Bosses attack union jobs

Verizon workers fight back

By Kathy Durkin

They had tried hard to reach a fair contract for 10 months and were fed up. So, on April 13, nearly 40,000 Verizon workers went on strike in Washington, D.C., and nine East Coast states from Massachusetts to Virginia. It is the largest work stoppage in the U.S. since the two-week Verizon strike of 2011.

The Communication Workers and the International Electrical Workers, which represent the workers in Verizon’s landline and broadband FiOS operations, called the strike. The AFL-CIO has endorsed it and its members, community leaders and other forces are joining rallies and picket lines and sending messages of solidarity. Youthful supporters of presidential candidate Bernie Sanders are backing the strike.

The strike can spark an even wider struggle at a time when many sectors of the multinational working class are in motion, especially low-paid and oppressed workers like those in the “Fight for $15” campaign and at workers’ centers, fast food and big box stores.

A lot is at stake for the workers. At its core, it’s job security: preserving good union jobs with livable wages and decent benefits, won by organized workers through hard-fought struggles. In the last decade, Verizon has cut its labor force by 40 percent. Workers hired after 2003 don’t have job security and now the company aims to eliminate the “no layoff” clause for workers hired before then.

Verizon aims to tear up the union contract and wrench disastrous concessions from the workers that would drive down their standard of living. Despite record profits of $39 billion over the last three years, executives seek to cut labor costs by transferring more health care costs to workers and retirees, reducing disability benefits and freezing pensions. Executives won’t discuss improving wages and working conditions. Instead, they would reduce overtime protections and make workers toil seven days consecutively.

The company plans to outsource work to low-wage nonunion contractors. Having already sent 5,000 customer service jobs overseas, Verizon seeks to offshore more jobs, exploiting those in the global workforce by paying extremely low wages.

CWA, IBEW say no job transfers!

Verizon plans to close and consolidate call centers, compelling workers to travel long distances daily or be laid off. In a major contract violation, the company aims to relocate workers up to 80 miles away from their current worksites for two months at a time, with no warning or

Continued on page 6

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Workers World 212.627.2994 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl, NY, NY 10011
We stand in full solidarity with the Verizon strike by CWA and IBEW members began April 13 — the biggest U.S. labor strike in over four years. We also are in that fight for the long haul and we will be walking the picket line alongside our union friends for contract justice now! The outrageous company pressure to layoffs, cutbacks, sourcing, forced relocation, attacks on injured workers must be stopped in its tracks.

Today, CWA and IBEW workers can win as they build union jobs and fight for the decent future that workers have a right to.

The communications workers know the way to win is by building alliances with communities they serve. CWA President Shelton recognized this in a Black History Month message, saying: “We must end structural racism ... Structural racism has filled our jails, yet we will not prosecute the biggest criminals of our time — the big banks, the one percent and Wall Street barons who destroyed our economy, and more recently the city officials of Flint, Michigan, responsible for the devastating water crisis.” In fact, prisoner-workers are now super-exploited under the law.

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a few. 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 revolution and national liberation struggles liberated territory from their imperialist overlords. We are in the streets to oppose every one of imperialism’s wars and aggressions.

**SOLIDARITY with the rising of the Verizon workers! CONTRACT JUSTICE NOW!**

Monica Moorehead, Candidate for President Lamont Lilly, Candidate for Vice-President John Parker, Candidate for Senate, California. We encourage you to learn more about our campaign at WorkersWorldParty.org.
Thousands trash Trump’s bigoted message
By WW NY Bureau

Thousands of people, including large contingents of struggling Fight for $15 workers, took to the streets here against racism on April 14. Protesters stormed the $1,000,000-a-plate Republican fundraiser at the Grand Hyatt with disruptions, banner drops and marches throughout the Grand Central complex adorning the posh hotel, while outside, hundreds in the billion-aire candidate’s bigoted message. It was Donald Trump’s only major New York campaign appearance so far in 2016. The huge turnout and fighting street tactics made it clear that, even with the Democratic debate scheduled later that night in Brooklyn, people were not waiting for the presidential candidates to stop the systemic racism embodied by the Trump phenomenon and police killings. It was time for Trump to go down!” The diversity of tactics, along with the unity of message, was organized by the Shut Down Trump NYC Coalition, initiated by the International Action Center. The coalition included the People’s Power Assembly; Shut It Down NYC; SEE-PRD NYC; Millennials March; Pakistan-US Freedom Forum; Queer Detainee Empowerment Project; Showing Up For Racial Justice; Workers World Party; South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship, & Training; Bangladesh American Community Coalition; May 1 Coalition; We Will Not Be Silent. (See Right Now! We Stay WOQ! Black & Pink NYC; Bend the Arc; Global Revolution Media; and Iraq Veterans Against the War. Famous 42nd Street was packed with anti-Trump demonstrators along a three-block stretch, from Madison Avenue to Lexington Avenue. The Grand Hyatt, where GOP donors were dining, and Grand Central Station resounded with chants against racism. The rally of thousands in front of the Hyatt included representatives from groups marching from Times Square and groups organizing direct actions.

Solidarity with many forms of resistance

The day was well organized into permitted Green zones and direct action Red zones. There was active solidarity against Trump’s racism and vicious bigotry that has targeted Muslims, immigrants, women and LGBTQ people. There was powerful unity among the thousands of participants emerging from many forms of the struggle.

