



Teachers mass outside the DPS building, May 1.

Detroit teachers dare to struggle Sick-out wins back pay

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire
Detroit

May 3 — Late this afternoon it was announced by media outlets that the Detroit teachers scored a victory in response to their two-day sick-out when Detroit Public Schools emergency manager Steven Rhodes caved in and agreed to pay teachers’ salaries owed to them through the summer months. The battle continues for adequate funding for quality education for Detroit’s youth; to stop public funds being diverted for debt service payments; and to restore local control of Detroit public schools to this majority African-American city.

Like yesterday, thousands of members of the Detroit Federation of Teachers called in sick today, closing down the school system citywide. The sick-outs were in response to an announcement by Rhodes that there is no funding for DPS past June of this year. Rhodes is a now-retired federal judge who presided over the city of Detroit bankruptcy in 2014. This would have caused many of Detroit’s underpaid and overworked teachers — those who spread their salaries over the entire school year despite not working during the summer months — to lose two months’ pay.

Thousands of teachers and other education workers surrounded the DPS headquarters in the New Center area beginning at 10 a.m. on both days. They chanted slogans such as “What happened to the money?” and “No pay, shut it down!”

These actions represent a continuation of previous sick-outs where teachers brought attention to the deplorable conditions within the school district. The Detroit public education system has been under some form of direct or indirect state control since 1999. The district has lost 150,000 students since then.

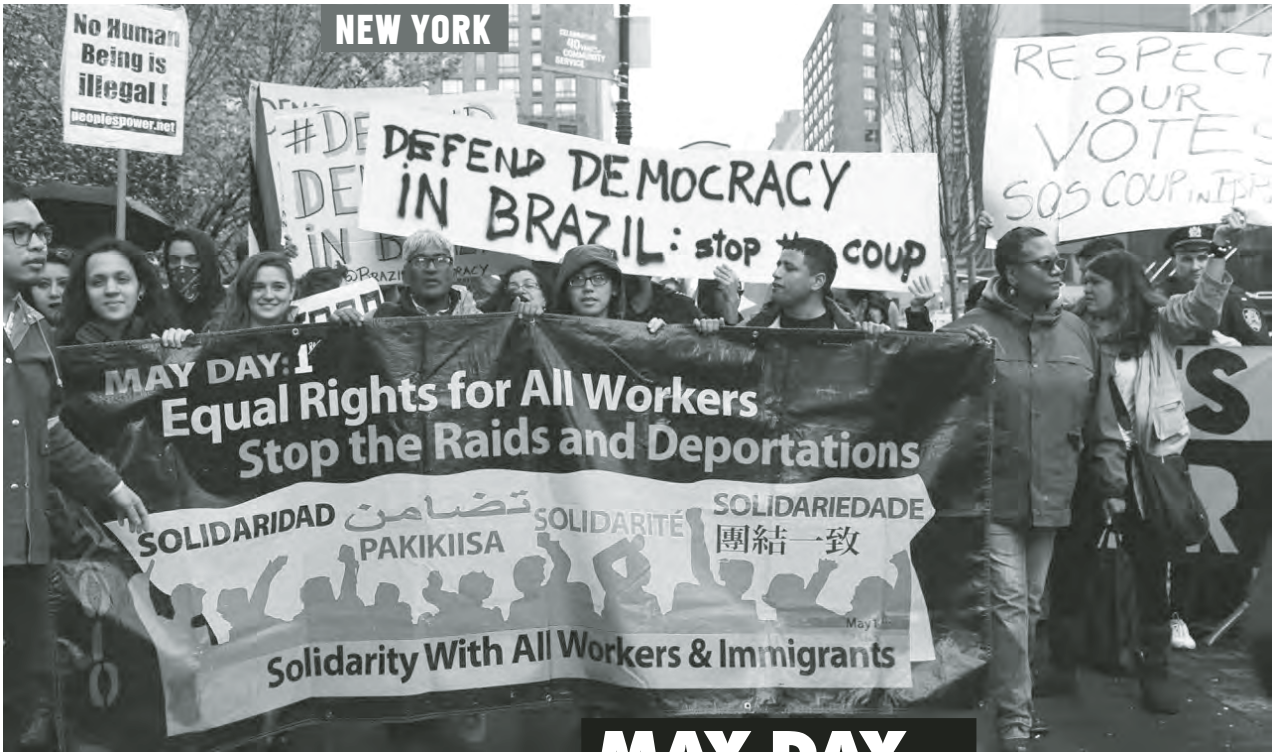
The corporate-imposed education crisis is reflected in the lack of school supplies and deteriorating buildings with leaking roofs, mold, mushrooms and other unsafe conditions. Many schools lack proper ventilation, and buildings are either too hot or too cold. The crisis is also reflected in the opening of scores of charter schools in Detroit, depriving the school system of desperately needed funds.

Moreover, the decline in DPS enrollment, in part a by-product of the foreclosure and eviction epidemic over the last decade that drove more than 200,000 people out of the city, has resulted in the closure of over 200 school buildings. Many of these abandoned schools have been vandalized and stripped of copper, iron, brick, electrical equipment and other materials, becoming stains on the neighborhoods and facilitating further underdevelopment and blight in communities across Detroit.

Debt service takes priority over education

When the state of Michigan seized control of DPS in 1999, the district had a \$93 million surplus, with at least another \$1.5 billion in bond funding approved by voters to improve school buildings and other infrastructure. At

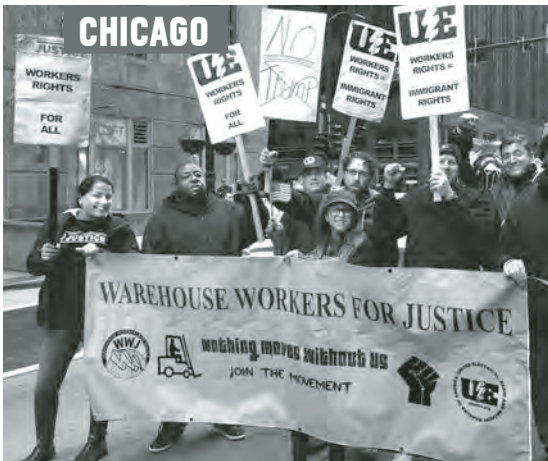
Continued on page 3



WW PHOTO, BELOW: TERESA GUTIERREZ



WW PHOTO, BELOW: J. WHITE

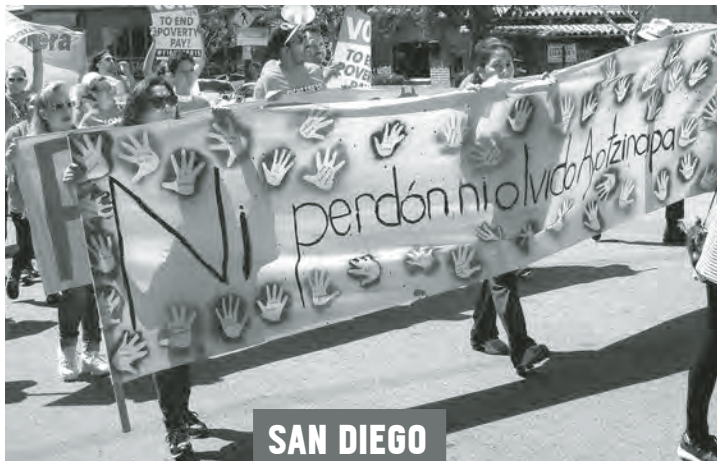


MAY DAY 6-7

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN



WW PHOTOS: ABOVE, JUDY GREENSPAN; BELOW, BOB MCCUBBIN



- Resisting N.C.’s hate law 3
- Trump blasted on both coasts 4, 5
- Verizon strikers stay strong 5
- Ode to Prince 8
- Unions support Palestine 9



Subscribe to Workers World

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

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Street _____ City / State / Zip _____

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

Suicides rise at a startling rate

By Lyn Neeley

Suicide rates in the U.S. have increased 24 percent since 1999, with nearly 43,000 suicides in 2014, and the pace of the increase is rising, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Factors examined by various studies and media reports have linked suicide increases with rising debt and unemployment, depression due to economic and social issues, mental health issues, discrimination, poverty and social isolation. Teenage suicide “clusters” reported in the media have been linked to a rise in social media and cyberbullying.

Fred Goldstein describes how capitalists drive up profits at the expense of the workers in his Workers World article “Slowdown, unemployment plague world capitalism.” He identifies ways workers are becoming increasingly distressed: more work in less time for lower wages, below subsistence wages, burgeoning unemployment and exporting of jobs to oppressed countries where workers are paid even less. (April 23, 2015)

In her April 28 WW article “Verizon Workers Fight Back,” Kathy Durkin illustrates this current trend: “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 is outsourcing more jobs and attempting to reduce health care and disability benefits and freeze pensions.

More than 14,000 of the suicides in 2014 involved middle-aged whites. Searching for a link between suicide in that group and financial insecurity and unemployment, a study by Katherine Hempstead at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation concluded: “Efforts that target employers and workplaces as important stakeholders in the prevention of suicide and link the unemployed to mental health resources are warranted.” She found there was a sharp escalation in 2007 when the economic repression began. (pubmed.gov, May 2015)

A study called “Impact of business cycles on US suicide rates, 1928-2007” found “overall suicide rates generally rose during recessions and fell during expansions.” (pubmed.gov., June 2011)

The steepest increase among women was among the middle-aged, at 63 percent, says the CDC. Women face many economic hardships: They make only 79 cents for every dollar earned by men, and in middle age, they have a

greater wage gap than that among younger workers. Also, single mothers make up one-quarter of U.S. households.

Suicide highest among Native Americans

The sharpest rise in the suicide rate was found among Indigenous people, an already very oppressed group. There was an 89 percent increase among Native women and a 38 percent rise among Native men.

Last April seven teens on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation committed suicide; this tragedy followed four suicides in the Diné (Navajo) Nation in Utah. The Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute says the suicide rate is double the national average among Native youth ages 15-24. They have the highest rate of suicide of any U.S. population group, and that rate is growing. (Indian Country Today, Oct. 13)

During a United National Indian Tribal Youth conference, Native youth blamed “poverty entangled with a lack of jobs or access to mental health care for the high suicide rates, and federal government’s policies in the American Indian community made these conditions worse.” One youth said, “It’s kind of numbing, when there’s one every week. How do you address it?” (PBS Newshour, Sept. 30)

Monica Moorehead and Lamont Lilly, WW presidential candidates, wrote, “The economic crisis has exacerbated Native workers’ unemployment, and high jobless rates continue. With bleak futures, one-half of Native youth drop out of high school. ... At least one-third of Native people are impoverished.” Also, “Indigenous women and men, 1 percent of the population, make up nearly 2 percent of those killed by police.” (WW, Nov. 25)

Suicide and young people

The CDC study showed that the suicide rate tripled for 10- to 14-year-old females; there were 150 suicides in that group in 2014. That is the second highest cause of death among adolescents, with the greatest increases found among girls in this age group.

The Cyberbullying Research Summary found that 20 percent of middle-school students reported that they seriously thought of attempting suicide and that all forms of bullying led to increases in suicide. (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010)

The vast majority of LGBTQ youth face harassment and bullying, including physical violence, because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender ex-

Continued on page 10

WORKERS WORLD this week

★ In the U.S.

