and Fruit of the Loom. These low wages also enticed Sae-A Trading, a major South Korean sweatshop operator, to set up a new plant in Caracol in northeast Haiti, near the Dominican border.

Bill Clinton also played a prominent role in Haiti while Hillary Clinton was secretary of state. Appointed as the U.N.'s special envoy to Haiti in May of 2009 — before the January 2010 earthquake — he urged investors to make money in Haiti when he and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited that year and also in a conference he called in New York.

After the earthquake, whose destruction of Haiti touched the hearts of the working people of the world and produced a nearly unprecedented flood of donations, Bill Clinton used his position to become co-chair of the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission. This role gave him a strong influence in how the $6 billion that flowed through this commission was disbursed. This made him responsible for the lack of real aid getting to the Haitian people.

At a protest on Jan. 12 in front of Bill Clinton's office in Harlem on the sixth anniversary of the earthquake, the Committee to Mobilize against Dictatorship in Haiti said: "Bill Clinton, as head of the IHRC, Interim Haiti Recovery Commission, was responsible for the $6 billion that came into his hands. He had unlimited control of this money. Six years after the earthquake, not much has changed, and as a matter of fact, Haiti is in worse condition than it was in 2010. Only Bill Clinton can tell the world what happened with this money." □

Businesses grew richer while Haitians grew poorer.

Jan. 12 protest at Bill Clinton's Harlem office.

U.S. investment in Cuba

How a little red tractor jumped to front of the line

By Bill Hackwell
Resumen Latinoamericano,
North American Bureau

How could it be that, while hundreds of U.S. corporations are lined up at the starting gates, chomping at the bit to invest, export and unleash a flood of products into Cuba, a small company producing tractors in Paint Rock, Ala., has not only jumped to the front of the line but has sealed the first deal approved by Cuba and the U.S. Treasury Department? The key was simple: Present a product that Cuba needs and develop a trusting relationship.

The Cleber LLC company will now become the first U.S. manufacturer to open shop in Cuba since 1959, assembling small tractors at the new world-class port of Mariel outside Havana. The tractor is a modern, inexpensive version of a 1948 Allis-Chalmers model designed for 100-acre farms.

The model stopped being manufactured in 1955, as agribusiness was wiping out most small farms in the U.S. In Cuba, over 70 percent of the agricultural land is now leased by small private farmers and cooperatives on plots around that size. The tractor is designed to be easily repaired in the field and can also be converted into a backhoe, a forklift or an excavator. It will eventually be battery powered through solar panels. The name of the tractor being introduced to Cuba is "Oggun," after the deity of iron in the Afro-Cuban religion of Santería.

The first thing that one of Cleber's founders, Saul Berenthal, did was go to Cuba and spend considerable time not just talking to Cuban government officials but also meeting with contacts at the economics department of the University of Havana to get a sense of the Cuban view of the new period and what they need. Berenthal also studied the Cuban Foreign Investment Law of 2014. This law, which was discussed at all levels of Cuban society before it was implemented by the National Assembly, was considered a necessary adjustment to allow more foreign investment and how that investment was going to be processed, monitored and authorized. While opening some areas, the law also explicitly states that no foreign investment can be made in the areas of public health, education sectors or in any institution of the armed forces.

It is not as though Cleber is producing the Oggun without calculating a profitable return. But the difference here is that they are not applying Wall Street's arrogant idea of what should be happening in Cuba right now — and that is the reason Cuba allowed their project to move forward.

The view of the bankers and corporate investors can be seen and heard in all corporate media outlets: Cuba should be opening up its markets. When Obama goes to Cuba in a few weeks, his main message will be to urge the Cubans to move faster in making all aspects of the Cuban economy accessible to U.S. businesses. But Cuba has set up its safeguards and they will control the pace of this new window of development.

It may be hard for the capitalists to understand that just because they have lots of products to sell does not automatically mean Cuba is interested. The country that has stood up to a hostile empire for over 55 years will make decisions as to who they do business with by a process that includes investment projects examined first by the Ministry of Foreign Trade, which relies on the Business Evaluation Commission, and then the ultimate decisions will be made by the Council of State.