The status of the GOP fundraiser as a private event gave it no protection from violence and direct action. The day got under way about an hour before the fundraiser was due to open. A group of activists waited three hours for Trump to appear so they could mount a protest. As Trump began to speak, 10 protestors stormed the hotel mezzanine with a banner that read “NYC rejects the Party of Hate.” Another group of protesters orchestrated a successful banner drop from a tenth-floor window. Underneath, in Grand Central station, protesters with the People’s Assembly dropped a banner reading “Shut Down Fascism in NYC – Black Lives Matter.” They were whisked away by Apple Store security, part of the coordination among the NYPD, Secret Service and many local agencies.

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Campaigns largely ignore issues facing African Americans

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Democratic Party candidates Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders are both making appeals to win over African-American voters during the final two months of the primary and caucus elections.

Nonetheless, very few specific issues are being addressed during the course of the debates, particularly the New York primary. Some of the essential concerns of African Americans requiring attention include:

- The need for jobs and income, considering African Americans and Latinos/as specifically — are disproportionately profiled, arrest and incarcerated at a higher rate than their white counterparts.

- Housing and land, where over the last couple of decades, housing prices in and around the cities have skyrocketed. A one-bedroom apartment in midtown Manhattan costs almost $3,000 a month. Rent controls were abolished decades ago, and a majority of the affordable housing units have been sold or restructured as luxury units. The rich are portrayed as having some inherent right to govern, access to the corporate media and the ability to control public opinion. African Americans and other oppressed workers and the oppressed, and Sanders make no pretense of soliciting African-American votes.

- Health care issues persist despite the Affordable Care Act as infant mortality rates remain very high in the cities, as well as the proliferation of treatable diseases requiring prohibitively expensive treatments, and the lack of access to affordable clinics and hospitals.

- Communications outlets where the corporate media utilize their influence to systematically demonize and de-mobilize the people in an effort to halt movements aimed at social change and revolutionary transformation.

Housing and the cities

African-American communities across the United States have not recovered from the impact of the Great Recession of 2007-08. In the area of housing, the economic crisis has devastated large sections of major urban areas such as Detroit, Chicago, New York City and Los Angeles. Predatory lending schemes initiated by the banks drained the limited household wealth of African-American working families. This phenomenon, coupled with the loss of jobs and other economic opportunities, forced millions to relocate to suburban areas and other states.

Some of the same financial interests involved in the massive fraud involving home ownership later moved into buying up rental properties, in part prompting the escalation of rents and fueling the demand for housing in cities and suburbs. Many of the traditional neighborhoods of African Americans and other working-class people have been subjected to “gentrification,” in which community residents are no longer able to afford to live in those areas.

Despite the housing crisis even further is the mass incarceration of African Americans and Latinos/as, where existing laws make them ineligible for loans and mortgage opportunities. There is a need for job programs to be implemented.

Day of Rage held despite arrests

Despite heavy-handed police repression against three leading organizers, members of the Philadelphia Coalition for R.E.A.L. (Racial, Economic and Legal) Justice and several hundred supporters marched through the city’s central business district on April 14, locking down traffic at rush hour.

Dubbed the “Day of Rage,” the protest demanded Black community control of police, reparations, an end to the racist police practice of “stop and frisk,” and the removal of Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney from office, who has been accused of repressing the people by removing and firing residents and other organizers from the streets.

The marchers were joined en route by contingents from “Stadium Stompers,” who demanded an end to Temple University’s gentrification of North Philadelphia, and “Fight for $15” organizers, who tied the issues of gentrification and poverty wages to racist police violence.

In a blatant attempt to suppress the protest, Philly cops arrested three prominent REAL, Justice organizers several hours before it began. In an early morning action, protesters had been demonstrating outside the FOX TV news station to call attention to the network’s racist bias when one activist was struck by a moving car. The driver of the car, who appeared to be drunk and/or high on drugs, fled the scene almost immediately without being charged, while three Black protesters, including the one who had just been hit, were arrested and given false charges.

Police held the protesters in custody for approximately 28 hours despite only minor charges being filed against just one of the three.

News of the politically motivated arrests spread quickly among members of the REAL, Justice Coalition, who released a statement promising that there would be “no peace in Philadelphia until these comrades are released.”

The coalition also announced that, rather than cancelling the Day of Rage march, it would instead bring the march directly to the police station where the three were being held. At 6 p.m., marchers from the participating organizations descended on the Ninth Police District headquarters, occupying the street outside.

Police formed a wall in front of the station, outnumbering the protesters as many as three to one at times.

As temperatures hit the low 50s, the demonstrators continued to hold the street for the rest of the night, dividing into rotating five-hour shifts until the political prisoners were finally released the next day.

The Philly Police Department’s shameless attempt to break the movement was the arresting three leaders failed, as the coalition’s militant response shows that power is in the people, and not in individual leaders.

- Matty Stardust
Prisoners continue fight for decent food

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

April 18 — For three weeks, food protests in three Michigan prisons have been over 95 percent successful. The latest took place in Cotton Correctional Facility, about 8 miles west of Detroit. On April 12, the facility’s Level II security prisoners stayed in their cells during lunch and dinner, with only a few dozen turning up for meals.

Michigan prisoners staged their first meal boycott on March 20-21 at the Kinross prison in the state’s Upper Peninsula. The second protests occurred March 26-28 at the Chippewa prison near Kinross. In both prisons, only a handful turned up for meals.

