As teachers walk out
Arizona ablaze with #RedForEd

By Otis Grotewohl

The spreading education workers’ struggle is ablaze in Arizona. On Thursday, April 26, an estimated 75,000 public school employees refused to report to work and began a historic walkout. Helicopter photos showed a red river of people advancing through the streets in Phoenix toward the Capitol.

On Friday, the school workers were back, rallying in the tens of thousands. Speakers in Phoenix included representatives of the Arizona Education Association, Arizona Educators United, students, the Latinx community and parent-teacher organizations. The protests continued on Monday, April 30, and on Tuesday, May 1 — International Workers’ Day.

School workers are demanding restoration in public funding to the 2008 level for devastated schools, competitive and lasting salary increases for all education workers and no new tax cuts for the rich until per-pupil spending is at the national average.

Just before the walkout date, Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey signed a tax break for coal mining companies that will cut state revenues by $42 million to $80 million a year.

According to AEA President Joe Thomas, 78 percent of its teachers voted for the action. This is the first statewide education workers strike ever in Arizona, and potentially the largest U.S. education walkout ever, as 820,000 of the state’s 1.1 million students could be affected. (tinyurl.com/ycpz3k6f)

Learning from West Virginia

Arizona teachers and school support staff in Arizona paid close attention to the West Virginia education strike in February and began taking matters into their own hands in early March. After a private Facebook page, “West Virginia Public Employees UNITED,” was used to organize actions and communicate before, during and after the strike, Arizona school employees started their own grassroots-led Facebook group called Arizona Educators United.

According to Labor Notes, “30,000 people joined [AEU] within the first 10 days,” with 45,000 members by mid-April. In solidarity, supporters of AEU not working directly for the public school system also set up “Arizona Parents and Allies United” on Facebook.

Noah Karvelis, a K-8 music teacher in Phoenix and organizer for AEU, created the #RedForEd movement on social media to unite education workers throughout the state. Red was the color worn by West Virginia school workers during their 1990 and their most recent strike. It has traditionally been the chosen color of most working-class as well as socialist struggles internationally.

The first #RedForEd event, organized by AEU, was

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MARX@200:
Class struggle in the age of Trump

2018 marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx. The revolutionary ideas, tactics, and strategies developed by Marx and his co-thinker Friedrich Engels have led to numerous revolutions and struggles all over the globe, from Russia, China, Cuba and Korea to Palestine, the Philippines and Burkina Faso. Today a new generation of revolutionaries is grappling with Marx’s legacy. What is the working-class struggle today, in the age of globalized capitalist exploitation and Trump’s white supremacist onslaught, police murders and ICE round-ups? 

Hear Larry Holmes, First Secretary of Workers World Party, and a diverse group of new and veteran activists sharing their perspectives:

Why Black Lives Matter is a class issue
Are workers still a revolutionary class?
The role of migrant workers, prisoners and sex workers in class struggle
Women and LGBTQ workers
Significance of teachers’ strikes
Workers’ stake in fight against war & climate change

And much more! Bring your experiences, ideas and questions.

Event will be live-streamed at Facebook.com/WorkersWorldParty

In the United States of North America, every independent movement of the workers was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the Black it is branded.

— Marx, Capital, Volume I, Chapter 10 (1867)

WORKERS WORLD PARTY
PARTIDO MUNDO OBRERO

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a truly international, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward!

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and aus叁e in class struggle

A revolutionary class?

Workers World Party fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capital profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you.

Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black and Brown youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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WORKERS WORLD this week

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Tenants shut down rent board meeting
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Veterans of anti-racist struggle honor Mumia and Bell
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Primero de Mayo: esperanza, resistencia, solidaridad

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis
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By Teresa Gutiérrez

The migrant sector of the global working class in 2006 revived May Day in the U.S., staying away from their jobs and thereby making a genuine contribution to the class struggle in this country.

The situation of migrants and refugees around the world has become a global humanitarian crisis, one that revolutionary and communist organizations must struggle to deal with. Allies of migrant workers often refer to “a war on immigrants.” This war is harmful and dangerous not just to migrants, but to all workers, here and around the world.

It was not started by Donald Trump or Attorney General Jeff Sessions, but they are absolutely escalating it. In fact, at a recent Trump rally he asked, “Any Hispanics in the room?” The large crowd of bigots booted a thunderous response.

Undocumented workers are not the only ones who have become victims of the anti-immigrant terror sweeping the country. U.S. citizens are also being rounded up and held for long periods of time by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, despite providing proof of citizenship.

Wrongful arrests are being made “based on incomplete government records, bad data and Ias investigations,” according to interviews. “There has indeed been a sharp rise in asylum seekers from Central America,” according to the Washington Office on Latin America points out: “There has indeed been a sharp rise in asylum seekers from Central America for example, are fleeing their country because of a fraudulent election supported by the U.S. government.”

Banners decorating the walls called for the release of all political prisoners, prominently featuring Black liberation fighter Mumia Abu-Jamal and Native American activist Leonard Peltier. Kazi Sanders of the Jericho Movement, introduced Oscar, whom he had met while the two were in Leavenworth.

Oscar stated that he owed his freedom to the support and solidarity he had received while in prison. He highlighted the many Puerto Rican political prisoners who had been freed, stating that the Puerto Rican people should feel proud of this achievement. He also called for support on the outside to express their solidarity and love with political prisoners still behind the walls.

Speaking on the imprisonment of Ana Bélén Montes, a former U.S. intelligence analyst who was convicted of giving secrets to the Cuban government, Oscar elaborated: “The United States government is one that cannot do anything but provoke hatred and fear. And it is that hatred and fear that is used against Cuba. And it is used for countries like Syria and for every nation that it cannot control, from the Rio Grande all the way to Tierra del Fuego – any place in the world that it cannot control.