The decision to accept or reject an investment proposal will be based on an evaluation not of how profitable it is, but on how much that proposal will contribute to the improvement of the standard of living of the Cuban people and the betterment of the social indexes of Cuban society which, despite the blockade, are some of the highest in the Western Hemisphere. In other words, ethical investments for the collective good versus investment dictated by profit.

Since the rapprochement between the two countries began on Dec. 17, 2014, the main thrust of the U.S. remains regime change, but through different, less confrontational methods. Their fantasy is that once the flow of capital begins to penetrate Cuba, there will be no stopping it.

There is no doubt that Cuba is now facing its biggest challenge, perhaps since the triumph of the revolution itself, but no one should underestimate Cuba and its commitment to its socialist model.

In the ongoing negotiations with the U.S., Cuba has insisted that it be treated with mutual respect and that its sovereignty is not on the table. Those who want to do business with Cuba should remember that, and the simple words of Saul Berenthal, the maker of the little red tractors from Alabama: "In the Cuban business culture, you always have to present the project, not only in economic terms, but what are the social benefits." □

WORKERS WORLD editorial

Women, struggle and socialism

Struggle. Solidarity. That's the essence of International Women's Day, as intended by its founders at the 1910 International Socialist Women's Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The delegates were so inspired by women workers' activism in the United States and Europe that they unanimously declared an annual special day in recognition of the struggle for women workers' rights and for building a coordinated movement to fight for economic and social gains.

Their goal was also to promote true global solidarity, to embrace women of all continents. Beginning in 1911, IWD has been commemorated around the world through marches, rallies, strikes and sit-ins against imperialist war and occupation, corporate exploitation, environmental destruction and more. These actions have demanded jobs and workplace rights, political and social equality, and an end to violence against women.

The Cold War and the McCarthy red-hunting period in the U.S. took its toll on all progressive activity, including International Women's Day. But in 1970, women members of Youth Against War and Fascism, the activist arm of Workers World Party, revived the militant legacy of IWD by organizing a public rally in New York City. They aimed to stay true to the class-conscious and struggle traditions of this special day, which had been diluted in many capitalist countries.

Sue Davis, a co-organizer of that women's protest, explains that in 1970, "following the successes of the Civil Rights Movement and the groundswell of anti-war protests, and inspired by Fannie Lou Hamer and the women of Vietnam, there was a new mood among women, a more revolutionary mood. Women were fed up with inequality and were fighting back."

YAWF Women called a rally on March 7, 1970, at Union Square — which in 1908 had been the site of a protest of 15,000 women garment workers, mostly immigrants, who marched through New York's Lower East Side against sweatshops and for their rights.

More than 1,000 women and men then marched with YAWF to the Women's House of Detention to protest racism, poverty and political repression — and to show solidarity with their most oppressed sisters, many African American and Latina. Outside the notorious prison, demonstrators took over the streets and raised clenched fists in support of the jailed women, who peered out the barred windows and responded with cheers.

Over the months that followed, many protests took place outside the "House of D" in solidarity with political prisoners and all women incarcerated there. That's probably why the women's prison was closed in June 1971 and the prisoners moved to the more isolated Rikers Island.

YAWF Women resurrected IWD based on the principles set by Dorothy Ballan, a WWP founder. She noted in her groundbreaking work, "Feminism and Marxism," that fighting for women's emancipation is a basic tenet of Marxism and an integral and essential part of the overall class struggle to end capitalist exploitation and all forms of oppression.

Monica Moorehead, WWP's 2016 presidential candidate and organizer of many IWD actions, asserts: "This year's International Women's Day takes place when women are under attack today on many fronts. Women need full liberation in all facets of society. To obtain this, WW calls for the abolition of capitalism, racism and a united fight for socialism."

This year on IWD, Workers World will march in solidarity in many cities with our sisters worldwide. The global economic crisis and imperialist wars, occupations and sanctions are devastating women's lives, forcing millions to migrate in a massive refugee crisis the warmakers have created. We support women in the U.S. who face growing income inequality, joblessness, cuts in social programs, restrictions on reproductive rights and other health care, foreclosures, racist police and vigilante violence, brutal immigration policies, and the horrors of the "new Jim Crow" mass incarceration.

