



Venezuela declares emergency Support Bolivarian Revolution

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

From the Ayacucho Hall of Miraflores Palace, Venezuela’s President Nicolás Maduro held a news conference on May 17 to report on the emergency situation and the dangers facing this South American country.

It’s the first time the Venezuelan government has made a call like this on a truly international level. Venezuelan embassy staff and consulates around the world in all time zones were at the conference, along with solidarity activists in different countries, connected by satellite, internet and various social media platforms such as Skype, Twitter and Instagram. Through these platforms, they sent pictures and asked questions of the president.

During the three-hour conference, Maduro explained and discussed in detail the urgent situation: “Venezuela is currently the target of systematic political, media and diplomatic aggression that goes beyond the boundaries of what we have experienced in 17 years of the Bolivarian Revolution.” Maduro called for “worldwide solidarity of leaders, social movements, presidents, prime ministers of governments around the world. Peace in this America is at stake in Venezuela, along with the future of our own independence in the 21st century.” (avn.info.ve, May 18)

International media campaign

The corporate media, especially in the U.S. and Spain, have been leading a campaign of demonization of Maduro, whom they accuse of tyranny and of causing chaos in the country’s economy that will lead to extreme violence.

In the U.S., it’s enough to look at the latest headlines of the most influential newspapers closest to the political, military and economic sectors — the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal, respectively. These newspapers serve as spokespeople for the right-wing opposition in Venezuela, especially for the National Assembly, now dominated by the MUD (Table of Democratic Unity).

Although divided among themselves, the right wing are all rushing to overthrow Maduro this year and impose a neoliberal program in Venezuela, thereby destroying the achievements of the Bolivarian process. One example illustrates this: When the National Assembly stated that health was a national emergency — of course, with the goal of privatizing health services — the Times published an alarming article, “Dying Infants and No Medicine: Inside Venezuela’s Failing Hospitals.” (May 15)

Imperialist aggression

But it’s not only the media that are committing aggression. U.S. government officials have attacked Venezuela, highlighted by President Barack Obama’s renewal, for another year, of the executive order imposed in March 2015 that declares Venezuela “a danger to U.S. national security.” This is a very serious and dangerous statement, and not only in diplomatic terms.

Washington has intervened, accusing Venezuela of violating human rights by imprisoning Leopoldo López, who it falsely characterizes as part of a peaceful political opposition. In doing so, it ignores López’s complicity in the death of dozens of Venezuelans and gives a big boost to rightist actions seeking destabilization of Venezuela by violent means.

To fulfill his role serving U.S. interests, Secretary General of the Organization of American States Luis Almagro announced on May 13 from Miami that the OAS should apply its Democratic Charter against Venezuela. For the OAS to arrive at a decision, Almagro requested

that the National Assembly of Venezuela report on the political situation. Almagro made the announcement at the two-day conference called the “Concordia Summit,” at which 200 rightist representatives of public and private sectors gathered to analyze the situation on the continent.

It’s enough to see the names of the participants to guess its agenda: Luis Alberto Moreno, president of the Inter-American Development Bank, and former presidents and prime ministers, including Luis Alberto Lacalle of Uruguay, Sebastián Piñera of Chile, Jorge Qui-

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Boston School Bus Drivers, Steel Workers local 8751, are among many union and community members who have shown solidarity with striking Verizon workers. See page 5.

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Bond demanded for Rev. Pinkney, political prisoner

By David Sole

Michigan political prisoner Rev. Edward Pinkney had his appeal placed on hold May 12 following oral arguments in his case on May 11. A three-judge panel of the Michigan Court of Appeals in Grand Rapids ordered the appeal “held in abeyance” until the Michigan Supreme Court decides *People v. Hall*, which could have bearing on the severity of the sentence imposed on Rev. Pinkney.

Rev. Pinkney was the leader of an election recall campaign against the mayor of Benton Harbor, Mich. He was charged with felony forgery when five dates on the petitions were alleged to have been altered. No evidence was presented to the all-white jury except that Rev. Pinkney was a vocal and well known African-American activist. In December 2014, he was sentenced to 2.5 to 10 years in prison.

Appeal briefs were filed in the fall of 2015 by attorney Tim Holloway, along with amicus briefs from the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Lawyers Guild. On May 11 during the Court of Appeals hearing, Chief Judge Colleen O’Brien asked the attorneys many questions about the sentencing provisions of the law and



PHOTO: PATI HEINZ/FACEBOOK

‘Free Rev. Pinkney’ billboards have been put up along Routes M-139 and I-94 in Benton Harbor, Mich.

down to Rev. Pinkney.

On May 16, Holloway filed a new brief and motion with the court requesting bond and freedom for Rev. Pinkney based on the new status of his case being left undecided, possibly for many months. In anticipation of granting of bond, many supporters have called for donations to be collected.

On May 28, supporters of Rev. Pinkney will demonstrate in his home town of Benton Harbor demanding his freedom. The protest coincides with the Professional Golf Association tour, played on a golf course built on land stolen from a public park given in perpetuity to the people of Benton Harbor. Over a decade ago Rev. Pinkney began protests against the seizure of land from the Jean Klock Park on the shores of Lake Michigan. □

the impact of the Hall case. The final decision in *People v. Hall* could be an important factor, separate from the issue of guilt or innocence, in challenging the excessive prison sentence handed

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Continuing the fight: Justice for Jovan!

By Tommy Cavanaugh
Rockford, Ill.

After Valentia Fresco (aka Jovan Blake) was killed by Metro Enforcement security officers on April 16 in Rockford, Ill., his family has held multiple demonstrations to demand charges be brought against the security guards who shot and killed him.

Keeping up the pressure on Metro Enforcement and the Winnebago County State’s Attorney, family and community supporters held another powerful protest to demand justice for Jovan on May 13. The protest, led by Blake’s mother and other family members, marched around the block of Metro Enforcement’s local office to take the message directly to the private security agency that they will not be silent or let murderers patrol their neighborhoods.

The size of the protests continue to grow as more people in the community become aware of what took place on April 16 and relate that to their own experiences of mistreatment or loss of loved ones at the hands of the police and Metro Enforcement.

Two days later, on May 15, a memorial was held at the site of Blake’s murder. Family and friends spoke briefly of his life working hard to care for his children. Gathered there were also family members of other young Black and Brown men murdered by police, notably the family of Mark Anthony Barmore, whose murder by police in the daycare center of a church in 2009 gained national attention. Barmore’s family stated that they will stand with Blake’s family through their time of struggle with the loss of a loved one and their fight for justice.

Justice For Jovan Blake! □

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Who we are & what we’re fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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Supreme Court sidesteps birth control challenge

By Sue Davis

The Supreme Court on May 16 separated the consolidated case of *Zubik v. Burwell* and referred nine similar cases back to nine appellate courts. The courts were directed to arrive at a consensus about whether or not religiously affiliated nonprofits must pay for contraceptive coverage as mandated by the Affordable Care Act. Originally, eight appeals courts voted against the nonprofits' claim, allowing coverage, and one voted to uphold the claim. Now the nine courts of appeal are required to come to a unanimous decision.

The religious nonprofits' argument is that the opt-out process for complying with the ACA's requirement that employer-provided health insurance plans cover contraception as preventive care violates the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

The high court's ruling, called "per curiam," was agreed to by all eight judges. The court instructed the lower courts to accommodate "petitioners' religious exercise while at the same time ensuring that women covered by petitioners' health plans 'receive full and equal health coverage, including contraceptive coverage.'" It affirmed the ACA mandate to provide women "without cost, the full range of FDA approved contraceptives."

The justices also instructed the nonprofits that while litigation moves forward, the goal of the birth control benefit — to provide seamless contraceptive coverage — must remain in place. It also warned these enterprises not to further

interrupt contraceptive coverage for their employees and students.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote a separate opinion, joined by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, to provide further clarification: "The opinion does not, by contrast, endorse the petitioners' position that the existing regulations substantially burden their religious exercise or that contraceptive coverage must be provided through a 'separate policy, with a separate enrollment process.' Such separate contraceptive-only policies do not currently exist, and the Government has laid out a number of legal and practical obstacles to their creation." (Politico, May 16)

This ruling is a legal sidestep in the battle over the ACA's contraceptive mandate. Will the appeals courts be able to unite on a unanimous decision, ending the case, or will it come back to the court after a ninth justice is seated? Stay tuned.

Abortion rights: bad news in some states

A bold, direct attack on the constitutional right to abortion was passed by the Oklahoma Legislature on May 19. The law would have made it illegal for doctors to perform abortions — which it called "unprofessional conduct" — except if needed to save the life of a pregnant woman. If physicians provided abortions, they would be found guilty of a felony and sentenced to one to three years in prison. They would also not be able to obtain a medical license in the state.

Despite her opposition to abortion, Gov. Mary Fallin vetoed the bill on May 20, saying it was "so ambiguous and so

vague" it couldn't overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. (Washington Post, May 20)

South Carolina legislators passed a bill on May 17 prohibiting abortions at 20 weeks after fertilization, which Gov. Nikki Haley is expected to sign. The final bill includes no exceptions for rape or incest, but has an exception if a patient's medical emergency would lead to death or in cases of severe fetal malformation.

The bill is based on copycat legislation authored by the National Right to Life Committee, which justifies the cut-off at 20 weeks based on the medically discredited belief that a fetus experiences pain at 20 weeks. Courts have struck down similar bills as unconstitutional in Arizona, Georgia and Idaho. Similar laws have passed in 17 states. (Rewire, May 18)

On May 19, Louisiana joined Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Utah in establishing a 72-hour waiting period for women seeking abortions. However, in a medical emergency, pregnant women will continue to be exempt from the mandatory waiting period and forced counseling passed in 2014. There is also an exception for women who certify in writing they live at least 150 miles from the nearest licensed clinic. They will be forced to wait a shorter delay of 24 hours. (Rewire, May 20)

Catholic hospital sued for denial of care

The 41,000-member California Medical Association filed a motion April 27 in state Superior Court to join an American Civil Liberties Union lawsuit against the

Catholic hospital chain Dignity Health, the fifth largest health care system in the country and the state's largest hospital system. A patient was denied a tubal ligation in 2015 because Dignity Health refused to allow it based on religious directives from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops which deny basic reproductive health care to patients. Sterilization was called "intrinsically evil."

A court hearing on CMA's motion is set for May 25 in San Francisco. The doctors argue that forcing them to deny basic health care on the basis of religious objections creates a conflict between the medical well-being of patients and the hospital system. They also assert that withholding medical care for nonmedical reasons is illegal in California, and patient health is jeopardized when religious rules override medical judgment.

This could turn into a major test case about the rights of Catholic-sponsored hospitals, which control 10 of the 25 largest hospital systems in the country, to impose their religious beliefs on patients and doctors. (Rewire, April 27)

'Crisis pregnancy centers' ineffective

A study released in early May by eKYROS, an anti-choice, Texas-based software company, showed that of the 2.6 million women who visited more than 1,200 anti-abortion "crisis pregnancy centers" since 2004, only 3.52 percent decided against having abortions.

