



India Cummings died in Buffalo prison. Why? 11

# Housing protest shuts down developers' summit

By Terri Kay  
 Oakland, Calif.

Community activists organized by the Black Power Network marched into Oakland's Kaiser Center Auditorium on March 18 demanding an end to development-driven displacement and calling for the city to declare a housing state of emergency.

The protesters locked themselves across an entrance to the auditorium where the Oakland Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Summit was about to begin. About a hundred strong, the remaining activists filed into the auditorium, chanting to the accompaniment of the Brass Liberation Orchestra.

The BPN's platform uses the key words "stop," "stay" and "expand" to signal its demands: "Stop — declare a housing state of emergency with a moratorium on no-fault evictions; Stay — protect residents by passing a stronger rent stabilization and anti-eviction ordinance, restoring social services and building truly affordable housing; and Expand — create a right-to-return program to bring displaced Oaklanders home."

Effectively shutting down the proceedings, BPN continued to chant, "Housing is a human right! That is why we have to fight!" BPN organizer Carroll Fife said, "Oakland is not open for business until Oakland is open for business for everyone." She was referring to the planned title of Mayor Libby Schaaf's speech to the Chamber, "Oakland: Open for Business," and to the fact that the average rent for an Oakland apartment is now over \$3,000 a month.

Several signs read: "Our housing crisis is not your profit opportunity. Eviction moratorium now!" Protesters demanded the City Council declare a housing state of emergency.

Chamber of Commerce organizers had to formally announce the cancellation of the meeting, promising to reschedule the \$95-a-seat affair. Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf had been scheduled to give the opening remarks and an investment economist was to have made a major speech on real estate opportunities in Oakland.

This action follows on the heels of the City Council's 6-to-1 decision on March 15 to approve a luxury development on the publicly owned East 12th Street parcel of land, ignoring a year of protests calling for 100 percent affordable housing on the site. The parcel overlooks Oakland's Lake Merritt, making it prime property in developers' eyes.

The "Save E. 12th Parcel for the People Coalition" had developed its own counterproposal featuring 100 percent affordable housing under the slogan "Public land for public good." People locked themselves to posts in the Council chambers as several hundred people filled the main floor and the two balconies, chanting until the Council walked out. Council members reconvened in the mayor's private chambers and held the vote approving the luxury development, while the people continued to chant and protest just outside the room. □



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

Protesters at Oakland City Council on March 15 demand a moratorium on evictions.



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

New York City

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# A rare victory for retired steelworkers

## Renco caught trying to rob pensions, again

By Chris Fry

Some 1,350 retirees, members of the United Steelworkers union, have won their battle against the giant Renco Group to get their full pensions.

The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp., a federal agency, announced on March 4 that Renco must restore all the pension money due these retired workers since 2012, when R.G. Steel went bankrupt and Renco, R.G. Steel's owner, cut off their pensions. The PBGC took over at that time and made much-reduced pension payments to the workers, but it also sued the conglomerate Renco Group for \$70 million in pension obligations. (nytimes.com, March 5)

The settlement means that Renco must also pay back the federal government for its pension payments to the R.G. Steel workers. Although it was the PBGC that negotiated the settlement, it was pressure by the union workers and their supporters that won the victory.

The Renco Group owns mines and factories around the globe. Its owner, Ira Rennert, is a billionaire with a palatial seaside home, known as Fair Field, on Long Island. The largest occupied mansion in the U.S., it is currently valued at \$248 million — more than the pension money Renco had denied the R.G. Steel workers.

### Sued WW in 2006

Renco is well-known to Workers World newspaper. The company sued us in 2006 for writing that Renco was robbing the workers of another company, WCI Steel in Ohio, of their pensions, also through a bankruptcy maneuver. Despite an army of Renco corporate lawyers, the judge dismissed the suit.

When, under pressure from the union and supporters like WW, the PBGC threatened to seize Rennert's Fair Field mansion to pay for the pensions, Renco backed off and made up the pension shortfall to the WCI retirees.

Typically, when a subsidiary of a conglomerate like the Renco Group declares bankruptcy, the conglomerate is obligated to pay the workers' pensions. But in the recent R.G. Steel case, Renco schemed to avoid this obligation, according to the PBGC.

Renco bought the financially troubled steel company in 2011 for \$1.2 billion and then sold a 24.5 percent stake

in it to Cerberus, a private equity firm. It told the PBGC that this was done to avoid declaring R.G. Steel in bankruptcy.

But shortly thereafter, in 2012, R.G. Steel did declare bankruptcy. As Renco now owned less than the 80 percent "cutoff" stake at its subsidiary, it claimed it could cut off the pensions of the steel company's workers, leaving the PBGC to make much-reduced pension payments. That's when the government agency sued Renco for fraud.

### Pensions belong to workers

Pensions are not gifts to the workers from corporations or government agencies. They are deferred wages, designed to supplement Social Security so workers can maintain a steady, secure standard of living through their retirement years. They are the product of countless struggles against the bosses, private and government. Pension funds are the property of the workers.

Government worker unions in particular have negotiated somewhat lower wages than private industry unions in order to get more money placed in pension plans. These pension funds become obligations that the bosses must pay.

But for decades, corporations and their political minions have connived to reduce and eliminate these pension obligations and replace them with stock market investment plans, like the 401(k) program. Then the workers, not the companies, assume all the risk, while brokers rake in billions in commissions.

Millions of workers found that their plans' savings evaporated in the Great Recession. Many have not recovered from that catastrophe.

Economist Teresa Ghilarducci explained it this way: "In America, when we had disability and defined benefit plans [pensions], you actually had an equality of retirement period. Now the rich can retire and workers have to work until they die." (nbcnews.com, March 23, 2015)

As with Renco, Wall Street is constantly hatching plans to gobble up the workers' pension plan funds.

In 2015, 12,000 Detroit city retirees, many of them African Americans, found their pension payments cut by 6.7 percent. On top of that, many of these same retired workers must pay back tens of thousands of dollars to the

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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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## 'No \$81 M police HQ!'

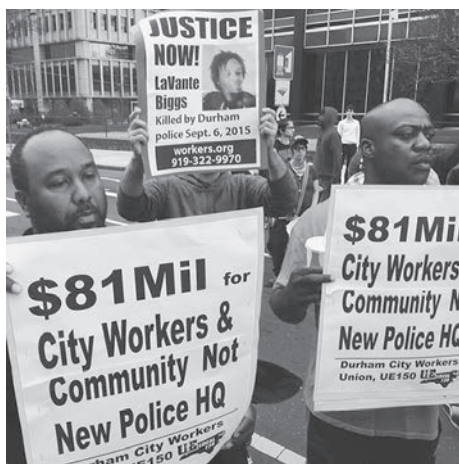
By L.T. Pham  
Durham, N.C.

On March 18, nearly 200 people gathered in front of police headquarters here to oppose the city's proposal for a new \$81 million headquarters. Organized by various community groups, the demonstration had the support of community members and city workers and caught the attention of many passing by. The crowd blocked the road in front of the police station for over two hours as speeches and chants rang out.

Last year, the Durham City Council approved a budget of \$62 million for the building of a police headquarters in East Durham, where it is to encroach on working-class communities of color and signify the rapid gentrification of Durham. This year, the budget was increased as the city argues for more technology, in-house services and the concentration of multiple departments into one facility.

The protest launched a campaign to build a "Durham Beyond Policing," which opposes the new police headquarters and calls for the \$81 million to be invested in schools, jobs, social services, public transportation and many other urgent needs of the city. At the demonstration, organizers presented a people's budget, emphasizing and prioritizing human needs over policing and cops.

The gathering of primarily young



WW PHOTO: DURHAM WWP BRANCH

Protesters press for a people's budget.

Black and Brown organizers and activists drew attention to the contradictions of the city's budgeting. As schools are under resourced, teachers underpaid and students policed; as public housing becomes more and more inaccessible and expensive; as more people face unemployment or underemployment, the city seems to be more interested in providing world class services and facilities to cops, whose function is to police and jail working-class people.

The organizing groups SONG [Southerners On New Ground], Say Her Name Collective and Black Youth Project 100-Durham plan to present a more formal people's budget to the City Council and organize more actions to halt the construction of the new police headquarters. □

## WW interviews man punched at Trump rally

### 'He hit me and the sheriffs threw ME on the ground'

Racist billionaire Donald Trump held a March 9 campaign rally in Fayetteville, N.C., and was interrupted nearly 20 times by demonstrations inside the building, as another several hundred people rallied outside the arena. Rakeem Jones was assaulted by a white supremacist as he was being taken out of the rally by police — who then attacked him after he had been punched. Trump has offered to pay the legal fees of the white supremacist who punched Jones in the face. The man who assaulted Jones later made a threat against him on national television, saying, "Next time we might have to kill him."

Jones spoke with Ben Carroll of the Durham Workers World newspaper bureau about what happened.

**Workers World:** What made you want to go to the Trump rally in Fayetteville?

**Rakeem Jones:** My friends and I just wanted to go at first to see what the hype was about. Where I come from, when I think of Donald Trump, you think of a billionaire, you think of Trump Towers and all of that, and I wanted to see it all for myself. I'd kept up with his campaign and his talk about building a wall on the border with Mexico, about banning Muslims from the country, and it all seems wrong to me. Why are you messing with



PHOTO: JUSTICEFORKEEM.ORG

Rakeem Jones

people and going against peoples' rights, freedom of religion and trying to discriminate against all these different people?

**WW:** What happened when you were inside the rally?

**RJ:** We had come with a pretty diverse group. There were five of us altogether — three Black men, including myself, a white man who is a gay veteran, and a white woman. When you got into the arena you could feel it in the air, something bad. We were just there to look and observe really. We get to our seats, and there were a few speakers before Trump. Then Trump comes out. The woman that's with

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## MUMIA RED ALERT

By Henry Hagins

Stalwart Mumia Abu-Jamal supporters have again issued red alerts during the week of March 13 in the form of e-blasts to constituents urging them to call, fax or email messages demanding that Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf, Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel and Mahanoy Superintendent Theresa DelBalso stop the state's deliberate foot-dragging and begin treating the world-famous political prisoner.

Mumia has a life-threatening hepatitis-C condition and needs a type of medication proven to have a 99 percent success

rate. Deliberate delay continues to severely endanger this heroic freedom fighter's life.

Recent visits by movement leaders Pam Africa, Suzanne Ross and Johanna Fernandez of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Free Mumia Coalition and the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, respectively, confirmed that his life-threatening condition has continued since its discovery last year. In fact, Mumia's physical condition continues to dangerously decline daily.

This is totally unacceptable! The MOVE Organization and Educators for Mumia have also mobilized and taken action. They sent out the following appeal:

"We strenuously urge all people of good will to support the following demands:

"1. Immediate provision to treat Mumia with the well-known and effective anti-viral medication. Liver damage, extreme weight gain and discomforting skin discoloration continues.

"2. Immediate release of all recent blood test results to Mumia's attorneys.

"3. Vigilant monitoring of Mumia for signs of diabetes — especially his blood sugar, since an attack nearly killed him in the spring of 2015!

"Call, fax or email the following persons:

"Pa. Gov. Tom Wolf, phone 717-787-2500, fax 717-772-8284, email governor@pa.gov.

"Pa. DOC Secretary John Wetzel, phone 717-728-2573, email ra-contacdoc@pa.gov.

"Mahanoy Prison Superintendent Theresa DelBalso, phone 570-773-2158 (expect sandbagging from personal secretary).

"Keep the pressure on to treat Mumia and ultimately free him!" □

## A rare victory for retired steelworkers

Continued from page 2

pension fund for so-called "excess interest" that they received. This is aptly called "clawback," as the state government and courts gouge the retired workers' meager income in order to hand over millions of dollars to Wall Street bankers.

This occurred despite a provision in the Michigan Constitution that guarantees full pensions to state and local government workers.

All this comes on top of the campaign

by Wall Street political hacks in Congress to reduce Social Security benefits and increase the retirement age.

As the capitalist crisis continues to unfold, every worker who has retired or plans to retire has a stake in the struggle against Wall Street's drive to steal from and eliminate pensions, hoodwink workers into shady investment schemes, and discard older workers, particularly oppressed workers, into lives of abject poverty. □

## CNY workers back down bosses

By Minnie Bruce Pratt  
Syracuse, N.Y.