Capitalist elections won't win progress for women. It will take a dedicated, independent movement to do that — to challenge racist state repression, wars abroad, and economic and social inequality. Ultimately, it will necessitate a united struggle against capitalism, the source of women's oppression and other forms of discrimination, bigotry and injustice. It will take a global fight for socialism to liberate the wealth created by the workers and use it to lay the foundation for full women's liberation and an end to all forms of oppression.

Socialist Cuba is a beacon of progress for women. The revolution's achievements are profound. The Federation of Cuban Women, founded in 1960 by Vilma Espin, has been instrumental in this process. Education and health care are free, with infant mortality much lower than in the United States. Cuba ranks fourth in the world in the number of women parliamentarians, with 48.9 percent, and second in the Americas only to Bolivia, with 53.1 percent women in parliament.

Just imagine what socialism could do here. ☐

Palestinian threatened with deportation

Rasmea Odeh wins court victory

By Chris Fry

Rasmea Odeh, a Palestinian American facing deportation, has won an important legal victory from the Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. The three-member panel ruled unanimously on Feb. 25 that District Court Judge Gershwin Drain erred during Odeh's trial in 2014 when he excluded expert testimony on how Israeli torture of Odeh had affected her memory when she filled out U.S. immigration forms two decades ago.

The Rasmea Defense Committee, which represents more than 50 organizations across the U.S., has called this court decision "a partial victory." In March 2015, Odeh had been sentenced by Judge Drain in Detroit to 18 months in prison, $1,100 in fines and having her citizenship revoked so she could be deported.

The appeals court decision means that if Judge Drain cannot show any new reason to exclude this testimony, then Odeh must be granted a new trial. This will "finally allow her to tell the entire story of Israel forcing her to falsely confess to bombings in 1969, when she endured over three weeks of vicious sexual, physical and psychological torture at the hands of the Israeli military." (justice4rasmea.org, Feb. 26)

When Israel was established in 1948, Odeh's family was driven from their homes by Zionist terror groups. First, they were forced into a refugee camp and then had to move again when Israel launched its 1967 war and began its occupation of both the West Bank and Gaza.

In 1969, Odeh was arrested for a supermarket bombing in Israel. While in an Israeli prison, she was tortured and raped. She was forced to confess to the bombing before a military court and spent the next 10 years in the Israeli prison system. She was freed in 1979 in a prisoner exchange between the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Tel Aviv.

In 1995, Odeh moved to the U.S. to take care of her father, who was suffering from cancer. She became a leading figure in Chicago's Palestinian and Middle Eastern immigrant community. She assisted thousands of Arab women as they adjusted to life in the U.S. Many of these women came to Detroit to support Odeh at her trial.

Before her sentencing, defense attorney Michael Deutsch argued that throughout history oppressed people like Odeh have resisted injustice and occupation. Deutsch pointed to Nelson Mandela, labeled a terrorist by both the apartheid South African regime and the U.S., but recognized around the world as a freedom fighter.

U.S. harbors real terrorists

The U.S. government has and is harboring many actual terrorists. After World War II and in anticipation of the Cold War against the Soviet Union, many Nazi war criminals were sheltered in the U.S. and abroad by U.S. imperialism. Wernher von Braun, who developed Germany's infamous V2 rocket, which killed thousands of civilians and was manufactured by concentration camp slave labor, was sheltered and employed by the Pentagon and NASA.

Another terrorist supported by Washington is Luis Posada Carriles. With CIA approval, Posada planted the bomb that killed 73 people on a Cuban airliner in 1976. He was released in 2007 by the same U.S. federal court system that convicted Rasmea Odeh.

Adding to the significance of Odeh's legal victory is the generally conservative character of the Circuit Court, which has upheld bans on same-sex marriage in several states. This ruling, coming after a vigorous campaign on her behalf, is expected to advance the struggle to free her of all charges.

"Rasmea and we are celebrating our victory today, and are thankful for the work of our great lawyers and thousands of people across the U.S. and the world who have stood with her," said Lara Kiswani of the Odeh support committee's Bay Area chapter. "And besides fundraising, we want everyone to continue to organize educational events, like our International Women's Day celebrations honoring Rasmea in San Francisco, Chicago, Minneapolis and other cities." (justice4rasmea.org, Feb. 26) ☐

Women change history: BUILD WORKERS WORLD!