Detroit teachers sick-out wins back pay.	1
Suicides rise at a startling rate.	2
Struggle continues against N.C. hate law	3
Justice for Deriante Miller	4
Bay Area turns up to block Trump	4
San Francisco/ Strikers hunger for justice	4
Verizon strikers stay strong as solidarity grows	5
‘Dontre Day’ in Milwaukee.	5
‘Dump Trump’ in Maryland	5
May Day 2016: Immigrant and Black Lives Matter!	6
A revolutionary’s tribute to Prince	8
Union locals adopt pro-BDS stance to aid Palestine	9
Movie reviews: Women ‘punished’ for abortions	10

★ Around the world

‘Sustainable development goals’ debated as world crisis grows	9
Workers, youth battle anti-labor law in France	11
Protests, strikes in Latin America	11
Donetsk honors anti-fascist martyrs	11

★ Editorial

Yale’s racist roots and reparations	10
---	----

★ Noticias en Español

Corte obstruye justicia en caso de Gurley	12
Editorial: Encubrimiento Ayotzinapa	12
Observadores internacionales visitarán Odessa	12

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

E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 58, No. 18 • May 12, 2016
Closing date: May 3, 2016

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

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

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

Copyediting and Proofreading: Sue Davis, Keith Fine, Bob McCubbin

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

Mundo Obero: Redactora Berta Joubert-Ceci; Ramiro Fúnez, Teresa Gutierrez, Donna Lazarus, Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis
Copyright © 2016 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.
Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$30; institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.
A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org/email.php.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl. New York, N.Y. 10011.



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 58 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. □

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

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

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

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

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

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

Buffalo, N.Y.
712 Main St #113B
Buffalo, NY 14202
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
312.630.2305
chicagowwp@gmail.com

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

Denver
denver@workers.org

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

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

Huntington, W. Va.
huntingtonww@workers.org

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

Lexington, KY
lexington@workers.org

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

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

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

Rockford, IL
rockford@workers.org

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

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org
Virginia
virginia@workers.org
Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, D.C. 20037
dc@workers.org

Struggle continues against N.C. hate law

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

On March 23, the right-wing North Carolina Legislature fast-tracked HB2, an anti-trans* and anti-worker bill, in an attempt to divide the working class. The bill was signed into law in less than 12 hours, with many lawmakers spending only 10 minutes reading it. Since then, demonstrations and teach-ins have been organized across the state in opposition to the new law which scapegoats trans* people in order to make broader attacks on the working class.

Protests have ignited on several college and university campuses and in cities. From Winston-Salem to Raleigh, Charlotte to Boone, youth and students have led the charge against HB2. Queer and trans* youth of color in particular have displayed a high level of militancy in leading this fightback.

In cities like Raleigh, Greensboro and Charlotte, organizers and communities have occupied intersections at rush hour, taken over administrative buildings and filled the streets to disrupt business as usual and bring attention to the sweepingly broad impact of the new law.

In Boone, Appalachian State University students organized an occupation in mid-April of the administration building to demand the chancellor come out against HB2. This action immediately followed a memo from the new Board of Governors' president Margaret Spellings, who is tasked with leading North Carolina's public university system. Spellings' track record of participating in for-profit college boards, privatization efforts and crafting the federal "No Child Left Behind" education policy has provoked protests for several months. Upon learning about Spellings' memo to university leadership that compliance with the new law is required, many students and youth saw the direct connection between the right-wing takeover of the state with the

right-wing takeover of one of the largest public university systems in the country.

It became very clear to activists that this attack on the trans* community is also an attack on higher education, particularly Historically Black institutions under constant threat of defunding. Key reactionary players in both the Legislature and the University of North Carolina Board of Governors are seeking scapegoats in the working class in order to implement policies that endanger all oppressed people and workers.

In Charlotte, three queer Black activists engaged in direct action and took the intersection of Trade and Tryon, the busiest intersection in downtown Charlotte, at rush hour. Charlotte is the second-largest banking city in the United States, following New York, and home to the headquarters of such major banks and corporations as Bank of America and Duke Energy.

The General Assembly's HB2 law was in some ways a direct response to Charlotte's local nondiscrimination ordinance that was scheduled to go into effect April 1. The ordinance would have protected trans* people from discrimination in public facilities.

Take a good look at corporate 'solidarity'

This spring we have seen such corporations as PayPal, Dow Chemical and American Airlines come out against the state of North Carolina and condemn the attacks on LGBTQ people. While many are excited to see these corporations pick a side in this battle, we should be critical of the contradictions in their stances and practices.

PayPal, for example, came under fire in 2014 when it looked to fill major positions in the company via unpaid internships — essentially searching for free labor while the company made millions and reaped the benefits of tax breaks. (thejournal.ie, July 10, 2014)

In 2012, a Dow Chemical worker died of severe acid burns from an explosion because a unit casing was old and the

company discouraged any repairs, claiming high expenses. Dow Chemical did not report this incident to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration until the worker died. That means many more incidents like this have probably occurred that have been overlooked or brushed over because the workers do not have a union. (houstonpress.com, June 13, 2013)

In 2011, American Airlines filed for bankruptcy in order to clear itself of debt. Millions of dollars of this debt was pushed off on its workers who became unemployed, their contracts and pensions slashed while the corporation got a fresh start. (reuters.com, Nov. 29, 2011)

While these corporations came out against HB2, their anti-labor and anti-worker practices cannot be ignored, despite media propaganda that paint them to be defenders of justice.

On the ground we know who the true fighters and warriors are; they are queer and trans* youth and students of color who have courageously confronted this law and drawn sharp connections among anti-trans* bigotry, the fight for Black Lives and, more broadly, the contradictions of corporations and politicians denouncing HB2 while having a hand in electing and campaigning for the reactionary state General Assembly. It is very clear who is under attack and who is initiating the attacks.

Call grows for a 'People's Session'

Trans* people are not to be blamed for sexual assaults in restrooms or stripping local government power to determine living wage standards or acting on discrimination complaints (other reactionary parts of HB2). It is the politicians, the banks and the bosses who fund them that have decided to unemploy, underemploy and underpay workers and launch another war against working-class and oppressed people.

The fight continues in North Carolina to repeal HB2. On April 25, the first day of regular legislative sessions, many

groups descended on the Capitol to demand a repeal. The session convened at 7 p.m., and by then, many had engaged in a sit-in in the Capitol building, while others held a disruption at the entrance. Loud chants echoed throughout the chambers as queer and trans* people warned the General Assembly that we were ready for this battle and we were coming.

The call for a People's Session continues to grow as organizers recognize that HB2 is just a small, while significant, piece of the larger fight to build a pro-LGBTQ and pro-worker society. Organizers are looking to longer-term strategies to build people's power through teach-ins and assemblies across the state. While the violence trans* people face in restrooms is urgent and crucial to address, we also know that trans* people are workers, are Black and Brown, are youth and students, and belong to other oppressed communities facing vicious attacks. If HB2 had not passed, we could easily expect another reactionary law that would also demand a united front to defend the gains of the civil rights, labor, women's and LGBTQ movements.

HB2 has galvanized thousands of people in North Carolina who are eager to take action as well as develop an analysis of the material and political conditions of this time. The work of countless grassroots groups and organizations such as the NC #BlackLivesMatter Queer and Trans People of Color Coalition is at the helm of this growing movement. Radical and militant organizers are coming together to build a distinctive anti-racist and anti-capitalist fightback. It is the bold leadership of these queer and trans* youth of color that has reshaped the public narrative on what the struggle against HB2 truly means.

Trans is used with an asterisk to indicate the spectrum of all the different genders of people who do not conform to the either/or of male/female or masculine/feminine.*

Detroit teachers' sick-out wins back pay

Continued from page 1

present, reports indicate that DPS is \$3.5 billion in debt, with substantial portions owed to the banks and bondholders.

The sick-outs come while the state government in Lansing is debating bills to "fund" the Detroit public schools. The bill passed by the State Senate would set up two districts, one with \$515 million in funds to be used only to pay debt service and a second with \$200 million to fund operations. The bill would remove the current elected Detroit School Board and replace it with an essentially powerless board, with the superintendent and executive officials to be named by a commission appointed by reactionary Flint-poisoner Gov. Rick Snyder, as well as Detroit Mayor Duggan.

However, the reactionary State House has rejected this bill, debating one instead that would limit school funding to \$500 million — only debt service would get paid! — and contains punitive attacks on Detroit teachers' rights. The House bill removes any oversight over charter schools, which have proliferated in Detroit despite their failure in educating Detroit students.

In the past couple of days it has come out that the actual debt for Detroit Public Schools — debt accumulated under the leadership of various state-appointed

emergency managers — is far higher than previously announced, requiring at least \$800 million to meet the bondholders' immediate demands. In addition, a report surfaced that the emergency managers' illegally used approximately \$30 million in federal funds earmarked for special needs teachers' pensions for operating expenses.

One of the demands of the striking teachers is for an audit of school funds to account for how the enormous debt occurred under emergency management. It is absolutely criminal that in a city where schools are falling apart and the needs of Detroit's children for quality education are so great, more school funds are likely to be used to pay debt service to banks and financial institutions than to educate students.

More attacks on Detroit

Federal housing funds, purportedly aimed at maintaining stability in the neighborhoods by assisting residents with paying off mortgages, over-assessed property taxes and inflated water bills, are instead being utilized to tear down homes and vacant businesses. The federal government is investigating irregularities in the expenditures for demolitions coordi-



WW PHOTO: ABAYOMI AZIKIWE

nated by the Detroit Land Bank Authority.

The Detroit Blight Removal Task Force, which identifies homes and other structures for seizure and demolition, is chaired by billionaire Dan Gilbert, head of Quicken Loans. Gilbert's role represents a clear conflict of interests. Gilbert is currently being sued by the Department of Justice for the misuse of hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal Housing Administration funds through his real estate financing operations.

Meanwhile, Gilbert announced April 27 that he and other capitalist investors have created a plan to construct a soccer stadium in downtown Detroit. Gilbert, who owns Rock Ventures LLC, the Cleveland Cavaliers professional basketball team and other enterprises, is a major player in the bank-led restructuring of Detroit. He and Detroit Pistons executive Arn Tellem declared their plans for the \$1 billion project at the site of Wayne Coun-

ty's failed jail. News reports from 2014 when construction was stalled said \$150 million was lost on the proposed new jail due to cost overruns and corruption.

During 2015 Gilbert made his opposition to constructing the jail in the downtown area well known. Instead, the banker and venture capitalist envisions a 25,000-seat Major League Soccer stadium and other businesses, including restaurants, hotel accommodations and a commercial office tower.

An article published April 27 in the Detroit Free Press stated: "The soccer stadium plan calls for relocating the current Wayne County Jail, Frank Murphy Hall of Justice and the Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility to Mound Road (far away from downtown). Gilbert has been trying to buy the unfinished jail site from the county, recently offering \$50 million. The county, which has already sunk \$150 million into the ... stalled project, did not accept the bid."

Gilbert and his capitalist cohorts do not want the jail to be in the downtown area because it interferes with their vision of the city, which is being designed as a playground for suburbanites and tourists while the neighborhoods are destroyed by the same banks and other capitalist forces.