Workers in central New York state are battling wages too low to live on and wage theft with the help of the Workers Center of Central New York. On March 17, Workers Center organizers Rebecca Fuentes and Nikeeta Slade led a dramatic direct action to support a local restaurant worker.

Thomas Colabufo had not received his final paycheck a month after leaving his job at Modern Malt, a "boutique" diner in the gentrifying Syracuse downtown area. After Colabufo's spouse was leafleted about wage theft by Workers Center activists on the street, she contacted the Center for help.

The result was a determined group of 12 people — students, teachers, workers and retirees — who marched with Colabufo, his spouse Velvet and their child into the diner. They insisted on meeting with the owner and handed him a letter demanding the missing check be paid that day. There was a tense confrontation with the boss, who resorted to the usual verbal tricks — denying the problem, blaming the worker, name-calling and trying to provoke supporters. The owner ordered everyone off his property, which he interpreted as including the public sidewalk!

The Workers Center contingent stood firm. Despite the owner shouting loudly, "Tomorrow!" within two hours he had backed down and Colabufo had the hard-earned paycheck in his hand. The Workers Center-Central New York, a "grassroots organization focused on workplace and economic justice," has conducted successful local actions against wage theft in construction, food service and janitorial services. (workerscentercny.org)

On March 15, farmworkers and Workers Center members Víctor Hernández and Antonio Salinas had travelled to the New York



PHOTO: REBECCA FUENTES

Organizer Nikeeta Slade strategizes with Workers Center.

state capital, Albany, to join 5,000 other workers at a massive Fight for \$15 rally. At a press conference, Hernández explained that he and his co-workers labored 72 hours a week for \$9 an hour — not enough to pay their rent. He said \$15 an hour for all workers would enable him to buy adequate nutrition to work the long hours. Big dairy farm owners and agricultural growers are mounting loud opposition to Gov. Andrew Cuomo's proposed statewide hike of the minimum wage to \$15.

A wide range of people, from farmworkers, custodians and airport wheelchair attendants to health care workers, attended the rally, sponsored by the Service Employees International Union. Various community groups attended to give support, including All\* Above All, an organization working to restore and expand abortion coverage for low-income women. The group's statement said: "We stand with Fight for \$15 because ALL\* of us deserve justice, respect and compassion, whether in our health care decisions or in our jobs." (AllAboveAll.org) □

## LESSONS OF BOSTON

## Rank-and-file solidarity is the key

Below is the third and final part of a phone discussion between leaders of the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, United Steelworkers Local 8751, and members of Workers World Party analyzing how the union was able to win a great victory over the transnational company Veolia/Transdev.



PHOTO: TEAM SOLIDARITY

Georgia Scott, Monica Moorehead and Lela Roseboro

### 'Boston, Cuba and revolutionary will'

— Monica Moorehead

WWP 2016 Presidential Candidate and member of the Secretariat

The duty of every revolutionary party is not only to support those on the front lines against corporate greed and union busting by those promoting racism and inequality, but to help get the word out, to help elevate a union like 8751 with the rest of the union movement that's so much on the defensive in the struggle against austerity. In terms of the role that Veolia is playing in all of this, the struggle of the union is one example of the struggle against austerity worldwide, whether it's in Flint, Detroit, everywhere in this country and around the world, or in Greece, Africa, the Caribbean. We know the struggle against capitalism knows no borders.

I want to raise Cuba especially — a country with little to no resources — that was still able to defeat the U.S., the most powerful imperialist country in the world, because Cuba had revolutionary leadership — which USW Local 8751 most certainly has. What the Cuban Revolution has shown us is that no matter how poor you may be in terms of economic development, if you have the revolutionary will, you can take whatever resources you have, whatever little material resources you may have, and prioritize those to meet the needs of the population.

That's what the Cuban Revolution is all about, and that's what Workers World Party did in our own small way in this struggle. We understood the importance of the 8751 struggle against Veolia had ramifications not just for this particular union, but for the whole labor movement, whether the workers were organized or unorganized. We tried to pull together our resources, whether human or material, to show our solidarity with this tremendous struggle over the last few years and throughout the decades that this union has been in existence. We were inspired by revolutions like in Cuba, which is like a rank-and-file country where people are so inspired and part of the revolutionary process.

**'The people are still resisting'**  
— Claude (Toutou) St. Germain

Recording Secretary, USW 8751, and representative of Fanmi Lavalas

Finally we got the Four back, but the struggle is not over. We still have a long fight with this monster company. But today I would say we are in a very good position with this company.

The struggle we are in today seems no different than what the people of Haiti are in right now. We really need to carry the same spirit we give the struggle in Boston, in Local 8751, to the people in Haiti now, to hold the fight, and win that battle.

I remember 1990 when we had our first elected president in Haiti. After the seven months he had in office, there was a coup d'état by the Army, by the capitalists of the U.S. All the Haitian nation stood up against that coup d'état, against everybody involved in that coup — the United States, France, Canada. The struggle is still on; the people in Haiti have kept fighting. The political party Fanmi Lavalas was in the fight to have the masses get involved in politics and social things as well.

In Haiti right now, the people are still in the streets. The people are still resisting capitalism, they still resist the collaborators of capitalism, they still resist. They don't want to give up the fight. They don't want to give up the right to have a good election. They don't want to give up the right to have food. They don't want to give up the right to an education. They don't want to give up the right to good health. They don't want to give up the right to be free in their country and be part of their country. The bourgeoisie of Haiti, the oligarchy, don't want the masses to get involved in the political area of this country. That's still a big struggle, not only to get the power, but also to have freedom for the masses to get involved in the real life of the country. Right now, they are still in the streets, demanding that the elections be fair, honest, democratic. If they aren't, the people will continue in the streets to make things be right.

The victory we had in Boston should be the victory of everyone, not only for those of us bus drivers in Boston. As a local, we seem like we are small, but we are not small, because we stood up in every fight,

everywhere, for years. We're traveling everywhere. If there was some kind of struggle, we were there to fight that.

I believe that when we say, "An injury to one is an injury to all," that's a true thing. Because we've been standing with everybody. That's why when we are fighting that fight against Veolia, we see so many people with us.

The people everywhere should stand with the people in Haiti to make a victory for the whole world. Not only for the people in Haiti, but for the whole world to see exactly how we can make things happen everywhere.

I think people power is the freedom for people to be together and to claim and to fight for the rights they need to have. I think that's going to remain our major battle in this struggle here. The right to form a union, the right to be together, the right to have a demonstration in the streets. That should be part of the struggle to get our freedom.

### 'Our future'

— Milt Neidenberg

Founding member, Workers World Party

I so appreciate the precious word of solidarity. Because solidarity and unity — building the bridges, tearing down the walls of oppression and racism — are the main factor that goes with class-consciousness and militancy.

How important it was that Team Solidarity swept the elections! Yes, it was years and years of hard work, day in and day out in the ranks, meetings at all the yards, the dozens of solidarity marches with the help of the Party. And for years and years the Boston mayors and bourgeoisie also red-baited our leaders and those who associated with them. But compared to years ago, the red-baiting, the anti-communist attacks didn't play; they didn't work. So the feeling of communists working with this splendid union is a classic example of our future.

The ruling class right now is in a crisis, \$18 trillion of debt and heading into another recession deeper than 2007. Listen to their debates: They argue, they insult each other. I've never seen a period like this, and I've been in the movement 65 years. That's one reason, not the main, why the drivers got such a wonderful contract — the internal confusion, including in Transdev.

And why was it in this period of deep austerity, unemployment and givebacks in labor contracts that USW 8751 got a good contract? The workers were able to make the company fear that if they didn't get a good contract, they were ready to strike. The school bus drivers had it printed on their T-shirts: a coiled cobra with the slogan "Will strike if provoked." They were so well-organized and ready that Transdev thought they'd better settle.

Now we go forward. It's social unionism, it's class struggle, it's unity and solidarity in the working class. Now we'll start to move while the ruling class is in disarray. Hope, unity, solidarity, sensitivity to the national question and self-determination!

On to socialism!

# On the picketline

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

## Another Northwest dairy worker dies; safety regs needed

Ruperto Vazquez Carrera, a 37-year-old dairy worker in Paul, Idaho, was killed Feb. 16 when the feed truck he was driving slid into a 20-acre manure reservoir, drowning him. The United Farm Workers is urging supporters sign a petition requesting Idaho Gov. Butch Otter discuss much-needed safety regulations with the UFW. ([action.ufw.org/page/speakout/idaho](http://action.ufw.org/page/speakout/idaho), March 11)

Last April 27, Workers World reported a similar fatal accident on a dairy farm in neighboring Washington state, where 27-year-old Randy Vazquez was killed on Feb. 24, 2015. Neither incident was isolated. Three dairy workers in Idaho were killed in 2013, while dairy farms in Washington average one death every 16 months and one serious injury every day — an injury rate 40 percent higher than in most private industries. "Agriculture, along with construction, is one of the most dangerous industries in [the U.S.]," said Washington State Labor Council President Jeff Johnson. "Accidents in the dairy industry in Washington state are higher than in agriculture as an industry." (The Stand, March 16)

On Jan. 18, a modest dairy worker safety bill, House Bill 2484, backed by the UFW and the Washington State Labor Council, was introduced in the state legislature. But due to the powerful state dairy corporations — which earn \$3.2 billion a year — the bill was essentially tabled on Feb. 9.

WW hopes the horrible death of Vazquez Carrera two weeks later will push the bill's passage next year, before another death can occur.

The Vazquez Carrera family is accepting donations for Ruperto's funeral at [gofundme.com/napysugc](http://gofundme.com/napysugc).

## Protest layoffs of Oreo workers in Chicago

On March 21, the first 277 workers received pink slips at the historic Nabisco bakery plant in Chicago that produces Oreos. Local 300 of the Bakery union (BCTGM) called a protest on March 23: "Laying off 277 workers here in Chicago in order to profit off the backs of low-wage earners in Salinas [Mexico] is wrong. In our opinion, what Mondelēz will be doing at the Nabisco plant on Wednesday is a crime. So come join us Wednesday morning at 6:30 a.m. to roll out yellow 'crime scene' tape outside the plant, and then join us for the follow-up press conference at 7:00 a.m. to express our outrage to the rest of Chicago." (Facebook, BCTGM Local 300, March 20)

Mondelēz, the international snack food conglomerate that owns Nabisco, announced plans last June to close down Oreo production in Chicago, leaving over 600 out of 2,100 unionized workers jobless. When the workers refused to agree to an outrageous 60 percent cut in wages and benefits to keep their jobs in Chicago, Mondelēz announced it would outsource Oreo production to Mexico, where workers are paid a fraction of the wages in an unregulated, unsafe working environment. Meanwhile, CEO Irene Rosenfeld rakes in obscene yearly profits of over \$20 million.

Workers at the Chicago plant, who are majority Black and Latino/a, have staged protests to rally community support to stop the outsourcing. To find out more about this struggle and sign a protest petition to Rosenfeld, go to [FightForAmericanJobs.org](http://FightForAmericanJobs.org).

## NJ Transit strike averted

A strike threat by the 4,200 workers in 11 unions who run the NJ Transit commuter railroad, which carries nearly a million weekday riders, went down to the wire on March 11. The threat of the strike, the first in 30 years, helped the workers win a mostly favorable contract. Though the contract has not been officially released and the workers have not officially ratified it, the terms include an annual salary increase of 2.5 percent, retroactive to 2011 and in force until 2019; and a cap on health insurance at about 2.5 percent of base pay, or about \$40 a week. NJ Transit management had opposed retroactive pay and wanted a 10-20 percent hike in health insurance. But the only concession the bosses won was extending the contract another year and a half. ([nj.com](http://nj.com), March 14) □

A new book to be released for May Day:

## Boston School Bus Union Victory

Blow by blow from the front lines — articles reprinted from the pages of Workers World newspaper

# 1937 Detroit Women autoworkers 'hold the fort'

By Martha Grevatt  
Detroit

1937 was the year of the sit-down strike. Hundreds of occupations of plants and other workplaces were recorded, and many “quickies” went unreported. The stay-in strike tactic was used to win big gains, particularly to gain union recognition, but also to win grievances on a daily basis.