March is Women's History Month. Though WW reports the struggles of poor, working-class women of all nationalities year round, we highlight them during March. It was women in Workers World Party who revived the militant tradition of International Women's Day in the streets of New York in 1970. Our newspaper always commemorates this socialist holiday with a roundup of women's protests for freedom, justice and equality the world over.

As Marxists, we strive not just to honor history but to make it — to bring about the huge changes needed to turn society upside down and put the workers and the oppressed first. Struggle is the only way to bring about change — like the efforts of the Black Lives Matter movement, started by women and transgender activists, that address racism head on and demand reparations for centuries of oppression. The slogan "We won't take it any more" sums it up.

While all issues are women's issues, it's important to recognize that women are powering the low-wage workers' fight for $15 an hour and a union. That's because 70 percent of low-wage workers — salespeople and janitors in big-box stores, bank tellers and servers in restaurants — are women, most often women of color and single mothers struggling to provide for their families.

If you appreciate WW's year-round coverage of struggles that assert and advance the rights of women, it's time to join the Workers World Supporter Program and help build the newspaper. We established the WWSP 39 years ago so readers could invest in the paper and promote working-class truth needed to make revolutionary change.

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

many campaigns needed to make qualitative, revolutionary change that crushes capitalism and ushers in socialism.

Write checks to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or donate online at workers.org/donate/. We are grateful for your help in building the revolutionary press in the U.S. ☐

Apple and the FBI

A look behind the curtain

By Gary Wilson

The FBI has an iPhone used by Syed Rizwan Farook, an accused shooter in the San Bernardino, Calif., attack. A judge has ordered Apple to assist the FBI in breaking the passcode encryption that blocks access to the device. Apple CEO Tim Cook has defied that order, saying that to do so would risk the security of all iPhones.

That's the official story, but it's not the real story.

Edward Snowden, the former National Security Agency contractor, says the facts are being obscured and there is every reason to be skeptical of the official story.

The fact is that Apple has already helped the FBI extensively in this case. It made Apple engineers fully available and has already provided the full data from the device's last backup, a backup made six weeks before the shootings. That's a lot of information.

If you don't know, the iPhone keeps a record of everything you do: where you go, where you shop, what you eat and more.

The iPhone itself was not Farook's personal phone. His personal phone was destroyed before the shootings took place. The iPhone that the FBI has is Farook's work phone and is the property of the San Bernardino County Health Department, which gave full permission for the search. So there is no Fourth Amendment privacy issue involved in the case, nor does Apple say that the right to privacy is the issue.

There's already a backdoor

Tim Cook says the issue is security and in his public letter says that Apple does not want to build a backdoor into its devices because of security concerns. But all Apple devices already have one or more backdoors. Apple regularly uses the existing backdoors to give access to the data on Apple devices to the government's police and spy agencies.

A backdoor, using the definition found on Wikipedia, is a way to bypass normal security on a system. A backdoor may be a hidden part of the system, a separate program or may be part of the hardware. Although normally hidden, in some cases backdoors are deliberate and widely known, and may have somewhat legitimate uses, such as providing the manufacturer a way to deal with users losing passwords. For example, default passwords can function as backdoors if they are not changed by the user.

On Apple devices, a common backdoor is the iCloud backup. It gives Apple access to all the contents on the device without having to use the encryption passcode. Apple uses this as a feature to recover users' personal data, such as photos, when a device has been lost or stolen. That also means, however, that it's a backdoor that Apple can regularly use to turn over users' data to the feds.

What the FBI is asking for in this case is an operating system modification that would allow repeated bad password entries. The modification would allow the FBI to easily crack iPhone passcodes in minutes. But they don't need this for access to Farook's iPhone.

John McAfee, founder of the McAfee antivirus software company, wrote on the Business Insider website on Feb. 18 that the FBI could do it on its own. "I'll decrypt the San Bernardino phone free of charge," is the title of his commentary. (tinyurl.com/jdm9ks6) Security technologist Bruce Schneier says that the intelligence agencies have already cracked the iPhone encryption and agrees that the FBI could do it themselves. (tinyurl.com/gmrfkwh) The German magazine Der Spiegel reported in 2013 that the NSA has complete access to the iPhone, and that they can activate the microphone and camera without the device's owner knowing. (tinyurl.com/kradbdq)

In an interview conducted on the BBC's "Panorama" program last October, Edward Snowden said that government spies can hack into any phone to listen in to what's happening in the room, view files, messages and photos, pinpoint exactly where a person is, and monitor a person's every move and every conversation, even when the phone is turned off.