This nation was founded on hatred and fear, and it will continue doing the same thing unless we choose to struggle to end hatred and fear in this country,” Oscar elaborated. “Until this government that tries to rule the world is brought to an end, we will continue having a world full of hatred and fear because that’s what this country promotes.”

Ending on a message of hope, Oscar stated, “We should think of the world as one. We should see the world for its potential. We should do everything to make sure that we live in harmony among ourselves and with love in our hearts and to make this planet one that will guarantee every future generation lives in peace and in dignity, and lives not to destroy life but to enjoy life.”

ON MAY DAY 2018
Worker unity needed vs. brutal war on immigrants

By Sam Ordóñez

Boston welcomes Puerto Rican freedom fighter

Puerto Rican activists, freedom fighters and supporters gathered here on April 28 in the Villa Victoria Center for the Arts to welcome freedom fighter Oscar López Rivera, released from a U.S. prison in 2017.

A delegation, from Workers World Party-Boston was among those greeting this heroic freedom fighter.

The Trump administration has kept the promises he made to his racist nationalist base. While all his shenanigans dominate the news cycle, brutal changes in immigration policy are being made behind the scenes.

It is now harder to get an H-1B visa to work in this country. This especially affects spouses, mainly wives, from India, aggrandizing economic hardship for their families.

A travel ban targets Muslim communities. When first issued, it led to a righteous outcry of support for migrants and refugees. But this ban is still making its way through the courts, and on April 25 the Supreme Court implied at a hearing on the case that a third attempt would succeed if the administration could prove its grounds.

The Trump administration has opposed DNA (Deferred Action for Child Arrivals), and to this date the legislation remains in limbo, meaning that about 800,000 Dreamers are anxiously living in uncertainty.

Early this year, the administration changed the asylum process, leading to more denials and deportations. The New York City Anti-Violence Project says there are likely thousands of LGBTQ asylum seekers in danger of violence if they returned home, who are stuck in a backlog of applicants that has grown to unmanageable levels. (Daily Beast, April 27)

Despite these restrictions, the Washington on Latin America points out: “There has indeed been a sharp rise in asylum seekers from Central America’s Northern Triangle region (Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador).” More individuals from this region sought asylum from 2013 to 2015 than in the previous 15 years combined, but not because of loopholes. Washington and Wall Street’s foreign and economic policies as well as the lucrative drug industry have forced millions to migrate. Honduras, for example, are fleeing their country because of a fraudulent election supported by Washington that installed a repressive government.

Banks as money launderers

The State Department reported four years ago that “trafficking organizations earn between $39 billion and $59 billion every year from selling marijuana, cocaine, heroin and methamphetamines” in U.S. cities. (NPR, March 20, 2014) That money must be laundered somewhere.

Wall Street banks profit the most. This lucrative industry fills their coffers while drug cartels destabilize the countries of Central America, causing so many to leave their homelands. These migrants have earned asylum a hundred times over.

When children arrive in the U.S. after a terrifying journey, they are terrorized even further. “Federal Agencies Lost Continued on page 21
Tenants are demanding a rent freeze.

De Blasio’s announcement came right on the heels of the NYPD assassination of Saheed Vassell in Brooklyn’s Crown Heights neighborhood.

Community activists have long described the Neighborhood Policing program as a systemic issue — that people who jump turnstiles “have money in their pockets.”

The banner was unfurled by People’s MTA leaders Mary Kaeserger and Teresa Gutierrez. Kaesinger, who uses a wheelchair, began the disruption with a wheelchair, began the disruption with a

Continued on page 8

Tenants shut down rent board meeting

All out for June 14 protest

By Kathy Durkin

Hundreds of angry tenants drowned out members of the Rent Guidelines Board at an April 26 meeting at Manhattan’s Coop Union Hall. Demanding a rent freeze, the crowd yelled, “If we don't get it, shut it down!”

The militant rally with loud chanting by tenant groups, public housing recipients and community organizations took place at the auditorium’s entrance. They prevented the hearing from starting on time.

The board meets annually to set rent increases for the city’s million rent-stabilized apartments, which house about 2 million people. Since 2013, tenant pressure has exerted some control on landlord greed, even winning rent freezes for one-year leases for two years and keeping increases fairly low. This year, organized tenants, many of them Spanish-speaking, mobilized to intervene, including CASA, Metropolitan Council on Housing, Real Rent Reform, Northern Manhattan Is Not For Sale, Good Old Lower East Side and the Road New York! and others from the Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan.

But the landlords and big real estate interests had another agenda. They sought a 4 percent raise for one-year leases and a 7

Continued on page 8
By Betsey Piette

Philadelphia

April 30 — Despite District Attorney Larry Krasner’s campaign promises to address decades of injustice in the Philadelphia DA’s office, it was evident at a hearing for Mumia Abu-Jamal today that the “Mumia era” — where law enforcers apply to everyone but Mumia — is still the rule.

The hearing was the conclusion of a 10-month court session where Philadelphia Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker. They invoke a petition by Abu-Jamal based on a 2016 U.S. Supreme Court decision, Williams vs. Pennsylvania, that found it unconstitutional for Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Rosalyn O’Connor, who in which he had played a significant role as Philadelphia DA. In effect, Castille would rule on an appeal case. The DA sought more time for a ruling on Abu-Jamal’s.

That hearing was initially intended to include testimony on a 1990 memo from former Assistant DA Gaelle MaLaughlin Barthold responding to Castille’s request for status updates on capital cases, including Abu-Jamal’s.

When the 180-day extension expired on March 26, the DA sought more time for a newly hired paralegal, Ryden Nelson, to look at an email chain favored by Abujamal’s, one in which standardize- ing their approach to all cases relating to the SCOTUS decision.

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March 7. Teachers, paraprofessionals, classroom aides, school bus drivers, school cafeteria employees, secretaries and custodians all over the state sported red clothing. As they made “selfies,” posting them on social media, they said that they were fighting for public education. #RedForEd began to go viral.