Detroit was known as “America’s strike capital,” boasting of more sit-downs than any other U.S. city. More often than not the occupiers were women. They showed incredible boldness in taking over factories — producing everything from auto parts to cigars to seed packets — as well as hotels, laundries and department stores. Polish immigrant women cigar makers waged a 66-day sit-down, the longest in U.S. labor history.

Police were often brutal when evicting the women occupiers. A violent police evacuation of a cigar factory led the United Auto Workers to organize the largest rally in Detroit’s history. Some 250,000 people gathered in Cadillac Square on March 24.

UAW leaders threatened to hold two sit-downs for every eviction. For three

weeks the city’s sit-downers — who typically occupied a half-dozen to a dozen workplaces on any given day — were left alone.

The peace was broken on April 14 with the forced evacuation of 120 strikers, 79 women and 41 men, from the Yale & Towne plant. The company employed about 400 women and a smaller number of men in the production of locks for Chrysler vehicles. All but 20 workers were signed up with the UAW. The union occupied the plant on March 9 after the company refused to negotiate on its list of demands; central was recognition of the UAW as the sole collective bargaining agent.

**‘End piecework! We demand a living wage!’**

Beyond that, the women workers wanted an end to the piecework system and its replacement with a straight hourly pay rate. Doing piecework pushed the women to work at a breakneck pace just to earn enough money to survive. They also sought a pay increase from their 35-cents-an-hour starvation wage and an end to the pay shortages they experienced in addition to low wages.

The UAW attempted repeatedly to

meet with management and negotiate an end to the strike. When the company went to court to evict the strikers, claiming the sit-down was illegal, the union’s attorney raised the company’s illegal and unfair labor practices. Not surprisingly, the court sided with the company. So did Wayne County Undersheriff Bernard McGrath, who was irked by the women’s “hold the fort” attitude. “Hold the Fort” was an old union song revived during the 1930s’ militant strike wave.

A combined force of 600 police and sheriff’s deputies, with injunction in hand, advanced on the plant. Outnumbering the strikers five to one, the cops nevertheless had a fight on their hands. Women had barricaded themselves inside the plant, while other strikers and supporters went to the roof and hurled lead weights and other projectiles at the police. When the union got word of the evictions, supporters massed at the plant, many of them Chrysler workers who had just completed their own victorious sit-down strike.

The women inside the factory were the hardest to evict. When they finally came out, the plant was so thick with tear gas fired by police that visibility was almost zero. The police called the young



women, most in their teens or early 20s, “gas-eaters.”

**‘Solidarity Forever!’**

All the strikers were arrested. They rode to jail singing “Solidarity Forever” despite nearly suffocating from the tear gas. They were released seven hours later when the UAW organizer arrived with a check to bail everyone out.

The courts found every striker guilty of contempt of court for defying the injunction, ignoring the union’s negotiations for a peaceful exodus from the plants. Had the police and sheriffs held off on the eviction, it would have taken less than an hour for the union to secure a voluntary evacuation.

After the sit-down ended, the strike continued with a picket line outside. Thousands of union supporters picketed in solidarity with these militant women. Chrysler workers pledged to refuse to install Yale locks on their vehicles.

It did not take much longer for the UAW, then a militant union organizing new members every day, to get Yale & Towne to give in and grant these courageous women their first contract. □

## WWP forums honor women’s struggles

The New York branch of Workers World Party hosted its annual International Working Women’s month forum on March 18. Kira Lynae, a Workers World Party organizer based in Baltimore, gave a stirring historical and political overview on the relationship between Black women and girls and the struggle for reproductive justice. Lynae explained the intersectionality between white supremacy and sexism under capitalism.

Alicia Campos, a leader of the Women’s International Democratic Federation (FDIM) section in the Americas, who had participated earlier in a United Nations forum focused on the plight of women worldwide, explained the relationship between the FDIM and the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), of which the FDIM is an affiliate.



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO  
Suzanne Adely, Monica Moorehead, Alicia Campos, Maritzel Gonzalez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Rosa Maria de la Torre and Kira Lynae

Maritzel Gonzalez, of the FMC, spoke briefly on the social gains made by women following the triumph of the Cuban Revolution.

Suzanne Adely, from Al Awda-NY and NY4Palestine, spoke on current unconsti-

By Workers World Detroit Bureau

The Detroit branch of Workers World Party held its annual “Women’s Speakout for Liberation and Justice” on March 19. The program opened with a tribute to Honduran resistance leader Berta Cáceres, who was assassinated on March 3. Community activists Cynthia Johnson, Reybekah Larson, Regina Ross and Sandra Simmons, as well as Detroit WWP leader Debbie Johnson, gave perspectives on the struggle for justice and women’s role in that struggle. Both Cynthia Johnson and Ross are running for state representative.

Ramona Africa was in Detroit for a film showing and discussion about the



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLACK  
Ramona Africa

1985 police firebombing of the MOVE organization in Philadelphia. Africa, who is the MOVE organization’s communication secretary, gave a moving presentation on the special courage of MOVE women. She is the only adult survivor of the 1985 bombing, which destroyed two city blocks and killed six adults and five children.

The women members of WWP presented their annual “Warrior Woman” award to long-time activist Margaret Guttshall. A Green Party candidate for the Wayne State University Board of Governors, she is running as a revolutionary socialist. □

tutional federal and state laws attempting to block and intimidate the growing Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions solidarity movement with Palestine aimed at the Zionist regime of Israel. Adely, a woman of Jordanian descent, opened her remarks by paying tribute to the heroism of Arab women resisting global imperialism.

The meeting paid tribute to the recent-

ly assassinated Honduran leader Berta Cáceres. A video showed her accepting an award at an environmental conference. Rosa Maria de la Torre, who chaired the meeting, paid tribute to International Working Women’s Day and the anniversary of the Paris Commune, both born out of the struggle for socialism.

— Monica Moorehead

## Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution

By Carl Lewis

Thousands of women fighters transformed gender roles within the context of the Nicaraguan Revolution and the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN in Spanish) during the intense struggle from 1978 to 1990 for national independence and self-determination, which continues to this day.

That this struggle took place during the murderous intervention of the U.S.-financed and -supported counterrevolutionary “Contras” serves as testimony to the fortitude of the women of Nicaragua. They not only sustained the Sandinista Revolution but also created a “revolution within the revolution” to further enhance

the political, social and economic advances of women.

Tomás Borge, who was one of the top FSLN commanders, once wrote: “We are aware of compañeros that are revolutionaries in the street, in the workplace, in all parts, but are feudal lords of the gallows and the knife in the home. Economic development on its own is not enough to achieve the liberation of women, and neither is the fact that women are organizing. We must launch a difficult and prolonged struggle against the habits, traditions, and prejudices of men and women. We must launch a difficult and prolonged ideological struggle, a struggle equally undertaken by men and women,

in Nicaragua. ... Therefore it is normal, and absolutely logical, that we now speak about a new revolution: a women’s revolution.” ([tinyurl.com/jyzwx7w](http://tinyurl.com/jyzwx7w))

The organization that took up this challenge was the Luisa Amanda Espinoza Association of Nicaraguan Women, known by its Spanish acronym AMNLAE, established under the nose of the U.S.-supported, right-wing military dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza García in 1977.

Luisa Amanda Espinoza was the first female FSLN combatant from the urban working class to die in battle against the Somoza regime in 1979. The AMNLAE slogan was “No revolution without wom-

Nora Astorga,  
Nicaraguan hero  
and revolutionary  
ambassador  
to the U.N.



en’s emancipation: no emancipation without revolution.” (Maxine Molyneux, “Mobilization without Emancipation? Women’s Interests, the State, and Revolution in Nicaragua,” *Feminist Studies*, 1985)

Thirty percent of combatants in the Nicaraguan struggle were women, in everything from urban support and medical needs to direct combat. Women also represented 37 percent of the FSLN in both regional and departmental positions in political administration. (Digital

Continued on page 11

## No real enthusiasm for Clinton

# Fewer African Americans vote in primaries

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**

Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Recent electoral data indicates that the number of African Americans who are voting in the Democratic primaries and caucuses has taken a precipitous decline since 2008, when Barack Obama was elected president.

Despite the much-championed reliance by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's campaign on the African-American electorate, this trend of declining participation could be an ominous sign for the Democrats in the November general elections.

Compared to their turnout in the 2008 Democratic primary, when Barack Obama was on the ballot, the number of African-American voters in the March 15 primaries declined drastically, by about 40 percent in Ohio, 38 percent in Florida and 34 percent in North Carolina.

The super PAC called "Black Votes Matter," founded by Charlie King, warns that even though primary turnouts are normally less than in general elections, the Democratic Party must not assume that it can mobilize the necessary electoral support to ensure a Clinton victory if she maintains her lead in delegates.

"It will be very hard for the Hillary campaign alone to have a message that excites Reagan Democrats and the 4 million new Black Barack Obama voters to vote. That is why Donald Trump poses a real challenge," King said. "And if that is not corrected ... states like Ohio, Florida and Virginia can turn to Republican-leaning states. ... Trump could become president." (New York Post, March 18)

King, who has been a Democratic Party strategist, told the New York Times, "No one has captured the real dilemma in the 2016 election. It's not a question of whether Hillary Clinton would get 90 percent of the Black vote. The question is: 90 percent of what?" (March 3)

2012 presidential election results indicated that African-American voters contributed significantly to Obama's campaign, winning slim margins of victory over Republican candidate Mitt Romney in Florida by 50-49 percent, Ohio by 50-48 percent; Virginia by 51-48 percent and Pennsylvania by 52-47 percent. A higher African-American turnout is presumed to have been decisive in winning a Demo-

cratic nominee in North Carolina for the first time in decades.

The Times noted, "Even Mrs. Clinton's strong victory in South Carolina, which was celebrated for her dominance among African-American voters, obscured a decline in Black turnout of about 40 percent." (March 3)

Nonetheless, Clinton's supporters suggest that the prospects of a Trump victory, if he receives the GOP nomination, will inspire traditional Democratic constituencies to vote in great numbers in November. Robert Zimmerman, Clinton fundraiser, said, "There will be a spiritual fervor for Democrats to come out and vote." (NY Post, March 17)

### African-American votes for Sanders

Meanwhile, a growing number of African Americans and other oppressed groups are voting for Sen. Bernie Sanders, illustrating the lack of enthusiasm for Clinton. The exit polls showed this in Ohio, Illinois and Missouri, where African-American support for Sanders rivaled that in Michigan. While Clinton won the majority of African-American votes, Sanders increased his percentage in these states, compared to his performance in the South.

Exit polls say Sanders did not exceed 20 percent of the Black vote in Southern states, but he won 28 percent in Michigan and Ohio, 29 percent in Illinois, and 32 percent in Missouri. (ajc.com, March 17)

In Michigan, where Sanders staged an upset against Clinton, voter turnout exceeded expectations. Some 2.5 million cast ballots — the largest level of participation since 1972, when George Wallace won the Democratic primary there over the cross-district busing issue.

However, more Republicans turned out than Democrats. Some 1,322,742 voters participated in the Republican primary, giving Trump a victory, while 1,193,169 voted in the Democratic primary. (mlive.com, March 9)

### Low Democratic voter turnout

This participation level is reflected throughout the entire Democratic electoral base where Clinton is the favorite candidate among the party hierarchy and its Wall Street backers.

The March 3 New York Times said, "In Nevada, exit polls suggested that Hispanic voters — who have helped push

the once deeply Republican state toward Democrats in national elections — voted in significantly lower numbers than in 2008. In Iowa, where Mrs. Clinton barely won after a hotly fought battle with Sanders, exit polls suggested that turnout for voters under the age of 30 dropped by roughly 40 percent from 2008."

The closeness of the primary results in Illinois, Clinton's home state, and Missouri, portends much for the general election's outcome, in relation to the degree of interest in supporting Clinton. Although Democratic Party leaders and elected officials speak confidently about the July convention, there are still 31 more primaries and caucuses.