The FBI hasn't said why they didn't ask the NSA to give them access to Farouk's phone.

Records not on the phone

Something that's commonly misunderstood is the phone's communication records. It may seem like the FBI needs access to Farook's iPhone to get the latest communication records, but the FBI already has all the records for this iPhone. The communication records for all mobile devices are always stored by the service provider, not on the phone itself.

Apple, in its appeal of the court ruling, has shown that the FBI has lied about many of the details of the case. Not only has Apple given full assistance to the FBI all along, but the company also told the FBI how to force a full backup of the device to the iCloud. The FBI mishandled that and failed to force a backup, which would have given them easy access to the data they say they are seeking.

The FBI also claimed in court that what it was requesting would be for this single phone, but Apple showed in its appeal that the Justice Department has already made requests for this same procedure for 12 other cases. The FBI lies. It hasn't really changed its mode or methods from its most notorious days as former FBI director J. Edgar Hoover's secret police force.

Apple's 'marketing strategy'

The Justice Department — the FBI is the enforcement arm of the Justice Department — made an unusual charge in its court response to Apple's stand: "Apple's current refusal to comply with the Court's Order, despite the technical feasibility of doing so, instead appears to be based on its concern for its business model and public brand marketing strategy."

The Justice Department rarely if ever attacks any company for having a business model or a marketing strategy. In fact, it's the primary job of the Justice Department to protect business interests. But there are competing business interests and maybe it is precisely Apple's business interests that are the reason it has taken a public stand against the court order.

Apple is the world's richest transnational corporation, ranked number one in the Financial Times Global 500 since 2012. That is, it was number one until last month, when it was passed by Alphabet, the Google parent company.

Apple is in a neck-and-neck battle with Google, and to a lesser extent with Facebook, Microsoft and Amazon, to be the primary portal to the digital world. It is a classic battle for world domination — and it is intense.

Apple's business model is to sell high-end devices at a premium price. Google and Facebook give free access and collect extensive data on their users, which they then sell to others, such as advertisers.

Apple has to convince people to buy its product over free or less expensive options. One of Apple's key claims has been that it guarantees privacy and security. What the Justice Department revealed is that there is a back way into an iPhone. Apple's marketing had implied that that didn't exist or had been closed with its latest software update.

Since this vulnerability was revealed, the New York Times, which is heavily invested in Apple and its products, reported that Apple had launched an internal operation to close this now widely known hole. □

Detroit officials nervous as public anger grows

Continued from page 2

Chief James Craig the next day. Craig often brags that street crime is down, yet reports abound related to corruption in the Detroit Land Bank Authority, known for its no-bid contracts and abusive administrators.

Other Duggan appointees joined the chorus against Bing, touting their dialogue with African-American business owners and city residents. The Duggan administration is known for its intolerance of critical comments about the social situation in Detroit.

Detroit still suffers from widespread poverty, unemployment and home foreclosures. Public transportation is poor, and large swaths of the city remain dark without working street lights.

Duggan delivered his "State of the City Address" on Feb. 23 at Second Ebenezer Church on the city's east side, which has been devastated by job losses and residential flight fostered by the banks and corporations. The speech triggered at least four disruptions from the audience, who chanted him down.

Demonstrators gathered outside the entrance of the church carrying a banner that read "Duggan = Black death." When opponents of the Duggan administration attempted to set up a picket line in front of the church doors, they were told by police that they had to move to the sidewalk because that area was "private property."

Some demonstrators challenged this notion, since the "State of the City Address" is a public event featuring elected officials. Detroit and corporate interests were sued in 2014 for turning away protesters at a public area downtown. The city of Detroit settled the suit and passed a new ordinance ostensibly designed to protect "free speech." Duggan opponents feel the police action on Feb. 23 violated the law.

Anger mounts against false narrative

Recent demonstrations against the city's ruling-class agents have gained the attention of at least a fraction in the power structure. Bing's warning cannot be viewed in a political vacuum.