Twenty-two states currently provide some financial aid to CPCs. (Rewire, May 10) □

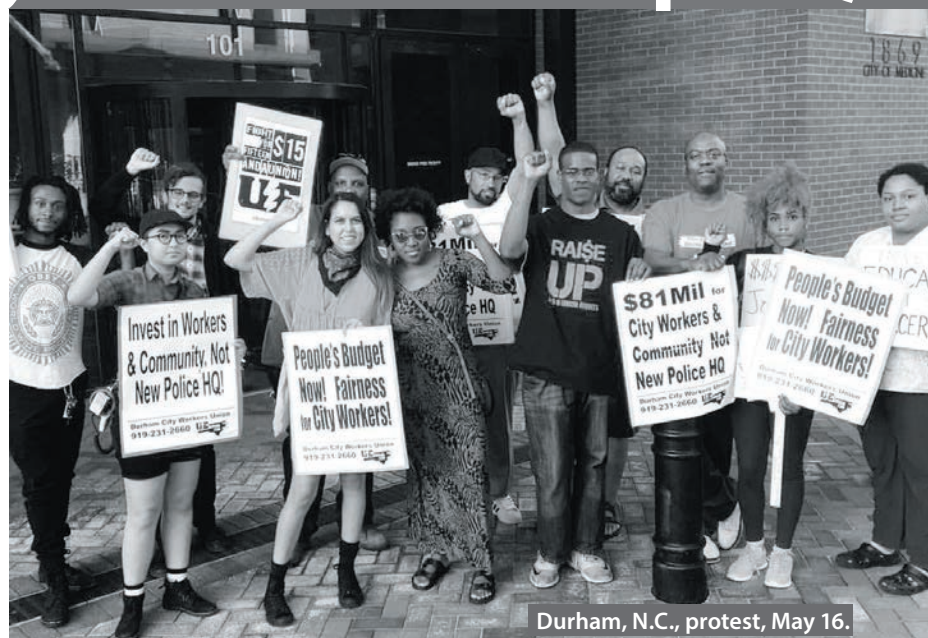
Protests say 'No!' to new cop HQ Durham, N.C.

By Ben Carroll
Durham, N.C.

Those struggling to shut down the city's plans to build an \$81 million police headquarters here held their seventh weekly picket outside Durham City Hall on May 16. A coalition of groups known as "Durham Beyond Policing" opposes the new headquarters. Pickets are set to continue as the city debates its budget throughout June.

Earlier, Durham Beyond Policing had given the council May 16 as a deadline to respond to the call from the community to stop the plans to build the new headquarters. The coalition includes the Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100) Durham chapter; the Durham city workers union, United Electrical Workers Local 150; the Say Her Name collective; Southerners on New Ground (SONG); and others.

When the deadline came and passed with no response, city workers and com-



Durham, N.C., protest, May 16.

munity members marched into the council's meeting that night and disrupted it with a mic check. The demonstrators reiterated the overwhelming opposition to

the new headquarters from the broader Durham community.

The May 16 action and the pickets at city hall are part of a struggle that has

been building throughout the year. In 2015, the Durham City Council approved a budget of \$62 million to build the new police headquarters in East Durham. There, the building would encroach on working-class communities of color and signify Durham's rapid gentrification. The cost has since grown by \$19 million.

City workers and community members have demanded a "People's Budget" that serves their needs instead of funding cops and jails. The People's Budget includes demands for housing, health care, childcare, raises and improved conditions for city workers, and more. Durham Beyond Policing has also gathered more than 500 signatures from the community where the new headquarters is to be built, calling for the immediate end to the city's plans and support for a People's Budget.

Pickets and other actions are planned to mobilize the widespread opposition to the new cop castle and fight for a People's Budget. □

Food workers vote to strike Kroger

By Workers World Staff

In a fabulous display of working-class power, hundreds of members of the Food and Commercial Workers Local 400 voted unanimously May 18 in Salem, Va., to reject a rotten Kroger contract proposal and authorize their bargaining committee to call a strike. Local 400 members, many of whom drove hundreds of miles to vote, are working at 41 Kroger retail food stores from eastern Tennessee to West Virginia and southwest and central Virginia.

Before the vote, Kroger had said it's latest contract proposal was its "last, best

offer." After the vote, Kroger agreed to resume bargaining with Local 400 on May 23-24 and to extend the previous contract until June 4.

UFCW members were backed up at the voting site by numerous labor and community supporters, including members of the Coalition For Justice from Blacksburg; Communication Workers who are now striking Verizon; and the Southern Workers Assembly. All of them had support signs and held a banner reading "Solidarity Forever: We Support Kroger Workers."

A UFCW Local 400 statement after

the vote noted, "Kroger's latest proposal would have provided only slight wage increases and no paid sick days for store associates. It also fell short of renewing the company's commitment to providing health insurance for its retirees."

"By rejecting this insulting offer and voting to authorize a strike," the statement continued, "we sent a strong, clear message to Kroger: We demand a fair deal and we are willing to fight for it." (ufcw400.org)

While Kroger offered Local 400 members only a 25-cents-an-hour wage increase over the next four years, the

company gave CEO Rodney McMullen a 17 percent raise to \$11.2 million a year. Other executives also received millions in pay raises. Kroger is now the largest retail food chain in the U.S., after buying Harris Teeter for cash in 2013. Kroger made over \$2.4 billion in profits in 2015.

Local 400 members are now engaging in a variety of workplace actions, including outreach to Kroger customers in stores, and external community outreach as part of the current contract campaign.

For more information and how to support Local 400, visit facebook.com/UFCW400 and ufcw400.org.

Police chief fired; #Frisco500 win

By **Dave Welsh**
San Francisco

May 19 — It’s less than a month since the “Frisco Five” began a hunger strike with a single demand: Police Chief Greg Suhr resign or be fired. For five years this chief has been crying crocodile tears while justifying every police killing of a Black or Latino/a person. For five years, this chief has been vigilantly protected by the mayor, the media and the city’s Democratic political establishment.

This afternoon the mayor fired him. “We know the power of the people made this happen,” said a spokeswoman for the Frisco Five, whose hunger strike lasted 17 days until they were hospitalized. “We have won this battle, but the war is not yet over.”

The fast sparked a surge of furious, non-stop protests, including a march of 300, led by the Frisco Five in wheelchairs, from Hunger Strike HQ at Mission

Police Station to a rally of nearly 1,000 at City Hall. Their banner said it all: “Black & Brown Unity against Police Impunity.”

The Five in their wheelchairs then disrupted the Board of Supervisors meeting — challenging the board to go beyond generalities and actually demand that the chief be fired. A week later, four of the supervisors did just that, adding to the growing chorus.

What may have been a decisive moment came on May 6, when hundreds of loudly chanting protesters took over City Hall and occupied it for seven hours, refusing to leave until the chief was fired. Called the #Frisco500, they held their ground after closing time, until sheriff’s deputies brutally removed them by 10:30 p.m., making 33 arrests.

SFPD kills again: Jessica Williams — #SayHerName

Earlier today, a police sergeant fired one shot at Jessica Williams, 29, a Black

woman, apparently after she refused to comply with police orders. She died in the hospital. Police claim she was driving a stolen car in the historically African-American Bayview district.

“It was her execution that finally triggered Chief Suhr’s resignation,” wrote J.P. Massar, an intrepid blogger who puts out timely reports about the people’s welfare. Massar denounced “a police culture that allows firing-squad executions and then has the Chief claim immediately that they are justified.

“The Anti-Police-Terror Project, based in Oakland, was on the job almost immediately as the news of the shooting shot across the twitterverse. They know that in cases like this the police are likely more interested in suppressing evidence and intimidating witnesses, not seeking the truth.”

A group of organizations, including the APTP, Frisco500, The Last 3% of SF, #DoNoHarmCoalition and Black Lives

Matter Bay Area, quickly organized a nighttime vigil for Williams near where she was shot.

The online publication 48 Hills posted this: “Another young person of color dead. And still, nobody held accountable.”

SF Public Defender Jeff Adachi wrote: “It is unacceptable for police encounters with unarmed citizens to end in bullet wounds and body bags. ... I am deeply disturbed by reports that the young woman gunned down today was driving away from officers. She was entitled to due process and above all, she was entitled to her life.” Adachi has requested that the California Attorney General’s Office “open its own civil rights investigation into the SF Police Department.”

Unfortunately, current Attorney General Kamala Harris, who is now a Democratic Party candidate for U.S. Senate, has refused to prosecute any police officer in California for killing unarmed Black and Brown people, despite many requests. □

Fort McMurray fire

An ecological and financial disaster for workers

By **G. Dunkel**

The fire that began on May 1 southwest of Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada, has consumed over a million acres of Canadian territory, the size of Rhode Island, and is still burning as of May 23. Only a good soaking rain and cool weather will put it out — something unlikely until the fall.

When, after a few days, the fire reached Fort McMurray, a small, diverse city of nearly 90,000 people, Albertan provincial officials then called for a “mandatory evacuation.” There is only one road in and out of the city, which was created to house those servicing the tar sands sites just to its north. Work camps near Fort McMurray were also evacuated as a precaution.

The Fort McMurray sands produce about a quarter of Canada’s oil. Economic analysts expect this prolonged shutdown will significantly impact Canada’s gross domestic product.

The fire spread so rapidly that 25,000 people had to flee north; most evacuees

went south, however, where the bulk of Alberta’s people live. Some people left with just the clothes on their backs, but there were no deaths due to fire. Two people fleeing died in a car crash. Families were split up and scattered around, and many people needed counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder, especially those who escaped through a raging fire.

Some people from First Nation (Indigenous) communities were evacuated to homes by boat.

The initial estimates for property lost that are covered by insurance was \$6 billion (Canadian). But the Canadian media have stopped reporting the damage costs because the extent of the destruction in Fort McMurray is still unclear. Some neighborhoods were completely destroyed, some partially and some were almost completely spared.

What this means is that nearly 100,000 people — mainly workers — lost their homes and now will have to discover what insurance companies will offer

to reimburse them. These companies benefit from a policy of “deny, delay and dispute.” Renters and people living in the Fort McMurray First Nation generally had no insurance, and many of the First Nation offices and community buildings in the city were destroyed.

First Nation communities in Alberta, both north and south of the city, have provided significant amounts of aid — water, food, gasoline — to the refugees. Fort McKay First Nation, about 90 miles south of Fort McMurray, sheltered 3,000 refugees. Alberta is about 6 percent Indigenous.

According to the May 22 Financial Post, many of the skilled trades who do summer work in the oil sands weren’t hired and are unemployed when they had expected to be working.

Firefighters were able to protect most of the infrastructure. About 90 percent of the existing homes in Fort McMurray have had their electricity and gas restored, and the Albertan premier has

announced that a phased reoccupation of the city will begin around June 1. Air quality is still poor; one day it was so high that emergency workers in the city needed respirators.