Jerry Goldberg contributed to this article.

Verizon strikers stay strong as solidarity grows

By Martha Grevatt

Since April 13, 40,000 workers, represented by the Communication Workers and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, have been on strike against Verizon in Washington, D.C., and nine East Coast states from Massachusetts to Virginia. There are many issues of contention, such as company plans to freeze pensions, reduce health benefits, eliminate jobs including through outsourcing and offshoring, and force workers to relocate away from their families.

On April 28, at the company's invitation, the two unions returned to the bargaining table. The next day IBEW Local 2222, which represents Boston landline workers, criticized the company's latest offer, and said, "Calling it the 'last, best and final' is just a tired way of trying to intimidate our members into accepting a contract that we can't live with."

The two unions, which represent workers doing similar work in different parts of the country, bargain jointly with the various phone companies. Both turned down Verizon's proposal flat-out and made a counter-offer. "Veri-greedy" refused to consider the unions' proposals.



Verizon strikers in Roanoke, Va., May 3.

Now workers are hunkering down to fight it out as long as it takes to win contract justice. Very few union members have crossed the picket lines.

Verizon aims to have the public and rank-and-file workers believe that the most recent offer contains significant improvements. The company that cries poverty about paying for health care managed to come up with the funds for full-page ads in newspapers up and down the East Coast. Executives sent individual letters to workers trying to get them to agree to the company's offer. They were sent

via non-union Fed-Ex rather than UPS or U.S. mail. Verizon CEO Lowell McAdams has personally visited picket lines, including one in the Syracuse suburb of DeWitt, N.Y., to try to win strikers to the company's side.

CWA District 2-13, representing strikers in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, D.C. and Virginia, has picked apart the company's position point by point. (district2-13.cwa-union.org) Verizon offered another 1 percent in pay raises over the life of the con-

tract, but the raise will be eaten up by bigger out-of-pocket health care costs. Workers will also face increased transportation costs in a new modification of "forced relocation," a major sticking point. Under this plan, workers could be subjected to long and costly commutes, but would not have to live elsewhere.

As a bribe, the company's latest offer would withdraw the forced relocation language if workers ratify the rest of the giveback package by May 20.

Verizon's offer still has numerous rollbacks of union gains, including reductions in pensions, paid leave and disability benefits. Job security will be undermined by new "flexibility" language, the closing of call centers and outsourcing of more jobs overseas. (The company already offshores 5,000 jobs.) Injured workers could have more trouble collecting workers' compensation.

Nevertheless, the fact that the company sweetened the pot a little is testament to the strike's effectiveness. Polls are showing public opinion of Verizon service is falling, as untrained managers and hired strikebreakers are proving themselves incapable of maintaining service or making repairs in a safe or timely manner.

Signs are appearing in café windows informing customers that no Wi-Fi is available. Doctors' offices cannot make ap-

pointments due to lack of internet service. Poor service is driving customers away.

Strikers' morale strong amid support

The company's intransigence is meeting stiff resistance. Local 2222 erected bonfires to burn the company's letters. CWA members in Virginia are marking the FedEx envelopes sent to them "return to sender" and adding additional messages, such as "Shame on you Veri-greedy" and "No scabs or fools live here."

The CWA and IBEW have filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board over the illegal bypassing of union negotiators to make an appeal directly to the workers, technically known as "direct dealing."

Support actions are taking place in states where there are no strikes. In Durham, N.C., members of United Electrical Workers Local 150 and Raise Up 15 picketed and leafleted outside a Verizon store in a shopping mall. They then took their protest inside the mall. Before they could reach the Verizon store, they were escorted out by security guards, but continued to chant on the way out. Black Workers for Justice is planning a solidarity action in Raleigh, N.C.

Union solidarity is expanding, with the latest support coming from the National Football League Players Association. "The NFLPA stands in solidarity with these striking workers who are seeking a fair and just contract for themselves and their families," stated DeMaurice Smith, NFLPA executive director, in a letter to the two striking unions written on NFL Draft Day. Verizon makes phone apps available to customers that allow them to watch NFL games on their phones. (Philadelphia Inquirer, April 29)

Strike leaders are reaching out to the public, effectively articulating the issues and demonstrating their resolve. Local 2222 Chief Steward Matt Lyons, speaking to a conference on "Socialism in the 21st Century," said, "I've been there 29 years; this is my fourth strike. My business manager, Myles Calvey, who is a rock star in the labor movement, this is his fifth strike. We've won them all so far."

Dante Strobino and Steve Kirschbaum contributed to this report.

'Dump Trump' Maryland

By Carl Lewis
Hagerstown, Md.

Chanting "Dump Trump!" and "Racist! Sexist! Anti-gay! Donald Trump, go away!" the second of two Maryland protests confronted the Republican candidate here on April 24. The racist billionaire held his hyped up spectacle at Hagerstown Regional Airport in the mountains of western Maryland. The multinational crowd of protesters came from Baltimore, Frostburg, and the Hagerstown and Frederick areas.

State and local police stopped demonstrators from entering the rally site. Those others who were allowed in and walked the mile to see Trump had to walk past the militant protesters.

The assembled activists were able to drown out a self-declared Nazi provocateur by chanting, "Two, four, six, eight! We don't want your racist hate!" which further added to his impotent rage.

The protesters held signs that read "No Hate in Our State," "15 Dollars an Hour," "Jobs Not Anti-Immigrant Hate" and a photo of Trump on which was written "No to Fascism." The Peoples Power Assembly made full use of its sound system to chant similar slogans.

The police formed a dividing wall be-

tween the protest and Trump's rally when more Mexican and Black youth joined the demonstration and added their voices to the anti-Trump chants. In between the chants, protesters were able to give a political rap on the group's sound system, explaining how the economic disruption caused by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was responsible for an influx of desperate, impoverished immigrants. Many of the assembled held Peoples Power Assembly placards denouncing Trump's racist and sexist campaign against Muslims, immigrants and women.

A week earlier, a protest in Berlin, Md., on the state's Eastern Shore, defied the region's history of racism. In the late 1960s, Civil Rights leader H. Rap Brown (now known as Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin and a political prisoner since 2002) was arrested for "inciting a riot" when he encouraged Black residents to unite and resist racism.

Demonstrators arriving from Baltimore, including members of Workers World Party, were encouraged to see that a crowd of at least 800 people, consisting of Black, Mexican-American and white youth, including LGBTQ groups, were there protesting Trump. Most were from the Eastern Shore, including students from the high school where Trump would be speaking.

A group of Mexican-American students was kicked out of that school the day before Trump arrived for wearing the Mexican flag colors of red, white and green. They displayed heroic militancy and enthusiasm at the rally and borrowed the organizers' megaphone to chant their slogans in both Spanish and English. The spirited rally lasted from 2 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Heavily armed police with a SWAT team kept the anti-racist groups on the grass when there was a confrontation with a bellicose crowd of Trump supporters.

Andre Powell, candidate for mayor of Baltimore for WWP, contributed to this article.

Brown neighborhoods.

"This is not normal," said Sakheim. "Nowadays when the police come in, they shoot people in the heart or in the head. Why is this? We know some of the officers are Army veterans who've been trained to shoot to kill. It's happened so many times. This cannot be just an accident. I think they are intending to kill people in these neighborhoods. The big developers, do they have a hand in this? Are police getting orders from somewhere to terrorize these targeted areas? For sure there is more to this than meets the eye." □

'Dontre Day' Milwaukee

By Workers World Staff
Milwaukee



On the two-year anniversary of the killing of Dontre Hamilton by a Milwaukee cop, hundreds marched and rallied April 30 for "Dontre Day," an event sponsored by the Coalition for Justice.

With Hamilton's family taking the lead, the march began at the Center Street Library in the heart of Milwaukee's Black community. Marching for miles in the rain, the Hamilton family and community supporters demanded justice for Dontre and all victims of police brutality and terror.

In the past two years state and federal

officials have declined to bring charges against the cop, Christopher Manney, who killed Hamilton. Just days before Dontre Day, the Hamilton family and their attorney announced they would pursue a federal civil rights lawsuit against the city of Milwaukee and Manney.

The march ended at Red Arrow Park in downtown Milwaukee, the site of Hamilton's murder. There, a variety of cultural events and speak-outs took place. Due to the pouring rain, the rally moved to All People's Church for the conclusion of this year's Dontre Day. □

MAY DAY 2016: IMMIGRANT

By Deirdre Griswold

The two most militant movements currently powering struggles for progressive change in the United States provided leadership and activists to commemorations of May Day — the internationally recognized workers’ holiday — and turned out marchers by the thousands, coast to coast.

The right of immigrants to live and work in this country without harassment and threats of deportation has been a major theme of May Day events since 2006, when millions walked off their jobs on May 1 in a stunning display of courage and militancy. This year, wherever there were large concentrations of immigrants, they again played leading roles in May Day demonstrations.

It was primarily Black unionists and community activists who in 2005 revived May Day in the U.S. with a demonstration in Washington, D.C. This year the Black Lives Matter movement and other forces struggling against state repression, police violence and low wages were in the forefront of many marches and rallies.

Family members of youth killed by police spoke at many events. Unions whose members are predominantly people of color turned out with their shirts and banners to underscore the struggle for higher wages and the need to organize the unorganized.

Overall, May Day events were as diverse and multinational as is the working class itself in this country. All the cutting-edge issues were addressed, from the rights of women and LGBTQ people to solidarity with Palestine and demands of “U.S out of the Middle East.”

The following reports, moving from West to East, help give the flavor and spirit of May Day 2016.

BAY AREA: Union solidarity with oppressed

Two militant, multinational May Day demonstrations were held in the Bay Area, one in Oakland led by Sin Fronteras and the other in San Francisco led by International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10.

Some 1,000 people gathered at the Fruitvale Bay Area Rapid Transit Station in Oakland, where police killed Oscar Grant in 2009. They then marched for “Legalization, housing, education, and a living wage. No more raids or deportations! No gentrification! No more police violence — Black Lives Matter!”

Cat Brooks, a leader of the Anti Police-Terror Project, recalled the murders of Grant and other Black youth: “There will be no more business as usual in the Unit-



ed States as long as this country is in the business of killing Black bodies.”

Luis Angel, of the East Bay Immigrant Youth Coalition, spoke about the historic role of the immigrant community in reviving May Day. He noted that the government is responsible for more than “3 million deportations” and called for “unconditional legalization for everyone — no one will be left out in our community.”

Pierre Labossiere, of the Haiti Action Committee, linked the struggle of the people of Haiti against police terror and gentrification with struggles in the Bay Area, identifying with the Black Lives Matter movement.

Fast food workers from the Fight for \$15 struggle and OUR Walmart filled the streets with chants and banners. Black, Latino/a and Asian families came out to watch and support.

In San Francisco, ILWU Local 10 leader Clarence Thomas and Teamster leader Chris Silvera from New York recalled the long history of the labor movement in fighting police brutality. Silvera said that to end police brutality and murders, “the unions need to be in the forefront.”