Citywide elections are scheduled for 2017, and the Duggan administration and the City Council have almost nothing to show for their efforts over the last three years.

Most neighborhood and small business districts in the city remain devastated. Approximately 50,000 homes are facing tax foreclosures after the March 31 deadline.

A Detroit News study during 2015 documented that the banks were responsible for the tens of thousands of abandoned homes and apartments in the city. Many of the report's findings reflect what the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs has been saying since 2008.

Successive city and state administrations have failed to stand up to the tyranny of the banks and corporations, which continue to loot the municipality of Detroit and Michigan as a whole.

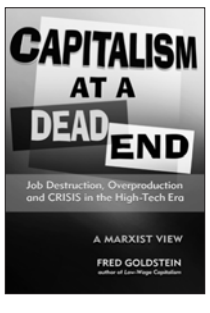
Gov. Snyder has come under fire for his continued emergency management of Detroit Public Schools. Teachers have engaged in "sick-outs" and other protests against the deplorable conditions in the schools.

Darnell Earley, the DPS emergency manager appointed by Snyder, stepped down on Feb. 29. Meanwhile, retired federal Judge Rhodes has been appointed the new emergency manager of the DPS by Snyder.

This appointment exposes the fact that Snyder and his backers are committed to maintaining corporate control over the DPS and all other aspects of public life in the city. Legal efforts by the state-controlled school system to sanction teachers for their protest actions have failed so far.

Duggan and his allies are proposing a new scheme of control and disempowerment over the DPS through what they call a Detroit Education Commission. This plan would continue the denial of the right to vote for an empowered school board, which has been rendered totally impotent by the state.

These developments, if continued, could very well lead to a mass rebellion, given the broad anger and discontent among the city's nearly 700,000 residents. □



Capitalism at a Dead End

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

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Libertad para Oscar López Rivera, ¡YA!

¿Tregua? Manténgase en guardia

Por John Catalinotto

La noticia de que el gobierno de Obama finalmente ha aceptado una tregua parcial sobre Siria con Rusia no trajo un alivio verdadero a quienes están preocupadas/os por el pueblo sirio o sobre el peligro de una guerra más amplia. El enfrentamiento entre las potencias nucleares fue quizás sólo pospuesta, y aún puede empeorar. El movimiento contra la guerra y el antiimperialista en Estados Unidos debe permanecer en estado de alerta.

El ejército turco ha estado bombardeando zonas kurdas a través de la frontera y amenaza con una invasión. Los neoconservadores estadounidenses se quejan de que Bashar al-Assad sigue siendo presidente de Siria. Se ha informado que el régimen de Arabia Saudita busca armas nucleares. La paz no ha llegado todavía.

En la cobertura actual de la guerra contra Siria por los medios corporativos, hay un intento continuo por culpar al gobierno de Damasco por todo lo que le sucede al pueblo sirio. Stephen Kinzer, ex corresponsal del New York Times, que actualmente es un alto miembro del Instituto Watson de Estudios Internacionales de la Universidad de Brown, calificó esta cobertura como "uno de los episodios más vergonzosos de la historia de la prensa estadounidense". (Boston Globe, 18 de febrero)

Dado que la cobertura de los medios corporativos de Siria distorsiona constantemente lo que está ocurriendo allí, una revisión de la historia reciente es necesaria. En 2011, después de un corto período de protestas sin armas, comenzó un conflicto entre el régimen por un lado y grupos armados reaccionarios del tipo Al-Qaeda por el otro. Estos grupos estaban armados y financiados por Arabia Saudita, así como Turquía y otras potencias de la OTAN, y todos estaban alentados por los imperialistas, incluyendo Washington.

El resultado ha sido casi cinco años de una guerra reaccionaria internacional contra el gobierno legítimo y soberano de Siria. Combatientes sectarios y reaccionarios proveyeron las tropas sobre el terreno contra el gobierno de Damasco. La guerra ha matado a más de 250.000 sirios, alrededor de dos tercios de ellos soldados sirios y civiles a favor del gobierno, y ha llevado a millones de sirias/os al exilio, incluyendo hacia Europa, pero sobre todo en la misma región.