Causes of the fire

Fort McMurray is in the midst of a boreal forest, similar to those covering about 60 percent of Canada’s land area. Boreal forests contain mainly conifers, whose needles, when they drop off, are highly flammable under dry conditions.

This past winter in western Canada, there was almost no snow. This spring’s warm weather due to climate change and a strong El Niño left the floor of the boreal forests particularly dry. A few lightning strikes were enough to set off this huge fire.

The carbon pumped into the atmosphere by the producing and burning of coal and oil, including oil from tar sands, is one of the root causes of climate change. □

Washington state

Environmental, Indigenous groups protest climate change

By **Jim McMahan**
Anacortes, Wash.

From May 13 through May 15, the group “Break Free Pacific Northwest” held a weekend of actions to oppose global climate change, on and around March Point, a peninsula where two huge oil refineries owned by Tesoro Corp. and Shell Oil are located. The peninsula, which is near Anacortes, sticks out for three miles into the Salish Sea, also known as Puget Sound. The actions included a march and rally led by Indigenous people, kayak actions on the water, a railroad track blockage with 52 arrests, and a three-day climate conference.

Break Free PNW is composed of at least 40 environmental and social justice groups in alliance with Native peoples from around the Salish Sea area. The movement is fighting to break free from fossil fuel use. But “the U.S. is the



PHOTO: ELLIOT STOLLER VIA TRUTH-OUT.ORG

one who’s kept climate negotiations from having enforcement mechanisms,” said Sarrah Tekola from the allied organization, “Women of Color Speak Out.”

BreakFreePNW.org says, “A just transition from fossil fuels provides real alternatives to communities dependent on dirty infrastructure, protects workers’ job security as fossil fuel use declines ... supporting the communities most

impacted by fossil fuels, here and around the world.”

Some 150 participants seized the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) tracks leading into March Point as the weekend got underway. The next day, Saturday, May 14, was the Indigenous Day of Action. The local Swinomish People and other Native peoples led a march of nearly 1,000 people for three miles up March Point, where a rally was held with speakers, dancers and drummers.

Although March Point was on reservation land, the federal government took March Point from the Swinomish in the 19th century. At this action, people in a hundred kayaks came over from Anacortes to demonstrate and converged with the rally.

On May 15, state, local and BNSF cops with guns drawn came and arrested 52 demonstrators who had pitched their occupation tents on the tracks for nearly two days. No trains had been able to come through during this time. The remaining 100 occupiers, in defiance, marched up the tracks a ways to attempt a second occupation, but the cops got in front of them. Those arrested were released after six hours.

Organizers are committed to stopping all ten large terminal or infrastructure projects for coal, liquefied natural gas, oil, etc., scheduled for the Northwest. The Lummi Nation was honored at the Saturday rally for stopping the building of a proposed massive coal port on their land by the SSA Marine company.

Break Free events were held around the globe from May 3 through May 15, with 30,000 participants in 20 civil disobedience actions, according to the BreakFree2016 website. □

Verizon strike demonstrates its effectiveness

By Martha Grevatt

May 22 — “While union workers insist that the strike will impair the company’s customer service calls and equipment installation, Verizon has assured its consumers that this won’t happen,” wrote the April 14 Wall Street Daily. “With little to no detectable change in service Verizon’s stock should see the same minimal change, as the product itself won’t suffer any deterioration.”

This typical capitalist bravado, put out a day after the Verizon strike began, was based on Verizon’s claims of having trained 10,000 potential scabs to do the work of “those who have opted to picket.”

The initial optimism of Wall Street is now being pummeled by a highly effective strike, currently in its sixth week. Stock value is falling as customer complaints skyrocket. Verizon has acknowledged that large numbers of residential customers are switching providers. Municipalities, including seven in Massachusetts, are following suit. Small businesses are blaming Verizon, not the unions, for the harm caused them by the company’s failure to provide necessary services.

The overwhelming majority of the 39,000 strikers, members of the Communications Workers and the International Electrical Workers, continue to “opt to picket,” with only handfuls here and there crossing the lines. In fact, picketing is the only option for these workers.

To counter the company lies in the media, the CWA launched a radio ad campaign stating: “The system is rigged. Rich get richer while the rest of us struggle to get by. This isn’t theory, it’s real. Verizon makes \$1.5 billion a month in profits and top executives pay themselves nearly 50



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

million a year while trying to take away job security from workers. That’s why Verizon workers are on strike.”

The state steps in

The strike’s effectiveness prompted U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez to insert himself into the bargaining process. Both parties were called together to meet in the presence of Perez and experienced federal mediator Allison Beck under the auspices of the Department of Labor. There they agreed that no public statements would be made during the talks. Under what amounts to a gag order, the unions cannot inform rank-and-file members of how — or if — the talks are progressing.

Why would such a high-ranking member of the capitalist state intervene in a labor dispute between a private employer and two private sector unions? One factor might be the location of the strike. New York is home to Wall Street. If the strike continues, it might not just be restaurants, shops and doctors’ offices having to get by without phone or internet service — big banks could be affected.

Moreover, Verizon provides services to the Pentagon. Wireline workers are on strike in Washington, D.C., and all of Virginia. Verizon has contracts with military bases across the country. If the strike drags on, war plans could be disrupted!

The CWA and IBEW should not put too



WW PHOTO: TONY MURPHY

much faith in the Democratic administration. It’s worth remembering that in 1978 President Jimmy Carter invoked Taft-Hartley — as President Harry Truman did decades before him — and wanted to use federal troops against striking coal miners.

Community-labor solidarity keeps growing

Dozens of solidarity actions were held from coast to coast on May 21 as part of “Children’s Day.” Children of New York strikers took turns leading chants and picketing in front of a Brooklyn Verizon wireless store, while 200 CWA members and supporters chanted along from the sidewalk and street. One picket captain told Workers World, “People in the neighborhood don’t cross the picket line.” The union treated the children to balloons, popcorn, cotton candy and ordered lunch for everyone.

CWA District 1 Legislative/Political Director Bob Masters introduced Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams and NYC Central Labor Council President Vincent Alvarez and recognized guests from the United Federation of Teachers. Activists also came from the Hunter College Internationalist Club, Parents to Improve School Transportation and the People’s Power Assembly. Announcements and conversations indicated that the unions are preparing for a long battle against Verizon’s “corporate greed.”

Members of CWA locals 2201 and 2204



WW PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

continue to stand strong on the picket lines across Virginia, receiving broad labor and community support. The week of May 15 numerous solidarity actions took place. In Roanoke, the Citizens’ Convention and Plowshare Peace & Justice Center began sponsoring a weekly picket line.

The Southern Workers Assembly continues to join picket lines, email appeals for strike funds and assist with visibility and outreach work. Many other unions and labor-community organizations are contributing financially and providing much-needed supplies for striking workers.

In a show of solidarity, CWA strikers came out to support the Food and Commercial Workers Local 400 during their strike vote May 18 in Salem, Va. Local 400 members voted down a horrendous contract proposal from Kroger and granted their bargaining team the right to call a strike if necessary.

The Blacksburg Coalition For Justice, the Southern Workers Assembly and other labor-community organizations hoisted banners and placards to show support for the CWA-IBEW striking workers at Verizon and the UFCW Local 400 members in their contract battle. This solidarity boosted the spirits of CWA, IBEW and UFCW members and their supporters and received widespread coverage in both corporate and social media.

Members and leaders from Pennsylvania, Delaware, D.C., Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia will attend the next major solidarity action in southwest Virginia, a May 28 rally in Roanoke. For more information, visit bit.ly/22kHNfB.

Sara Catalinotto and WW staff in Virginia contributed to this article.

Detroit activists oppose increased fracking waste

By Mike Shane
Detroit

Detroit residents and community activists have been organizing since last year to oppose the increased processing and dumping of hazardous and radioactive fracking waste at a US Ecology facility in their neighborhood. On May 18, members of the Coalition to Oppose the Expansion of US Ecology (COE-USE) joined with other activists at a demonstration at the main office of the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. They opposed the dumping of fracking and other industrial waste liquids into Detroit’s sewer system while also demanding a moratorium on residential water shutoffs.

USE operates several hazardous waste processing facilities in Detroit. The company has requested a permit from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to increase tenfold the processing and disposal of radioactive and carcinogenic fracking waste at its US Ecology North facility, which is located in the middle of Detroit at 6520 Georgia St.

At a meeting with community activists on May 11, MDEQ representatives stated that they anticipate approving the permit on Oct. 1 because what USE wants to do is legal. This is the same state agency that played a major role in poisoning the water and the people of Flint. This is the same MDEQ that has allowed southwest Detroit to be the most polluted zip code in Michigan for decades, despite strong

and vigorous opposition from residents. Many Detroiters have no confidence in the MDEQ, and, in fact, accuse it of a pattern of environmental racism.

The fracking waste originates in Pennsylvania and is created by the oil industry in their intense drive to extract oil and gas regardless of the adverse effects on people and the environment. Unable to dispose of this hazardous waste in Pennsylvania or nearby West Virginia and Ohio, the oil industry came to Detroit to dump its poison.

The fracking waste is composed of a cocktail of poisonous “proprietary” or secret chemicals mixed with sand and water that is used to hydraulically fracture underground shale deposits containing oil and natural gas. The sand and water solution is injected into the shale under high pressure, hydraulically fracturing the rock and releasing the trapped oil and gas. The sand and water that return to the earth’s surface have picked up an unknown mixture of metals and radioactive compounds and this frack waste must be disposed of.

The fracking industry is exempt from the legal requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, due to the passage of the “Halliburton” loophole of the 2005 National Energy Act. This loophole, engineered by then Vice President Dick Cheney, exempted the oil and gas industry from environmental regulations and resulted in a huge increase in fracking and subsequent pollution of water resources wherever fracking has occurred.

A ‘hazardous chemical nightmare’

Currently, USE Detroit North is permitted to discharge 300,000 gallons of toxic chemicals and metals such as cadmium, cyanide and lead into the public sewer system. According to a fact sheet issued by COE-USE, “USE has not only requested ... to process and store ten times this amount, they are also requesting [dumping] a nightmare of new hazardous chemicals” at the Detroit facility.

The Great Lakes Environmental Law Center, in a statement issued on Sept. 11, warned: “The sheer volume of storage for new waste and the number of new chemicals proposed to be handled and stored in connection with the expansion of this facility ... is staggering. Many of the hazardous waste chemicals ... are known human carcinogens such as arsenic, benzene, and vinyl chloride. Others like dioxin and phthalates have potential to disrupt human hormonal processes, affect the reproductive system, and cause immune system problems. In short, the hazardous wastes accepted at this facility are the worst and most dangerous known to [humanity].”