More than 400 people then marched from the union hall to Harry Bridges Plaza for a closing rally emceed by Cephus Johnson, uncle of Oscar Grant. Johnson called to the stage many people whose children had been murdered by police. Dionne Smith, mother of James Rivera, and her spouse recalled the extreme brutality of Stockton, Calif., police, who shot their son 48 times.

Johnson noted that the turning point in the Oscar Grant case came when the Longshore union joined the fight and shut down Bay Area ports.

— Judy Greenspan



LOS ANGELES

WW PHOTO: TERESA GUTIERREZ

LOS ANGELES: No to ICE and police terror!

Thousands marched from East Los Angeles to downtown led by unions, Black Lives Matter-LA and nonprofits working on immigration issues. Participants stopped at both the Los Angeles Police Department headquarters and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Field Office to hit police and ICE terror. These protests were combined with calls for international solidarity.

Many left forces marched with the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front contingent, including participants in the Workers World Party Senate and presidential campaigns. They joined in singing the International, which was played over loudspeakers by FMLN organizers, along with speeches from Fidel Castro and songs of liberation from El Salvador. The FMLN in Los Angeles has endorsed John Parker, Workers World’s candidate for U.S. Senate.

— WW Los Angeles Bureau

SAN DIEGO: ‘Stop poverty wages and Migra violence!’

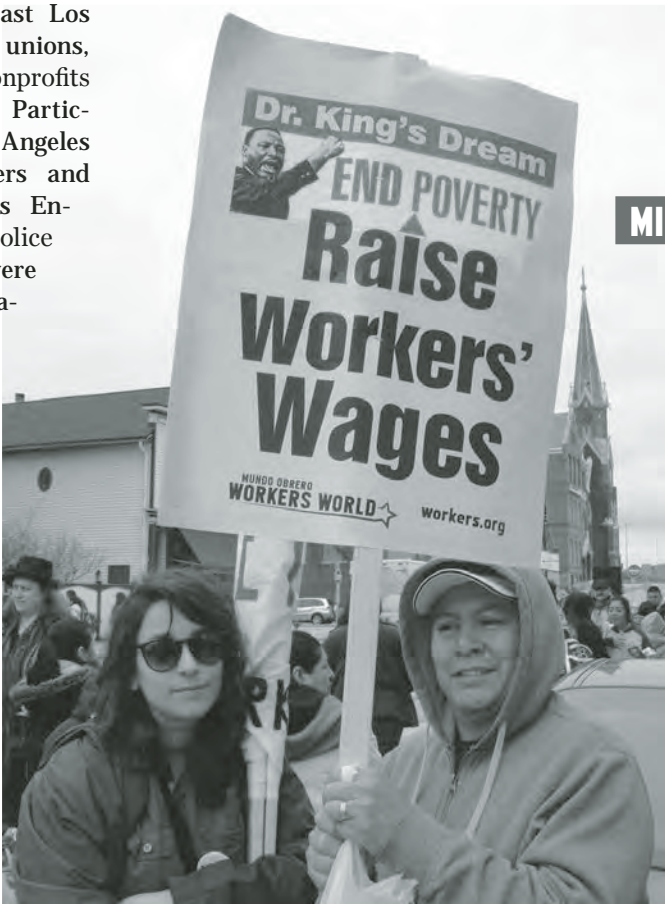
“Workers’ Rights Have No Borders” was the theme as hundreds gathered at San Diego City College for an opening rally and then marched several miles through the Barrio Logan neighborhood to historic Chicano Park for a closing rally. Signs and banners in English and Spanish voiced the concerns of the city’s working-class and poor communities, including the fight for \$15 minimum wage and a union, justice for the missing students of Ayotzinapa, condemnation of Trump’s reactionary politics and the need to fight for socialism.

The May Day Coordinating Committee’s points of unity included “Stop pov-



OAKLAND, CALIF.

WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN



MI

AND BLACK LIVES MATTER!



CHICAGO



WW PHOTOS: J. WHITE

erty wages and worker abuse," "Stop police and Migra violence" and "Stop deportations and welcome refugees!" The program highlighted the history of May Day and its connection to struggles today. Cultural performers included the youthful Junkyard Dance Crew and Aztec Dancers.

Speakers included representatives of the Service Employees Union, UNITE HERE Local 30, the California Faculty Association and Unión Del Barrio, as well as San Diego professor Dennis Childs, author of "Slaves of the State: Black Incarceration from the Chain Gang to the Penitentiary," and María Puga, widow of Anastasio Hernández Rojas, who was kicked to death by several Border Patrol agents on May 28, 2010. While his death was caught on video and ruled a homicide, no criminal charges have been filed against the agents involved.

Childs spoke about the huge immigrant detention center located nearby and ended with a call to "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier and all political prisoners!" Gloria Verdieu, of Workers World Party, and Kiki Ochoa, of Unión Del Barrio, co-chaired both the City College and Chicano Park rallies.

— WW San Diego Bureau

WISCONSIN: Youth of color in lead

Thousands marched in Milwaukee on May Day for immigrant and workers' rights. Latino/a and other youth of color played a central role in the organizing and sent a clear message that resistance is building to the anti-immigrant and anti-worker Wall Street forces.

The sponsors of May Day Milwaukee — Voces de la Frontera and Youth Empowered in the Struggle — mobilized members from multiple cities, K-12 schools and colleges in the state. They were joined by dozens of other labor, community and student organizations taking a stand against racist politicians like Scott Walker and Donald Trump, who push anti-immigrant, union-busting legislation on behalf of Wall Street. After a rally at the Voces office, the loud and militant protesters marched through the streets of Milwaukee to another rally at the County Courthouse.

— WW Wisconsin Bureau

CHICAGO: Solidarity Day and 'Dump Trump'

Thousands marched through Chicago led by drummers and dancers in bright-



WW PHOTO: ABAYOMI AZIKIWE

ly colored dress. The lead banner read "Human Rights for Immigrant Families." At the monument commemorating the Haymarket Massacre, where May Day began, hundreds of union activists joined the march. A rally called by the Chicago Teachers Union and other progressive unions included speakers from the National Women in the Trades Conference. A woman plumber said, "We women in the trades know what it is like to be oppressed and isolated. We must stand in solidarity with immigrant workers, the Fight for 15 and all workers fighting for a decent wage and a union."

At the Federal Building downtown, hundreds of Syrian activists and their supporters gathered to demand the U.S. get out of the Middle East. They joined the march to Trump Tower where there was a huge police presence. "Whose streets? Our streets" chanted the crowd, in a clear expression of the mass movement being built to fight the racist, sexist, homophobic, anti-immigrant warmongering represented by the Trump campaign.

— J. White

DETROIT: Many issues, one message

A diverse crowd celebrated May Day in downtown Detroit. A contingent of youth fighting for a \$15 minimum wage and a union joined city of Detroit retirees demanding the courts overturn the theft of their pensions by recent bankruptcy proceedings. Flint activists brought a first-hand report on the continuing struggle against lead-poisoned water. A May Day message from Michigan political prisoner the Rev. Edward Pinkney got a warm

response from the crowd. Other speakers addressed the continuing destruction of Detroit from mass water shutoffs and tax foreclosures. Attacks on public education and teachers' unions were protested.

Speakers from the Hispanic Workers Center spoke in Spanish about the many challenges faced by immigrant workers. A handful of anti-immigrant bigots showed up but were quickly confronted by a defense line, including youth from the Flint area. The bigots soon left. The rally ended with a march to Whole Foods, where the store was surrounded by activists demanding a boycott of Driscoll berries in solidarity with berry workers in Washington state.

— David Sole

NEW YORK: No ICE, no racist police

Some 600 people braved the rain to celebrate May Day in Union Square. The day before, hundreds attended a May Day event in the South Bronx.

Black Lives Matter signs filled Union Square, along with Palestinian, Ecuadorian and Brazilian flags. A long banner demanded human rights in the Philippines and signs demanded freedom for political prisoners Oscar López Rivera, Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Peoples Power Assembly signs declared, "No Workers' Liberation without Black Liberation." Many others denounced wage theft and demanded a \$15 minimum wage. Signs and banners linked the struggle for LGBTQ rights with workers' rights. Workers World Party presidential candidate Monica Moorehead reminded the crowd that May Day began in Chicago where workers fought for the eight-hour day in 1886.

ICE-FREE NYC played a big role in building this year's May Day, as did several Filipino organizations. A speaker from BAYAN denounced the April 1 massacre of peasants in Kidapawan, Philippines. A Brazilian speaker condemned the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff as an attempted coup. People then marched to Washington Square to join the Immigrant Worker Justice Tour of places where workers face special injustice.

— Steve Millies



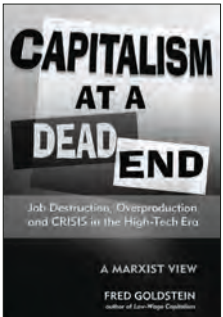
MILWAUKEE

PHOTOS: WISCONSIN BAIL OUT THE PEOPLE MOVEMENT

Capitalism at a Dead End

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

Available at major online book sellers



A revolutionary’s tribute to Prince

By Larry Hales

On the morning of April 21, the musician Prince, born Prince Rogers Nelson on June 7, 1958, was found slumped in an elevator in Paisley Park, his home and recording studio in Chanhassen, Minn., near Minneapolis. He was later pronounced dead after paramedics arrived.

Tributes from around the world started, most of them spontaneously. People gathered at important cultural centers, like the Apollo Theater in Harlem and the First Avenue Club in Minneapolis. That was made famous by Prince’s movie “Purple Rain,” which was the name of his inimitable sixth recording, which some consider the best movie soundtrack of all time.

When it was confirmed that Prince had died, it hit this writer and millions of others like a tsunami, a cultural tsunami — a deluge of memories set to music of the faces, voices, eyes, mistakes, loves and losses, struggles and being caught, of twisting, turning, tumbling and being rolled over, that almost drowned Prince’s fans in decades of things past.

On a personal level that is what Prince meant to so many. His music defined our lives. He was us, Black and defiant. He was us, what we were and thought of ourselves then, what we had become, and our thoughts of our past selves and what we hoped to be. But Prince was even more than that.

For days after his death, people mourned in Prince’s favorite color, purple. Throngs gathered, swayed and rocked, singing and dancing and obligatorily crying the “whoohoo hooo hooo hoo” that occurs two-thirds of the way into the song “Purple Rain” before Prince’s guitar solo, the piano and strings fade out.

The disbelief was still palpable — that such a cultural giant, short and petite, whose stage presence was like Little Willie John’s, powerful and long lasting, was gone so suddenly. The Broadway musicals “The Color Purple” and “Hamilton” played live tributes to the artist after performances — singing “Purple Rain” and singing and dancing to “Let’s Go Crazy.”