Arizona education workers continued to walk out every Wednesday as school workers began to strike in Oklahoma and walked out in Kentucky. In Arizona, teachers and school support workers weekly began holding informational pickets, walk-ins and rallies at the Capitol. They mobilized a huge protest against reactionary Gov. Ducey. Ducey did 10 years ago. While the Arizona Legislature was still in session, AEU focused its attention on combating a reactionary school voucher bill, SB 1467, which would take money from public schools and give it to private schools. In the West Virginia victory, strikers defeated charter school and school voucher bills.

After feeling the heat from the #RedForEd movement, Gov. Ducey announced a “plan” to raise pay to 20 percent by the year 2020 and increase public education funding by $371 million by 2023. But Arizona education workers saw this proposal as too little, too late — an insincere offer that does nothing to improve pay for school support staff. Instead, the reactionary governor’s weak offer appears to be just another tactic to divide the working class. Teachers marching on April 26 also said they emphatically refused raises that would come at the cost of cutting social services for poor, Latinx or disabled students. (Payday Report, April 27)

Finally, AEU and AEA activists are making it clear they do not want to see any more tax breaks for the rich. While state funding for Arizona students and public schools has steadily decreased in the last ten years, tax breaks for Arizona’s top 1% have increased. Education workers in West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Kentucky correctly took aim at the energy bosses and extraction industries in their states as the root of the budget problems. Arizona school employees are also directing their anger at the state’s big business.

As teachers walk out

Arizona ablaze with #RedForEd

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The strikes and walkouts, which started in West Virginia and spread to Oklaho- ma, Kentucky and Arizona, are primarily being waged in “right-to-work” (for least) states where work stoppages of any sort are illegal. It’s important to acknowledge the fact that these struggles are majori- ty-women, rank-and-file-led.

There are rumblings that educator work actions may soon begin in Arkan- sas, Mississippi and South Carolina. Many of the education workers in these states undoubtedly voted for the racist Republicans, but the walk-ins, walk-outs and outright strikes are a clear action against the right-wing agenda set by reac- tionaries backing privatization and profit. Arizona Gov. Ducey is a Republican, like the governors of West Virginia, Okla- homa and Kentucky who attempted to break the public education workers’ ac- tions. But Democratic governors have also been antagonistic toward public sec- tor unions, despite the fact that the union bureaucracy donates millions of dollars to that party of capitalism each election cy- cle through political action committees.

The capitalist Democratic Party is no alternative, typically showing its true an- ti-union colors in areas where it is the ma- jority party, in an attempt to contain and stop militant mobilizations. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo has called teachers’ unions a “sleazy industry.” (New York Daily News, Jan. 23, 2019)

Education workers in so-called “blue states,” such as Colorado and Wisconsin, have already participated in rebellious walkouts. Thousands of teachers and research assistants struck at Columbia University in New York City on April 24 and the university’s refusal to even par- ticipate in negotiating a contract.

Teachers in Puerto Rico, led by the cou- rageous Puerto Rico Teachers Federation (FMPR) have struck against colonialism: the closing of public schools, spending privatization through charter schools and racist gutting of public services in order to service big band banking. FMPR has a history of standing up against U.S. imperialist big business. (See “FMPR: A fighting in- strument.” Workers World, April 19).

That education workers’ strikes in the U.S. have inspired working people throughout the globe is a nightmare for the billionaire class. Rank-and-file ed- ucation workers are realizing what a mighty power they have when they fight collectively.

Otis Grootwohl is a WWP member and union activist in West Virginia who was involved there in the education workers’ strike and is monitoring other education strikes.

Puerto Rican

Puerto Rican teachers protesting attacks on public education on April 27 are attacked by police, tear gassed.
Milwaukee teachers defend public schools

By Workers World Wisconsin bureau

Thousands took the streets in Milwaukee on April 24 to defend public education and to stop austerity in a “Picket to Defend Our Schools” action called by the Milwaukee Teachers’ Education Association. A flotilla of united teachers, students and community members filled and overflowed the area in front of the Milwaukee Public Schools central office and stretched for blocks. (www.facebook.com/MEAutumn/)

The MTEA is putting up a valiant fight in many directions against a 5 percent cut to the MPS budget. Milwaukee is a majority Black and Brown city and gets thousands of dollars less per student from state funding than suburban schools. So this is also a mighty struggle by the MTEA to prevent the racist funding inequity from worsening.

Since the late 1980s, Milwaukee has been the laboratory for “school choice” and also “welfare reform” — right-wing initiatives aimed at privatizing education and cutting support for poor and oppressed people. In 2011, the infamous Act 10, the so-called Wisconsin Budget Repair Bill, was proposed by Republican Gov. Scott Walker and passed by the state legislature. The bill was one of a slate of anti-worker rulings like that anticipated from the U.S. Supreme Court in the pending public service employee union case, Janus v. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. That would be an epic “yes!” to solidarity if they linked up with the June mass action in D.C. of the Poor People’s Campaign, renewing the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s call to end racism, militarism and poverty.

School bus battles roll on

By Sara Catalinot New York

“Experienced drivers! Safe children!” chanted New York City school bus drivers and attendants in Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1181, along with representatives of school bus drivers’ families and retired teachers. They were rallying together on April 24 to defend employment protection provisions (EPP) in school bus contracts.

The contracts, between the New York City Department of Education and private contractors like the School Transportation (PIST NYC), are now “postponed until further notice.” Parents to Improve School Security and Transparency (PIST NYC) submitted an affidavit to the federal court denying the companies, but a state court granted a temporary injunction in their favor. Bidding on driver routes is now “postponed until further notice.”