Despite suggestions that Clinton is on her way to clinching the nomination, she only leads Sanders by 317 delegates, with 1,147 to Sanders' 830. Illustrating how undemocratic is the selection process for nominees, 712 superdelegates have pledged their allegiance to Clinton, giving her the advantage. These superdelegates can allegedly switch to Sanders' side if he overcomes Clinton in the upcoming elections.

## Utah activists fight back vs Trump

By **Adam Koritz**

Salt Lake City, Utah

A diverse group of Salt Lake City activists gathered at the City County building on March 18 to protest the presence of reactionary GOP front-runner Donald Trump, whose racism, sexism, xenophobia and exploitation of his employees have all been exposed.

Organizations as diverse as Students for a Democratic Society, Utahans Against Police Brutality, Utah Anti-War Committee, Students for Justice in Palestine, Socialist Alternative, Teamsters Local 222 and Freedom Road Socialist Organization all spoke at the event. A common theme of the speeches was that the organizations of workers, students, the LGBTQ community, and oppressed nationalities ultimately are the ones with the power to stop Trump's reactionary movement.

Next came a march with chants of "Whose streets, our streets!" and "El pueblo unido jamás será vencido." More people joined, eventually reaching around 3,000. The march then began pushing up against the barriers and blocked the entrance, delaying the arrival of "The Donald" by about an hour.

Protesters began chanting, "When immigrants are under attack, what do we do? Stand up, fight back!" Pigs fully clad in riot gear emerged and began pushing back against the crowd.

Tensions have been rising between the community and the police, especially after the recent shooting of 17-year-old Abdi Mohammed. A pushing match ensued instigated by the cops and reactionaries leaving the event. "You guard fascists!" some demonstrators shouted and took turns hitting a Trump piñata.

Because of Trump's vicious attacks on immigrants, Utah's Latino/a community has begun mobilizing in a way not seen since the huge marches in 2005 and 2006 calling for amnesty.

After Trump left, cops tried to trap some demonstrators, but the people held together and got out. No arrests were made.

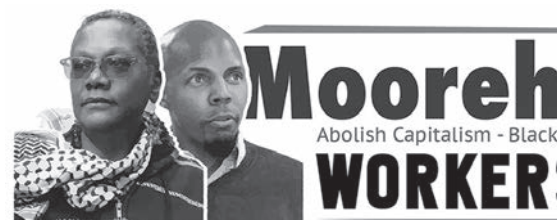
More people are realizing that in capitalist society the cops aren't neutral.

Largely due to the Trump campaign, the Republicans have a greater turnout in primaries and caucuses than do the Democrats. The March 14 San Diego Union Tribune noted — with graphs of states' electoral participation — that "Republican voters have been turning out in record numbers in the primary contests held so far. Democrats on the other hand are showing up in lower numbers than they did in 2008, the last open election."

In other notable election events, African-American communities voted out two county prosecutors in Democratic primaries: Anita Alvarez, in Cook County, Ill., and Tim McGinty in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. These electoral results reflected the mass outrage at police killings of African-American youth: Laquan McDonald, age 17, and Tamir Rice, age 12.

No matter which party wins, nationally oppressed and working people will face the necessity of building an independent political movement to challenge and defeat the inevitable programs of economic austerity, state repression and imperialist militarism. □

They act as enforcers of an increasingly disintegrating social order. These are the "bodies of armed men" that Marx spoke about. This fact has been more painfully obvious to oppressed communities. How this plays out remains to be seen but we can say with certainty that the people will continue fighting. With humanity and the very planet at stake, how can we not? □



Monica Moorehead for president. Lamont L.

## What We Stand 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!

## Prosecutors booted in primaries

By **Kathy Durkin**

The struggle in the streets has impacted the electoral arena in Democratic primary races for prosecutor in counties where Chicago and Cleveland are located. Incumbents were voted out of office on March 15. These cities were the scenes of community outrage and protests against racist police killings in 2014 — of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald in Chicago and 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland, both African Americans.

It took Anita Alvarez, state's attorney of Cook County, Ill., 13 months to indict the officer who fired the 16 shots that killed McDonald, despite a police dashcam video that clearly implicated him. Only after a judge ordered the video released — in response to journalists' legal actions — did Alvarez indict the officer for murder.

In Cuyahoga County, Ohio, prosecutor

Tim McGinty had instructed a grand jury not to indict the officer who mercilessly shot Rice, a child playing with a toy gun in a Cleveland public park. Another officer then brutally tackled Rice's 14-year-old sister, who had come to her brother's aid.

Both prosecutors were ousted in the primaries. The Black Lives Matter movement, the youths' families and their allies accused them of collaborating with the police and abetting the cover-ups of these killings. Demonstration after demonstration demanded they step down — and the culpable police officers be charged, convicted and jailed.

While confined to the electoral arena, these votes show the growing strength of the Black Lives Matter movement, which is determined to challenge government officials and police when Black people are senselessly gunned down by racist police. □

# Two sides of the Sanders campaign

By Fred Goldstein

The Bernie Sanders campaign has a dual character. On the one hand, it has unearthed and given voice to widespread opposition to Wall Street and massive economic inequality and injustice. On the other hand, Sanders is running in the Democratic Party, which has been controlled for generations, and is controlled now, by the very financial oligarchs the Sanders' supporters are rebelling against.

The mass response to Sanders' call to break up the banks and make the rich pay for universal college education, universal health care, raising the minimum wage and so on is totally understandable. After decades of austerity, takebacks, union busting, racism and mass incarceration, it is no wonder that Sanders' appeals have fallen like rain on dry grass.

But in the long run, the road to dealing with the banks, the billionaires and corruption does not lie through electoral politics and the Democratic Party. It lies through mass mobilization and independent struggle. The Sanders' adherents are eventually going to have to come to grips with this hard truth.

That being said, whatever the final outcome of the Democratic Party primaries, at present it is undeniable that the Bernie Sanders campaign has given expression to the accumulating anger at Wall Street and the Democratic Party political establishment. Hillary Clinton, a known friend of Wall Street, a pro-Pentagon hawk and a thoroughly opportunist politician, represents that establishment.

When Sanders began his campaign, denouncing not only Wall Street but the upper echelons of the corporate monopolies, he was regarded as a minor candidate who would, at best, be a mere novelty in the campaign.

As a senator from a small rural state who called himself a democratic socialist, he was outside the Senate millionaires'

club and was expected to be a marginal candidate in the Democratic primaries.

But within weeks after he declared his candidacy and began to campaign, the capitalist media began to notice that he was drawing huge crowds on campuses, in cities, in rural areas, everywhere he went. His audiences numbered from a few thousand to 28,000 at a rally in Oregon.

The massive popularity of the Sanders campaign, especially but not exclusively among white youth, workers and young women, took the capitalist media and the political establishment by complete surprise.

It should be noted that Sanders has since expanded his appeal to African Americans and Latinos/as, with a number of prominent civil rights leaders, political figures and activists in the arts campaigning for him.

## Occupy Wall Street at the ballot box

The message Sanders is preaching bears a close resemblance to the message Occupy Wall Street advocated.

In September 2011, OWS seized Zuccotti Park in Manhattan, established a general assembly in the streets and denounced the massive inequality in the U.S. This movement put forth the slogan, "We are the 99%." It opposed the 1%, who control vast amounts of wealth. OWS was dedicated to direct action.

The assemblies quickly spread to many cities throughout the U.S., indicating that OWS had millions of passive sympathizers. Even the big business media had to feign sympathy for a while, until the police systematically swept the assemblies off the streets with brutality and arrests. The development of this movement, and especially its widespread support, took the ruling class totally by surprise. From the biased vantage point of their board rooms and estates, the rulers always underestimate the people's wrath.

And just as they underestimated OWS, so they also underestimated the hatred for Wall Street and grinding inequality that has left a whole generation without a future. Economic and social conditions have gotten worse since 2011.

The Sanders campaign is, in some ways, a continuation of OWS in electoral form. Therein lies the appeal of Sanders and is the basis of his wholly unexpected electoral success.

## Up against the machine

As of March 20, Sanders had accumulated over 6 million votes, not counting the caucus states of Iowa and Nevada. Even then, his vote count hardly reflects the popularity of his anti-banker, anti-billionaire message. He has raised \$140 million in repeated small contributions from a record-setting base of 2 million-plus contributors and 4 million individual donations.

Yet, not all his supporters can vote in the primaries, for a variety of reasons — obstructive voter qualifications, age limits, conflicts with school, etc. By the time the campaign ends, Sanders will probably gain millions more votes.

His broad support is remarkable, since the campaign is up against the two most powerful political machines in capitalist politics, the Clinton machine and President Barack Obama's machine, which have combined to block him in every way possible. These two machines are deeply entrenched nationally and have been in existence for years.

Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign has been active since 2007. After she lost to Obama in 2008, her campaign quietly resumed during his administration. She had been a U.S. senator from New York, the home of Wall Street, and then became

secretary of state, where she worked closely with the Pentagon.

Sanders began without any organization that could remotely match the Clinton machine.

## Corporate media bias

Sanders is also up against the capitalist media. The media are using Donald Trump to boost their ratings and pile up profits. The Hollywood Reporter on Feb. 29 quoted CEO Les Moonves of CBS on Trump and the Republican "circus": "It may not be good for America, but it's damn good for CBS."

Moonves went on: "The money's rolling in and this is fun. I've never seen anything like this, and it's going to be a very good year for us. Sorry. It's a terrible thing to say. But, bring it on, Donald. Keep going."

Moonves would hardly mind having millions of viewers who would likely watch Sanders on a daily basis the way Trump is viewed. But Sanders has attacked too many millionaires and billionaires and won't take their money. So for the media moguls, politics come before ratings.

The networks are billionaire corporations. They feel fine publicizing Trump. But between Sanders and Clinton, they are all for Clinton. "Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting" wrote on March 20 that the Washington Post printed 16 negative articles about Sanders in 16 hours. The Post is owned by Jeff Bezos, whose Amazon.com fortune is worth \$50 billion.

The New York Times marginalized the Sanders campaign to such an extent that its own readers rebelled and the Times' public editor had to publicly rebuke the management.

The Tyndall Report, which tracks campaign media coverage, reported that in 2015 Clinton received 121 minutes of coverage (excluding the hearings on her emails) and Sanders received 20 minutes.

The media want to conceal labor's significant support for Sanders. The Communication Workers, the National Nurses United, the American Postal Workers and over 40 local unions have endorsed him. All the unions that endorsed Sanders polled their rank-and-file members.

The unions that endorsed Clinton did it by executive action, without consulting the rank and file. But because of the strong rank-and-file support for Sanders, the AFL-CIO leadership has been unable to endorse Clinton.

## Billionaires and bankers fear Sanders

Bankers, financiers and corporate heads want to bury Sanders. Lloyd Blankfein, CEO of Goldman Sachs, is perhaps the most powerful and influential banker in the U.S. Sanders called him out for his greed and his guilt in the financial crisis. Blankfein responded on CNBC on March 3, saying of Sanders' campaign, "It has the potential to be a dangerous moment, not just for Wall Street, not just for the people who are targeted, but for anybody who is a little bit out of line."

Who are the people Blankfein was talking about? They are the 18 top corporate criminals Sanders named for massive tax dodging and who were complicit in the economic crash of 2008. They include Brian Moynihan, CEO of Bank of America, the bank that got \$1.3 trillion from the government bailout; Blankfein of Goldman, which got \$824 million from the Treasury bailout; James Dimon of JP-MorganChase, which got \$416 billion in a bailout; Boeing; GE; and so on.

Sanders lists all the jobs the corporations moved overseas, the billions in taxes they would have owed except for offshore tax havens and the fact that many of them

paid zero taxes. (trueactivist.com)

These management decisions must be what Blankfein meant by being "a little bit out of line."

## Capitalist elections and mass struggle

The rules of U.S. capitalist electoral politics are extremely restrictive, even in comparison with other capitalist countries. The elections are winner-take-all, which rules out proportional representation. For anyone but Democrats or Republicans just to get on the ballot, there are onerous petition requirements. Campaigns are extremely expensive, which has made it easy for the rich to totally control the election process — even before the "Citizens United" Supreme Court decision removed donation limits.