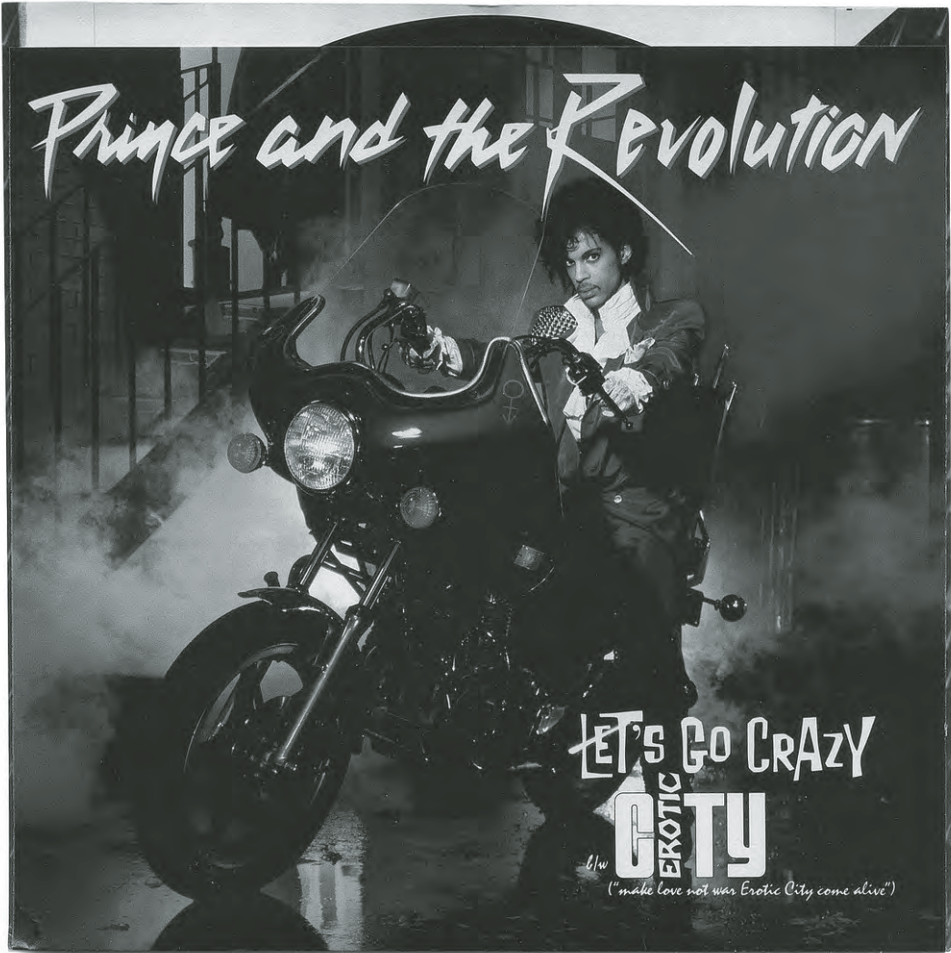
Prince had supreme talent. He said in a 2010 Daily Mirror article: “Music is my life. It’s my trade. If I can’t get it out of my head I can’t function. Someone told me they saw me at my peak, but how do they know when my peak is? I think I’m improving all the time. When I listen to my old records I’m ashamed of how I played then.”

His musicality is evident in his ability to play a multitude of instruments. His first three full-length recordings were arranged, composed and all the instruments played by him. The need to be free of the music in his head is the most apt way to explain his perfectionism and the need to do all things. Though, as his career progressed, from his third recording, “Dirty Mind,” on, he included accompaniments by others. His first band, The Revolution, formed in 1979, was first featured on the album “1999.”

‘Someone doing something different’

During much of Prince’s musical career, he seemed to be able to inhabit multiple genres or transition seamlessly from one to the next. His experimentation and innovativeness are akin to that of Miles Davis, who was constantly bursting genres of jazz.

Both musicians, in different ways and with different temperaments, spent their musical careers growing and changing, rarely being in the same place or caring



Prince was an artist. His life and the art created by him express the experiences of and the desire and need for freedom and equality for all people, especially Black and other oppressed people.

what any critic might say or demand. In his autobiography, Davis is effusive in his praise of Prince, saying, “His shit was the most exciting music I was hearing in 1982. Here was someone who was doing something different, so I decided to keep an eye on him.”

The music Davis was most likely referring to in 1982 was from the “1999” release. That album was more well received than Prince’s four preceding albums. It was fuller musically, rich with the sound emanating from Minneapolis, where Prince was born and remained for most of his life. Prince made his unique blend of funk, rock, R&B and synthesized music popular.

Prince was an artist. His life and the art created by him express the experiences of and the desire and need for freedom and equality for all people, especially Black and other oppressed people. Davis also said of Prince: “He’s got that church thing up in what he does. He plays guitar and piano and plays them very well. But it’s the church thing that I hear in his music that makes him special, and that organ thing. It’s a Black thing and not a white thing.”

The church sound is the synthesizer organ used in “1999” that rises over the drum machine, vocals and other instruments. Questlove of the Roots recognized the programming of Prince’s drum machine for its importance at the time and its relation to the burgeoning hip-hop scene. The prominence of the drum machine grew in hip-hop productions.

Part of the “church thing” Davis referred to in Prince’s music is that everything becomes an instrument in church. The atmosphere, the give and take among the song leader, choir and parishioners, the drums, organs, toe tapping, pew slapping and bible thumping — it is a raucous experience that no one in the space escapes. The synthesizer in “1999” lives in everything, reaching out, filling space and receding only to splay out again. The

interplay among band members, Prince and the audience feels like a religious experience.

Pushing gender boundaries

“1999” is not an overtly political statement, and what it does say in the song “Free” is muddled, as it celebrates an illusory freedom that supposedly exists in the United States. Prince’s earlier attempt at politics was a reactionary take on the Cold War, where he blamed the Soviet Union and the leftist movement for the tension and potential of nuclear war. The song “Ronnie, Talk to Russia” would be forgettable if not for it being a sign of Prince’s political trajectory. In the late 1970s and early 80s, politics and mainstream culture in the U.S. swung sharply to the right.

Prince was daring. His representation of himself was daring, not just in his music, which in this period was highly sexual and provocative. He pushed not only the boundaries of what was acceptable to listen to, but he exploded gender boundaries. He proudly wore high-heeled boots, eye liner, and sequined and purple clothes, and was an avid and very good basketball player.

Prince would appear on stage in knee-high boots and underwear, singing in a falsetto, though he could shift his register to a baritone. He employed shrieks, howls and very sensual moans throughout.

Prince’s androgyny was not new. Little Richard was very much ahead of his time, and different Black male musical acts sang in different registers, from high falsetto, such as the Philadelphia sound groups the Stylistics and Delfonics, to falsetto such as the Temptations’ Eddie Kendricks. With Prince it was very much not just who he was, but he enjoyed breaking stereotypes and gender roles.

His androgynous appearance and the popular heights to which Prince ascended influenced a generation of young people, especially Black people, since

mainstream white radio stations did not often play Black musicians. Even MTV refused to do so until Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” became so popular the station couldn’t ignore it.

Prince did not temper his expression. He continued despite what critics or mainstream tastes deemed popular.

Liberation and politics

Prince’s politics were in formation throughout his life, influenced by current events, as were his thirst for creative freedom and control over his music. Prince could never be described as anti-capitalist, but later in his life, starting with his struggles against Warner Bros., he became more and more a proponent of Black ownership and control over creative industries.

During the struggle with Warner Bros., Prince changed his name to a symbol and appeared in public with the word “Slave” written across his cheek. Of course, Prince’s material life was not that of someone enslaved, but his salient point was to tie the struggle for his financial and artistic control over his image and music to the historic struggle of African-descended people against slavery, both actual and de facto, and for liberation. This, and his later insistence that Black musicians control their masters, can be seen as necessary in order to break from white supremacy. While it might be advocating for Black capitalism, which has its own contradictions, this struggle must be seen in light of the history and development of capitalism and imperialism in the U.S. Prince covered a 1970s’ Staple Singers’ song, “When Will We Be Paid?” in 2001, a further indication of his developing politics.

Prince had his contradictions. He grew up as a Seventh Day Adventist, and his spirituality and religion are craftily placed in his music. Even the overtly sexual songs have religious messages embedded in them. Prince became more religious as he grew older and converted to become a Jehovah’s Witness.

Despite that, he continued his defiance toward the music industry and against white supremacy and racism. During the height of the Black Lives Matter movement, along with numerous other Black cultural artists, Prince gave large financial donations to the movement and to the families of Trayvon Martin, Freddie Gray and others gunned down by racist cops and vigilantes.

He wrote and performed “Baltimore” shortly after the rebellion there in response to Gray’s murder, racism and the oppressive conditions throughout the city. Some of the lyrics are: “Nobody got in nobody’s way/ So I guess you could say it was a good day/ At least a little better than the day in Baltimore/ Does anybody hear us pray/ For Michael Brown or Freddie Gray?/ Peace is more than the absence of war/ Absence of war.”

There can never be another Prince. The Black struggle has and will continue to produce magnificent and relevant cultural artists, but Prince belongs at the top of the pantheon of artistic talent in any tradition. He was a large cultural force who continued changing and developing, musically and politically. As Miles Davis said, Prince “played above” what he knew and strove to go higher, deeper than that. But ultimately, he struggled for freedom of expression and freedom from labels and oppression.

He was ours, with contradictions, but ours, decked out in purple, our “dearly beloved” Black shining Prince. □

‘Sustainable development goals’ debated as world crisis grows

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

Heads of state attended a United Nations conference in New York City in late April to address Sustainable Development Goals 2030. Another gathering focused on the status of governments’ actions to curb climate change.

The SDG program was adopted in 2015 after the Millennium Development Goals lapsed. The MDG set objectives of eliminating poverty and raising incomes beginning in 2000; the deadline was extended 15 years.

During the first decade of the 21st century, significant economic growth occurred in leading states in Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific. Rising prices for oil, natural gas, strategic minerals and other commodities produced by so-called “developing countries” fueled profits for transnational corporations and governments in states where these resources were extracted and exported.

Income generation in postcolonial and neocolonial states encouraged foreign direct investment in industrial production, technology transfers and greater cooperation among governments in the Global South. Household incomes rose in many regions of Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific.

Political alliances among these states brought forward the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa Summit (BRICS), the Africa-South America Summit (ASAS) and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

The distribution of wealth generated during the new millennium was not equitable. Wealthy social groups arose, while smaller enterprise owners and their workers experienced improvements in living standards.

Much debt that had crippled the African continent during the 1980s and 1990s was written off and refinanced, giving the appearance of substantial development that would extend into the future. Further deregulation of the international financial industry provided credit for corporate investments and household consumption.

Rapid economic reversal

By the end of 2010, expansion of the credit-based economy was causing leading investment firms and banks to close. Western capitalist governments and central banks were compelled to bail out financial institutions with trillions of dollars and euros.

This phenomenon’s effect in the U.S., Western Europe and China was not immediately apparent to many governments in Africa. Nevertheless, leading capitalist states’ strategic interests conflicted with those of emerging economies.

Washington has been emphasizing domestic production of oil and natural gas in the U.S., prompting a precipitous price decline of these major exports in Nigeria, Russia, Venezuela and Brazil. South Africa — where the extraction of gold, diamonds, platinum, iron ore and coal was the engine of growth under the racist set-

tlar-colonialist system — witnessed major capital flight and job losses.

There was a clear political agenda, too. Imperialists perceived the regional blocs of FOCAC, BRICS and the rejuvenated Non-Aligned Movement as threats to their hegemony in international exchange and the balance of military and economic forces.

Mugabe says, ‘Stop the sanctions!’