If EPP is not enforced, companies can deviate from the labor contract pattern, reducing benefits and wages while ignoring citywide seniority. This can lead to low standards, exploitation and worker turnover, which is bad for the children. The companies hire people who are desperate for jobs, while expert drivers and matrons stay unemployed. Protestors contend this has occurred in route contracts that the DOE has previously awarded to non-EPP companies, despite a determined 2013 strike.

People rallied in two shifts of about 50 people each, starting at noon, some arriving in yellow school buses. They gathered across from the New York State Supreme Court where a court hearing was held at 2 p.m. on the status of the EPP in contracts. Forty EPP supporters went inside, but the courtroom lacked enough seats for all of them.

Seventeen school bus companies have sued to try to remove the protective provisions from the contracts. A federal court denied the companies, but a state court granted a temporary injunction in their favor. Bidding on driver routes is now “postponed until further notice.”

The judge heard oral arguments from both sides, and is expected to issue a writ-

Solidarity is needed! What a sight and inspiration it would be if teachers, school staff, students, parents and community supporters would take their yellow school buses in the thousands to Washington, D.C., in June to demand an end to right-to-work-for-less. That would be an emphatic “no!” to anti-worker rulings like that anticipated from the U.S. Supreme Court in the pending public service employee union case, Janus v. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. That would be an epic “yes!” to solidarity if they linked up with the June mass action in D.C. of the Poor People’s Campaign, renewing the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s call to end racism, militarism and poverty.

teachers fight ‘disaster capitalism’

Excerpted from an April 28 message from Mercedes Martinez, president of the Teachers’ Federation of Puerto Rico (FMPR)

On April 18, the Oversight Fiscal Board, imposed by the U.S. Congress, submitted different fiscal plans for our country. It’s Disaster Capitalism on hormones. This will mean thousands of [school worker] layoffs, hundreds of school closures, added to Law 85 that now allows 10 percent charter implementation beginning August 2018.

[Teachers] are facing the biggest attack ever. We had a National Assembly that determined to strike May 1. If the government does not revoke these measures, on May 2 we will go to the governor’s mansion to demand he attends to our proposals. If they insist, during the week of May 1, teachers will plan a boycott against standardized testing.

[April 27] we had a civil disobedience action, which ended in police brutality against all the teachers who were protecting the union, being pepper sprayed. It was a protest against school closures and all these measures. Police brutality was implemented against the protesters. Teachers resisted.

We expect more repression on May 1, and we will not back down.

Please send a solidarity message/video to Facebook mercedes.martinez754.

Los Angeles Unified School District school bus workers (along with special education aides, cafeteria workers and other school staff) voted April 14 with a 94 percent overwhelming majority for their union’s bargaining team to authorize a strike if negotiations fail. Service Employees Local 939 organized a weekend strike captain training session for April 28. For more information, see tinyurl.com/y9ydfr16. The writer is a founder of PIST NYC. Other parents as well as teachers in MORE-UFT who were present at the rally contributed to this article.

By Workers World Wisconsin bureau

Milwaukee teachers, school workers, students and community members picket to defend their schools on April 24.

PHOTOS: MERCEDES MARTÍNEZ

PHOTOS: ATU ORGANIZERS FACEBOOK

MORE-UFT who were present at the rally contributed to this article.
By Deirdre Griswold

With the leaders of both the Democrat-ic People’s Republic of Korea and South Korea having declared they are ready to end the state of war between the two that has existed since 1950, the ball is now in the U.S. court.

Donald Trump has accepted an invi-tation to meet with Kim Jong Un, leader of the DPRK, but no date has been set. Meanwhile, Trump has brought into his administration two very extreme war-hawks, John Bolton and Mike Pompeo. Will they set the policy, or did he bring them in to keep an eye on them? With Trump, it’s hard to know.

The problem, of course, is not be-tween the two Koreas. The problem is the continuing U.S. military occupation of South Korea, which has driven a wedge between north and south since 1950. A peace treaty between the two would under-mine the excuse given by Washington for the continued U.S. occupation: the claim that the Koreans in the south need to be defended against their fellow Kore-ans in the north.

The desire of most South Koreans to break down these barriers was clearly seen during the Winter Olympics, when they gave an ecstatic welcome to the joint North-South Olympic team marching un-der one flag. In the stands, only U.S. Vice President Mike Pence showed extreme hostility to this development, shucked down in his seat and not even standing for the South Korean national anthem.

For years, ever since the U.S. flew Syn-gam Khan, who had been living in the United States for decades, back to Seoul and installed him as the first president of the newly created state of South Korea, Washington has been used to calling the shots there.

Growth of people’s movement in south

No more. A people’s movement in the south has survived and grown stronger in the long struggle against U.S.-supported, brutal military dictators and corrupt politicians in the pockets of the chaebol, the large industrial conglomerates run by a few wealthy families.

For years South Korean unions have militantly and tenaciously fought for workers’ rights. As recently as 2015, hun-dreds of police stormed the headquarters of the Korean Public Service and Trans-port Workers’ Union during a strike by truckers. But the repressive government that ordered the attack is now gone, and its president, Park Geun-hye — the daughter of a general who had earlier ruled the country through an open mili-tary dictatorship — has been imprisoned for corruption.

To achieve the downfall of the Park re-gime, South Koreans demonstrated every weekend for a solid year. At times, the number of people participating in these rallies exceeded a million.

It is this kind of disciplined and mil-itant organization on a mass level that has changed the political landscape in South Korea. After years of a historic meeting between the DPRK’s Kim Jong Un and Moon Jae-in, now the leader in the south. Their recently announced agreement to end the formal state of war that has existed since 1950, and their symbolic act — when both stepped across the border line at Panmunjon that di-vides Korea — must have brought tears to the eyes of so many Koreans who have lived with the terrible sorrow of families divided for generations.