Only rarely can a presidential primary campaign be used to express mass opposition. It happened in 1968 when Sen. Eugene McCarthy opened up a campaign against the hated Vietnam War. It happened again in 1984 when Jesse Jackson waged a campaign against Reaganism, austerity and racism.

Now it has happened with Sanders. However, progressives and revolutionaries must not overlook Sanders' negative side and the deceptive lure of the Democratic Party. Sanders has still failed to fully embrace the Black Lives Matter movement and the struggle against racism and police brutality. He has yet to denounce the multi-trillion-dollar rathole of military spending that starves social services. He has been ambivalent about Cuba, defending its social gains in one breath and calling it a dictatorship in the next. He is a supporter of Israel and has many other contradictions.

In addition, all true advances of the people have come not through elections but through struggle. Union rights, Social Security and welfare were won in the 1930s through marches, general strikes and sit-down strikes. Civil rights were won through the struggle of millions of African Americans and white progressives who sat in and faced the police. Anti-poverty measures were won by rebellions in cities throughout the country. Women's rights were gained by marches and protests. The fight for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer rights began with the Stonewall Rebellion. Harsh anti-immigrant legislation was defeated by the historic strike of millions of immigrants on May 1, 2006.

Reforms are always a reflection of prior struggle.

Above all, while Sanders' self-description as a democratic socialist has legitimized the term socialism, he is, in fact, a liberal reformer of capitalism. He wants to make the system of capitalist exploitation more humane. A real socialist stands on the platform of abolishing capitalism.

It is not enough to break up the banks. It is not enough to curb corporate greed. As long as the banks and the corporations have control of the economy, they have tens of thousands of threads by which they can control the government, the state, the treasury and the economic life of the country.

True socialism seeks to abolish the system of wage slavery altogether and place the economy in the hands of the workers and the oppressed. The economy must be run in a planned way for the health and benefit of the people and not for profit of any kind. This is the way to end income inequality, injustice and oppression of all types.

There is a way to register support for revolutionary socialism without embracing the two-capitalist-party system. Vote for Monica Moorehead for president and Lamont Lilly for vice president on the Workers World Party ticket. □

**Head-Lilly '16**  
Lives Matter - Fight for Socialism @wwp2016  
**WORKERS WORLD PARTY**.ORG  
Lilly for Vice President.

## What We Fight For.

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!

Contact Moorehead/Lilly Campaign Manager Teresa Gutiérrez at **917.740.2628**. to book the candidates to speak at your campus, union hall, community group or house meeting, or for more information. Visit [workers.org/wwp/](http://workers.org/wwp/) or [facebook.com/WorkersWorldParty/](https://www.facebook.com/WorkersWorldParty/) or email [wwp2016@workers.org](mailto:wwp2016@workers.org).

## State violence continues in Honduras

# Hillary Clinton has blood on her hands

By Teresa Gutierrez

On March 15, just days after the assassination of Indigenous leader Berta Cáceres, news surfaced that one of her comrades, Nelson García from the Río Chiquito community in Honduras, had also been executed. Cáceres and García both belonged to the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH).

According to a COPINH communique released by the Honduras Solidarity Network, García was assassinated when he broke for lunch at his mother's house after "having spent all morning helping to move the belongings of the families being evicted" in Río Chiquito.

Violent evictions were taking place just before his assassination in which "approximately 100 police, 20 members of the militarized police, 10 soldiers and several members of the ... investigative police" invaded an area that 150 families had heroically taken over.

The families had built homes in Río Chiquito with materials they had been able to find. More than 75 families were evicted, their houses, gardens and a community oven destroyed. The community's chickens were also killed.

### Honduras in crisis

Most of the media in this country, when they refer to Honduras, describe this Central American nation as "the most violent country in the world."

Little explanation is given as to who commits the violence and why.

But the recent murders of Indigenous leaders and community activists are directly related to the 2016 U.S. presidential elections, especially the candidacy of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who has responsibility for the killings.

Since 2009, most of the violence has been directed at the resistance movement. Murders, beatings, rapes and

threats have all been waged against those who organize for their basic rights.

National Public Radio stated in July 2013 that in Honduras, a nation of only 8 million people, as many as 20 people were killed every day. A report by Telesur the next year said that "Homicides, feminicides, political persecution, disappearances and targeted assassinations have escalated since the 2009 military coup against elected President Manuel Zelaya." (July 17, 2014)

Honduras is in a crisis. The national homicide rate for women is 14.6 per 100,000 inhabitants, making Honduras one of the most violent and dangerous places in the world for women, according to the community-based Jesuit station Radio Progreso.

Even to report this news is an act of resistance. One of Radio Progreso's reporters, Carlos Mejía, was killed in May 2014. International journalists have been detained, including reporters for Telesur, while others have received death threats or been murdered.

Every sector in society has been targeted: campesinos/as, the Garifuna nation and political activists. Since 2009, more than 30 union members have been killed. (The Nation, December 2015)

In December 2009, a well-known international LGBTQ activist, Walter Trochez, who had traveled to the U.S. to speak about conditions in Honduras, was executed. The world mourned his loss.

It is no wonder, therefore, that mothers send their children to the U.S., or families find some other way to escape the violence. When fighting for LGBTQ rights



PHOTO: KATHRYN JOHNSON, INFOAMERICAS.INFO

Protesters hung banners at the U.S. Agency for International Development information office inside the Ronald Reagan Building, Washington, D.C., March 14.

or just a roof over your head or to stop a corporate dam from taking over ancestral lands is cause for assassination, you don't have much choice. No matter how treacherous the road from Honduras to the U.S.-Mexican border, mothers, fathers and whole families are caught between a bloody rock and a very hard place.

### Clinton: 'Send Honduran families a message'

During the Feb. 11 Democratic Party debate in Milwaukee, both Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton were asked about their solutions to the recent "child migrant crisis" that had captured the news some time back.

Clinton said unabashedly, "Those children needed to be processed appropriately, but we also had to send a message to families and communities in Central America not to send their children on this dangerous journey in the hands of smugglers."

Almost one month later, during the Miami debate on March 9, Latino/a moderators sharply asked the question: "Would you as president deport children?" Both amazingly said no, although Sanders more forcefully.

But no one pointed out Clinton's role in the mass exodus from Honduras. As secretary of state, she had more than supported the 2009 illegal coup that ousted President Manuel Zelaya.

"Hillary Clinton was probably the most important actor in supporting the coup in Honduras," says American University professor Adrienne Pine, confirming what Berta Cáceres had said many times.

Clinton herself, in her book "Hard Choices," wrote that in the days after the coup, "I spoke with my counterparts around the hemisphere, including Secretary [Patricia] Espinosa in Mexico. We strategized on a plan to restore order in Honduras and ensure that free and fair elections could be held quickly and legitimately, which would render the question of Zelaya moot."

### Why U.S. wanted Zelaya out

Why was Zelaya so dangerous to U.S. imperialism? Why did they want him out?

The International Action Center sent a delegation to Honduras with Honduras USA Resistencia not long after the June 2009 coup. Juan Barahona, labor leader and representative of the National Front of the People's Resistance (FNRP), told the delegation that Zelaya had been about to support a major raise in the minimum wage. Others corroborated this, with some saying the raise was 60 percent.

"This infuriated two U.S. companies, Chiquita Brands International (formerly United Fruit) and Dole Food Company," said John Perkins, author of "The New Confessions of an Economic Hit Man," in an interview with the website Truthout. The big corporations feared that a rise in the minimum wage could spread to other countries in Latin America.

The 2009 coup helped militarize the country even further. Marjorie Cohen writes in Truthdig, "Amid all this, the United States has added two military bases in Honduras — bringing the total to 14 — and increased its financing of the Honduran police and military." (March 15)

The illegal, U.S.-backed coup ousted a progressive president and ushered in a wave of repression. Hillary Clinton has the blood of Berta Cáceres, Nelson García and the over 25,000 people that have been killed since 2009 on her hands. □

## Cuban foreign minister says blockade still intact

By Cheryl LaBash

March 21 — Despite positive steps, the U.S. blockade of Cuba continues intact. That's how Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez characterized the situation after the latest round of revised U.S. measures in a televised press conference at the Havana Libre Hotel on March 17.

Rodríguez's press statement, which so far has received little coverage in the corporate media, clarifies in detail how the U.S. blockade is still in place.

Anticipating President Barack Obama's visit, Rodríguez said: "Cuba has engaged in the construction of a new relation with the United States, in the full exercise of its sovereignty and committed to its ideals of social justice and solidarity. No one should expect that, in order to achieve that, Cuba will renounce any one of its principles or its foreign policy, which is committed to the just causes all over the world and the defense of peoples' self-determination.

"The U.S. president will be able to see a nation that is involved in its economic and social development and the improvement of the wellbeing of its citizens, who enjoy rights and are able to show some achievements that are still a chimera for many countries of the world, despite our condition as a blockaded and underde-

veloped country." (all Rodríguez quotes from Granma, March 17 — tinyurl.com/zoy7cc3)

### Fourth round of revised regulations

On March 15, just five days before Obama began his historic visit to Cuba, the U.S. Commerce and Treasury departments announced the fourth round of revised regulations on trade since Obama and Cuban President Raúl Castro simultaneously announced the planned opening in relations 15 months ago.

The New York Times trumpeted the revised regulations as "wiping away stiff restrictions on travel and commerce" based on allowing individual "people to people" educational trips in place of organized groups, and lifting limits on the use of the dollar in transactions with Cuba. The Times coverage left the U.S. public with the illusion that relations are normalized.

Rodríguez pointed out: "The truth is that the blockade is still in force. Jack Lew, the [U.S.] Secretary of the Treasury, has himself recognized, two days ago, that the blockade still restricts, in a very, very significant way, the volume of transactions between Cuba and the United States."

Although the announcement expands the scope of previous measures allowing

travel, Rodríguez pointed out that "the legal prohibition that prevents U.S. citizens from freely traveling to Cuba is still in force. This prohibition should be lifted by the U.S. Congress."

Bipartisan congressional support for Freedom to Travel bills has surged in the House of Representatives. Now 23 percent have signed on in the House and 46 percent on the equivalent Senate bill.

In one of the more laughable restrictions lifted on March 15, it is no longer a U.S. crime to consume Cuban rum or smoke Cuban cigars in a third country.

### Carrying out trade in U.S. dollars

An important aspect of the blockade has been the restriction on using U.S. dollars, which is now less restricted.

"Authorizing Cuba to use U.S. dollars does not mean that banking relations between Cuba and the United States have normalized. Cuban banks are still not allowed to open correspondent accounts in U.S. banks, and therefore our operations will necessarily continue to be done through third parties, which increases operational costs as well as the amount of related procedures. None of the other measures entered into force modify the implementation of fundamental aspects of the blockade."

Rodríguez pointed out that, for this

new measure to work, "the U.S. government is required to issue a political statement as well as clear and precise instructions that would provide legal and political guarantees to banks, in order to halt financial persecution and reverse the intimidating effects generated by the sanctions imposed for years on U.S. and third-countries' financial institutions for conducting legitimate transactions with Cuba."

Hoping it wouldn't happen again, Rodríguez cited fines levied on Commerzbank and Credit Agricole in 2015 for earlier transactions involving Cuba. These caused other financial institutions to cut lines of credit and close accounts in fear of U.S. sanctions. In practical terms, the restrictions prevented Cuban doctors serving in Africa — including those fighting the Ebola epidemic — from receiving their pay.

Rodríguez listed five concrete examples of restrictions that could still be eliminated by executive decisions.

In another modification that could at first seem more than it is, U.S. ships may now dock in Cuba and then continue to another port. Rodríguez pointed out, however, "Ships carrying goods to Cuba are still not allowed to touch U.S. ports for a period of 180 days, thus increasing freight charges." □



# China, the U.S. and global warming

## Coal miners' jobs and the environment

By Deirdre Griswold

In this series, we've compared the response to global warming by the Chinese and U.S. governments.

With roughly one-fifth of the world's people living in China and its rapid industrialization in recent decades, both particulate air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions have become big problems. However, China, so woefully underdeveloped before its socialist revolution, is now far ahead of the U.S. in developing and carrying out long-range, comprehensive economic plans to shift its economy to other energy sources.