At the U.N. High-Level Thematic Debate on Achieving Sustainable Development Goals on April 21, Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe criticized imperialism’s economic sanctions that have robbed Zimbabwe of over \$42 billion in revenue since the millennium began, hampering the country from reaching the MDGs. He placed the sanctions’ impact in the context of the economic crises facing former colonial and neocolonial countries.

Mugabe said an urgent situation faced the majority of the world’s peoples and hoped that “the critical lessons of the Millennium Development Goals will instruct us ... particularly on the imperative of moving swiftly from commitments to action, to assure success in our common and individual efforts.” (Zimbabwe Herald, April 22)

Mugabe stressed, “Recent revelations have shone light on the schemes ... that deprive governments of huge financial resources which can be channeled towards development.” He called for international cooperation to stamp out “financial engineering schemes that siphon resources from use for public good.”

“For us in Africa,” noted Mugabe, “illicit flows, estimated at \$60 billion a year, further hemorrhage the limited financial resources at our disposal. This area needs urgent resolution to ensure that an improvement in domestic resource mobilization efforts contributes to national coffers, and not to lining the pockets of those illegally transferring these resources from our countries.”

The U.S. government has been stiffening sanctions against Zimbabwe by prohibiting transactions involving dozens of institutions and individuals as part of an imperialist scheme to interfere in Zimbabwe’s 2018 elections, reported the state-owned Sunday Mail on April 24. The newspaper has uncovered evidence that Washington is blocking Visa and MasterCard usage for all Zimbabweans on a list of “Politically Exposed Persons.”

Banks operating in Zimbabwe have been warned of “stiff penalties” for people and institutions that do not carry out the sanctions. In February, Barclays Bank was fined \$2.5 million for conducting financial transactions involving Zimbabweans and others on the list.

Dilma Rouseff resolute

Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, who was subjected to an impeachment vote in the lower house of Congress on April 17, told the international audience at the U.N. climate change conference that she would fight to remain in power. The attack on her is part of a politically

motivated assault on the Workers’ Party in Brazil, which maintains the largest bloc within the legislative body.

Rouseff blamed Brazil’s wealthy class for the “illegal attempt” to force her from office. She indicated she would appeal to Mercosur, the regional bloc of South American states, to suspend Brazil if she does not survive a Senate vote in May.

Mercosur’s platform includes a clause which says that if elected governments in

member-states are overthrown, they can be suspended from participating in regional meetings, and economic sanctions can be imposed. Paraguay was suspended in 2012.

At a New York press conference, Rouseff said she “would appeal to the democracy clause if there were, from now on, a rupture of what I consider democratic process,” and will fight the “coup” with all her strength. (Reuters, April 22) □

Union locals adopt pro-BDS stance to aid Palestine

By **Martha Grevatt**

On Sept. 5, 2014, a group of Palestinian popular organizations called on people around the world to step up the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement to economically weaken and isolate the apartheid state of Israel.

The message, signed by over a dozen Palestinian workers’ organizations, included a call for “Working within trade unions to raise awareness about Israel’s regime of oppression and engaging in effective BDS measures such as stopping the handling of Israeli goods, divesting trade union funds from Israel and complicit companies, and boycotting complicit Israeli trade unions.” (bdsmovement.net)

U.S. unions, some of which backed the movement to defeat apartheid in South Africa, have largely ignored this plea for solidarity. “An injury to one is an injury to all” seems to have been forgotten when it comes to opposing the racist Zionist state.

Nevertheless, the BDS movement just got a shot in the arm. Units of two United Auto Workers locals, representing graduate student teachers at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and New York University, have endorsed BDS.

From April 12 through April 14, the University of Massachusetts Graduate Employee Organization unit of Local 2322, the largest unit of the amalgamated local, conducted a vote of its 2,000 members. Over 95 percent supported a resolution to “join the global movement for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions.” In a four-day election ending April 22, over 65 percent of the 2,000 members of the Graduate Student Organizing Committee-UAW Local 2110 at New York University followed suit.

“We know that our principled stand will be criticized, scrutinized and challenged,” said GEO co-chair Santiago Vidales. “But we know that we are building a movement for liberation. The liberation of Palestinian people is inherently connected to our own.” (geouaw.org)

Struggle over BDS

In 2014, UAW Local 2865, which represents graduate student employees in the University of California system, passed a resolution supporting BDS. A right-wing minority in this local then appealed the membership’s majority vote to the union’s International Executive Board under the UAW’s internal appeal process.

The IEB ruled in favor of the minority, saying that the resolution



A Palestinan flag on a school bus is a symbol of the Bus Drivers Union solidarity with Palestine. When Veolia Corporation attacked their union, the bus drivers publicized Veolia’s role in illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

would cause a loss of jobs at UAW-represented military contractors. Local 2865 responded by appealing the IEB’s ruling. A decision is expected this year.

Over 20 organizations have issued statements or passed resolutions in support of Local 2865. Among them are UAW Local 4121 at the University of Washington, the Palestine Solidarity Collective in Syracuse, N.Y., and the rank-and-file group Autoworker Caravan.

The United Electrical workers passed a resolution at its 53rd national convention last August supporting BDS and calling for an end to U.S. aid to Israel.

In October, an Israeli law firm filed a charge against the UE, claiming that its support for BDS constituted a secondary boycott. This charge attempts to use the viciously anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act, which prohibits unions from targeting third parties not directly involved in a labor dispute. Such a “third party” might be a store that sells products made by scabs. In January, the National Labor Relations Board dismissed the charge.

One union that has supported Palestine for decades is the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, United Steelworkers Local 8751. Recently the local passed a resolution opposing state legislation attacking the BDS movement.

Many unions around the world, including Unite the Union in Britain and the Congress of South African Trade Unions, are supporting BDS. It is time for the U.S. labor movement to stand with Palestine and reject Israeli apartheid. □



WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by **Sara Flounders** PentagonAchillesHeel.com

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

– Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann,

President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009;

Foreign Minister of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government.

Available on major online book sellers.

Yale’s racist roots and reparations

The brutal murder of nine African Americans at the historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., in June last year by a racist who brandished Confederate symbols sparked a nationwide movement to have Confederate flags and statues removed and to remove the names of slave owners from buildings and elsewhere.

One such rich slaveholder was John C. Calhoun, an 1804 Yale graduate, after whom Yale University’s Calhoun College is named. In the wake of the Charleston shooting, Yale students began a petition to remove Calhoun’s name and got more than 1,500 signatures. The petition reads, “Like the official display of the Confederate flag in South Carolina, Calhoun College represents an indifference to centuries of pain and suffering among the Black population.”

For anyone who doesn’t know how rotten Calhoun was, in the early 1800s, he was the most vicious national voice promoting the slavocracy, even calling slavery a “positive good.” And he was powerful as well as rich, a representative and senator from South Carolina, a secretary of state and a vice president under both John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson. One of his major “contributions” was to author the doctrine allowing slaveholding states to disregard any federal law inhibiting slavery.

In the face of the Underground Railroad, led by heroes like Harriet Tubman, Calhoun authored the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. This law enabled slave owners to track down and re-enslave fugitives in the North.

Defying his students, Yale President Peter Salovey announced on April 27 that the school refuses to remove the white supremacist’s name from the residential college.

At a time when even the South Carolina Legislature would agree to remove the Confederate flag from the Statehouse, why would a New England Ivy League university refuse to erase the name of this racist monster? The only logical reason is that conceding this part of Yale’s

past opens the door to re-examining the whole of Yale’s historic entanglement in and enrichment from slavery.

Yale University is named after Elihu Yale, an official of the East India Company in the late 1600s, who made a fortune from the Indian Ocean slave trade. Yale College Dean Holloway pointed out last year, “At its founding and for its first 150 plus years, yes, Yale, like so many other institutions of the era, were complicit in plunder because their finances were interwoven with the global slave economy.” (yaledailynews.com, March 30, 2015)

The unpaid labor of millions of African slaves over centuries was central to the accumulation of capital of many of today’s banks, insurance companies, corporations and elite institutions like Yale University. This accumulation, worth trillions in today’s dollars, was particularly intensified after the invention of the cotton gin by another Yale graduate, Eli Whitney. It continued through the period of sharecropping, the economic engine of Jim Crow, enforced by the brutal terror regime of the Klan.

This racist legacy continues in a thousand ways to this very day, with housing, education, prisons, and even clean water policies from governments and corporations alike all designed to plunder the wealth produced by the African-American community.

For years there has been a growing reparations movement demanding a return of this wealth back to the African-American communities from which it was and is so cruelly extracted. Yale’s administration and all of its Wall Street sponsors want to avoid anything that might open the door to that just reparation of wealth.

Workers World supports the just demand of the Yale students to rename their college. But that’s just a start. The first plank of the Workers World Party 2016 election campaign includes the demand for reparations now! That debt must be paid by wealthy institutions like Yale University and all of its Wall Street backers. □

Women ‘punished’ for abortions

By Sue Davis

Right-wing, racist, sexist, Republican Party presidential contender Donald Trump stated March 30 that women would need “some form of punishment” if abortion were banned in this country.

What the bigoted, blowhard bully doesn’t realize — like the majority of people in the U.S. — is that women who need abortion care are already being punished.

Nearly 300 laws regulating abortion services — mostly far-reaching, medically unnecessary laws under the guise of “protecting women” — have been passed by 44 state legislatures and the District of Columbia since 2010. Written by anti-abortion “Americans United for Life,” the measures subject clinic providers to legal restrictions not required for other medical procedures or professionals, and they impose economic, social, and emotional hardships on women.

Two new documentaries reveal the deeply personal effects the new laws have on the one-in-three women who need such health care in their lifetime and on the clinic staffs who provide them.

‘Trapped’ exposes unnecessary laws

“Trapped” by award-winning director Dawn Porter explores the ramifications of so-called TRAP laws. According to the Center for Reproductive Rights, “Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers laws single out the medical practices of doctors who provide abortions and impose on them requirements that are different and more burdensome than those imposed on other medical practices.”

Porter goes behind clinic doors to give voice to providers and clients in Alabama and Texas. The film is timely since the Texas-based Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt case was heard by the Supreme Court on March 2, and will be decided in late June. The legal suit challenges two provisions in the 2013 Texas law HB2: abortion clinics must be ambulatory surgical centers, and doctors performing abortions must have admitting privileges at hospitals 30 miles from where they work.

Interviews with Amy Hagstrom Miller, founder and CEO of WWH, who brought the case against Texas, and Marva Sadler, director of WWH clinical services, are particularly telling. Miller describes how clinics have been forced to close, forcing poor women, especially in the southeastern region along the Rio Grande, to travel hundreds of miles at great expense to get an abortion.

Because clinic closings have put huge pressures on still-open clinics, Sadler, an African-American mother of six, describes with tears in her eyes not being able to accommodate a 13-year-old incest victim. She had to be turned away because she needed an immediate procedure, but the doctor, who is only scheduled on certain days, was not available.

Gloria Gray, owner of the West Alabama Women’s Center in Tuscaloosa, fought the admitting privileges’ law in Alabama. She discussed the issue with her provider, Dr. Willie Parker, an experienced, faith-based African-American ob-gyn, who was not approved by local hospitals. Parker is straightforward about state laws. When counseling a patient, he recites the state script that “abortions will give you breast cancer,” but adds, “Now I’ll tell you the truth — there is no scientific evidence supporting that.” Ultimately, Gray’s challenge to the law succeeded in overturning it.