El imperialismo estadounidense y sus aliados, incluido el régimen turco y las monarquías del Golfo, son los responsables de este horror. Fue sólo a mediados de 2014, cuando el grupo Estado Islámico (EI) declaró un "califato" y comenzó a amenazar los intereses imperialistas en Siria e Irak, que Washington comenzó a alterar su apoyo incondicional a la oposición siria.

Pero incluso cuando EUA alegó estar atacando el EI, los del establecimiento estadounidense que nunca quisieron renunciar al objetivo de "cambio de régimen" en Siria, se resistieron. A pesar de la campaña de propaganda contra el EI, poco se hizo para degradar la posición sobre Siria de estos reaccionarios.

No fue hasta el pasado otoño, cuando Rusia intervino por invitación de Siria, que la ofensiva rusa-iraní-Hizbolá-siria comenzó a erosionar la posición militar de los grupos como el EI y Al Qaeda. Los neoconservadores y todos los estrategas imperialistas se sienten frustrados por su incapacidad para controlar los acontecimientos, no importa cuánto destruyan, como muestra su experiencia en Irak, Libia, Yemen y ahora Siria. Están ahora aún más frustrados ya que el apoyo de Rusia, Irán y Hizbolá por su aliado sirio ha mejorado las posibilidades de una victoria sobre los reaccionarios.

En ese artículo del Boston Globe, Kinzer argumenta que sólo apoyando a las fuerzas del gobierno sirio se puede derrotar al grupo Estado Islámico.

A pesar de la argumentación racional de Kinzer, no hay razón para esperar que los que están en el poder en EUA sigan su consejo. No sería la primera vez en la historia que los militaristas sobreestimen su propia capacidad para controlar los acontecimientos mediante el uso de la fuerza. No olvidemos que cada potencia imperialista europea antes de la Primera Guerra Mundial creía que podía derrotar rápidamente a sus enemigos.

El 23 de enero, mientras el secretario de Estado John Kerry promovía las conversaciones de paz sobre Siria, el vicepresidente Joe Biden estaba en Ankara prometiendo apoyo al régimen turco, que había pedido a EUA ser más agresivo contra Rusia en Siria. Ya sea este enfoque de dos caras una táctica de negociación o un signo de diferencias en la administración, deja plasmado el peligro de una guerra más amplia.

Las/os que están dentro de EUA que quieren luchar contra la guerra, sólo pueden tomar un respiro corto y tener el peligro de una guerra mayor en la mira. Deben estar preparadas/os para lo que suceda a continuación, listas/os para hacerle frente a cualquier escalada de EUA, la OTAN, Turquía o Arabia Saudita en su guerra contra Siria y sus aliados. □

Lucha de clases en Wisconsin desde 2011

Por el Colectivo WW-MO de Milwaukee

El 10 de febrero del 2011, estudiantes y trabajadoras/es comenzaron la histórica ocupación del edificio del Capitolio estatal en Madison-Wisconsin para oponerse a la racista y anti-sindical Ley 10.

Marcando el comienzo de una de las mayores revueltas en EUA desde la década de 1930, durante semanas decenas de miles de trabajadoras/es y personas de pueblos oprimidos ocuparon edificios y marcharon en Madison para derrotar a la Ley 10. Decenas de acciones de solidaridad se llevaron a cabo en todo el mundo, incluyendo un día de cierre de los muelles de la costa oeste por los miembros del Sindicato Internacional de Estibadores y Trabajadores de Almacén, (ILWU por las siglas en inglés).

Eventualmente, líderes sindicales moderados o reaccionarios vinculados a los partidos Demócrata y Republicano maniobraron para dirigir la ocupación del Capitolio estatal hacia la arena electoral. Se puso en marcha una fallida campaña de revocación contra el gobernador de Wisconsin Scott Walker, para hacer frente a diversos sectores de la clase trabajadora que querían acciones directas, incluyendo el cierre de varias industrias capitalistas o hasta una huelga general. Eventualmente, la Ley 10 fue empujada por la legislatura racista y de derecha de Wisconsin y firmada por Walker.

Desde esta significativa derrota para la clase obrera y los pueblos oprimidos, en los últimos cinco años los funcionarios políticos servidores de Wall Street en la Legislatura y el propio Walker han participado en viciosos procesos de austeridad capitalista tipo Jim Crow [n. de t.: de segregación racial], derrocando o eviscerando numerosas leyes que beneficiaban a las/os trabajadores y las comunidades, leyes que se ganaron como concesiones a las masas por la lucha de clases directa en la década de 1960, de 1930 y anteriores.