Here we will look at what is happening to coal miners in both China and the U.S.

Of the widely used fossil fuels — coal, oil and natural gas — coal is the largest producer of carbon dioxide emissions. China has little oil and gas but a great deal of coal. Its air pollution problem has come largely from burning coal to make steel and generate electric power.

Arriving in Shanghai some 25 years ago, this writer was hit with a wave of nostalgia. It took a few minutes to figure out why. It was the smell of coal smoke, which had hung in the air all winter in the industrial city of Buffalo, N.Y., where I grew up.

China is still a developing country. But it has been building the infrastructure necessary to reduce consumption of fossil fuels while improving energy efficiency. This is not a wish list that could be shot down by future politicians, but part of a detailed plan for the country's development. Even with economic growth, its carbon footprint will peak somewhere between 2025 and 2030, as early as nine years from now. Its per capita CO2 emissions have always been much smaller than those in the U.S., and will go even lower.

China is the world's largest producer of steel and coal. But it is also the largest producer of solar and wind energy technology, and has forged ahead in hydroelectric and nuclear power. It has been shutting down thousands of coal mines, with plans to close many more.

### What will happen to coal miners?

Coal mining is difficult and dangerous work. Chinese coal miners used to have the largest casualty rate in the world, with thousands dying in mine accidents

every year. However, fatalities have been greatly reduced in recent years with enhanced safety measures, and will decline further as older mines are closed. The pace of shutting mines has also been accelerated by the slowdown in the capitalist world economy and a global glut in many commodities.

Miners everywhere have been a militant, close-knit section of the working class. The coal miners' union in the U.S. was once the most feared by the bosses. China's miners are no exception.

A plan to cut emissions for the health of the people and the future of the planet has to deal with what happens to the workers in these areas of the economy. In China's case, measures are being taken. The government is setting aside billions of dollars to relocate laid-off miners and their families.

The U.S. website [mining.com](http://mining.com), citing Chinese sources, reported on Jan. 21 that "Beijing plans to close about 4,300 coal mines, remove outdated production capacity of 700 million tons and redeploy around 1 million workers over the next three years. ... China has eliminated about 560 million tons of coal production capacity and closed 7,250 coal mines in the last five years."

This was updated in a China Daily report on Feb. 2 that Beijing "has promised to spend 100 billion yuan (\$15.25 billion) a year for up to five years to address overcapacity in sectors such as steel and coal, while local governments will contribute another 100 billion yuan. ... The coal industry alone will get around 140 billion yuan, and 1.8 million employees in the sector will be relocated."

What's important here, from our point of view, is that China is committing very large sums to relocate the affected workers.

### Still a struggle of workers vs. bosses

No one should think this plan to relocate miners into other jobs will happen automatically. A constant tug of war goes on in China between the growing capitalist class and the state, which arose out of China's great revolution made by the workers and peasants. Even in state-owned enterprises, officials can behave like bosses, as appears the case with the huge coal company Longmay, the product of a consolidation of many smaller state-owned mining companies.

Thousands of miners at Longmay's Shuangyashan Mine in northern China have been staging militant protests because company officials owed them months of back wages. With layoffs looming, the miners were very apprehensive that the promises made them might not materialize.

Chinese workers have a very militant tradition, and will fight for their rights. When private owners are involved, as is the case with half of China's coal production, the workers have all the more reason to struggle. The miners' struggle is an important test of how much the government will let enemies of the workers in China, whether corporate owners or corrupt officials, get away with.

### U.S. coal miners in crisis

Meanwhile, what is happening to coal miners in the United States?

The first thing to note is that capitalist economic stagnation and mechanization have already eliminated many miners' jobs here. The job losses don't come from any strenuous environmental measures taken by Washington.

By 2013, the number of coal miners in the U.S. had dropped to about 80,000 from nearly 230,000 in 1980. With technological advances, each miner now produces almost three and a half times as much coal, while total production remains about the same.

Most mining in the U.S. has shifted from the Appalachians to Wyoming and Montana, where instead of digging underground, it is done through "mountaintop removal" and other surface extraction. In 2013, the coal extracted per worker in Wyoming, where virtually all production is surface mining, was 10 times that in West Virginia, where most mining is underground.

As more corporations globalized in search of higher profits, manufacturing in the U.S. declined along with the demand for coal. Companies like Peabody, which used to be big in Appalachia, have moved most of their operations overseas. Peabody Energy Australia, for example, sold 38.2 million tons of coal in 2014, while Peabody in the U.S. is said to be near bankruptcy.

The four largest U.S. miners by output — Peabody Energy, Arch Coal, Cloud Peak Energy and Alpha Natural Resources — which account for nearly half of U.S.



production, were worth a combined \$34 billion at their peak in 2011. Today they are worth only \$150 million. Dozens of U.S. mining companies have declared bankruptcy in recent years.

The shift overseas can be seen in a February report by the Rhodium Group called "The Hidden Cause of America's Coal Collapse." It describes how union miners in Alabama were forced into voting for a rotten contract:

"At issue were the jobs, benefits and pensions of miners who had been working for Walter Energy Inc., which was undergoing bankruptcy. In December, the company persuaded a bankruptcy judge to let it renege on its promises to workers, jettisoning its pension and health care commitments to make itself more attractive to buyers.

"The UMWA protested, eventually striking a deal with the company that bought Walter (Coal Acquisition LLC), getting some of the jobs and benefits back, at substantially reduced levels. Last week the miners grudgingly voted to accept the deal."

United Mine Workers International President Cecil Roberts explained what pushed the union to the wall: "The coal industry is in free fall right now. Multiple companies are in bankruptcy or soon could be. Prices are lower than they've been in decades. The market for the kind of coal mined in Alabama is weak due to an ongoing global recession."

The U.S. news website [vox.com](http://vox.com) is not left wing, but here's what it published on Feb. 22 about these pressures on coal miners: "Coal companies have every incentive to publicize a 'war on coal' as the source of their woes. It diverts anger toward Barack Obama and perpetuates the illusion that a Republican president might revive coal's fortunes. ...

"Meanwhile, the executives who made big, risky bets ... are getting bonuses, while workers who have given their lives to the mines are losing pensions and benefits. ... Coal miners truly have no friends in the ruling class."

Workers in the United States are being whipsawed by these conditions and right-wing politicians like Donald Trump are trying to capitalize on that.

While these job losses have nothing to do with environmental protection, we must be sure that our demands for cleaning up the planet include concrete measures to create jobs for all who need them. If China can put aside billions of dollars to do that, why can't the billionaire-run U.S.? □

## WW interviews man punched at Trump rally

Continued from page 3

us was talking to the rest of us and says "Trump is disgusting."

At this point, a man on the same row as us a few seats down shouted at us to get out. He said it a lot more aggressively than that. We're just here to look and he starts to get physical with us. Then they call the police over and by this time all the attention is on us. Ronnie, my friend, is recording to get Trump on film, but he's able to get everything that's happening to us on camera too. The police come over and I'm thinking they're going to the guy who was yelling at us, but they're coming to us to take us out. As we're getting put out, Trump yells about going to our mamas, and that put me over the edge because my mom passed when I was 18.

As we're getting escorted out by the sheriffs, this old white man in one of the aisles comes over and I got punched in

the face. I told the sheriffs he hit me and they threw ME on the ground and got on top of me, and told the guy who punched me to go back to his seat. They took me out the door. I was talking to a reporter who got put out 'cause they thought he was with us.

**WW:** What has happened since the rally and your story of being attacked has gone viral nationally?

**RJ:** It's crazy. I've seen the videos afterward and how it's been seen everywhere. This happened in my little town of Fayetteville and now it's gone out internationally? And I heard later the man who punched me said that "Next time we might have to kill him." Who is the "we" he's talking about? And the fact that he said this on national television?! I don't feel safe anymore. I've got to keep looking over my shoulder 'cause I don't know

when this "we" might pop up. All these comments people are leaving online about me now. I'm trying to make sure my family is safe. I can't do normal things like I used to like taking the city bus because I get recognized everywhere now.

Before this, I wasn't really into politics. It's really got me thinking now, though, all the people getting put out of Trump rallies and roughed up by his supporters. I just saw what happened in Chicago, Arizona, St. Louis and the other rallies where there have been protests, and how what we did and what happened to me is part of all that.

**WW:** How can people offer solidarity to you and your family right now?

**RJ:** I appreciate all the ways that people have reached out to support me. If anyone would like to help, log on to [www.justiceforkeem.org](http://www.justiceforkeem.org) for all information. □

## MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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# WORKERS WORLD

## editorial

### First came the wars

Two items appeared in the news on the same day this month, March 22.

One was that, finally, months after having denied responsibility, the commander in charge of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, U.S. Gen. John W. Nicholson Jr., went to Kunduz, Afghanistan, to apologize for the U.S. bombing of a hospital there run by Doctors Without Borders. That bombing last October killed 42 people, including doctors, nurses and patients.

Also on March 22 came reports that suicide bombers had set off explosions in Brussels, at the airport and in the subway system, that killed at least 34 people and wounded many more. The Islamic State group is reported to have claimed responsibility.

The report about Nicholson's apology was not on the front pages or top of the news.

The Brussels attack was the lead story in every media outlet, and undoubtedly will continue to be prime news in the U.S. and Europe, especially as the victims' stories become known.

This dual standard on the value of human life is normal fare for the imperialist media. It is an attitude that fits the needs of a ruling class that for generations has treated peoples and whole countries as nothing but raw materials for its far-flung profit machine.

But wait a minute, apologists for imperialism might say. Didn't the general apologize, and wasn't that bombing just a mistake? No, it wasn't a mistake. It flowed from the fact that U.S. planes, piloted and drones, are attacking people in Afghanistan all the time, and most of it never even gets reported.

The U.S. and NATO have been waging

war all over the Middle East and North Africa ever since the first Bush administration unleashed its assault on Iraq in 1990-91. Regime change is the lofty phrase they give their goal, but what it means is trying to impose the will of conquerors through hellish, bloody, military assault. The number of people killed, injured, driven mad, displaced from their homes and/or reduced to a life of starvation on the streets, from Libya to Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Yemen, has climbed into the many millions.

These conditions breed a kind of desperation virtually unknown here. How else can one explain the mass exodus of refugees, whole families risking their lives, trying to reach Europe?

And while the answer pushed by every imperialist politician, especially those on the far right, is to strengthen the repressive power of the state to both keep out immigrants and also prevent bombings like those in Brussels, the truth is that once there is a movement of oppressed people who feel they have no other recourse except to give up their own lives for a cause they believe in, such acts will continue. We don't have to agree with their ideology to understand their extreme suffering and acknowledge their sacrifice.

There can be no peace without justice. It's a familiar slogan: "No justice, no peace!" For the peoples of the Middle East, justice starts with an end to the wars and occupations ravaging their countries. For the sake of innocent victims on both sides caught in the crossfire, we must fight like hell to eradicate the predatory system of monopoly capitalism that views war as a necessary and even desirable strategy in its insatiable quest for superprofits. □

## Palestine supporters protest AIPAC

By David Card and Colleen Gillan  
Washington, D.C.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee held its annual conference in Washington, D.C., on March 20-22. AIPAC is a racist, Zionist organization of the richest and most powerful politicians in the United States and Israel. They meet every year to collude on deals that benefit the state of Israel, which the U.S. government is all too happy to grant so long as Israel continues to colonize and destabilize the entire Middle East.

The primary target of Israeli aggression and occupation is the people of Palestine. Palestine is the nation on which the entire state of Israel was constructed. Since 1948, when Israel was declared and millions of Palestinians were driven from their homes, the Palestinian people have never stopped resisting.

On the afternoon of March 20, hundreds of supporters of the Palestinian people gathered outside the White House to show their outrage at the annual meeting of AIPAC. Some came from as far away as Australia and the Korean peninsula. Protesters then marched to the Washington Convention Center,

where AIPAC was holding its meeting. Among the chants were "From the river, to the sea, Palestine will be free!" and "When people are occupied, resistance is justified!"