In Cotton, the facility’s Level II security prison, the second protest took place in Cotton Correctional Facility, which is over 500 miles from his spouse’s home in Benton Harbor. When Rev. Pinkney received a recent copy of this newspaper, a previous article on the Kinross protest had been clipped out by prison authorities. But no matter what censorship can stem the tide of prisoner resistance.

On Palestinian Prisoners’ Day
Activists demand divestment
protests, Clinton

By Joe Catron
New York

Several dozen activists, including large numbers of students, rallied in Brooklyn’s Cadman Plaza Park on April 17 to mark the 42nd annual Palestinian Prisoners’ Day and launch the second Prison Divestment National Week of Action. They then marched to Hillary Clinton’s nearby campaign headquarters, where they chanted a large protest against the Democratic presidential candidate’s pro-war political record.

Palestinian Prisoners’ Day commemorates the 1974 release of Mahmoud Baker Hijazi, the first Palestinian prisoner freed by Israel in a prisoner exchange with resistance groups, and shows solidarity with 7,000 current detainees, including 700 “administrative detainees,” 438 children and six elected members of the Palestinian parliament, whose live sentences are imposed without even going through Israeli military trials, known for their 95.74 percent conviction rate against Palestinian defendants.

Marches, rallies and strikes have marked the day throughout the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel in 1948 and the 2005 prisoner exchange with the Israeli military trials, known for their 95.74 percent conviction rate against Palestinian defendants.

Upstate NY speaks truth to power

Continued from page 3

East Asian, Latina, pro-Palestinian Jewish and anti-racist white. Among us were a homeless woman who was being waged through a public school teacher, a retiree, a professional football player, students, immigrants and a disability rights activist. The group included members of Black Lives Matter, Palestinian Solidarity Collective, Workers Center of New York, the ANSWER Coalition, Workers World Party and more.

While the power of all our movements in action with us, we battled against the screaming audience and evictingTrump with a nationwide mobilization against Real Estate Investment Trust tax breaks used by the Corrections Corporation of America and the GEO Group to avoid property taxes on their private prisons.

This day ended with Trump visiting by prison guards onto the street, our banner not only increases the profitability of private imprisonment but also allows prison companies to pour donations into the campaigns of politicians whose policies of criminalization benefit them.

In California included representatives of Cop Watch, HDK New York, the International Action Center, Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, Students for Justice in Palestine, Students Without Borders and Queens Neighborhoods United. Many of the speakers connected domestic struggles against mass incarceration and police repression, as well as liberation movements in Kurdistan and elsewhere, with the Palestinian prisoners’ movement and the fight for a free Palestine.

Following a march, with chants of “Smash the settler Zionist state!” and “Hillary, Obama: You will feel the Intifada!” the group joined 100 picketers from the Committee Opposed to Hillary Clinton’s Interventionism outside the Clinton headquarters.

Chants and speakers criticized Clinton’s record of intervention, from Haiti and Honduras to Ukraine, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Palestine.

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

By Workers World Staff

On April 13, 40,000 Verizon wireline workers, represented by the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and International Electrical Workers (IBEW), went out on strike against the company and its anti-union demands for cuts and concessions while it banks $1.5 billion per month in profits. Here are reports from some picket lines in Virginia and Boston.

VIRGINIA: "United in how we roll!

Members of CWA Local 2204, on the picket lines throughout Virginia, are standing strong against Verizon's greed. Beginning at rallies in over a dozen locations at 6 a.m. on the first day of the strike, CWA members from around the state — Arlington to Roanoke to Wise — came out to picket. The rallies looked like a sea of red T-shirts and strike signs.

"This strike is very important, not only for Verizon workers but all workers," said Deb Carey, Norton Area Vice President, CWA Local 2204. "Verizon is a prime example of what is wrong in America and what is the need for labor organizing. We are making $1.5 billion profit a month off the backs of their employees but want to freeze pensions, force retirees and workers older, copper network, leaving many customers with poor service.

Picketers have been out from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day. Strikers have been joined by workers away from home and families for months at a time."

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Workers' labor: source of Verizon's wealth

"No union can go it alone'

On April 17 read in part:

"The biggest of these gestures is the corporate greed at Verizon, we are hearing directly from us. They are asking members of the more senior leadership to refuse, disregarding seniority and family ties. Verizon's goal is to establish a travelling workforce, and those who can be sent anywhere, anytime, to build FiOS networks and then move on to the next worksite. This is a key issue for the workers, and their right to refuse job transfers. Moreover, dispersing workers dilutes their collective strength.

Verizon workers are angry that the company continues to build FiOS networks on its own while it is in a war against unions, aiming to destroy their right to refuse, disregarding seniority and family ties.

The CWA says the company refuses to negotiate a fair first contract with better wages and benefits for Verizon Wireless retail workers — even though they formed a union in 2013. These employees bring in high profits, says Verizon — but are among the lowest paid workers at the company.

"We are here to fight for our jobs — and in the long run for thezell's corporate greed and they know our fight is their fight. As upper management visited some of our picket lines yesterday they got a clear message that we want a fair contract that addresses our concerns. We continue to see the support of our fellow sisters and brothers from the labor movement who also understand our fight is their fight. They come to our picket lines and walk with us and offer their heartfelt support as Verizon moves into their home state. We have entire families walking our picket lines together because they know we are all part of the CWA Local 2204 family. United in Solidarity Is How We Roll!!!"