IN INDIA

As repression grows, so does class struggle

By Harmony

Indian police forces claim to have killed more than three dozen commu-nist guerrilla fighters in late April raids against the forces of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in the Gadchiroli district. To add insult to injury, during one raid the leftist are said to have been sitting at dinner while marking the four-teenth anniversary of the birth of their martyred leader Charu Majumdar and of the leader of the Chinese Revolu-tion, Mao Zedong.

The conflict between the Communist Party of India (Maoist) and the police forces are not the only recent revolution-ary activity in India.

In response to the rising suicides of thousands of farmers — suicides that fol-lowed increasing government land theft, brutal military dictatorships and corrupt politicians in the pockets of the chaebol, the large industrial conglomerates run by a few wealthy families.

For years South Korean unions have militantly and tenaciously fought for workers’ rights. As recently as 2015, hun-dreds of police stormed the headquarters of the Korean Public Service and Trans-port Workers’ Union during a strike by truckers. But the repressive government that ordered the attack is now gone, and its president, Park Geun-hye — the daughter of a general who had earlier ruled the country through an open mili-tary dictatorship — has been imprisoned for corruption.

To achieve the downfall of the Park re-gime, South Koreans demonstrated every weekend for a solid year. At times, the number of people participating in these rallies exceeded a million.

It is this kind of disciplined and mil-itant organization on a mass level that has changed the political landscape in South Korea. After years of a historic meeting between the DPRK’s Kim Jong Un and Moon Jae-in, now the leader in the south. Their recently announced agreement to end the formal state of war that has existed since 1950, and their symbolic act — when both stepped across the border line at Panmunjon that di-vides Korea — must have brought tears to the eyes of so many Koreans who have lived with the terrible sorrow of families divided for generations.

Tenants shout down rent board meeting

As for June 14 protest

Tenants shut down rent board meeting

All out for June 14 protest

Continued from page 4

percent increase for two-year leases. The board, which is heavily weighted toward realtors, adopted a preliminary resolution by a 5-4 vote, which would allow for up to 2.75 percent hikes for one-year leases and up to 3.75 percent for two-year leases, to take effect Oct. 1. If these rates are made permanent in the final vote on June 26, the new board would be handing landlords the highest rent hikes in five years.

Tenants ‘raised hell’

Tenants loudly denounced the board’s vote. Standing, they yelled: “Shame! Shame!” and “Fight! Fight! Fight!” They called out, “Shut it down!” Anne Pruden, a Workers World activist from Brooklyn, reported that the tenants “raised hell, disrupted and shut down the hearing.” It was over.

Tenants are organizing their next steps. They will speak out at the board’s five hearings in June and at its session at the end of that month when the board’s final vote is taken. They must mobilize; they have no alternative. Many NYC residents live on fixed incomes, have low-earning, minimum-wage jobs and must feed their families. The cost of living is soaring, but incomes are not.

A March for Tenants’ Rights and an End to Homelessness is being organized for June 14 in Bryant Park by Real Rent Reform, a tenant, community and labor coalition. A major target is Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who has prioritized allocating subsidies to billionaire developers while ignoring the crisis in private and public housing for the city’s multinational work-ing class, elderly and disabled populations.

Homelessness at 1930s’ Depression level

Met Council reports that more than half of New Yorkers pay over 30 percent of their income on rent. The lack of af-fordable housing exacerbates the crisis of homelessness, now at the highest level since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Over 633,143 homeless people live in city shelters, including 23,314 children — a number 82 percent higher than 10 years ago. Families comprise three-quarters of those living in shelters, says the Coalition for the Homeless. Thousands more, many suffering from multiple health problems, sleep on the streets or on subways.

Income inequality and racist discrimi-nation result in disproportionate numbers of people of color being included among the homeless: 58 percent of shelter resi-dents are African American and 31 per-cent are Latina. These populations are among the city’s lowest-paid workers.

Every day, greedy landlords enforce evictions of victims who don’t have attorney-ly to fight the landlord’s Park Avenue law firms. In addition to job loss and low wages contributing to homelessness, ten-ants often must flee overcrowded or un-safe housing conditions and domes-tic vi-olence — with nowhere to go.

The struggle for affordable housing should be part of any progressive agen-da. Housing is a right!
Despite thousands of casualties Palestinians continue to resist Israel’s blockade of Gaza

By Sam Ordóñez

Heroic demonstrations against the Israeli occupation of Gaza continued on April 28 for the fifth week. Every Friday since March 30, the Great March of Return has brought thousands of demonstrators, armed only with their unbreakable resolve, to the militarized fence surrounding the Palestinian enclave.

The demonstrations are scheduled to continue until May 15, the day of the “Nakka” or “Catastrophe,” when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forced to flee their homes in the 1948 war that established the state of Israel.

According to Reuters, three Palestinians were killed and another 600 wounded by the Israeli Defense Forces on the last Friday of a week that saw some 200 casualties since the beginning of the Great March of Return to 42 Palestinians dead and over 5,000 wounded. Israel has deployed snipers and tear gas against the unarmed demonstrators since the demonstrations began.

Conditions in Gaza have been described as “the world’s largest open-air prison,” as Israeli occupation forces have blocked the small strip by land and sea since 2007, restricting the supply of key necessities, including medicine. The territory, which depends on Israeli-controlled power plants for electricity, receives only about four hours of energy a day.

The Great March of Return has demanded not only an end to the siege conditions experienced in Gaza but the right of all Palestinians to return to their homes and villages in what is now Israeli-controlled territory. The images of thousands of unarmed protesters confronting occupation soldiers week after week in defiance of the violence used against them is reminiscent of the struggle against South African apartheid.

Israeli authorities have attempted to lay the blame for the horrific scenes coming out of Gaza at the feet of Hamas, the Palestinian organization that controls the territory. But it was the Israeli state that ordered snipers to fire on unarmed demonstrators, authorized the use of live ammunition and tear gas, and intentionally deprived the people of Gaza of electricity and medicine. It was also the Zionist project that forced Palestinian families from their homes in the first place, and has continued to expand deeper and deeper into Palestinian territory.