“Trapped” premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival, where it won the Special Jury Award for Social Impact Filmmaking.

Talking openly about abortion

In “Abortion: Stories Women Tell,” award-winning documentary director and producer Tracy Droz Tragos chose to focus on conditions in her home state of Missouri, where only one clinic remains open, in St. Louis. She started the movie after passage of a law requiring a 72-hour waiting period. After a counseling session, there’s a three-day wait (regardless of rape or incest) before a woman can have an abortion. Utah, South Dakota, Oklahoma and North Carolina have similar regulations.

Droz Tragos deliberately chose to focus on women instead of politicians or current events. “Women have so many different feelings,” she told Elle magazine. “It’s very, very complicated. I knew from the onset that ... my interest [was] elevating the voices of women on both sides of the issue.” (April 7)

Thirty-two of the 81 women Droz Tragos interviewed discuss their views. Those who elect abortion have a variety of reasons, mostly economic, bad timing or rape. Many are mothers, including Amie, a single-mother of two who works 70- to 90-hours a week and drives three hours to a clinic near the Illinois border for a medical abortion. Sarah, whose wanted pregnancy had a terminal birth defect, has the support of her husband and pastor. Female security guard Chi Chi verbally protects women entering her clinic from threatening male antagonists.

Of those who oppose abortion or work to ban it, there’s Reagan, a Midwest regional coordinator for Students for Life. Te’Aundra was persuaded by her boyfriend to give birth after she was barred from a basketball scholarship due to her pregnancy.

While showing both sides is startling at first — it’s the only movie I’ve seen which does that — the contrast between the two groups of women is clear. Those supporting reproductive freedom are motivated by the need for a woman to take control of her life; those who oppose abortion base their beliefs on religious dogma, shame, guilt or family pressure. The film, produced by HBO, had its world premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival, April 18-23.

Both films should have a wide showing to educate the public about the harsh, reactionary legislative climate aimed at ending women’s legal right to control their own bodies, their lives and their families. Having access to abortion is a fundamental human right. As Juan Mendez, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture noted in his April 7 report to the Human Rights Council, restricting protective abortion laws is a form of torture. □

Suicides rise

Continued from page 2

pression. They are two to three times more likely to attempt suicide than other teens, says the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.

High school students face a bleak future, with fewer job opportunities, low wages, exorbitant college tuition and increased student debt. Since 1990, debt on student loans has increased to 74.3 per-

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes

Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance Leilani Dowell

The Struggle for Socialism Is Key Monica Moorehead

Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights Imani Henry

Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice! Saladin Muhammad

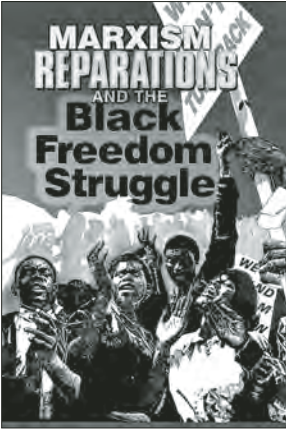
Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior Mumia Abu-Jamal

Racism & Poverty in the Delta Larry Hales

Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions Pat Chin

Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation Consuela Lee

Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion John Parker



GRAPHIC BY SAHU BARRON

Available online at major booksellers.

FRANCE

Workers, youth battle anti-labor law

By G. Dunkel

On April 28, for the fourth time in two months, hundreds of thousands of French workers, students and youth poured out into the streets to demand that the government withdraw a new labor law that is to be taken up in Parliament.

Thousands of worksites, schools and universities were closed in a one-day general strike so their workers could participate. The protests occurred in most major French cities — in particular, Paris, Marseille, Bordeaux, Rouen, Lyon, Toulouse and Rennes.

More protests are scheduled for May Day and May 3, the day Parliament officially begins discussing the new law.

Since the government has extended the state of emergency imposed after the attacks in Paris on Nov. 13 until this September, it has sweeping powers to harass and control protests. Hundreds of thousands of people came out to demonstrate. Both before and after the main marches there were sharp confrontations between the cops and protesters.

The minister of the interior demanded that the unions who were the major force behind the protests condemn the “violence.” Instead, some union leaders condemned the cops' use of excessive force. (Le Monde, April 28)

The new law would remove many protections and benefits that French workers have won over decades of struggle. It would make it much harder for students and youth entering the labor force to find steady, full-time work. It would basically abolish the standard workweek of 35 hours and any protection against excessive overtime.

As one worker put it on French TV, the new law will mean “working more to earn less.”

Militant unions lead fight

There has been a split in the French labor movement. On one side is the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT), which is closely allied to the governing, misnamed Socialist Party. On the other are the much more militant unions like the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) and Workers Force (FO). The CFDT says that with a few, fairly minor modifications, the new labor law is acceptable. The CGT and FO want it withdrawn since it is rotten to the core.

The CGT just finished its triannual congress in Marseilles. There, it resolved to strengthen its jobsite organizing. It also said it will reach out to other forces that are struggling in a progressive direction but which are not necessarily oriented to a workplace, like students and artists. (L'Humanité, April 21).

cent of graduates’ annual earnings.

Veterans’ suicide

The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs says there is a daily average of 22 suicides among Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans. Thousands of veterans suffer from untreated post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse. “People need to understand that the impact of war is significant on the human psyche,” wrote Carl Lewis in the Feb. 18 issue of WW.

High costs, lack of insurance and cutbacks in public mental health programs keep people in desperate need from accessing essential services, treatment and medications. Between 2009 and 2012, states cut \$4.35 billion in public mental health funding. That 19 states still refuse to expand Medicaid is another barrier to accessing care. □

One example of collaboration between labor and other forces was the joint action of striking railroad workers and “intermittents” — actors with a temporary contract — that shut down a production of Phèdre at a well-known Paris playhouse called the Odeon.

But the major connection that the CGT is trying to build is with the progressive forces and individuals working within Nuit Debout (generally translated as “Staying Up All Night”). This movement has occupied the Place de la République, much like Occupy Wall Street in the U.S. occupied Zuccotti Park or the Indignados movement in Spain occupied Puerto del Sol in Madrid.

An alternative newspaper called Fakir proposed in February extending the demonstrations against the new labor law after the marching was finished by getting together in a public place and discussing more issues than the protest against the labor law.

‘We can win!’

The first time a Nuit Debout was established was after the huge demonstration on March 31 against the proposed labor law. It was replicated in dozens of French cities, and even in Francophone areas of Canada and Belgium. It was well organized with a good sound system and written summary reports of the discussions that took place previous evenings, some YouTube channels to make videos available and an Internet radio station.

There were a number of commissions set up — some dealing with logistics and organization, others with special topics like the LGBT+ struggle, feminism, the role of France in Africa, left parties in France, and the possibility of and how to call an ongoing, i.e., multiday, general strike.

While many of the people participating in the Nuit Debout were young, there was a broad range of ages represented, with older people tending to come after work.

The French media extensively covered the Nuit Debout. The government reacted by ordering a very heavy police presence, which was kept out of direct sight of the occupied Place. Cops made sweeps of the area every week or so, removing tents and tables.

After the April 28 demonstration, the two top leaders of the CGT — Catherine Perret, the national secretary, and Philippe Martinez, the general secretary — came to the general assembly of Nuit Debout at the Place de la République. Following a discussion that included how to call a general strike, Martinez spoke and

Workers filled the streets in Argentina in protest marches on April 29 against right-wing President Mauricio Macri’s campaign of job cuts. The main demonstration took place in Buenos Aires, where hundreds of thousands of people participated. Protests also took place in other provinces.

In a show of unity, the five main trade unions called the march despite their own differences with each other.

WORKERS WORLD
MUNDO OBRERO ★

Observadores visitarán Odessa

Continúa de página 12

"Además, respetuosamente apelamos al Comité de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas para que inicie una investigación internacional sobre los sucesos del 2 de mayo de 2014, conforme a lo solicitado por los miembros de la familia, los amigos y partidarios de los que murieron en ese día".

Entre los firmantes se encuentran el ex fiscal general de EUA Ramsey Clark; la ex congresista estadounidense y candidata presidencial del Partido Verde Cynthia McKinney; el premiado periodista John Pilger; el Consejo de Paz de EUA; la co-directora del Centro de Acción Internacional Sara Flounders; la presidente de Bayan EUA Bernadette Ellorin; la editora y columnista de Black Agenda Report Margaret Kimberley; los co-coordinadores de UNAC Marilyn Levin y Joe Lombardo; y muchas otras personas más.

Para leer la declaración completa y la lista de endosantes, firmar la declaración y obtener actualizaciones, visite unacpeace.org. □



WW PHOTO: PADDY COLLIGAN

A ‘Nuit Debout’ movement of workers and youth in France.

said: “We need a much stronger citizens' movement. It is important that we defend this notion of citizenship everywhere. We have common values and it is necessary that they be extended. The main principle of the CGT is to have unions in every enterprise.” (tinyurl.com/jclqb3y)

In a statement issued April 29, the CGT said: “500,000 demonstrators throughout France reaffirmed that they are convinced that the government must hear the street and withdraw its bill.

“Already new, massive demonstrations are projected for May Day, the international day of workers' struggle. New initiatives — demonstrations, speakouts, lobbying — will take place Tuesday, May 3, when the National Assembly opens debate on the bill.

“General assemblies are being organized in numerous enterprises; we invite all workers to participate and decide how to continue the mobilization. We can win.” □

Protests, strikes in Latin America

Avenida Segunda, in Costa Rica’s capital of San José, April 26.

“This is a historic gathering. ... We understand that the interests of the workers come before the interests of the union leaders,” said Hugo Moyano, who heads the truckers union and a branch of the influential CGT labor federation. “Macri is against the workers.” (Mercopress, April 30) They have united not only to oppose job cuts but also against mounting poverty, soaring public utility bills, rampant inflation and the government’s neoliberal austerity policies.

In his first four months in power, Macri has overseen the sackings of 127,000 public and private sector workers, despite the familiar right-wing election campaign promise to create more jobs. Unions are vowing a general strike if Macri vetoes a bill reinstating many laid off workers.

Macri has also welcomed U.S. “vulture funds,” which bought Argentinian sovereign debt bonds at a small fraction of their face value, and then demanded repayment in full.

The recent Panama Papers leak exposed Macri’s directorship of an offshore tax haven shell company for the business empire of his billionaire father, Francisco Macri.

Union groups in Costa Rica launched a massive strike on April 26 that is being called the "Mother of All Strikes." Public schools, airports and health care services came to a halt as thousands of workers went on strike and marched to the Legislative Assembly. They demanded attention to 16 points, including respect for labor rights, defense of the public health care system, defense of the education budget, opposition to sales and income tax increases, salary hikes, land for peasants and access to water as a public right.

The unions are also demanding that the rich pay their fair share of taxes. Official calculations estimate that eight percent of the gross domestic product is lost to tax evasion.

Protesters carried banners with messages like "Let the rich pay more taxes" and "For the dignity of workers," among others. One student said that she was participating in the march in protest of attempts to privatize the Costa Rican National Institute of Education "because it is the only chance we have to improve ourselves." (commondreams.org, April 27) □

Donetsk honors anti-fascist martyrs

Kiev. That led parts of Ukraine to declare themselves independent.