BOSTON: "No union can go it alone"

Our message is resonating, that's for sure. Our members are strong.

That was the conclusion reached by Myles Calvey, business agent for IBEW Local 2222, five days into the strike against Verizon. Calvey, who represents thousands of telecommunications workers in Greater Boston, explained the strike issues in great detail in an hour-long interview with WGBH radio on April 17.

Local 2222 members, along with all 40,000 striking Verizon workers, are angry about the company's outrageous contract demands. They see the anti-union attitudes of the company intensify since the last Verizon strike in 2011. For the current management, including CEO Lowell McAdams, "The workers have now become the poison with in the company," reported Calvey. "Every bad thing that happens, it is the union that caused it." Union members are fighting for jobs because Verizon wants "to converge on jobs. They want to cut, cut more. We are just asking them to maintain jobs.

Militant pickets have been seen all over the Boston area. Many union members have come out to show solidarity with the strikers, including firefighters, nurses and Teamsters. The Teamsters union sent all United Parcel Service drivers a text message instructing them not to cross picket lines. Honks of solidarity have been non-stop. Local 2222 is asking for community support, with the understanding that in 2016 no union can go it alone without support from the communities they serve. Local 2222 has been joined on the picket lines every day by members of Steelworkers Local 8751, the Boston School Bus Drivers Union. By joining the picket lines the drivers are expressing their heartfelt solidarity, love and gratitude. During Local 8751's better, 26-month fight to reinstate of four fired union leaders, as well as contract justice, Local 2222 turned over part of its union hall to Teamsters Solidarity, the Voice of the United School Bus Workers — rent free. Nor has it been forgotten that leaders of Local 8751 were arrested while on the picket line supporting phone strikers in 1989.

"I wish all unions would be here to show solidarity and show the world how strong." said Local 8751 President Andre Francois. ■

Calif. "temp" warehouse workers strike again

Workers at the Port of Los Angeles went on strike April 6 for the third time in seven months to protest the company's ongoing violation of U.S. labor laws under the National Labor Relations Act. Over 200 workers employed through temporary staffing companies joined the picket line.

Threat of CSU strike leads to fair contract

When 26,000 faculty members in the 23-campus California State University system organized to strike in mid-April for higher pay in a three-year contract, administrators at CSU blinked. This came after an independent report in late-March supported the California Faculty Association's demand for a 5 percent raise in 2014-15, countering the adminis- tration's offer of a 2 percent increase. The percent increase takes effect June 30, followed by a 2 percent increase for 2015-16 on July 1. Salary increases for tenured-faculty, become effective with temporary contracts. Librarians, counselors and coaches will increase their pay.
Low-wage workers strike for $15 and a union

By Benjy Pyles

On Thursday, April 14, workers in Atlanta, Boston, New York, Los Angeles and more than 300 other cities across the U.S. — as well as in 40 other countries, including South Korea, the Philippines, Chile, Panama, Pakistan and Brazil — walked off their jobs and/or joined marches and protests in what organizers said was the largest protest by low-wage workers in history.

Some 60,000 workers took part in the U.S. “Fight for $15” demonstrations, according to organizers. They called for the right to collectively bargain and a minimum wage of $15 an hour, more than twice the current U.S. federal minimum of $7.25 and many times higher than in most countries.

Many of the international actions were directed at McDonald’s. McDonald’s CEO Steve Easterbrook raised $7.91 million last year — more than tripling the $1.67 million he “earned” the previous year.

California and New York have both recently passed legislation to raise the minimum wage to $15 through a “phase-in” period over several years. Undoubtedly, this is to give the capitalists the time to seek ways to increase their superprofits made out of the exploitation of colonized and oppressed nations, so that the wage increases for their workers do not come out of their own pockets. This is why real internationalists must also raise the demand of a global minimum wage or basic minimum income!

New England

Low-wage workers at Boston’s Logan International Airport, home care and child care workers, adjunct professors, religious leaders, immigrant and housing advocates, legislators and the Black Lives Matter movement joined with striking fast food workers to protest the Massachusetts State House organized by the wageactioncoalition, the Service Employees Union and other unions. They marched from the State House to McCormick & Schmick’s and McDonald’s, to build solidarity with workers there struggling against poverty wages and poor working conditions.

Bills are pending in Massachusetts to raise wages to $15 an hour for about 1,500 service employees at Logan Airport and over 200,000 workers at fast food and “big box” retail chain outlets across the state.

A rally also addressed the struggle for justice for Jeffrey Pendleton, a Black 26-year-old hailed for his support for the ACLU, who had worked for a Burger King in Nashua, N.H. He participated in a fast food worker strike and was active in the Fight for $15 movement. After Nashua police arrested him on a minor offense, he was sent to the notorious Valley St. Jail in Manchester, N.H., not far from Donald Trump’s campaign headquarters. Pendleton was too poor to afford the $100 bail that would have set him free.

Pendleton had been harassed by police because he was homeless and had won money settlements from both Hudson, N.H., and Nashua police departments last year with support from the ACLU, although much of the settlement money went to paying lawyer fees.

Shorty after his imprisonment, Pendleton was mysteriously “found dead” in his jail cell on March 13. The circumstances resembled those of the internationally known case of Sandra Bland, a Black woman active in the struggle against police brutality who was “found hung” in a Texas police cell three days after being arrested for failing to signal when changing lanes.