Progressive people in the United States must unite not only to condemn the crimes of the Israeli government, but also to end the complicity of the U.S. government in those crimes. In addition to weapon sales and diplomatic cover for Israel’s yearly military aid, the U.S. has long protected Israel from international consequences, for example, by using its veto power in the United Nations Security Council to block an investigation into Palestinian deaths, days after the Great March of Return began.

Israel returns the favor by acting as the Pentagon’s attack dog against countries in the area that refuse to surrender their sovereignty, like Syria, Iran and Yemen.

Through military aid, diplomatic support and economic ties, the U.S. has enabled the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. Washington has dropped all pretenses of neutrality since the election of Donald Trump, who in February announced he would move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem.

On April 13, the same day the IDF gunned down unarmed protesters, the imperialist militaries of the U.S., Britain and France launched a total of 105 missiles at Damascus to “punish” the Syrian government for alleged chemical attacks. In truth, these missiles made it impossible for international investigators who arrived the next day to determine what had happened.

But the imperialists were silent when Israel used white phosphorus against Gaza in 2009, and of course, there has been no talk now from the capitalist politicians of any “humanitarian intervention” to protect the Palestinian people. The hypocrisy of the U.S. government is rarely so blantly exposed as when it remains silent about the crimes of Israel.

As the Palestinian people continue their heroic resistance against Zionist occupation, it is the duty of progressives living in the belly of the beast not only to continue to draw attention to their struggle, but to demand an end to U.S. support for Israeli apartheid.

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France: Class war and imperialist war

By Rémy Herrera

April 22 — France is no stranger to strikes and demonstrations. But in this early spring, the atmosphere is unusual- ly tense. The president’s statements and media reports on order being restored are so frequent that one can only suspect something serious is in the works.

Demonstrations have risen to a notch in recent weeks, thanks mainly to President Emmanuel Macron. He says he’s paying close attention to the protests and is ready to talk with his critics, but he orders all those on the move beat back.

In mid-April, he sent 2,900 soldiers to evacuate about 800 radical activists from the “zone to defend” (ZAD) in Notre-Dame-des-Landes in western France. These activists, from ecological and autonomous movements on the extreme left, had prevented construction of an air port there. They continue to occupy parts of the area, which they have transformed into open-air squats, seeking alternative, collective agricultural spaces and rejecting private individual ownership.

The day after the soldiers intervened, five times as many people joined the “Zads” to face the “forces of order.”

Macron launches riot police

At the same time, Macron launched the CRS riot police to dislodge students occupying the Sorbonne and Tolbiac to protest “educational reforms.” Students immediately retaliated — or recopulated — other universities, as in Nanterre, and even Sciences Po, a highly prestigious school in which the French president himself graduated. In Lille, students were forced to take their exams between two rows of police officers.

Some 50,000 people came out across the country for the national “interprofessional day of action” called by the CGT union confederation on April 19. In Paris the demonstrators were met with water cannons and tear gas grenades, although nothing serious justified the repression.

Lacking popular support, Macron sought to demonstrate his strength by sending troops to attack the peaceful resistance. Since the big banks support him, it’s true he has something to fear about — strength enough to change class war. And he can defy the people, in the name of “necessary reforms,” in contempt of social dialogue.

Today, Macron wants to break the backbone of the workers’ movement. He takes aim first at the railway workers, who stand at the forefront of the decline of public services and who enabled the protests to crystallize. Macron is acting like Britain’s Margaret Thatcher did in 1984, for example, by using its veto power in the United Nations Security Council to prevent an investigation into Palestinian deaths.

On April 3, however, the first day of the 36 national strikes planned by the French rail unions, the Anglo-French company Eurostar bided, in charge of the high-speed railway service connecting France to Britain, tried to move workers from the Lyon depot in east London to Paris. Thanks to a joint action by the CGT and the RMT — the British trade union covering the transport sector — French and British workers organized to stop the company. This illegal attempt to break the strike by using British employees was foiled by international workers’ solidarity.

The stakes in this struggle are high. Two visions of society are at odds: One, presented as “outdated,” is that of solidar- ity’s triumph over capital, reviewed hope for youth and a common future; the other, neoliberal, the strategy of the elites, is destined to fail and leaves the majority of the population stuck in its tracks.

Continued on page 11
Teachers and all school workers are on the march, protesting pay so low some have to sell their blood to make ends meet. They are striking in dozens of cities, who are trying to learn in overcrowded, mold-infested rooms using outdated, battered textbooks and dual-language instructions.

School bus drivers, teachers’ aides, cafeteria workers are also fighting for job security and to keep their first-in-last-out rights. Teachers are gathering at the statehouses and the state-of-the-art presence for the children.

The big business media have made much of the fact that school worker actions are happening in Republican-dominated states that “went for Trump” in 2016. But education workers are not marching because of who they might have voted for.

They are rising up because their work with students and their workplace conditions have been devastated by austerity attacks. Education funding has withered while megabucks have gone to the already super-rich superbosses and the military/industrial complex.

In Puerto Rico, members of the Teachers’ Federation (FMPR) have been tear-gassed, beaten, and have the predatory Big Bank interests now deciding the fate of public schools there. The U.S.-imposed Fiscal Control Board is hell-bent on closing hundreds of schools and firing school workers.

After the Great Recession of 2008, banking interests gained a chockhold in Puerto Rico as it struggled with heavy municipal debt. Current PCB members, who were then banking executives, arranged loans, got big “fee service” payoffs and millions in interest for their banks. The banks want to loot public programs to get more millions — including closing schools and firing teachers.

A similar fate befell Detroit, Mich., after its city’s bankruptcy. Detroit teachers held their ground in 2013 and 2014 and protested the takeover of public schools by bought-and-paid-for politicians who placed bank profits before the lives of Detroit’s children.