People laid flowers at the base of the monument to V.I. Lenin, leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution which set up the first workers’ state in history. At sunset they lit candles in memory of the fallen. Afterward, a requiem concert was held, sponsored by a labor union representing the people's militia and security forces of the Donetsk People's Republic. Memorial events were also held in Lugansk, Moscow and many other cities throughout the former Soviet Union and other parts of Europe. □



MO FOTO: BRENDA SANDBURG

EDITORIAL

Encubrimiento Ayotzinapa

La desgarradora noticia sobre México notificada en los medios estadounidenses está escrita con un tono apropiado de conmoción y horror. Un equipo internacional especial de investigación asignado para descubrir qué sucedió con los 43 estudiantes de Ayotzinapa desaparecidos, ha informado que su investigación fue detenida tanto por las autoridades locales como por las nacionales.

La información sobre el asalto asesino de los estudiantes por la policía - simplemente porque intentaron apropiarse de autobuses locales para asistir a un evento, algo que se había convertido en una "travesura" anual - fue ocultada en todos los niveles, dice el equipo. A pesar del encubrimiento, algunos cuerpos han sido recobrados, y su mutilación es tremendamente enfermiza, revelando una brutalidad sádica que adormece la mente.

Pero, ¿qué es lo que queda fuera de todos estos reportajes en este país? Los mismos hechos básicos que se dejan de decir cuando se trata de la desesperada emigración en masa que ha estado sucediendo desde hace años desde México y Centroamérica.

El acuerdo comercial impuesto a México por el capital estadounidense, el llamado TLCAN, ha arruinado a los pequeños agricultores que solían ser capaces de sobrevivir con lo que podían cultivar. Ellos no podían competir con la agroindustria de EUA que ha asumido el control del mercado y de la tierra. La resultante pobreza extrema alimentó el tráfico de drogas y la violencia que engendra. El Estado mismo se convirtió en parte del instrumento de "protección" de lo que llama ilegal, pero del cual se alimenta. Los clientes de las drogas están, por supuesto, mayormente en los Estados Unidos.

La investigación sobre Ayotzinapa por el pueblo no puede dejar de lado los monstruosos crímenes del imperialismo estadounidense hacia el pueblo mexicano. □

Por Deirdre Griswold

Por un breve tiempo, el pasado mes de febrero existía la esperanza de que al fin las vidas negras importaran, cuando un jurado condenó al oficial Peter Liang de homicidio y mala conducta en la muerte a tiros de Akai Gurley, un joven afroamericano de 28 años de edad. El oficial de policía de la ciudad de Nueva York se enfrentaba a una posible pena de cárcel de 15 años por dispararle y no buscar ayuda médica para Gurley posteriormente. Se informó que mientras el joven agonizaba, el policía en lugar de llamar al 911, estaba enviando mensajes de texto a la "unión" de la policía en busca de ayuda legal.

Sin embargo, el jurado que había condenado a Liang fue revocado. Primero, el fiscal de distrito de Brooklyn Ken Thompson pidió sólo libertad condicional, seis meses de arresto domiciliario y 500 horas de servicio comunitario para Liang. Luego el 19 de abril, el juez del Tribunal Supremo estatal de Brooklyn Danny Chun tomó la inusual medida de reducir el veredicto de homicidio del jurado, a homicidio por negligencia. Luego,

eliminó el arresto domiciliario y condenó al oficial a sólo 800 horas de servicio comunitario y cinco años de libertad condicional: Ni tiempo en la cárcel o confinamiento de ningún tipo por tomar la vida de Akai Gurley.

Gurley murió el 21 de noviembre de 2014, cuando Liang sacó su pistola y disparó un solo tiro, accidentalmente afirmó, rebotando la bala alcanzando al joven negro en el pecho. Todo ocurrió en el hueco de una escalera a oscuras de una unidad de vivienda pública en Brooklyn. Gurley y un amigo habían estado tratando de subir por las escaleras en la oscuridad porque el ascensor estaba fuera de servicio - una ocurrencia común por los fondos insuficientes para las viviendas destinadas a personas con bajos recursos.

Apenas dos semanas después del asesinato de Gurley, un gran jurado en otra ciudad de Nueva York, en Staten Island, rehusó procesar a un policía blanco en el asesinato por estrangulamiento de otro hombre negro desarmado, Eric Garner, lo que provocó protestas generalizadas.

Por eso, cuando Liang fue acu-

sado y sometido a juicio, parecía posible que, finalmente, un policía sería encarcelado por matar a un hombre negro. Pero entonces, el juez revirtió el fallo del jurado, lo que llevó a más rabia y protestas.

La tía de Gurley Hertencia Petersen, reaccionando a la indulgente sentencia del juez dijo: "Ahora aquí está. Otro hombre negro ha sido asesinado a manos de un departamento de policía y el oficial no está siendo considerado responsable".

Esa noche, una multitud fue al barrio donde vive el fiscal Thompson y se demostró frente a su casa, gritando, ¡"Si la familia de Akai Gurley no puede dormir esta noche, Ken Thompson no va a dormir esta noche"! La policía detuvo a siete de los manifestantes. Es incluso posible que los manifestantes pasen más tiempo en la cárcel que el policía que disparó contra una persona y la dejó sangrar hasta la muerte.

"Las vidas negras importan" no es sólo una consigna. Es una demanda para que el sistema racista falsamente llamado "justicia criminal" sea destruido y se haga verdadera justicia. Hasta que no haya justicia, no habrá paz. □

Observadores internacionales visitarán Odesa

Por Greg Butterfield

El 2 de mayo de 2014, por lo menos 48 antifascistas y sindicalistas fueron asesinados cuando los neonazis atacaron un campamento de protesta en la ciudad de Odesa en Ucrania, e incendiaron la Casa de los Sindicatos que se encontraba en las cercanías. Cientos de personas más resultaron heridas. Muchas se vieron obligadas a huir del país. Otras fueron detenidas y sometidas a juicio mientras los autores salían impunes.

Desde entonces, el gobierno de Kiev respaldado por EUA, que ayudó a desencadenar el ataque contra sus oponentes políticos en Odesa, ha bloqueado todo intento de investigar el crimen y enjuiciar a los responsables.

Ahora que el segundo aniversario de los trágicos eventos se acerca, ambas partes están preparándose para un nuevo enfrentamiento.

Los familiares y amigas/os de los activistas asesinados, dirigidos por el Comité de Madres del 2 de Mayo están decididos a llevar cabo un evento conmemorativo en el Campo Kulikovo donde murieron sus seres queridos.

Delegaciones de varios países planean monitorear y apoyar el evento, incluyendo diputados del Parlamento Europeo y activistas de la Coalición Nacional Unida Contra la Guerra (UNAC por las siglas en inglés) con base en EUA.

Grupos neonazis como Right Sector, Svoboda, Automaidan y Maidan Auto-defensa, que atacan de forma rutinaria y violentamente tales conmemoraciones,

han amenazado a las/os organizadores y prometieron evitar que se lleve a cabo el evento.

Detrás de ellos, el gobierno de Ucrania encabezado por el presidente de Petro Poroshenko y el gobernador Regional de Odesa Mikhael Saakashvili - un títere de EUA y ex Presidente de la República de Georgia quien huye de cargos en su contra de corrupción y crímenes de guerra en su propio país - están movilizando al cuerpo policial y a la Guardia Nacional, dominada por los fascistas, para "mantener el orden" en Odesa. (Timer-Odesa.net, 19 de abril)

Ciudad Heroica en estado de sitio

Odesa es una de las "Ciudades Heroicas" de la antigua Unión Soviética, premiadas por el papel jugado por sus residentes en la resistencia a la ocupación nazi durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Los sucesores modernos de Hitler tienen un odio especial hacia esta ciudad. Al igual que muchos puertos marítimos importantes, Odesa ha sido durante mucho tiempo una ciudad diversa, inclusiva y multinacional. Esto fue reforzado a través de décadas de desarrollo socialista cuando Ucrania era parte de la Unión Soviética.

No es de extrañar entonces, que las fuerzas detrás del golpe de estado en Ucrania en el año 2014 se enfocaran en las/os residentes de Odesa. Y sin embargo, la gente de esta Ciudad Heroica sigue resistiendo.

El 28 de enero, cuando el Servicio de Seguridad de Ucrania (SBU, el FBI de

Ucrania) y los neonazis atacaron un complejo de viviendas donde muchos inmigrantes vietnamitas viven, derribando las puertas de las/os residentes y robándoles sus ahorros, la gente combatió y persiguió a los matones armados en la calle. Algunos jóvenes incluso intentaron apropiarse de los vehículos de éstos. (Timer-Odesa.net)

La incursión también fue denunciada por el Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores de la República Socialista de Vietnam.

El 10 de abril, cientos de residentes de Odesa, incluyendo muchos ancianos veteranos de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, salieron para conmemorar el aniversario de su liberación del fascismo en 1944 por el Ejército Rojo y partidarios locales. Brutalmente atacado por neonazis, estos se defendieron, coreando "¡Banderistas, salgan de Odesa! ¡El fascismo no pasará! " Banderista" se refiere a Stepan Bandera, un colaborador nazi e icono de los nacionalistas derechistas ucranianos.

La ciudad está llena de carteles puestos por la noche instando a la gente a venir al memorial del 2 de mayo.

"Los neonazis atacan a las personas mayores y a los niños", señaló Alexey Albu, ex diputado regional de Odesa y sobreviviente de la matanza del 2 de mayo, después de un asalto en marzo a miembros de su familia. "Pero la situación va a cambiar. El gobierno de Ucrania, que protege a los ultranacionalistas, está a punto de reventar. Después de su derrocamiento, se identificarán y castigarán a los responsables". (Fort Russ, 27 de marzo)

Solidaridad internacional

La Coalición Nacional Unida Contra la Guerra está enviando una delegación de activistas contra la guerra y pro derechos humanos basadas/os en EUA a Odesa para unirse a otros grupos internacionales que monitorearán el memorial. UNAC también está instando a la gente a ponerse en contacto con sus funcionarios elegidos y a los medios de comunicación locales y nacionales para exigir que presten atención a lo que está sucediendo en Odesa.

Un comunicado emitido por la UNAC apoyando el memorial y pidiendo una investigación por las Naciones Unidas de los eventos del 2014 dice en parte: "El 2 de mayo de 2016, un memorial se llevará a cabo en Odesa-Ucrania, en honor a la memoria de decenas de activistas pro-democracia que fueron brutalmente asesinados en Odesa en esa fecha hace dos años.

"No hay ninguna razón para que las autoridades de la ciudad prohíban este memorial pacífico, pero los radicales de derecha - algunos de los cuales se cree que estuvieron involucrados en los acontecimientos de 2014 - han declarado que no van a permitir que se proceda. ... Hacemos un llamado a los gobiernos de Odesa, Ucrania y los Estados Unidos para que garanticen el respeto a los derechos cívicos de los asistentes al memorial del 2 de mayo en Odesa, incluyendo a las delegaciones de observadores internacionales que estarán presentes en ese día.

Continúa a página 11