Outside the convention hall, protesters blocked all available doors and challenged people trying to get inside the convention. At least one fight broke out in which a Zionist attacked a pro-Palestine demonstrator. The police predictably attacked the demonstrator, who had just been assaulted, instead of the Zionist who had attacked him. The police then protected the Zionist from the angry crowd and ushered him into the building, showing which side they are on.

Militant street demonstrations such as this, combined with the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, which calls for not buying goods and services that come from or support Israel, have greatly increased pressure on Israel in recent years. The movement to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to national self-determination won't stop until they have achieved victory.

Free Palestine! □

## Who caused Flint water scandal?

### Finger-pointing leaves capitalists off the hook

By Martha Grevatt

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder must have a lot of bruises on his legs or behind. "I kick myself every day," he told the Congressional Oversight and Reform Committee on March 17 when he testified about the Flint water crisis that occurred under his watch. He repeated this statement when grilled about his claims that he first learned about the lead poisoning of Flint in October 2015. Many believe he probably really knew or should have known about it much earlier.

Snyder's self-deprecations and apologies will not assuage the wounds of Flint residents, 150 of whom made the long bus journey to Washington to attend the third congressional hearing on the Flint tragedy. They are tired of bottled water and what they have to go through to procure it. Flint's compelling case of environmental racism has motivated a diverse range of groups and individuals around the country to donate water, supplies, funds and labor. But the donated cases of water are snatched up as soon as they arrive, proving that the state is not supplying enough water to meet community needs.

Billions of dollars are needed to fully address the many aspects of this crisis. The majority African-American city of 100,000 was poisoned when the city failed to add anti-corrosive chemicals to the water after disconnecting from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. Untreated water from the Flint River caused lead in the aging pipes to leach into the water supply. Now the price tag alone on replacing lead pipes is over \$1.5 billion and the costs of meeting the health, nutritional and social service needs of the population are immeasurable.

So far only three homes have had their pipes replaced — two under the direction of Mayor Karen Weaver and one by the Flint Coalition. The state has yet to contribute one penny toward infrastructure repair, while the legislature drags its feet on appropriating the \$232 million in aid — still a drop in the bucket — proposed by Snyder. Yet with or without state assistance, Flint's people are determined to bring clean water back to their homes, house by house. With shovels and rented backhoes, in an act of resistance to environmental racism, the community is taking control of its destiny.

#### Hearings offer Flint no relief

Testifying along with Snyder was Gina McCarthy, head of the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Com-

mittee Chair Jason Chaffetz and his fellow Republicans treated Snyder with kid gloves, attempting to foist most of the blame on the EPA for failing to aggressively intervene against the ineptitude and racist neglect of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). Chaffetz exploited statements by whistle-blowing water safety specialist Marc Edwards, who was critical of the EPA as well as the Snyder administration.

In contrast, members of the Congressional Black Caucus blasted Snyder for his role in the poisoning of Flint. Snyder had appointed Flint's three consecutive emergency managers, who made and carried the decision to disconnect from Detroit water. Former Flint EM Darnell Earley had testified the day before. Earley's involvement in the Flint scandal had led to calls for his removal from the job of EM over Detroit Public Schools; he resigned in February.

The governor oversees MDEQ, which consistently rules against protecting the environment and in favor of oil companies and frackers. Its appointed staff is more aptly characterized as political cronies than as scientific specialists. From April 2014, when the switch to the Flint River was made, until October 2015, MDEQ insisted Flint water was safe to drink.

Ranking Oversight Committee member Elijah Cummings of Maryland and others demanded Snyder's resignation. Lacy Clay of Missouri pointed out the hypocrisy of Republicans blaming the EPA for not aggressively acting on a crisis a Republican governor created, especially considering their frequent charge of federal overreach by the EPA into states' domains.

Presidential candidates Donald Trump and Ted Cruz want to abolish the EPA altogether.

The Democrats, however, have no real plan of action to heal Flint or address the many current or looming water safety crises in the country. None of them are talking about canceling the debt service payments to the banks that are strangling poor, oppressed cities like Flint and Detroit. None of them are pointing the finger at General Motors, which has practically abandoned Flint, the city where GM was born. None of them are raising the slogan, "Money for Flint, not the Pentagon."

Both Republicans and Democrats are quick to point political fingers at each other, but what drives the capitalist austerity that made Flint's children sick is a rotten system of exploitation that puts profits ahead of our health and well-being. □

PHOTO: JOE CATRON



# Unable to prevail with ground war, U.S. bombs Somalia

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

On March 7, the Pentagon announced it had killed 150 members of the al-Shabab (“the Youth”) guerrilla movement in a bombing operation in Somalia.

These military actions are part and parcel of a broader U.S. strategy to dominate the Horn of Africa. The administration of President Barack Obama has continued military and political intervention in Somalia aimed at remaking the political landscape of the East African state, which shares borders with some of Washington’s closest collaborators in the region, including Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya.

The administration’s rationale for a renewed air campaign in Somalia was to downgrade and destroy training bases for al-Shabab. The Islamist movement has not only continued its war against the Western-backed regime in Mogadishu but has crossed over into neighboring Kenya and Uganda in apparent retaliation for their deploying troops in Somalia as members of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), established in 2007.

The Pentagon press release claimed that the area it bombed “is a training facility of al-Shabab, which is a terrorist group affiliated with al-Qaida. The strike was conducted using manned and unmanned aircraft and the fighters who were scheduled to depart the camp posed an imminent threat to U.S. and AMISOM forces.”

An escalation in the Pentagon’s air

campaign in Somalia coincides with the years-long proxy war inside the country, which has resulted in the deployment of 22,000 AMISOM troops from eight different African states. They are trained, armed and given logistical support by Washington, the United Nations and the European Union. In addition, the Somalia National Army is supplied by Western governments and their allies in an effort to defeat al-Shabab, which maintains control over large areas of the country.

This bombing operation was followed on March 9 by reports that at least 15 al-Shabab fighters had been killed in another raid led ostensibly by the imperialist-backed and -trained SNA troops, working in conjunction with U.S. Special Forces. News of the second attack emanated from al-Shabab itself and a Somali federal government official.

Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, a spokesperson for al-Shabab, stressed that foreign soldiers had attacked their base, located approximately 30 miles from Mogadishu, the capital. He said the attackers “were masked and spoke foreign languages which our fighters could not understand. We do not know who they were but we foiled them.” (Reuters, March 9)

According to Abu Musab, al-Shabab lost only one fighter, contradicting reports from other media and governmental sources. The Islamist organization said the military commandos landed along the River Shabelle. The suspected Special Forces unit used M16 rifles and rocket launchers. U.S. government offi-

cial later announced that their troops were involved in the attacks, alongside the Western-backed Somali military forces.

## Decades-long U.S. intervention deepens hostility

This war of containment, domination and control of the resource-rich Horn of Africa state began 10 years ago, when Washington attempted to impose a political dispensation on the country beginning in 2006.

The 1992-94 occupation of Somalia by thousands of U.S. Marines, U.N. troops and forces from Canada and other states began after a popular uprising. Since then, successive U.S. administrations have sought avenues to interfere in the internal affairs of the country.

In 2006, an Islamic Courts Union movement began to solidarize with local organizations to establish a political system that operated independently of the foreign policy imperatives of the administration of former President George W. Bush. Washington encouraged its contacts inside Somalia to force out the Islamic Courts, which proved to be a disaster.

Sentiment toward the U.S. government became even more hostile, leading to the invasion of Somalia by neighboring Ethiopia, a staunch partner of Washington in its so-called “war on terrorism.” However, the intervention of the Ethiopian military, then under the leadership of late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, was by no means sufficient to drive the Islamic

Courts movement out of Mogadishu and other areas in the central and south of the country where it had taken control.

Over the next three years, the Islamic Courts split over whether to enter a transitional government in Mogadishu backed by the imperialist states. By 2009, the al-Shabab group emerged as the main opposition in the capital to the U.S.- and British-supported regime.

The escalating deployment of forces from Uganda, Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and other African states strengthened the AMISOM operation, driving al-Shabab out of most of Mogadishu and some other areas in Somalia’s central and southern regions.

Nevertheless, al-Shabab remained strong, attracting fighters from other countries and reportedly pledging allegiance to al-Qaida.

The Obama administration’s recent bombing of the country signals a greater reliance on airpower and the drawing down of military assistance to AMISOM and the SNA. Exposing further the dominant imperialist role in the war, AMISOM has announced it will rely more on airpower.

The U.S. Africa Command (Africom), which has thousands of troops in Djibouti and other African states, has been bolstered under the Obama administration.

With no substantive discussions of foreign policy toward Africa during the presidential campaign, policymaking is left to the intelligence agencies and the Pentagon, much to the detriment of the people in Africa as well as in the U.S. □

# Uproar over death of young jailed woman

By **Tom Answeeney**  
Buffalo, N.Y.

The Erie County Holding Center in Buffalo, N.Y., where most prisoners are awaiting trial, has for years been the scene of protests and angry demonstrations by the Prisoners Rights Coalition, Prisoners Are People Too and other groups. The jail and the county sheriff in charge have an extraordinary history of brutality, with so-called “suicides” and “medical events” hidden behind a wall of secrecy.

On March 18, protests to demand justice for India Cummings, a 27-year-old African-American woman, resumed in front of the Holding Center. Cummings died on Feb. 21 of multiple injuries incurred during the 16 days she was imprisoned there. The county refuses to acknowledge her death as a murder and has so far withheld information from her family as to how it occurred.

Despite the cold weather, a large de-

termined crowd marched to the county office building and stormed the entrance. They occupied the county executive’s office and the building lobby for approximately 30 minutes before arrests were made. The Buffalo Anti Racism Coalition, which organized the protest, issued five demands:

- Resignation of Sheriff Timothy Howard, who is in charge of the Holding Center.
- An impartial criminal investigation into the death of India Cummings.
- Those found responsible for the death of India Cummings be fired and held criminally liable.
- All violations of a 2010 settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice be made public and rectified immediately.
- The Erie County Holding Center be fully transparent by releasing documents and video relevant to the case of India Cummings and other inmates who die in the Center’s custody.

More protests are planned for the near future. □

# Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution

*Continued from page 5*

Envio #25, 1982)

## Militant determination to change society

In “Sandino’s Daughters” Margaret Randall wrote: “They viewed the Sandinista National Liberation Front as an organization focused on creating a system free of political, social and economic inequality and saw the revolutionary struggle as an opportunity to participate in the overthrow of the Somoza regime, which they believed was necessary in order to change the patriarchal society that imposed unequal relations among men and women. ... Women were acutely aware of their socio-economic position, because they were the first to be affected by unemployment, inflation, and shortages.” (p. 10)

The women were up against the deeply rooted realities of economic, social and political inequality; low and unequal wages; isolation from the political process; sexual objectification and exploitation; legal obstacles to advancement and other manifestations of oppression. The heroic endeavors of these militant women show how much they were determined to change capitalist society.

Although much has changed in Nicaragua since that period, nothing can erase

the lessons and ideological advancement embedded in both the memory of the “Daughters of Sandino” and the heritage they leave to future generations of women.

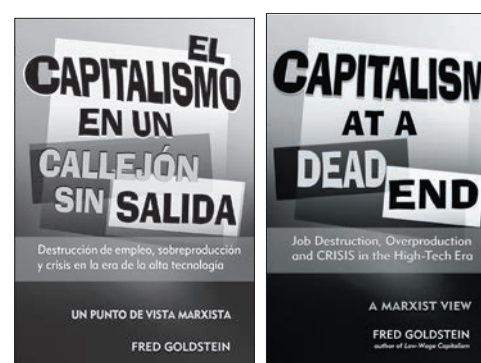
Among those who have contributed, some with their lives, and should be memorialized are:

**Idania de Los Angeles Fernández**, 26 years old, FSLN fighter; **Araceli Pérez Darías**, 23 years old, born in Mexico, FSLN combatant and leader of the Western Regional Command and the Frente Interno; **Ana Isabel Morales**, FSLN combatant. All captured and assassinated by Somoza’s National Guard in León, Nicaragua, on April 16, 1979.

**Arlen Siu Bermúdez**, 20 years old (born July 15, 1955), Chinese Nicaraguan, killed in FSLN combat operations Aug. 1, 1975. Parks and neighborhoods are named after her in Managua and León.