Recognizing the weaknesses of Environmental Protection Agency and MDEQ regulations, COE-USE has written a letter to Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, executive director and health officer of the Detroit Health Department, requesting that he block the requested USE permit on public health



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

Protest against fracking waste expansion in Detroit neighborhood, May 8.

grounds. The letter, authored by Diane Weckerle, stated in part: “When I worked as a public health nurse in the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program of the Detroit Health Department, every zip code was considered high risk due to the age of the homes. And every child had an elevated lead level. The harm this causes a child’s ability to learn, their health and their behavior is well documented. We’ve learned more recently that this harm can affect DNA and future generations. The legacy of lead poisoning and the infrastructure of water pipes must also be considered before allowing more toxins into the environment.”

The next demonstration in opposition to the USE expansion will take place on May 26 at 4 p.m. at the MDEQ Detroit office located at 3060 West Grand Blvd. □

HONORING PAST REVOLUTIONAR

Black Liberation & the re-emergence of MALCOLM X

By Lamont Lilly Lilly is WWP's vice presidential candidate in the 2016 elections. The following article is based on a talk given at a Workers World Party forum in New York City on May 20. To view a video of the talk, go to youtu.be/AfrZ54-3BCK.

Thursday, May 19, was the 91st revolutionary birthday of Brother Minister El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz — Brother Malcolm X. Born on May 19, 1925, he was brutally assassinated at the Audubon Ballroom on Feb. 21, 1965, in New York City. It would be just like Malcolm to request that we not only lift his name in love and respect but also the names of Yuri Kochiyama, Lorraine Hansberry and Brother Ho Chi Minh, all of whom share his birth date.

The way Malcolm was evolving, he would want us to recognize all their contributions to the struggle. This was the same Malcolm X who said, “I, for one, will join in with anyone, I don’t care what color you are, as long as you want to change this miserable condition.”

Unfortunately, comrades, we’re still living in many of the same conditions that Malcolm was preaching about in 1964 and 1965: racism and Jim Crow; police murders of Black men, Black women and Black babies; church burnings; mass incarceration; poor housing; and third-class living conditions. Tamir Rice was no different than Emmett Till. The poverty then is the same poverty now, even worse. The same imperialism. The same police state.

But Brother Malcolm did leave a blueprint of what needs to be constructed through work and collective struggle.

New generation of freedom fighters emerges

That’s the time we’re living in right now — a renewed period of work and struggle. A new generation of young freedom fighters has stepped forward, comrades! We’re talking about teenagers and youth. And Brother Malcolm X is right back in the swing of things, right back on the front lines from the depths of his grave.

No one is being studied and paid more homage right now than Brother Malcolm X, at least among the movement’s Black youth. Sister Beyoncé put Brother Malcolm X front and center on her new album “Lemonade,” which instantly went global.

The album features Malcolm X live, as if he were talking right in your left ear: “The most disrespectful person in America is the Black woman. The most unprotected person in America is the Black woman. The most neglected person in America is the Black woman.”

When I heard that live vocal sample on the album, I



couldn’t help but think of Sister Sandra Bland, murdered by police in a Texas jail cell; Rekia Boyd; Renisha McBride; and seven-year-old Aiyana Stanley-Jones, murdered by Detroit police while she was sleeping. For all the criticism she’s received, for Sister Beyoncé to put Malcolm X on her album like that was actually quite revolutionary.

As of last month, you have Black girls — girls of color all over the world, as young as six years old — googling Malcolm X now, reading about him, writing about him, learning about him, listening to his speeches. Not in the public school system, but on their own independent, free-thinking terms.

Right here in Manhattan somewhere, there’s a crew of 12-year-old Black girls braiding each other’s hair now and discussing Malcolm X’s political theory. That kind of enthusiasm for Malcolm X hasn’t happened in 40 years, comrades.

A good friend of mine, Dr. Ashley Farmer, who’s currently working on her postdoctoral degree at Duke University, just published a major academic article on Malcolm X. It’s entitled, “The Many Women Mentors of Malcolm X.” A must-read, it was published via the African American Intellectual History Society on May 3 and has been widely circulated ever since.

Oppressed youth seek guidance from Malcolm

As the state has clamped down and decent employment has dried up — as the conditions have worsened and white supremacy has once again mounted an ugly surge via the Trump campaign and the Ku Klux Klan’s

new membership drive down South — the oppressed youth have sought guidance in an old friend. The youth in Ferguson, the youth in Baltimore, the youth in Palestine, Black girls and Black boys are again discovering Malcolm X for the first time.

Not only was Malcolm ahead of his time regarding the role of women, he was thinking, traveling and organizing internationally in the early 1960s, long before social media or the Internet.

Today, we have Facebook and Twitter, which is how our Palestinian comrades were assisting the struggle in Ferguson during the 2014 rebellion. Malcolm didn’t have that, but he did organize a very similar network of friends, allies and comrades — in Cuba, Ghana, Egypt, Algeria.

When I was in Lebanon last year for the International Forum for Justice in Palestine, it was the youth from Algeria and Tunisia who knew all about Malcolm X. I learned firsthand that Malcolm X is still a bridge of international working-class struggle.

Malcolm stated in 1964: “It is incorrect to classify the revolt of the Negro as simply a racial conflict of black against white, or as a purely American problem. Rather, we are today seeing a global rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter.”

One of the current and most beautiful aspects of the Black Lives Matter movement is this new emphasis on things “Black.” Not only do Black lives matter, but the masses of Black youth are now “unapologetically Black,” redefining what Black Power means for a new generation.

Why the U.S. incinerated Hiroshima and Nagasaki

By Stephen Millies

Barack Obama is scheduled to visit Hiroshima on May 27, the first sitting U.S. president to do so. Obama’s visit to the Japanese city has revived the question of whether killing hundreds of thousands of people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atom bombs was a military necessity.

Dwight Eisenhower didn’t think so. The former president and five-star general wrote in his autobiography “Mandate for Change” that dropping atom bombs on Japan “was completely unnecessary.” Ike claimed that he said this to War Secretary Henry Stimson.

General Curtis LeMay told a Sept. 20, 1945, news conference, “The atomic bomb had nothing to do with the end of the war at all.” Even President Truman declared that dropping the bombs “did not win the war.” (“Hiroshima in America, Fifty Years of Denial” by Robert Lifton and Greg Mitchell)

A big reason why Japan surrendered was that the Soviet Army and Mongolian, Korean and Chinese allies rolled through northeastern China and all of Korea. This not only destroyed the biggest Japanese army but threatened a socialist revolution in Japan itself.

Yet talking heads at Fox News still claim that burning babies alive in Hiroshima and Nagasaki “saved the lives of U.S. soldiers” by averting an amphibious invasion of Japan.

Complete barbarism

After breaching the walls of a besieged city, Roman soldiers killed or enslaved every human being they could find. Even cats were sliced in two. Among their victims was the famous mathematician Archimedes, killed by a

legionnaire after Syracuse in Sicily was overrun in 212 BCE (Before the Common Era).

Two thousand years later, international law was supposed to prevent such war crimes. Nazi leaders were hanged in Nuremberg for deliberately killing civilians.

But U.S. war leaders committed war crimes, too. General LeMay burned alive over 100,000 people during the March 9-10, 1945, firebombing of Tokyo.

At least 200,000 people, including thousands of children, were killed by the atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, and Nagasaki three days later. Even decades later people died from radiation-caused illnesses.

A diplomat from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea told this writer that 30,000 of the people killed in Hiroshima were Korean forced laborers. Truman murdered these Korean workers held hostage by the Japanese emperor and big business.

President Teddy Roosevelt turned Korea over to the Japanese Empire in the 1905 peace treaty, signed in Portsmouth, N.H., that ended the Russian-Japanese war. Teddy got a Nobel Peace Prize for his crime.

People’s Korea has found it absolutely necessary to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself against the Pentagon. This is not only because of U.S. nuclear missiles aimed at Korea.

At least 4 million Koreans were killed during the Korean war. Using napalm and white phosphorous bombs on human flesh didn’t satisfy U.S. generals and politicians. Then Texas Congressperson Lloyd Bentsen can be seen in “The Atomic Cafe” demanding that atom bombs be dropped on Koreans.

This didn’t stop Bentsen from being the Democratic candidate for vice president in 1988 or from serving as President Bill Clinton’s first Treasury Secretary. Korea also remembers the Hiroshima holocaust.

The Manhattan Project’s real target

More than 100,000 workers were mobilized by the U.S. Army’s Manhattan Project to build the death bombs. At least \$2 billion was spent, which, as a percentage of the U.S. economy, is equal to \$180 billion today.

The excuse for the Manhattan Project was that the U.S. had to “beat Hitler” at developing the atom bomb. This was the reason given to scientists like the young physicist and future Nobel Prize winner Richard Feynman.

But the real target of the Manhattan Project was the Soviet Union.

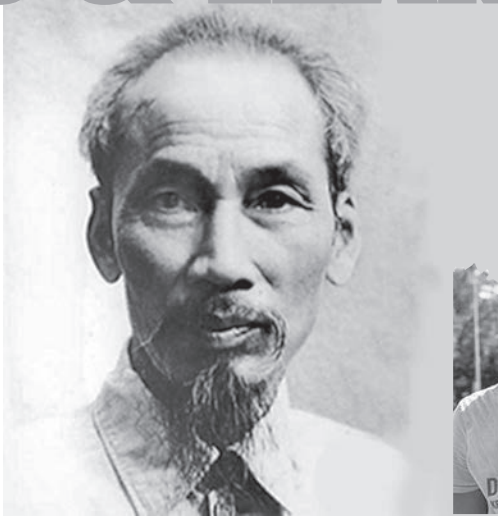
According to William Shirer in “The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich,” U.S. brass hats expected the Soviet Union to collapse within six weeks of Hitler’s invasion in June 1941.

A representative of Kansas City’s corrupt Pendergast Machine — Sen. Harry Truman — declared, “If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany, and that way let them kill as many as possible.” (New York Times, June 24, 1941)

The Soviet Union didn’t collapse. At a cost of 27 million Soviet lives, Nazi forces were forced back from Stalingrad to Berlin. It was the Red Army of workers and peasants that liberated Auschwitz on Jan. 27, 1945.

Despite pleas from Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, War Secretary Stimson refused to bomb the rail-

RIES & LEARNING FROM HISTORY



Vietnamese revolutionary leader Tribute to **HO CHI MINH**

By **L.T. Pham**

L.T. Pham is a Vietnamese youth and a leader of the Durham, N.C., branch of WWP.

The following article is based on remarks made at a Workers World Party forum in New York City on May 20. To view a video of the talk, visit youtu.be/tpmod2HOY74.

Beautiful Black Power, Black pride

If you haven't noticed, Black youth are now wearing their hair natural again. The young sisters today have said the hell with straightening their hair. They're rocking their "locs," braids and cornrows — the short doobies, their natural coils and twists. It's a reflection of a political and cultural shift.

If you don't have any pride in who you are, how in hell can you be a good freedom fighter? If you don't love the people, how can you serve the people? You have to love yourself and love the people, then you'll have a cause to fight for — a worthy cause, a noble cause, a righteous cause — the kind of cause that will make you sacrifice for the next generation — out of love, out of pride and solidarity. We learned that from Brother Malcolm X.