In recent strikes in West Virginia and Oklahoma, education workers pointed to Big Oil as the major reason why pay for predominately women teachers had hit all-time low in 2016. But education workers are not marching because of who they might have voted for.

The school workers are defending public education, fighting back against the power to withhold their labor to win better lives for themselves and their communities. They are demanding the right to strikes in many “right-to-work” (for less) states, despite being threatened with jail and loss of their jobs, they are fighting state governments and walking out.

These education workers are reforge a labor movement in solidarity with their communities.

On the frontline in the war now under way on peoples’ needs, education workers, alongside the children in their schools, see every day the impact of immi-gration and Customs Enforcement raids on in/migrant families, the terror of racist police violence on Black and Brown communities, the sickness and pain from privatized poisoned water systems and for-profit food, and the injustice of un-reasonable prison pipelines.

The school workers are fighting public education, each other, their students and their communities. Their outrage and rhetoric are, they say, “We won’t back down!”

We are with them, and we say: “Make the banks, the bosses and the military Cannes!*

Mni Wiconi! Water is Life!

I want to dedicate my talk this afternoon to Berta Cáceres, an Indigenous women of the land and water, who was murdered by the Honduran government and paramilitaries, and to all the Indigenous and other workers and leaders throughout these con-tinents, and to our Afro-Brazilian sisters Marielle Franco who has just been assas-sinated! Let’s also re-member especially ou-ther relatives in Puerto Rico, Haiti and Palestine, in particular Abdihamid and Faten women and children who are imprisoned by the Zionist. I also want to express my solidarity with Black strong women here and in our communities.

It has been really exciting to read about South Africa beginning the very necessary process of taking land back from farmers who are not Black or Afri-kans — so that African people would have more land. This hunger for the return of land is strong among colonized and formerly colonized peoples everywhere. The question of land is central. When settlers dispossess people of their land, it is trying to destroy a way of life, a whole people. The theft of land is what supports all the other realities on that land.

Sometimes, though, progressive peo-ple here do not realize that they too are living on stolen land. Stolen land is not something that just happens somewhere else. We have multiple oppressed peoples within the U.S. and all our struggles here are happening on stolen land. The issue of protecting the land and returning the land to Indigenous nations is a funda-mental one that underlies everything.

Settler colonialism and capitalism alter our relationships with land and water

There are two aspects of settler colo-nialism and its “kissing cousin” capital-ism that I want to talk about: how they bring about violence against the land and against women, because the two are very much intertwined.

On you hear Indigenous people say-ing that “the Earth Is Our Mother,” that is not just a quaint expression. It is an attempt to explain how deeply interconnected we are. In a traditional Indigenous view — and Indigenous nations are not all the same, this is generalizing — the land and water are our bodies, our communities, entirely part of our bodies, not separated from our bodies. The water is part of our bodies. Everything is tied to land — how we treat each other, how we organize our- selves politically, how we treat the land. When we are removed from our land, when our land and water are abused, these attacks on our bodies, By contrast, the constant demand of settlers is for property and expansion. Settler Colonialism and Capitalism duce our relationships to land as being no more than relationships as property to be bought and sold and exploited. They often also reduce land to property, so stolen Africans became chattel slaves. Indigenous people became slaves ear-ly on in many regions and also wards of the government who were not permitted to feed themselves, whose children were

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A Voice from Harpers Ferry Cerrors Gervais, World War II

The Klan & Government: Fear and Its History

The Remaking of Land and Bodies

WORKERS WORLD editorial

Who made off with the school money?


Indigenous women & the land vs. settler colonialism

Mai Wiconi

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estableciendo las conexiones entre los movimientos de liberación de étnico y las de liberación en el movimiento Las Vidas Negras Importan, la violencia entrelaza
da que enfrentan las mujeres de color y los latinos con el terrorismo planeado y desarrollado en acciones de #SayHerName. Muchas de las trabajadoras de educación en huelga en West Virginia y Oklahoma han citado las marchas de mujeres de 2016 como inspiración. En las recientes manifestaciones provocadas por la masacre en una escuela secundaria de Florida, las/os mujeres han planteado simultáneamente el problema de violencia en tiempos de escuela, el policía racista y el racismo. El terrorismo feminista ha existido desde el siglo XIX. En el movimiento Las Vidas Negras Importan, en el movimiento #SayHerName, mujeres han proclamado su resistencia en el contexto de la inseguridad en los espacios públicos. La violencia ha sido diseñada y perpetuada de forma sistemática. Podemos estudiar y aprender de los cientos de años de resistencia en las rebe
diones de personas desplazadas africanas en EUA: en Carolina del Sur, 1739; en Nueva York, 1741; la costa este en Louisiana, 1811; Nat Turner en Virginia, 1831; American Indians no registrados a lo largo del sureste de los Estados Unidos. Podemos aprender de la resistencia de Haiti en 1804, cuando las personas es
clavizadas ganaron su libertad liberando su propia guerra de liberación.

Podemos animar con la resisten
cia de March el Primero de Mayo de 2005. Ini
ciado por sindicalistas negros con con
ciencia de clase en la costa oeste, la costa este de EUA y respaldado por el Partido Workers World-Mundo Obrero. Esta acción tuvo como objetivo el de a
menazar y resistir el nuevo plan de trabajo que el gobierno son
dan deben luchar independentemente en su propio nombre, liberadas/os de los parti
dos demócrata y republicano.