Chicago, Los Angeles

Over 1,000 low-wage workers descended on Chicago’s “Magnificent Mile” on the evening of April 14 after having spent most of the day on the North Side near the Loyola University campus, an action which included a shutdown of an entrance to Lake Shore Drive. They began a second set of marches under heavy police presence to the site of the recent arena victories of Chicago — outside Park Tower, where Ken Griffin, CEO of Citadel LLC and Illinois’ wealthiest person, keeps a penthouse apartment. Citadel has owned and traded millions in McDonald’s stock over the years, raking in huge profits. The workers stopped briefly at a Bank of America office to chant, “Banks got bailed out! We got sold out!” The financial giant controls more than $2 billion worth of shares in the company.

In Los Angeles, protesters held aloft large balloons and marched behind a banner that read, “McJobs hurt us all.” In New York, thousands rallied in Times Square and later protested outside a Republican gala featuring the party’s three candidates for the 2016 presidential race.

Howard Rotman contributed the New England portion of this report.

Victory for public sector unions, for now

By Jeremy Baumann

Late in March, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in the long-awaited Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association case. This ruling comes as a victory for all oppressed peoples and workers. It followed the sudden death of the racist, sexist and anti-worker Justice Antonin Scalia in February.

The Friedrichs case affects public sector unions that carry out collective bargaining. This decision allows employers to continue to receive fair-share fees from nonmembers in exchange for services/benefits; it simply means they have the right to receive funds from nonmembers.

The case was initially filed in 2013 and made it all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court, which heard oral arguments in January when Scalia still had a seat. A decision in favor of the anti-union plaintiffs would have overturned the court’s 1977 decision in Abood v. Detroit Board of Education, which allowed unions in states where the public sector collectively bargains to receive from nonunion members fees that are equivalent to members’ dues, since all workers in a fair-share shop receive contractual benefits through union representation.

Fair share fees and collective bargaining still at stake

While this decision is definitely worth celebrating, unions and their supporters should still be on guard. According to NEAToday.org, “Dozens of similar cases are currently working their way through the federal court system, although none will end up on the court’s docket until next term at the earliest — or not at all, depending greatly on who is sitting on the court.” (Feb. 19)

Workers have been up against union-busting legislation in many states in recent months. Scab bills such as “Right-to-Work” (for less) go hand-in-glove with the recently proposed, right-wing initiatives against LGBTQ people, from Michigan to North Carolina to Mississippi, as well as the racist so-called voter ID laws that have been recently implemented in Georgia.

The reactionary and bigoted “Center for Individual Rights,” which has represented the plaintiffs in the Friedrichs case from the very beginning, also announced it is circulating a petition urging the Supreme Court to rehear the case. While it is unlikely that the Court will be successful in its request to the highest bourgeois court, it is a reminder that the struggle to save public sector unions is ongoing.

Our class can only win through community-labor unity and fightback!
By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Late on the night of April 17, the lower chamber of the Brazilian Congress, the House of Deputies, met to vote on an impeachment process against President Dilma Rousseff. After approximately six hours of grueling, tiresome debate, there were 396 "Yes" votes versus 137 "No" votes, with 7 abstentions — more than the two-thirds needed to impeach.

The debate still continues in the upper house, the Senate, in a few weeks. There a simple majority will decide whether to continue the process, which will decide the future of Rousseff's presidency. While the case against her is discussed in the Senate, President Rousseff must be removed from her position.

Vice President Michel Temer will assume the presidency during that process. Rousseff could appeal to the Supreme Court, but nobody believes that will be considered impeachment before, it would doubtful it rule on her behalf.

Circus atmosphere

The long voting process in the House was reminiscent of a circus or a sporting event. Every legislator had 10 seconds to make a statement after casting his or her vote aloud, and they did. The entire event was covered live and could be watched on several websites. Like watching actors on Oscar night, the majority mentioned their relatives, their loved ones, their cities, their country or god as the reason for their vote. Those voting "Yes" made no mention of the legitimacy of the impeachment. Applause and shouts were heard. Confetti was even fired from a toy gun after a "Yes" vote, while silence followed "No" votes. It definitely appeared to be an anti-theatrical governmental circus.

Behind the spectacle, a more disturbing action was taking place: the absolute illegitimacy of the impeachment process. Secretary General Luis Almagro, of the Organization of American States, itself far from a progressive organization, wrote in a statement: "Our Organization has made a detailed analysis of the impeachment process against Dilma, and has concluded that it does not fit within the rules that govern this process. There is no criminal accusation against the president; rather she has been accused of the poor administration of public resources in 2014. This is an accusation that is political in character, and that does not merit an impeachment process."

Worst yet, Vice President Temer, of the conservative Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB) and instigator of the impeachment, is under investigation by the Supreme Court for corruption and money laundering. "Cunha is accused of receiving $5 million in bribes from a construction company related to Petrobras, the semi-public Brazilian petroleum company. Many other legislators as well are subject to investigation. In the eyes of many of the Brazilian people, the credibility of the Parliament is zero.

Severe crisis

The government and the country itself are in the midst of a severe political, economic and social crisis. The impeachment has followed closely on the heels of the Panama Papers. President Rousseff, like others, will see the exit of the Brazilian financial markets, but, by the global market as well. A Bloomberg article on April 17 reported, "Investors have piled into Brazilian assets in the past few weeks over expectations Rousseff's ouster will allow a new government to push through measures aimed at pulling Latin America's biggest economy out of its worst recession in a century and tackling an exploding budget deficit. But the severity of the problems means her likely successor — Vice President Michel Temer — will have little margin for error."