Last year, during the Movement for Black Lives Convening in Cleveland, everybody there was Black and proud! When I say "proud," I don't mean the arrogant kind of proud. I mean the "Shut Shit Down" kind of proud — the kind of proud that makes you stand up and fight back instead of laying down and begging. The kind of proud that makes you defend yourself, resist and hold your head high, despite the teargas, despite the tanks. The kind of proud that makes you get organized and take over highways and universities.

It was Malcolm X who gave us that, comrades — not only 50 years ago, but today in 2016. And the young people have taken that and run with it. So let's help them go as far as they can with it. Cointelpro [the murderous U.S. government program which targeted progressives and revolutionaries, especially African Americans and other people of color] thought they had killed Malcolm, but the youth are keeping him alive. In the words of El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, "The future belongs to those who prepare for it today. In all our deeds, the proper value and respect for time determines success or failure." □

road lines to Auschwitz that took millions of people to their death.

USSR deterred nuclear war

The Manhattan Project was Wall Street's response to the phoenix-like resurrection of the Red Army. The U.S. and British ruling classes dreaded Soviet forces marching all the way to Paris and being welcomed by workers.

Capitalists also feared a revival of the German working class who had been crushed by Hitler.

During World War II, Time magazine publisher Henry Luce proclaimed an upcoming "American Century." The Pentagon was planning to confront the USSR not just with the bomb, but also with military forces numbering 16 million GIs and the biggest air force in history.

This immense power was also to be used against the Chinese Revolution and as a threat to all oppressed people.

Super-racist U.S. General George Patton talked about rearming Nazi SS troops and marching to the Volga. Winston Churchill considered an invasion of the Soviet Union in "Operation Unthinkable."

The U.S. had half the world's industrial capacity in 1945. President Kennedy correctly noted in 1963 that the Nazi destruction of the Soviet Union would have equaled everything in the United States east of the Mississippi River being destroyed.

But the millions of GIs whom Wall Street wanted to use against the Soviet Union wanted to go home. Even though it was still a Jim Crow army, tens of thousands of soldiers demonstrated in Paris, Manila and other cities demanding to go home. This GI revolt was the greatest gift of the U.S. working class to the world revolution — and probably the least known.

May 19 marked the birthday of many revolutionary leaders, among them Ho Chi Minh, Malcolm X and Yuri Kochiyama.

They all shared a commitment to fighting imperialism and national oppression through an internationalist perspective. Ho Chi Minh, or Uncle Ho, was a Vietnamese Marxist-Leninist born in 1890.

In 1941, he was the founder of the Viet Minh Independence Movement that forced the French out of the country in 1954 through a huge guerrilla force that took extremely strategic actions.

There is much from the life and work of Uncle Ho and the Vietnamese people's struggle against imperialism that remains central to our fight today.

Opposed U.S. lynchings

First and foremost, having an internationalist perspective is key. We should always strive to fight for and with workers and oppressed people globally. As imperialism takes root on every corner of this earth, so does resistance and militant action to defend ourselves and our communities. The massive violence that capitalism inflicts, the unending stolen labor, the growing destruction and extraction of resources, and capital made possible by the poor is not something we take lightly. Only a globally united front can resist the ongoing colonial grabs for Africa, the disgusting occupation of Palestine and the unending war waged against Black and Brown people at home and abroad.

Ho Chi Minh drew these connections in 1924 when he wrote about the lynchings of Black people in the U.S. He recognized that Black people experience a deep and unique national oppression caused by capitalism that has implications for colonized people all around the world. To know this means we should always be ready to defend the struggle for Black liberation.

Secondly, in studying the life of Uncle Ho, we see that it is extremely necessary not only to have a political program, understand and practice organization and study Marxism-Leninism, but we must also bring this to the masses. Our duty is not only to teach but to learn from the people whose struggle, labor and sacrifice will

bring about revolution. Communists and revolutionaries alone cannot fight this war. We must be where the people are, we must build up the skills of the masses to claim this war as their own, and we must believe the masses, when in struggle, armed with their own tools and grasp of socialist revolution, will bring down this criminal system.

Ho Chi Minh died in 1969, six years before he was able to see the unification of his country and the liberation of his people from U.S. imperialism. But to this day, his critical role in the formation of the National Liberation Front continues to be celebrated in Vietnam and across the world.

Global, multinational working-class solidarity

Lastly, we learn from Uncle Ho: solidarity forever. For there is only one working class and that is the global, multinational working class. And we have a shared enemy and that is imperialism, which depends on the festering racism and national oppression, anti-LGBTQ bigotry and anti-immigrant bigotry that we see today.

Ho Chi Minh, through his support for the Black liberation struggle and the demand for communist parties to take action against the attacks on oppressed people living in colonies, emphasized the need for supporting oppressed people's right to self-determination. Solidarity with Uncle Ho and the Vietnamese people made possible an impressive people's army engaged in guerrilla warfare against the French and the U.S. This has inspired oppressed people globally to fight back with militancy and without apology.

The life and legacy of Uncle Ho live on and stand shoulder to shoulder with the life and legacy of Malcolm X, who fought to his very last breath.

May we continue to pay tribute to Uncle Ho and Malcolm X in our struggles in the streets. May we continue to fight in their spirit, as internationalists and revolutionaries. May we continue to make sacrifices, put our bodies on the line and dedicate our lives to revolution.

Long live Ho Chi Minh!

Long live Malcolm X!

Long live internationalism!



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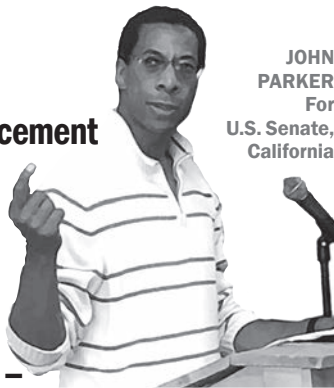
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Despite billions of aid lavished on Chiang Kai-shek, the Pentagon couldn't stop the Chinese Revolution.

The only reason that a nuclear holocaust hasn't destroyed humankind is that the Soviet Union, at tremendous cost, was able to develop a deterrent nuclear force against a Pentagon attack.

Strategic Air Command head Curtis LeMay and Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Lyman Lemnitzer both wanted to launch a nuclear first strike on the Soviet Union. In 1968 LeMay was George Wallace's running mate during the segregationist's fascist presidential campaign.

LeMay actually had hydrogen-bomb-equipped planes continually in the air ready to attack. Inevitable crashes happened, including one off Spain's Mediterranean coast in 1966. It took 12 weeks and over 20 naval ships to recover the bomb.

A 1958 accident dropped a Mark 15 thermonuclear bomb off the Atlantic Coast of Georgia. It has never been recovered.

That unexploded bomb is a real threat to people in the U.S., not the small number of nuclear weapons that People's Korea needs to defend itself. □

Philippine election and U.S. imperialism

By Carl Lewis

In the years following the Spanish-American War of 1898, U.S. imperialism consolidated its political, economic and military domination over Spain’s former colony, the Philippines.

The Philippine revolution had begun in earnest in 1896 as a guerilla movement against the Spanish empire. The U.S. posed as the “savior” of the people from Spanish rule, promising to usher in “democracy and liberty.” Betrayal, arrogance and subterfuge led to subjugation, despite the heroic efforts of those resisting imperialism and racism.

The yoke of neocolonialism went hand in hand with feudalism and a comprador ruling class. Although Philippine nationalists fought heroically against U.S. subjugation and for authentic independence and self-determination, neocolonialism remained in the saddle.

The U.S. military led a brutal pacification campaign to quell a rebellion that eventually claimed 1.5 million lives. Using tactics similar to what they did later in Vietnam, they created “strategic hamlets,” or reconcentrados. Water boarding and a scorched earth policy were the trademarks of imperialist occupation. (Bobby Tuazon, Bulatat.com)

Expanding the policies of Manifest Destiny and the Monroe Doctrine from the Western Hemisphere to Asia, this burst of U.S. aggression around the turn of the century also led to the exploitation of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Hawaii for their natural resources and cheap labor. The Philippines and Hawaii would serve as a bridgehead for U.S. economic hegemony

in the Asian-Pacific — what is now called “Pivoting to Asia.”

The Philippines became a virtual aircraft carrier for the U.S. military in order to guarantee U.S. control throughout the Pacific. The U.S. also made sure to create and nurture a comprador and feudal elite government that would build up the armed forces of the Philippines and a large police force to oppress the people.

World War II and its aftermath

The Japanese invasion of the Philippines during World War II led to an anti-colonial resistance movement headed by Hukbalahap Mapagpalaya ng Bayan, the People’s Liberation Army. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, they fought the Japanese heroically. The PLA attempt to form an alliance against Japanese rule with the U.S. Armed Forces Far East was rejected. The anti-imperialist movement had to procure its weapons from Japanese soldiers and by raiding ammunition dumps.

By 1946 the PLA numbered 15,000 fighters. When the Philippines gained formal independence from the U.S. in 1947, it was on the basis of neocolonialism, allowing U.S. Naval, Air Force and Army bases throughout the islands. A pacification program as well as a counterinsurgency policy by U.S.-backed President Ramon Magsaysay hurt the movement, especially when a minority of the CPP opted for electoral struggle.

The further decline of the agrarian economy, massive inflation, obscene corruption and nepotism were hallmarks of Magsaysay’s successors. President Ferdinand Marcos ruled as virtual dictator

for 21 years starting in 1965. He imposed nine years of martial law, beginning in September 1972, and sponsored the Bagong Lipunan (New Society), which for all practical purposes was a neo-fascist manifesto that outlawed strikes and muzzled the press.

Afraid of rising opposition to Marcos and a possible split in the military, Ronald Reagan himself told Marcos to step down in 1986. The U.S. finally opted for a more liberal-sounding and pliable candidate, Corazon Aquino.

In December 1968, Jose Maria Sison reestablished the Communist Party of the Philippines. The CPP received its impetus from the massive popular unrest in the country, especially among the peasantry. In March 1969, the New People’s Army was established from the remnants of the old Hukbalahap. And in 1973 a broad popular organization was established called the National Democratic Front.

Election of Duterte

This year, the Philippine presidential elections in May caused tremors in the capitalist world, especially in the U.S. The winner, Rodrigo Duterte, a “shoot from the hip” populist, describes himself as “the first president of the left.” (The Guardian, May 10) U.S. imperialism regards him as an unknown quantity, especially after a record voter turnout of more than 80 percent of Filipinos.

What is critical to the U.S. military is the “Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement,” signed in 2014 with the previous Philippine government. After years of mass opposition, the Pentagon was forced to evacuate its bases in the Philip-

pines in 1991. The EDCA allowed the U.S. to use its former military bases as staging areas, consistent with the “Pivot to Asia” of the current Obama administration.

Duterte, however, has voiced opposition to the EDCA, as well as the “visiting forces” agreement regarding U.S. military cooperation with the Philippines.