Podemos energizarnos con el renaci
miento histórico del Primero de Mayo 2006 con las huelgas lideradas princi
palmente por trabajadoras/os de bajos salarios inmigrantes en todo EUA, enardecidos por el reaccionario proyecto de ley Sensenbrenner. El estado de California esencialmente se cerró con una huelga general ese Primero de Mayo, mientras millones marcharon a nivel na
tonal. Esta acción masiva fue organizada por trabajadoras/os del Caribe, México y América Central, quienes traían la expe
riencia de la lucha contra la devastación en sus países de origen por el imperialis
mo económico y militar. Desde EUA los siglos de bloqueos, monopolio de “libre
cambio”, invasión y ocupación. Ahora todas/os los trabajadores en EUA están tratando de sobrevivir a la ru
ina de la misma economía de austeridad. Los esquemas de privatización de los grandes bancos y los finanzas se roban lo que el pueblo ha ganado para su bien común. La explotación capitalista está destruyendo los sistemas de agua
de transporte, los sistemas educativos desde Detroit y Flint, Michigan, hasta Paris, siguen huyendo.

Mientras tanto, la supremacía blanca está siendo brutalmente movilizada por las fuerzas reclamando la capitalización en un último intento por evitar la huida uni
taría. “Tenemos que derrocar la suprem
acía blanca como las/os luchadores por la libertad de Durham, Carolina del Norte, derrocaron un monumento racista!” El Primero de Mayo es un llamado internacional para abolir el capitalismo y vivir con nuestro poder compartido. Este es un liberación que priorice las necesidades humanas, la solidaridad es nuestra mejor herramien
ta y nuestra mejor arma.

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De los trabajadores inmigrantes a los trabajadores de la economía familiar. La explotación capitalista — shrink from confronting the
do en la economía familiar.

No hay ningún lugar allí. Inclusos los trabajadores en las empresas de la economía familiar logran resistencia.

La economía familiar en el centro del sistema mundial — shrink from confronting the
do en la economía familiar.

No hay ningún lugar allí. Inclusos los trabajadores en las empresas de la economía familiar logran resistencia.
El papel Mill fue liberado de prisión el 24 de abril luego de que la Corte Suprema de Pensilvania ordenó al juez de Filadelfia que liberara a Meek. El juez Rendell jugó un papel clave al oponerse a la fiscalía, sin un nuevo juicio para Abu-Jamal, siguen atacando directamente las armas.

¿‘Alivio extraordinario’ para Mumia?

Casualmente, Mill fue liberado el día del cumpleaños del prisionero políтиco más famoso de Filadelfia: Mumia Abu-Jamal, ex miembro del Partido Panteras Negras y renombrado periodista. Abu-Jamal es uno de las “muchas personas de color” sin el lujo de contar con el apoyo de políticos adinerados.

De hecho, Rendell jugó un papel clave al oponerse a los intentos de Abu-Jamal de ganar un juicio justo. El gobernador Wolf se ha negado reiteradamente a cumplir con las/los seguidores de Abu-Jamal, aceptando sólo a regadívidas cajas de peticiones pidiendo el tratamiento de hepatitis C para Abu-Jamal y otros 6,000 prisioneros de Pensilvania en 2016.

Desde su arresto en diciembre de 1981, en relación con el tiroteo del policía de Filadelfia Daniel Faulkner, el caso de Abu-Jamal ha estado plagado de corrupción judicial, incluida la coerción de testigos y la retención de información para la defensa. A mínimo 15 de los 35 policías involucrados en la recolección de pruebas en el caso fueron posteriormente declarados culpables de falsificación de pruebas en otros casos. El estado también afirmó que no pudo realizar pruebas de balística de rutina que hubieran probado si Abu-Jamal en realidad disparó su arma o si su arma había sido utilizada.

Fotos de Polakoff retunden testigos de la fiscalía

En 2011, el investigador alemán Dr. Michael Schiffermann de la Universidad de Heidelberg descubrió 26 fotografías tomadas por el fotógrafo independiente de Filadelfia Pedro Polakoff, una de las primeras personas en llegar al lugar después de la muerte de Faulkner.

Desde Meek a Mumia, ‘libere a todos!’

Polakoff ofreció sus fotos a la policía y a los fiscales, pero nunca se usaron en el juicio de Abu-Jamal de 1982 ni en las audiencias posteriores a la condena.

¿Esta oleada de acción continuará y se extenderá a otras/os trabajadores en otros empleos y lugares? La respuesta está en nuestras acciones colectivas. En primer lugar, podemos y debemos construir una fuerza inquebrantable en las luchas de las/os trabajadores para mantener la credibilidad de Reginald V. Graham, el oficial que lo declaró culpable de falsificación de pruebas en otros casos.

Debemos estar al lado de las/os demás en las luchas contra: la supremacía blanca, agresiones a refugiadas/os y migrantes, ataques a mujeres, islamofobia y anti LGBTQ, falta de respeto y barreras para las personas con discapacidades.

Debemos comenzarnos unas/os a otras/os: “Luché por usted como si su lucha fuera la mía”. ¡Porque lo es!

Eso significa proporcionar solidaridad material y real a las/os refugiados y trabajadores inmigrantes que son secuestrados y encarcelados todos los días por el Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas desde Estados Unidos hasta el norte de Nueva York. Eso significa unirse a Las Vidas Negras Importan para exigir justicia para las víctimas del terror policial; defender a las/os trabajadores negros, que son blanco de los supremacistas blancos, y son armados como blancos, y sus tratados.

El 30 de abril debe ser una fiesta para una huelga de centros educativos y del trabajo a lesbianas, gays, bisexuales, trans y humanitarios para revertir las viles leyes anti LGBTQ. Eso significa proporcionar solidaridad material y real a las/os refugiados y trabajadores inmigrantes que son secuestrados y encarcelados todos los días por el Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas desde Estados Unidos hasta el norte de Nueva York. Eso significa unirse a Las Vidas Negras Importan para exigir justicia para las víctimas del terror policial; defender a las/os trabajadores negros, que son blanco de los supremacistas blancos, y son armados como blancos, y sus tratados. 

La esperanza ya está visible en la forma en que se están

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