Some of the Rousseff administration's policies have affected the population negatively. These include neoliberal measures of privatization and cutbacks. The Workers Party (PT), Rousseff and ex-President Lula da Silva's party, has weakened its ties with the masses even during Lula's administration. The economy, however, was in much better health during Lula's government and although he made compromises with Brazil's wealthy capitalist class, his administration was able to implement programs that uplifted the living standard of millions of people who lived in abject poverty.

This is the second part of an article by Agustín Lage Diers, director of the Center of Molecular Immunology in Cuba since 1993 and a member of the Cuban National Assembly of the Popular Power (Parliament) between 1993-1997, published in CubaDebate on April 7. Lage met with the U.S. delegation visiting Cuba. Part 2 discusses differences between the Cuban and U.S. points of view. The complete article is available at tinyurl.com/cubxvjp.

We disagree on the role that this non-state sector should have in our economy:

- They [the U.S.] see it as the main component of the economy; we see it as a complement to its main component, the socialist state enterprise. As a matter of fact, today the non-state sector, although providing nearly 30 percent of jobs, contributes less than 12 percent of the country's GDP [gross domestic product], an indication of its limitations in terms of value added.
- They pose [the non-state sector] as equivalent to "innovation"; we see it as a sector that engages in a constant struggle against what is left over from the capitalist past. "Spirit" has been expressed over these past few years in many other ways, such as the development of biotechnology, its medicinal and vaccines; massive training in new information technologies at the University of Informatics Sciences; urban agriculture; the energy revolution and the valorization of energy during the Special Period [of profound economic crisis], none of which were mentioned in our visitors' speeches. They see private initiative as "empowerment" in the sense of "empowering one part of the people", and a relatively small part. The people's role as protagonists is found in the state sector, which, having large and constantly funded sector (including health, education, sports and public safety), where the real work is done for all the people and where most of the wealth is created. We can't accept the implicit message that the non-state sector is equivalent to "the Cuban people." This wasn't stated so brutally, but is quite clearly inferred from the discourse.
- They tactfully separate the concept of "initiative" from state ownership. We see in the state sector our main opportunities for productive initiatives. That's how I explained it in the Business Forum, using the example of the Molecular Immunology Center where I work, which I described as a "company with 11 million stockholders." [Cuba's population — WW]
- They see the non-state sector as a source of social development; we see it as a source of social power. In addition, they have a "hostile" concept of social inequalities (of which we already see evidence in such things as the recent debates on food prices), inequalities that will have to be controlled by fiscal policies that reflect our values.
- They believe in the driving force of competition (although this concept has been questioned even by serious ideologues of capitalist economies). We are familiar with its rapacious nature, eroding social cohesion, and we believe in the dynamic, the driving force, that emerges from programs that consider the whole nation.
- They believe that the market efficiently distributes investments in response to demand; we believe that large and permanently funded sectors (including health, education, sports and public safety) distribute investments in response to real demand, but rather to "demand by those with money in their pockets," and deepens social inequalities. They see in the state sector our main opportunities for productive initiatives, or by trying to reproduce the path of today's industrialized countries 300 years later. That would be a recipe for perpetuating unproductive and unnecessary dependence on an economy designed as an appendage and complement to the U.S. economy, which accumulates capital abroad, rather than in the 19th century when such dependence submerged us in a single-crop economy and closed the door to industrialization. Understanding these differences is key to looking at history, and thus, history is something we can't forget.

Tacking the road to civilized coexistence, "with our differences" means the whole Cuban people need to arrive at a deep understanding of those differences, to keep specific and apparently rational decisions on tactical economic questions from leading to strategic errors, and worse still, allowing others to push us toward such errors, by virtue of what is said and what is left unsaid.

We know how to do this even better now.

'Battling in the field of ideas'

Civilized coexistence certainly distances us from the risk and barbarity of war (both military and economic), but it doesn't exonerate us from battling in the field of ideas.

We need to win this battle of ideas in order to win the economic battle. Cuba's 21st-century economic battle will be fought on three main fronts:

1. The socialist state enterprise's efficiency and growth capacity, as well as its insertion in the global economy.
2. The link between science and the economy, through high-tech companies, whose returns will add value, significantly increase the GDP, and create high value added, that expand our export portfolio.
3. Conscious limitation on the extension of capitalist ideas and their aggressive advance through action by the socialist state.

On these fronts the Cubans' 21st century will be decided.

The battle of ideas consists of consolidating our thinking and consensus about Continued on the next page
China, U.S. and global warming
What can be done about rising sea levels?

By Deirdre Griswold

It has been more than a third of a century since climate scientists in both the United States and Britain began to publish papers showing that accumulating greenhouse gases in the atmosphere were raising temperatures around the world. (“Climate Impact of Increasing Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide,” James E. Hansen et al., Science, 1981; “Variations of Surface Air Temperatures,” Part I, Northers, 1982).

In the United Nations, the U.S. under Bill Clinton and George W. Bush committed itself to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but never submitted a protocol, or final version of the Kyoto Accord, which Congress, leaving the accord dead in the water.

Today’s question is: why isn’t there any effort now to address the climate crisis? More than 200 U.S. mayors have pledged to ensure that their own communities do not contribute to global warming.