Professor Jose Maria Sison, chairperson of the International League of Peoples Struggle and political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, said the following about the recent elections:

“Apparently foreign monopoly interests and the local oligarchy of big compradors and landlords have advised the Aquino government that it was a better choice to desist from electoral fraud and avoid the risk of widespread and uncontrollable civil strife. They are confident that the Duterte presidency would still be financially and politically manageable by using as a lever the underdevelopment and poverty of the Philippines and the huge foreign debt and total public debt of the Philippines, amounting to more than U.S. \$77 billion and Php 164 trillion respectively. ...

“The CPP has challenged Duterte to assert the national sovereignty of the Filipino people and defend the territorial integrity of the Philippines, to let the toiling masses of workers and peasants empower themselves against the oligarchs, to develop the Philippine economy through national industrialization and genuine land reform, to promote a patriotic and progressive culture, expand the public school system, and foster international solidarity for peace and development.” (tinyurl.com/hq4mscm) □

U.S. missiles put Europe on nuclear frontline

By Manlio Dinucci

At a ribbon cutting ceremony at the airbase of Deveselu in Romania, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg inaugurated the “Aegis Ashore” land-based installation of the U.S. Aegis missile system.

Stoltenberg thanked the United States, because this installation greatly increases its ability to “defend European allies against ballistic missiles outside the Euro-Atlantic area.” He announced the start of work to establish another “Aegis Ashore” in Poland, similar to the one in operation in Romania. This one will also be equipped with Lockheed Martin’s SM-3 interceptor missiles and MK 41 vertical launchers.

The two land-based installations are added to four Aegis ships (also equipped with SM-3 missiles and vertical launchers) which — sent out by the U.S. Navy from the Spanish base of Rota — cross the Mediterranean, Black Sea and Baltic Sea, while linked to a powerful radar system in Turkey and a command center in Germany.

NATO’s secretary general, on the one hand, says that “our missile defense program is a long-term investment against a long-term threat.” On the other hand, he ensures us that “this site in Romania, just as the one in Poland, is not directed against Russia.”

The function of the so-called “Scud” anti-missiles is actually offensive. If the U.S. were able to implement a reliable system capable of intercepting ballistic missiles, it could keep Russia under the threat of a nuclear first strike, relying on the ability of the “Scuds” (shields) to neutralize the effects of retaliation.

In reality, this is not possible at the present stage, because Russia and also China can take various countermeasures, which makes it impossible to intercept all nuclear warheads.

For what then is the Aegis system, which the U.S. is enhancing, being deployed in Europe? Look to Lockheed Martin itself for the explanation. Illustrating the technical features of the MK 41 vertical launch system — the one installed on Aegis missile ships and now even at the land base of Deveselu — the company stresses that it is capable of launching “missiles for every mission: anti-air, anti-ship, anti-submarine and to attack ground targets.” Each launch tube is adaptable to any missile, both to interceptors and to those for a nuclear attack.

Thus, no one can know which missiles are really deployed in vertical launchers at Deveselu or those on board vessels sailing in the Russian territorial waters. Unable to inspect them, Moscow must assume missiles are present that enable a nuclear attack.

Europe thus returns to a climate of Cold War, to the benefit of the U.S., which can thus increase its influence on its European allies.

In the meeting with the leaders of Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway on May 13 in Washington, President Barack Obama denounced “the growing presence and aggressive military posture of Russia in the Baltic-North Sea region” as he reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to “Europe’s collective defense.”

At the same meeting, Obama highlighted the European consensus to maintain sanctions against Russia, praising



in particular Denmark, Finland and Sweden, who, “as members of the EU, strongly support the TTIP [the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership], a treaty that I reaffirm that I want to conclude before the end of year.” We see that Lockheed’s vertical launchers can also contain the TTIP missile.

This article was published in Il Manifesto on May 15. Translation by WW managing editor John Catalinotto. Dinucci is an anti-militarism expert who will expose NATO’s aggressive role at a June 11 conference in Prato, Italy.

WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

“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 at major inline book sellers
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France

Workers battling labor law occupy refineries

By G. Dunkel

Some 220,000 workers hit the streets May 17, with thousands more on picket lines, blockading fuel depots and occupying oil refineries in the ongoing battle against the new anti-labor law. The French government used a rarely invoked feature of the French constitution to force the reactionary law through the National Assembly on May 10 without a vote.

Over 400,000 workers came out on May 19 to protest the law. These are the sixth and seventh national demonstrations against the regressive labor law in the past two months.

The demand of the workers is simple: They want the new labor law completely withdrawn.

Six refineries out of eight are occupied, and most fuel depots in the north and west of France are blockaded. Major ports like Nantes-Saint Nazaire and Rouen are on strike, with other ports shut down. Truck drivers, who have particular grievances over working conditions, are still out.

Even though the workers' struggles have caused disruptions and aggravations for



French workers, students continue protests.

the population, 70 percent of the people in France still oppose the law, according to the General Confederation of Labor (CGT).

The refinery occupations and fuel depot blockades, along with blockades truckers had erected on the roads, have led to major shortages in fuel supplies for cars and trucks. This involves not just gasoline but also diesel fuel, which is used much more in France for both cars and trucks than in the U.S. According to figures as of May

22 from the Ministry of Transportation, 1,612 gas stations out of 12,000 in France are totally or partially dry.

Most of the dry gas stations are in the north and west of the country.

When Prime Minister Manuel Valls was asked what his government was going to do about fuel running short, he mentioned the 90-day supply the French government keeps in emergency stockpiles. When Alain Vidalies, the secretary of state for transports, was asked about the same problem on May 22 on the main evening news program on French TV2, 20 Heures (Eight O'Clock), he said that before touching the emergency fuel, the government would use "the forces of public order" to clear the blockades, but would stay away from the refineries.

Protests throughout France

The May 19 protests took place throughout France. In Nantes, the representative of the national government for the area invoked the state of emergency, which has been extended to November, to ban the demonstration scheduled for May 19. Still thousands of people showed up and

"played cat-and-mouse with the cops for a few hours, risking six months in jail and a 7,500-Euro fine." Sixty-six people were arrested. (Agence France Presse, May 20)

In Paris, 10 people described as "militants" were prohibited from protesting, but they went to court, and most of them were allowed to join the protest.

The seven unions that have been active in fighting this law — the CGT, Workers Force, Unitary Union Federation, Solidarity, National Union of French Students, National High School Union and the Independent and Democratic Federation of High Schools — issued a joint statement May 19 calling for nationally coordinated demonstrations May 26 and a national protest June 14 in Paris. The French Senate is due to deliberate about the new labor law on that day.

This union struggle against a law that the French media portray as bringing great benefits to companies operating in France is growing larger and sharper. Though the workers have still failed to shake the government's refusal to concede, the government is destroying any illusion of French democracy. □

Donetsk and Lugansk: front line against fascism

By Greg Butterfield

Looking through the magnified sights of an anti-tank weapon in the Lugansk People's Republic, I experienced a moment of deeper understanding of the stakes in the anti-fascist struggle in Ukraine.

It came as I was visiting a camp of Prizrak, the "Ghost Brigade" anti-fascist militia, on the outskirts of Kirovsk in the northwestern part of the independent Lugansk People's Republic.

I was surrounded by volunteer fighters, not only from Donbass and Russia, but from India, Spain, Italy, Norway and several other countries, women and men. Young communists and antifascists, internationalists living in the most difficult conditions imaginable, their sleeping quarters dug into the earth, subject to torrential rains and hail, surrounded by the shrapnel, exploded shells and burned-out vehicles from past battles.

Several days earlier, Ukrainian forces had attacked a nearby bus stop in an attempt to advance. They were pushed back. Now the Prizrak fighters were digging trenches to prevent another advance by the better-equipped enemy forces.

Through a magnifier I had a better view of the Ukrainian base just across no-man's land, which was visible to the naked eye from our position. In addition to tents, vehicles and people moving around, I could see two flags. One was the Ukrainian national. The other was the black and red flag of the fascist Right Sector.

That was on Sunday, May 8.

A second moment of understanding came the next day, May 9. Celebrated as Victory Day throughout the former Soviet Union, it marks the final defeat of Nazi Germany by the Red Army and partisan forces in 1945, after the loss of more than 27 million Soviet lives.

I was in Lugansk, capital city of the Republic, where I participated in the Victory Day parade with the Lugansk Communists and Komsomol.

Coming out of the Communist Party office in the city center, I saw tens of thousands of people streaming down the main street to the gathering site: youth,

elders, veterans, workers, parents with young children, teenagers. Almost all were carrying signs bearing photos of relatives who had fought and died in the Great Patriotic War, as the Soviet anti-fascist struggle in World War II is called. Many carried the Victory Flag, the hammer-and-sickle banner of the Red Army division that had entered Berlin and planted a red flag on the Reichstag.

As I entered the crowd, I thought how difficult it would be to explain this experience to people back home. I've been to many demonstrations, including some very large ones, probably bigger than this, but the feeling of single-minded unity and determination was something I'd never felt before.

This was not only a deeply felt day of history, shared tragedy and triumph over nigh-impossible odds seven decades earlier. I remembered that just two years ago, fascists had been at the gates of Lugansk again — shells were destroying apartment buildings, schools and hospitals. A woman was literally torn apart on the street in front of a government building occupied by the anti-fascists. Tanks were on the roads, and there was gunfire on the streets.

Wreckage of yet another U.S. war

On our way to Lugansk, we had stopped at a memorial by the side of the road: a wrecked tank, only about a mile from the city. In the spring of 2014, the four-person tank crew had volunteered to hold the line against advancing Ukrainian forces, to give the anti-fascist resistance time to prepare to defend the city. All those in the tank were burned alive.

In just the few minutes that we international visitors pulled over to photograph the memorial, at least half-a-dozen cars driven by locals pulled over, too. Families brought flowers and ribbons to lay on the tank, an offering of memory and thanks, heaped on top of dozens and hundreds left earlier.

On Victory Day I stood beside Lisa Chalenko, two years old. She was an infant when Lugansk was besieged. Her parents remember that time only too well. Thousands of other parents, chil-



WW PHOTO: GREG BUTTERFIELD

dren, teenagers and grandparents in Lugansk also remember.

For them — and for people throughout the Donbass republics, in Odessa, in Ukraine — the struggle against fascism is not history. It is their life, now, today.

I've returned home. And while here, in the heart of imperialism, in the belly of Wall Street, it is difficult to find anyone who has heard of the war in Donbass, and too many self-proclaimed leftists and progressives would rather ignore or even condemn the resistance in Donetsk and Lugansk. There everyone understands that the Ukrainian junta, the fascist gangs, the constant, murderous ceasefire violations could not continue for a single day without the support of the United States.

It's time for the anti-war movement and the left to get serious about supporting this struggle and awakening the workers, the youth and progressive movements to its reality.

Because this war, this struggle, isn't going away.