Estos incluyen los mayores recortes en la historia de Wisconsin en educación desde grados primarios hasta la superior y la expansión de las escuelas charter por todo el estado. Se implementaron numerosas formas de desregulación y privatización. Se redujeron las protecciones del medioambiente.

Se redujeron la mayoría de las disposiciones salariales prevalecientes, el "derecho-a-trabajar" por menos se puso en práctica, la permanencia en puestos de facultad en la Universidad de Wisconsin fue eliminada y la protección del servicio público se redujo. Se redujeron los beneficios por desempleo mientras que implementaron pruebas de drogas para las/os beneficiarios de asistencia social. Quitaron los fondos para la Planificación de la Familia.

Austeridad capitalista crea enterradores

Pero como han luchado contra los ataques, las masas en Wisconsin están aprendiendo.

En su "Conferencia sobre la revolución de 1905" a un grupo de jóvenes de la clase trabajadora en Zurich-Suiza, V.I. Lenin escribió: "La verdadera educación de las masas no se puede separar de la lucha independiente, política y sobre todo revolucionaria, de las masas mismas. Solo la lucha educa a la clase explotada. Solo la lucha le da a conocer la magnitud de su propio poder, amplía su horizonte, mejora sus habilidades, aclara la mente, forja su voluntad; y por lo tanto, hasta los reaccionarios tuvieron que admitir que el año 1905, el año de la lucha, el 'año loco', definitivamente enterró la Rusia patriarcal". ("La revolución de 1905", enero 1917)

PHOTO: JOE BRUSKY

¡Día sin Latinos! a 18 de febrero. en Madison

La austeridad en Wisconsin ha sido luchada por las masas a cada paso, en particular por las/os que eran jóvenes y estudiantes en 2011 pero que ahora son trabajadoras/es militantes con consciencia de clase. Muchas/os se están convirtiendo en líderes, se identifican con el socialismo o se están haciendo comunistas.

Estas/os líderes emergentes no han conocido otra cosa que la austeridad y la guerra, y no tienen futuro bajo el capitalismo. Están empezando a moverse en batallas ofensivas ya que aprenden que para que la clase trabajadora pueda lograr cualquier victoria y en particular para lograr el socialismo, las masas no deben quedar encerradas en una serie de batallas defensivas sin fin.

Esto está reforzado por una nueva ola de jóvenes y estudiantes oprimidas/os y militantes en formaciones de Las Vidas Negras Importan como Joven, Dotada/o y Negra/o en Madison y la Coalición por la Justicia en Milwaukee, organizaciones pro derechos de inmigrantes tales como Juventud Habilitada en la Lucha (YES por sus siglas en inglés) y jóvenes indígenas que luchan por sus tierras sagradas y sus artefactos. Otros aspectos destacados de la lucha de clases incluyen las exitosas huelgas en 2015 del Sindicato Amalgamado de Tránsito, Seccional 998 (ATU L-998) y del Sindicato Trabajadores Automotrices Seccional 833 (UAW L-833).

Estos acontecimientos que han ocurrido desde 2011 son parte de un proceso irregular pero continuo de trabajadoras/es veteranos y de los pueblos oprimidos por todo el estado que están cada vez más escépticos sobre la capacidad del Partido Demócrata para ofrecer algún alivio a las masas. Están buscando alternativas a la miseria absoluta y la destrucción infligidas sobre ellas/os por parte de los bancos, las corporaciones y sus sirvientes políticos. Cualquier ilusión de que el sistema capitalista pudiera ser reformado se ha hecho añicos.

Karl Marx escribió en el "Manifiesto Comunista": "Lo que produce la burguesía, ante todo, son sus propios sepultureros. Su caída y la victoria del proletariado son igualmente inevitables".

Es en este espíritu que, a pesar de la actual austeridad implacable en Wisconsin, durante la primera semana del quinto aniversario de la ocupación del Capitolio estatal en 2011, numerosas batallas de clase estaban en apogeo y en erupción, incluyendo el "Día sin latinas/os" con 50.000 participantes el 18 de febrero en Madison. □