The Florida Straits’ waters shouldn’t be any different. (tinyurl.com/zosgbk8)

Private property and competition represent the past, and although this past still necessarily exists within the present, it cannot remain as it was. You always have to see the concepts behind the words spoken, and the reasons why other words are left unspoken, in terms of how the future takes some different conceptions of how human beings should live together, of the way people organize themselves to work and live in society, and of the distribution of the fruits of their labor. And it’s also very good that this be so. Our ideal for human society is still a communist, but I’ve had to accept that democracy and capitalism are here to remain, and that the struggle is a long one. Capitalism’s essential belief, even more so than the revolution, is that material prosperity is constructed on the basis of private property and competition. The Florida Straits’ waters shouldn’t be any different.

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Capitalism’s essential belief, even more so than the revolution, is that material prosperity is constructed on the basis of private property and competition. The Florida Straits’ waters shouldn’t be any different.
Too big to fail? How often have we heard that recently? The Federal Reserve Board says that five U.S. banks are too big to fail: JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Bank of New York Mellon and State Street. Not all are household names, but they’re big, all right. Together, they have almost $8 trillion in assets. Where did all that wealth come from? After all, it’s just paper, or money that can buy.

Yet somehow these banks can claim in their annual reports that they’re so big they couldn’t fail. And they seem scared silly that a lot of it could evaporate. The products that can be bought with the money can’t evaporate. But they can sit a long time in warehouse if people can’t afford them. And the people who provide services can’t evaporate. But they can be out of a job.

How could this happen? If a financial crisis leads to gridlock in the economy. It happened in 2008 and 2009 and it could happen again. And if it did, these banks and a lot of other capitalist entities “too big to fail” would go to the U.S. government to bail them out — again.

That’s what the politicians in Washington and the financiers on Wall Street are worrying about right now. It took trillions of dollars last time to get the capitalist economy working again. And it hasn’t worked very well, except for the billionaires. Not here, not in the rest of the capitalist world either. Unemployment remains high, especially among the oppressed and young people. Wages are still low. And workers are paying the price for capitalism in this high-tech, globalized era at a dead end. To function, it needs to expand. To expand, it needs customers. But production that is more and more robotized and high-tech doesn’t need many workers. In fact, for the workers this has been an era of layoffs and low wages, not the transition from working class to “middle class.” So who’s going to buy everything? Capitalism is facing a dead end. Where to go?

All kinds of artificial means have been tried to pump up the economy. Mainly this has meant bailing out the banks. But banks are in trouble if they can’t service their debts.

We invite you — sign up today! Join workers.org/donate. And thanks for reading workers.org.
EU-Turkey deal outs migrants at risk

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Thousands of migrants in Greece from the Middle East, Asia and Africa are be- ing sent to Turkey in an effort to curtail and reduce the number of people flooding into Europe. The migrants are making the journey on unmarked boats and are being denied entry into the EU by countries from Poland and the Baltic states onward. The Greek government has sent hundreds of migrants on boats back to their home countries. There are reports that 25,000 migrants have been returned to Syria and 50,000 to Turkey.

Uncertainty about the status of those who have reached Greece contributed to clashes on April 11 to 12 as Macedonian security forces used tear gas and rubber bullets to contain crowds they claimed had attempted to break through the Idomeni border camp. An estimated 6,000 to 8,000 migrants wereHenry Clinton is its favored can-

didate of U.S. imperialism that serves
unions and from people of color, remains
challenged by Bernie Sanders' verbal attacks
Continued from page 3

Protesters disrupt Clinton in Baltimore

Continued from page 3

nation, especially of people of color — are all the responsibility of the Democratic Party and the Bill Clinton administra-

By Sue Kelly
Dublin, Ireland

A century ago, on April 24, 1916 — Eas- ter Monday — a few hundred Irish men and women mounted an armed rebellion against the immense and brutal British Empire. They rise up in Dublin at St. Ste-

ghen's Green, the Four Courts and various other key locations around the city, and in the countryside at Wexford, Louth, Meath, Cork and Galway, among other places.

During the hundreds of years of Brit-

ish occupation, religious and political

oppressor. It was preceded by the Re-

bellion. Over two weeks, all seven

views, who played a significant role in

the coming togeth-

er of socialists, republicans, nationalists,
suffragists and Irish culture activists into a revolutionary movement to establish a
democratic and egalitarian republic. Mas-
termined by the Irish Republican Broth-

erhood, the fighting included the Irish Cit-

izen's Army and the Volunteers.

The General Post Office became their headquarters. Shortly after noon on Eas-
ter Monday, Padraig Pearse, leader of the Irish Citizen's Army and the leader of the Rebellion, read the "Procla-

mation of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic" from the front steps of the GPO. It is a significant document for many reasons, not the least of which is its

inclusion of women throughout. While women and their sup-

porters in other nations of the world were striving to achieve the right to vote, the Procla-

mation was a radical endorsement of equal rights for women in Irish society.

Pearse read from the Procla-

mation: "The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic recognizes the right of all men and women, equally, to enjoy liberty, equal rights and equal opportu-
nities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and pros-

perity of the whole population, cherishing all the children of the nation equally."

More than 100 women took part in the Rising, many of whom were members of the Republican women’s organization Cumann na mBan, which had in its con-

stitution, alongside its equality agenda, an explicit commitment to the use of force by arms against British force in Ireland.