Everyone I spoke to during my eight-day visit to Donbass agreed on this point — from soldiers to political activists, students and parents, journalists and taxi drivers.

Working-class Donetsk besieged

I visited the city of Donetsk, capital of the Donetsk People's Republic, for a few days before going to Lugansk for an International Antifascist Conference in Krasnodon on May 7. While I was there, I had the opportunity to see firsthand what U.S. support for the Kiev junta means.

Donetsk is a beautiful city, a Soviet

city, full of culture and wide boulevards, parks and universities built for the enjoyment of the working class — in that region, primarily miners and metal workers. This was the most working-class region of Ukraine before the war, its population imbued with socialist aspirations despite two-and-a-half decades of capitalist wreckage.

The leaders of the Donetsk republic have worked hard to rebuild and establish a sense of normalcy for the city's people despite the war

and economic blockade. But just a few minutes' drive from the city center and you are back on the front lines of the war.

I rode with Janus Putkonen, director of Donbass International News Agency, to the outskirts of Donetsk. He showed me the highway and railroad that used to connect Donetsk and Lugansk, now cut off by the Ukrainian occupation forces. The sound of gunfire rattled nearby.

We drove to the village of Octoberski, a Donetsk suburb. Markets, apartments, a theater burned out and demolished. Row upon row of small houses and businesses destroyed by Ukrainian shelling — roofs collapsed, whole sides of buildings torn off, a cemetery shelled. And in the distance, the gutted remains of the Donetsk airport.

For those who continue to live here, mostly in larger apartment buildings, shattered windows are boarded up rather than replaced because everyone understands the destruction will come again.

At night, the sound of shelling continues. When I was there in the first week of May, things were relatively quiet — an informal ceasefire over the spring holiday week. But in the second week, the shelling of Donetsk and other cities and villages resumed and intensified.

No surrender to fascism, genocide

The war isn't over and there's no end in sight. Why? The residents of the Donetsk and Lugansk republics are certainly tired of war and blockade. But they are unwilling to surrender to Kiev, and they know that if they did, the result would be genocide. That is the program of the fascist battalions that hold up the neoliberal

Continued on page 10

Congress fiddles while Zika looms

While the U.S. Congress votes hundreds of billions of dollars for military expansion, it is squeezing health programs vital to the people. As Congress’s reaction to the threatened Zika epidemic shows, the capitalist health care model kills.

In response to Zika, the Obama administration requested in February that Congress allot \$1.9 billion for emergency measures to prevent its spreading in the United States. The funds would be used to develop a vaccine, pay for tests and treatment, and discover methods of containing the disease-carrying *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes.

The Senate voted to allocate \$1.1 billion of new funds. Then House reactionaries reduced this to \$622 million and insisted that money be diverted from funds earmarked for a possible recurrence of the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, which killed over 28,000 people. The White House calls this amount “woefully inadequate” and threatens a veto if the House vote carries. Even some right-wing Southern politicians want more funding, as their states are vulnerable to Zika.

While not rendering most sufferers acutely ill, Zika presents a danger to developing fetuses. The virus can cause microcephaly, characterized by small brains and brain damage, and even fetal death. It is also associated with Guillain-Barre syndrome, a potentially paralyzing, even deadly, neurological disease. The virus can be spread by sexual contact.

Outbreaks of Zika have occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean. Puerto Rico reports 1,100 cases, with 129 involving pregnant women. (U.S. News & World Report, May 20) As of May 18, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that 544 U.S. residents, including 157 pregnant women, have been infected.

As Congress squabbles over Zika allocations, other health programs are being hit hard. The National Institutes of Health is trimming its malaria, tuberculosis and influenza programs to finance research for a Zika vaccine. The CDC moved \$44 million from public health emergency grants for states and cities to Zika funding. This money is part of the \$589 million the White House has transferred from other programs (mostly efforts targeting Ebola) to fight Zika while awaiting Congress’s resolution.

Donetsk and Lugansk: front line

Continued from page 9
eral junta and of neo-Nazis in the government, like the new head of parliament, Andriy Parubiy.

The Ukrainian military has more weapons, more soldiers, more vehicles. But the rank-and-file drafted soldiers are demoralized. Only the neo-Nazi battalions, who receive training from the U.S. military, are motivated to fight.

The people’s army in Donetsk and Lugansk, made up mostly of local residents, is very motivated to defend their homeland and families. Although many of the soldiers have been demobilized, tens of thousands can be remobilized within 72 hours, if necessary.

The only way for Ukraine to win the war

Needed: medicine for people, not profit

This theft from vital health programs hides that there is enough money to pay for the fight against Zika and other disease outbreaks, as well as an Ebola recurrence. Here are some budget items whose funding does nothing for the workers and oppressed people of this country:

First, there’s the Pentagon budget of over \$600 billion a year — and that’s only what is publicly reported. Billions more are covertly funneled to military and intelligence agencies. Also, eliminate the \$1 trillion allotted to develop “smarter” nuclear weapons over the next 30 years.

Second, there’s the \$300 billion that the government pays annually to big banks for interest on federal loans.

Third, eliminate all tax loopholes and gimmicks. Penalize all corporations that do not pay income tax. Last year, 27 profitable corporations did not pay a cent of this tax. (March 7, USA Today) Only 10.6 percent of federal revenue comes from corporate income taxes, reported the Pew Research Center on April 13.

Tax breaks for the super-rich and big business reduce government revenue by billions, even trillions of dollars — money that could be used for health care and other human needs. It could fund research, prevention and treatment programs for Zika and every other disease — and still pay for expanded Medicare and/or Medicaid for all.

But here’s the reality: This is a medical crisis in a capitalist country. Reactionary billionaires oppose government spending on public health and their political representatives fight allocations for it.

What the masses of people really need is a socialized health care system in a socialist society, where the government’s role is to organize, prioritize and provide everything that is needed to meet disease outbreaks and medical emergencies — and provide free medical care — without political resistance.

Cuba provides a stellar example of how the Zika crisis can be handled with a slew of preventive public health measures. We have to fight for a socialist system that puts people’s needs first and relegates the war machine and profit-hungry banks and corporations and their politicians to the dustbin of history. □

against the independent republics, says Putkonen, is through NATO airstrikes of the kind used against Yugoslavia. But that would mean an air war on the very border of the Russian Federation.

Neither side can back down, Putkonen says. Russia’s government knows that if it withdrew its promise to aid the Donbass republics, it would be next on Washington’s hit list. If the U.S. and NATO were to back down, that would inspire a domino effect of resistance throughout the region.

There is only one acceptable solution, in which people in the United States have an important part to play.

That is the overturn of the neoliberal, neo-Nazi, oligarch regime in Kiev, aided by the growth of a powerful anti-war

Ghost Brigade leaders on Mozgovoi’s legacy

By Greg Butterfield
Kirovsk, Lugansk People’s Republic

On May 8, a group of 11 internationalist visitors along with the leader of the Lugansk Communists received a tour at the front lines of battle from Prizrak (Ghost Brigade) Deputy Commander Alexey Markov (Dobriy). Afterward, we had the opportunity to meet with and ask questions of Commander Pyotr Biryukov (Arkadich).

One of the things I asked about was the legacy of Commander Alexei Mozgovoi, for the Ghosts and for Donbass, a year after his death. Mozgovoi and four of his comrades were assassinated in a roadside attack on May 23, 2015.

Arkadich responded: “We are here! That is the main answer. Mozgovoi is still alive for us and we have not forgotten him. It was our choice to join Prizrak in 2014.

“We don’t forget any of his principles, his program for People’s Power. We may not shout things aloud, but we push ahead with our line.”

A fascist group from Ukraine took credit for Mozgovoi’s assassination. However, there was intense speculation that conservative forces in the government of the Lugansk People’s Republic may have been responsible. Other prominent

left-leaning militia leaders have also been slain under mysterious circumstances.

Arkadich addressed this issue: “Many people wanted to make a sensation about Mozgovoi [after his death] — Internet warriors — talking about how we should go to Lugansk to clean house. There were many accusations, but we need a solid basis to take action. We don’t want to be clowns or make accusations that would aid the enemy.

“War is the continuation of politics by other means. We know what we are fighting for. We cannot forget those killed in Odessa. We don’t go into politics right now [in the Republics] because the situation is complicated. But we have our own ideology and political line.”

Dobri added: “In 1914, when World War I began, no one knew that world empires would fall. We can’t say what will happen in the coming years, but we are not only fighting in a war, but gaining very important experience which may one day be valuable for everyone. As communists, we have to be ready for any kind of world situation.

“In times of crisis there is a chance for small but ideologically developed forces, like the Bolsheviks after World War I. And maybe we will have that chance.”

“We are not rebels,” said Arkadich. “We are revolutionaries.” □

Venezuela declares emergency Support Bolivarian Revolution

Continued from page 1

roga of Bolivia, Alvaro Uribe of Colombia and José María Aznar of Spain.

Incidentally, it was at this summit where Uribe called for foreign military intervention to help the Venezuelan opposition.

Venezuelan reality

Imperialism always takes advantage of its targets’ difficult situations to extend and exacerbate differences and problems in order to cause a conflagration that aids its goal of exploitation.

In Venezuela, there is indeed a dire economic situation, mainly the result of the fall in oil prices, along with a persistent drought that has caused a lack of drinking water and power outages due to the decline in the water level of dams. Also at play are the consequences of the attack by rightist oligarch importers and manufacturers who monopolize commodities and create shortages in food markets.

All these things, along with capital flight and resale of products in the illegal market, has caused shortages, especially of basic products subsidized by the government. They are sold illegally at higher prices across the border in Colombia, which creates a major crisis due to the lack of basic necessities.

Government measures

Combined with the shortages and taking advantage of the population’s difficul-

movement in the U.S. to prevent the Pentagon and NATO from intervening.

The children of Lugansk, the elders living in basements near the front line, the working people of the Donbass republics are doing their part. They are waiting for us. □

ties, the National Assembly is instigating violent demonstrations in the streets to advance its agenda of holding a recall referendum against Maduro before January 2017. It is rushing because if Maduro is removed this year, the president of the National Assembly, Henry Ramos Allup of the right opposition, would succeed him.

But if the period specified in the constitution lapses, a lengthy process is needed for collecting signatures and validation, etc. According to experts, this could not occur before the third week of January 2017. (Telesur, May 16) If it is delayed until 2017, Maduro’s vice president, Diosdado Cabello, a staunch defender of the Bolivarian Revolution, would succeed him.

To defend the Bolivarian process and its achievements, the government of President Maduro has declared a state of emergency for 60 days and a mobilization for two days of the Bolivarian Armed Forces, along with the people’s militias, to practice defense exercises around the country.