**Nora Astorga**, mother of three children, became a famous combatant who lured away National Guard Gen. Pérez Vega (known as “Perro,” dog in English, for his brutality against civilians) and immediately executed him.

**María Dora** and **Daisy Zamora**, former FSLN combatants. □



## Capitalism at a Dead End

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

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## Lo que reveló el debate del Partido Demócrata Latinas/os, inmigrantes y elecciones

Por Teresa Gutiérrez

Un tema recurrente en las elecciones presidenciales del 2016 es la inmigración, especialmente en el lado republicano.

La retórica inflamatoria del aspirante republicano Donald Trump es especialmente perversa con sus llamados a la construcción de un muro en la frontera sur de EUA, incitando al más terrible racismo.

Pero los demócratas también plantean la inmigración, y fue un tema muy importante en el debate presidencial celebrado el 9 de marzo en Miami.

El tema sobre la inmigración, la grandilocuencia racista de “construir el muro” por parte de Trump, junto con la crisis económica que ha dado paso a muchas dificultades, presenta a las/os latinas/os preguntas: ¿qué camino tomar en esta temporada de elecciones? ¿Debe Trump ser descartado como un molesto mosquito? ¿Qué ganarán las/os latinas/os apoyando a los Demócratas? ¿Qué puede detener las deportaciones? ¿Cuál voto traerá empleos con buena paga, cuidado de salud asequible y educación para todas/os? ¿Quién puede detener el aburguesamiento de nuestras comunidades?

La respuesta no se encuentra en la cabina de votación, sino en las calles. Se encuentra en la construcción de un movimiento, pero no cualquier movimiento, sino guiado por la conciencia de clase revolucionaria, un movimiento que sabe que para obtener beneficios reales para las/os latinas/os, la primera tarea es defender al movimiento Las Vidas Negras Importan.

### Demócratas y la base ‘hispana’

El debate del Partido Demócrata del 9 de marzo tuvo lugar en Miami, donde la población es un 70 por ciento latina. Se orientó sobre todo hacia una audiencia principalmente latina y al clima social del sur de la Florida. Fue patrocinado por Univisión y el Washington Post y tuvo lugar en el Colegio de Miami-Dade.

Univisión es la quinta cadena de televisión más grande en EUA, con una audiencia promedio de alrededor de 1,5 millones de adultos durante el horario estelar y, según su publicidad, supera a “una o más de las redes de habla inglesa [ABC, CBS, NBC o FOX] en dos de cada tres noches”.

El debate fue realmente único. Fue bilingüe y se emitió simultáneamente en español por Univisión. Las/os interrogadores y moderadores a menudo hablaron en español antes de ser traducidas/os.

Se llevó a cabo con un sabor latino a lo largo de la noche, que comenzó con el himno nacional estadounidense cantado por un joven mexicano-americano vestido con su traje de charro mariachi.

Por supuesto, el himno nacional ofende a muchas/os que saben que el himno es en realidad una promesa al sistema imperialista.

El niño era Sebastián de la Cruz, quien en el 2013 ya había captado atención nacional. Durante la fase final de la NBA de ese año, Sebastián cantó el himno nacional en un juego de los Spurs de San Antonio en Texas, también con su traje de mariachi. Inmediatamente, los racistas reaccionaron ofendidos porque había

cantado esa canción vestido de mariachi.

Hay que dar crédito a los Spurs, pues llevaron de nuevo a Sebastián unos días más tarde a otro juego como muestra de su apoyo al niño, al cual que se le había sido dicho que “regresara a su casa” y otras basuras racistas. Sebastián les contestó conmovedoramente “yo estoy en casa”.

Una característica constante de las elecciones del Partido Demócrata es su búsqueda del voto latino. Este año no es la excepción. Lo mismo puede decirse de su búsqueda por el voto afroamericano.

Por lo tanto, no es sorprendente que Sebastián fuera invitado para abrir el debate, con traje de charro y todo.

Sin embargo, otros dejos latinos de la noche molestaron a una gran cantidad de latinas/os. Cuando Hillary Clinton declaró: “Yo dije, ‘Basta’”, sobre un pasado evento, las redes sociales enloquecieron.

El Sun Times Network informó más tarde que la búsqueda de tendencia de Google buscando la palabra “basta” se elevó un 2,550 por ciento.

Pero muchas/os activistas latinos se molestaron por el uso de spanglish por un político, especialmente uno que es una belicista, y quien no hace mucho caracterizó a los hombres africano-americanos como “súper depredadores”.

El papel de Clinton en Honduras fue especialmente ofensivo, pues ella era parte de la administración de Washington que apoyó el derrocamiento del presidente constitucional Manuel Zelaya. Su salida conllevó una agitación social extrema, con al menos 25.000 muertes y un éxodo masivo para escapar de la violencia.

### ¿Hillary Clinton tratando de complacer ‘hispanas/os’?

En otro momento en el debate, la moderadora María Elena Salinas preguntó a Clinton si ella vacilaba sobre el tema de inmigración o “lo que algunos llamarían ‘hispandering’”. [nota de trad.: (hipócritamente) para buscar el apoyo latino]

Hillary Clinton ha sido acusada de hispandering muchas veces. La palabra es en spanglish y refleja el interés falso por los problemas y la cultura latina para servir a sus propios intereses.

El 10 de diciembre, la Radio Nacional Pública informó que Clinton fue acusada de esto, cuando ella se llamó “La Hillary” y “Tu Hillary”. En otra ocasión el año pasado, Clinton publicó un tweet con una foto de ella, Bill y su nieto, con la cita “Si ete maneras en que Hillary es igual que tu abuela.”

Otra cosa que hizo que el debate en Miami fuera diferente fue la participación de una mujer inmigrante de Guatemala que hizo una pregunta desde la audiencia.

Aunque a diferencia de otras estaciones, Univisión a menudo representa los intereses de las/os latinas/os, sigue siendo una institución capitalista. Es también presa de los modos burgueses y rara vez pone latinas/os de piel oscura en la pantalla. También ha puesto a las personas de piel oscura o indígenas de las Américas en un papel negativo o de sirviente.

Por eso, cuando Lucía Quiej hizo su pregunta, fue una alegría verla. Era bajita y oscura. Y hermosa.

Tenía el aspecto de las personas que

EUA ha sacrificados en Guatemala, al igual que alguien de la nación indígena Lenca, cuya líder Berta Cáceres, recientemente fue asesinada por los escuadrones de la muerte en Honduras que “La Hillary” ayudó a crear.

Quiej preguntó a los candidatos qué harían sobre casos como el suyo, en que su marido había sido detenido y deportado por tener una licencia de conducir falsa. Sus hijos estaban sentados junto a ella, con lágrimas en los ojos.

Ambos candidatos hablaron de reagrupación familiar.

Durante la noche, las/os moderadores presionaron y obligaron a los candidatos a responder a la pregunta: “¿Deportarían a los niños” siendo presidente? Ambos dijeron que no, Sanders con más fuerza.

Clinton repitió la opinión de que sólo los criminales o terroristas deberían ser deportados, pero, irónicamente, nadie señaló que bajo esas mismas directrices, el marido de Quiej aún sería deportado puesto que había “roto” la llamada ley de conducir sin licencia.

Y nadie señaló el comentario insultante de Clinton en un debate a principios de este año cuando dijo que en EUA no podemos permitir más niños centroamericanos porque “tenemos que enviar un mensaje a los padres de que es peligroso enviar a los niños”. Esta es la arrogancia imperialista en su máxima expresión.

### Sanders sobre Nicaragua y Cuba

El debate continuó con otro tema necesario mencionar. Fue una pregunta a Bernie Sanders sobre una entrevista en 1985 en la que alabó al gobierno sandinista de Daniel Ortega e hizo un comentario favorable sobre Fidel Castro.

La respuesta de Sanders en su mayor parte fue progresista e importante para la televisión nacional.

Pero Sanders caracterizó erróneamente a Cuba. Dijo que “Cuba es...un país autoritario, antidemocrático, y espero que...se convierta en un país democrático”.

La verdad es que Cuba es, de hecho, más democrática que EUA. En Cuba, no se necesitan miles de millones de dólares para postularse a un cargo. Las políticas en Cuba son establecidas con el conjunto de la población; hay muchas elecciones, todas libres y justas; sus organizaciones de masas están directamente vinculadas con el gobierno; y así sucesivamente.

Pero Sanders también dijo que Cuba ha educado a sus hijos, ha proporcionado atención médica gratuita, envía médicos a todo el mundo y ha “transformado totalmente la sociedad”.

Lo más importante es que Sanders dijo a millones de personas, “A lo largo de la historia de nuestra relación con América Latina hemos operado bajo la llamada Doctrina Monroe, que dice que EUA tenía el derecho de hacer lo que quisiera en América Latina. Así que fui a Nicaragua y al poco tiempo me opuse a los esfuerzos de la administración Reagan para derrocar ese gobierno. Y antes, me opuse firmemente a Henry Kissinger ... para derrocar al gobierno de Salvador Allende en Chile. ... [Nosotros] debemos trabajar con los gobiernos de todo el mundo, no involucrarnos en cambios de régimen. La cuestión clave aquí es si EUA debería ir

a derrocar a pequeños países de América Latina. Creo que eso fue un error”.

Clinton, sin embargo, fue venenosa con sus mentiras contra Cuba socialista, afirmando que el gobierno cubano “opreme”, “desaparece”, “aprisiona” e “incluso mata a la gente” por expresar sus puntos de vista. La Red Nacional sobre Cuba ha exigido la corrección y la retracción de estas calumnias de Clinton.

Cuando se tiene en cuenta que el debate se llevó a cabo en el condado de Dade, lleno de sentimiento anti revolucionario cubano, las observaciones de Sanders, a pesar de estar contaminadas por propaganda imperialista, fueron importantes. Al final del debate, de hecho, fue Sanders, no Clinton, quien recibió una ovación.

El señalar el papel atroz de Henry Kissinger, buen amigo de Hillary Clinton, y para distinguirse de ella en el tema de Kissinger, también fue bueno.

¿Es esto, junto a sus otras declaraciones progresistas razón suficiente para apoyar a Sanders? Esto es material para otro comentario.

### ¡Liberación, no deportación!

Pero el hispandering de Clinton, el hecho de que una administración demócrata haya deportado más que ningún otro presidente de EUA, el papel del gobierno de EUA en Honduras, el apoyo y la financiación para el baño de sangre que asola a México, su falta de intervención en las/os 43 desaparecidos de Ayotzinapa y las condiciones de deterioro de las/os trabajadores latinos en este país son razones más que suficientes para que las/os latinas/os rompan en masa con el Partido Demócrata.

Pero para la reflexión, es también la incapacidad de Sanders de romper con el sistema capitalista, su fracaso por reconocer genuinamente el profundo impacto del racismo en la sociedad e ir más allá de la desigualdad de ingresos y apoyar la necesidad de indemnizaciones para las/os negros. Estos son sólo ejemplos más de la necesidad de romper con todos los demócratas.

¿Qué pasaría si una sola vez cuando se le preguntara a Sanders, ¿“Cómo se puede pagar la matrícula universitaria gratuita”?, dijera, ¡“Cerrar el Pentágono y tomar el dinero de ahí”!

El sistema capitalista necesita deportaciones. Necesita racismo y guerra para sobrevivir. Los dos partidos han sobrevivido durante generaciones porque después de todo defienden los intereses capitalistas.

Cada vez son más las/os latinas/os, especialmente los jóvenes, que reconocen que los políticos que cambian dependiendo de dónde sopla el viento no son las personas que pueden defenderles. Las/os jóvenes latinas/os han pasado por un período que les ha llevado a concluir, como dijo un joven en Chicago, ¡“Liberación, no deportación”!

Es por ello que la campaña presidencial 2016 Moorehead / Lilly del Partido Workers World-Mundo Obrero dice que este sistema debe ser destruido para que la humanidad sobreviva. Estamos llevando nuestro mensaje a las convenciones demócrata y republicana de este verano. ¡No al muro racista! ¡No hispandering! ¡No capitalismo! □