Brutal suppression and secret executions

The British quickly declared martial law and ordered reinforcements, leaving a garrison of about 2,500 military personnel in place before any returns begin. This is in light of continuing serious gaps in the rendition agreements that constitute the Irish island becoming the independent Republic of Ireland.

Much of Dublin was demolished. Only a few houses survived in the Kilmainham Jail area. From the Kilmainham Jail, Pearse and 14 others were executed at Kilmainham Jail.

The British, who had been systematically rounding up Irish civilians, began shooting those who opposed the British. The British soldiers executed 140 men, women and children. In a sickening act of savagery, Pearse was hanged and Pearse's children were watered down. The bodies were buried in a mass grave in Kilmainham.

The Irish public was outraged and the Rebellion’s leaders became heroes and martyrs as public opinion moved toward the goal of a sovereign Irish republic. The years following saw the growth of Sinn Fein and the Easter Rising commemorations. The Volunteers surrendered. The day before, Pearse had seen British soldiers shoot 16 of his own countrymen in the street, and a family holding a white flag mowed down while escaping their burning house.

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stitution, alongside its equality agenda, an explicit commitment to the use of force by arms against British force in Ireland.
Ministro Villegas, ¡el paramilitarismo sí existe!

Por Olga Lucía Marín, guerrillera de las FARCE

Todos los días me levanto con la esperanza de que el presidente Santos y sus ministros al fin decidan acabar con la política de la derecha. Una política que sigue vigente y que es resultado de esa política de defensa impuesta por la Escuela de las Américas. Las cifras y las circunstancias en las que han nacido y han mutado y mantenido sus diferentes nombres sí lo revelan. En el gobierno de Juan Manuel Santos van 346 crímenes de Estado. “...no es ningún fantasma, es una realidad que denunciamos a través de la insurrección. Ni una ecuechización patológica para poslarizar la paz.”

El paramilitarismo no puede considerarse únicamente como una máquina que mata a su oponente político, es una concepción estratégica, “un pensamiento y una corriente política que ha hecho de la guerra y el terror, su principal medio de defensa y reconquista de un sector muy poderoso de colombianos y colombianas que utiliza el asesinato y el miedo para mantener sus privilegios de clase. No puede ser casualidad, ahora que avanza el acuerdo de paz en la Habana, reaparezca el paramilitarismo en varios lugares del país. Regiones como Putumayo, región de la “Brida Movida” N° 13 con una larga lista de hombres y mujeres, algunos ejemplos son: en Mapiripán-México, en las tierras de Rodríguez y Gonzalo Rodríguez es denunciado el asesinato de Sikiuani, Luis Rodríguez Castro, uno de sus líderes como una nueva arremetida paramilitar; en Cúcuta, en el norte, en el Vicariato de Hacarí, el líder Orangel Galvis de la guerrilla de las Américas, recibió amenazas telefónicas por parte las Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia. En la región, como siempre, hay un batallón que nunca se entera de nada. Y no podía faltar, estos señores si no logran sus objetivos con el compañero de a quienes amenazan le advierten que deben matar a “su señora y a sus hijos”. La semana pasada, el país conoció el famoso “paro forzado” desarrollado por los paramilitares en varios departamentos: Antioquia, Córdoba, Chocó, Sucre y Magdalena, entre otros. Demostrada su capacidad para continuar posteriorizar con el apoyo evidente de importantes sectores políticos, económicos y militares, y lo más vergonzoso, de sectores del mismo gobierno colombiano. Como era de esperarse el jefe del Centro Democrático, senador y ex presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez, y su partidario no trinaron, ni hablaron del “Procesamiento armado”, evidente en este paro, ni mucho menos alzaron voz alguna “en repudio con los asesinatos recientes de militantes de la izquierda y activistas de derechos humanos”.

El Ministro de Defensa, Luis Carlos Villegas en entrevista con Semana dijo: “Es irresponsable calificar a estas bandas de paramilitarismo...En el país no hay paramilitarismo ni permitiremos que vuelva a aparecer”. Si es así, ¿por qué ante la toma de las carreteras, y algunos barrios de Medellín con actos violentos, no apareció ni la policía, ni el ejército o el ESMAD siempre presos en los paros agrarios o estudiantes? Se queda corto el ministro de defensa al negar la existencia de esta política por parte de las instituciones del Estado y del paro reciente por las AGC, la gente le recuerda la frase del Presidente, “el tal paro no existe”. Que raro, un fantasma que no dejó muertos de cuerpo y hueco como existió...

Y luego de una enteriza de la realidad, asumiendo entre la prensa alternativa, pues los grandes medios de desinformación, sobre esto poco dice, no queda más que decir al señor Villegas, Ministro abra el ojo, porque el paramilitarismo sí existe!

Llamamos por tanto a la población colombiana a cerrarle el paso a los enemigos de la paz con la moral y la política en defensa de los diálogos y a exigirle al gobierno cumplimiento de los acuerdos firmados tanto en La Habana como en Cartagena de Indias esperando que la desilusión de enriquecimiento” de un sector de los inversores en Brasil se desvanece este año esperando que la desilusión de enriquecimiento” de un sector los FMI y el ESMAD siempre presenle al negar la existencia de esta política por parte de las instituciones del Estado y del paro reciente por las AGC, la gente le recuerda la frase del Presidente, “el tal paro no existe”. Que raro, un fantasma que no dejó muertos de cuerpo y hueco como existió...

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