There are several reasons for these measures. Among them are the dangers of violent protests by right-wing groups that attack the National Guard and state buildings; the declaration of rightist Henrique Capriles, who told the BBC that “a military uprising is in the air” and called upon military forces to oppose Maduro. In addition, there was “the incursion into Venezuelan airspace of an American spy aircraft on May 11. This regards a 707 Boeing E-3 Sentry, equipped with cameras, high precision radar and high-tech devices for electronic espionage.” (Avn. infove, May 18)

The progressive movement in the U.S. and worldwide must step up its solidarity efforts in defense of the Bolivarian Revolution and to demand no U.S. military or other intervention in Venezuela!

Translated from Spanish by WW managing editor John Catalinotto.

CIA turned in Mandela in ‘62, still undermines Africa

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

Confirmation of United States efforts to prevent Africa from reaching genuine self-determination and national liberation resurfaced in mid-May when the international media circulated damning reports about the CIA’s pivotal role in the arrest of African National Congress and South African Communist Party official Nelson Mandela in 1962.

Donald Rickard, who in 1962 was the United States vice-consul in Durban, said he and his superiors believed that Mandela was “the world’s most dangerous communist outside of the Soviet Union.” And he had no reservations about alerting the apartheid regime about his location. (British Telegraph, May 15)

Mandela was stopped at a police road-block in Howick, KwaZulu Natal on Aug. 5, 1962, and arrested. His capture provided the legal and political basis for trials that culminated with the Rivonia Treason convictions, sending him to over 27 years in prison. The CIA’s pivotal role in his arrest has been repeatedly documented since 1990, the eve of Mandela’s first visit to the U.S. after his release from prison.

Rickard claimed that ANC informants alerted him that Mandela was traveling to Howick, and he relayed this information to South African police, noting that the ANC-SACP leader was planning to return to Johannesburg.

Secret travels

Mandela had traveled outside of apartheid South Africa to win international

support for the national liberation movement against settler colonialism and to receive arms training in order to build the military wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe. By early 1961, the ANC declared that it was futile to continue peaceful methods of struggle in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre of March 1960 and other atrocities.

In March 1962 Mandela undertook military instructions from the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) at their bases across the border in Morocco. In his testimony during the Rivonia Trial in 1964, Mandela said, “In Africa I was promised support by ... Ben Bella, now president of Algeria.” (nelsonmandela.org)

A publication by Mandela, “Conversations with Myself,” includes numerous extracts from his 1962 diary, all of which verify his military training at FLN facilities in Morocco.

Around the same time Mandela also took military courses in Ethiopia then led by Haile Selassie I. According to an article published by the British Broadcasting Corporation, “In July 1962, Col. Fekadu Wakene taught South African political activist Nelson Mandela the tricks of guerrilla warfare — including how to plant explosives before slipping quietly away into the night. Mr. Mandela was in Ethiopia, learning how to be the commander-in-chief of Umkhonto we Sizwe — the armed wing of the African National Congress.” (Dec. 9, 2013)

Col. Fekadu later praised the future South African president, saying, “Nelson Mandela was a very strong and resilient student, and he took instruction well and

was really very likeable.” He “concentrated on the task in hand.”

Continuing U.S. strategy in Africa

The CIA intervention in 1962 was part of a broader U.S. policy extending from the 1960s to the present. In 1960, the CIA and the U.S. State Department plotted to overthrow and assassinate Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba. Immediately after the revolutionary Congo prime minister won the largest bloc of votes for his Congolese National Movement, his government was neutralized and displaced by a coup.

Lumumba later fled to the east of the country where he was kidnapped by forces allied with the imperialists. He was subjected to torture and a brutal assassination. Army Col. Mobutu Sese Seko, a CIA asset, served as the front for Washington and various mining corporations for 37 years until he was displaced in a national uprising in 1996-97.

Later in the West African state of Ghana, the first prime minister and president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, was overthrown in a military and police coup on Feb. 24, 1966, which was coordinated by the CIA. Nkrumah had been a staunch supporter of Lumumba, along with dozens of other liberation movements across the continent. (See “In Search of Enemies” by John Stockwell)

The former Portuguese colony of Angola in southwest Africa was on the verge of national independence in November 1975 when the country was invaded by the South African Defense Forces and the CIA in order to prevent the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which

was aligned with the South West African People’s Organization of Namibia and the ANC of South Africa, from taking power.

The 55,000 Cuban internationalist forces deployed by then-President Fidel Castro worked in conjunction with national and regional forces to drive back the SADF, establishing Angola as a rear base of the struggle to eliminate white-minority rule in the subcontinent.

Between 1975 and 1989, approximately 350,000 Cubans served in Angola. The defeat of the SADF and the CIA in Angola represented a major turning point in the overall movement of the African people for self-determination and sovereignty.

As recent as 2011, the administration of President Barack Obama dispatched hundreds of CIA operatives to Libya, setting the stage for a massive seven-month bombing campaign, which toppled the government of Col. Muammar Gadhafi, a former chair of the African Union.

Business Insider reported this fact at the time, saying, “CIA operatives have been working in Libya along with MI6 agents and other spies to gather information for use in airstrikes. ... Obama signed an order several weeks ago authorizing the CIA to provide arms and other support to the rebels.” (March 30, 2011)

These instances represent a few important cases highlighting the legacy of U.S. interference in the internal affairs of the African continent. Such occurrences reveal that Washington has never been a supporter of African independence. This stance is in sharp contrast with that of such socialist countries as Cuba and the former Soviet Union. □

WW - MUNDO OBRERO

Golpe en Brasil

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ogistas le atribuyen gran parte de la destrucción de la Amazonía ; Alexandre de Moraes, el ‘pitbull’ de Temer, quien estaba al frente de la policía acusada de los derechos humanos con escuadrones de la muerte en Sao Paulo, está ahora a cargo del ministerio de Justicia; y Marcos Pereira, pastor evangélico es el ministro de industria, luego de que la comunidad científica se rebelara contra la propuesta de ser nominado al ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología. José Serra, cercano a la Chevron, será el ministro de relaciones exteriores.

“Ahora, movilización permanente”

Sin embargo, incluso desde antes la votación, no ha habido un día en calma en Brasil. El pueblo ha salido a las calles constantemente, formándose alianzas que se manifiestan bajo la consigna de “Fora Temer”.

El lunes 9 de mayo, miles de campesinas/os ocuparon una finca relacionada con Temer. Kelli Mafort, dirigente del MST explicó que “la ocupación de esta granja es para denunciar la intervención de la agroindustria en la articulación de golpe (...) y estamos aquí para denunciar los vínculos de Michel Temer con el propietario de la granja, y de su empresa frente a las comisiones ilegales”. (Telesur)

Activistas feministas se encadenaron al portón del palacio presidencial protestando por el gabinete de Temer al que calificaron de “racista, sexista, homofóbico y elitista”.

Manifestaciones han surgido no solo en Brasilia la capital, sino en Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro y otros lugares. Stedile, en una entrevista para Resumen Latinoamericano el 13 de mayo resumió: “Es el momento de movilizarse contra el golpe de estado. Un golpe sin tanques de guerra

en las calles, pero igualmente desestabilizante... La presidenta no ha cometido ningún crimen y ha sido apartada del poder ilegalmente. Las organizaciones populares lo tienen claro. La clase obrera lo tiene claro. Los intelectuales, los artistas, la iglesia progresista de base lo tiene claro. Para el MST, para los movimientos reunidos en el Frente Brasil Popular, el gobierno Temer-Cunha no tiene ninguna legitimidad porque nace bajo el signo de la corrupción y del retorno al neoliberalismo. Hemos llevado al presidente del Senado, Renan Calheiros y al presidente del Supremo Tribunal Federal Ricardo Lewandowski el equivalente a tres volúmenes de firmas contra este proceso de impeachment. Mientras tanto, debemos emplear todas las energías posibles porque nos espera un período de muchas luchas y crisis a todos los niveles: política, social, ambiental”.

Gobiernos y organizaciones repudian el golpe

Varios gobiernos de la región ya se han declarado en contra del golpe. Venezuela la retiró a su embajador en Brasilia para una consulta. El Salvador y Nicaragua no reconocen al gobierno de Temer.

Los países que componen la Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América-Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos (ALBA-TCP) emitieron un comunicado rechazando el golpe.

La Red de Intelectuales y Artistas en Defensa de la Humanidad está haciendo circular una petición a nivel internacional repudiando el golpe ‘La humanidad contra el golpe de Brasil’. Organizaciones cubanas también emitieron una declaración condenatoria.

En varios países se han convocado movilizaciones rechazando el golpe y en las redes sociales hay una gran cantidad de mensajes contra el golpe y solidarizándose con el pueblo brasileño en lucha. □

Israeli jailers release Palestinian hunger striker

By **Joe Catron**

Hundreds of Palestinians gathered in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron on May 20 to celebrate the release of Mohammed al-Qeeq by Israeli jailers a day earlier. Al-Qeeq, a 34-year-old Palestinian journalist and father of three, was freed after a record-shattering 94-day hunger strike protesting his “administrative detention.”

This Israeli military regulation allows the indefinite internment, without charge or trial, of Palestinians under orders by area commanders of the Israeli occupation forces. Israel currently holds around 750 “administrative detainees,” out of 7,000 Palestinian political prisoners overall, according to the Palestinian Prisoners’ Club in Ramallah.

In New York, Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network celebrated al-Qeeq’s freedom at a weekly protest outside the local office of British-Danish security company G4S. Samidoun had organized over a month of pickets demanding al-Qeeq’s freedom before he ended his strike on Feb. 26 in an agreement with his captors to secure his release.

G4S, the regular site of the protests, currently holds contracts to equip Israeli prisons and detention centers. It also operates private jails and services immigration facilities for Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the United States.

Following years of campaigns by both anti-prison and pro-Palestine groups, G4S said in March that it would end its operations in Israel and youth jails in the U.S. and United Kingdom.

On May 22, Israel’s public security and strategic affairs minister, Gilad Erdan, told a conference in New York that the

PHOTO: JOE CATRON
Protesters demand al-Qeeq’s release, Feb. 5.

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement had helped drive G4S from the Israeli market. “The company is now trying to convince everyone that BDS was not a factor,” Erdan said. “Don’t listen to them.”

The BDS campaign against G4S, the world’s largest security company and second-biggest private employer, will continue until the implementation of its March announcement. These efforts include Samidoun’s protests, on Fridays at 4-6 p.m., outside the company’s office at 19 West 44th St., between Fifth and Sixth avenues in Manhattan.

The gatherings currently highlight ongoing hunger strikes by other “administrative detainees,” including Fouad Assi and Adib Mafarjah, who will reach their 62nd day of fasting on Friday, May 25.

Another, Sami Janazrah, resumed a full hunger strike on May 18 after suspending it to consume only liquid foods during a one-week “investigation” by Israeli forces. Before that he held a full hunger strike for 70 days.

For news about struggles by these and other Palestinian political prisoners, as well as about worldwide activities to support them, visit Samidoun’s web site and subscribe to its emails at samidoun.net.

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





Libertad para Oscar López Rivera, ¡YA!

Editorial WW-Mundo Obrero, 22 de mayo de 2016

La visita de Obama a Hiroshima

La visita del presidente Barack Obama a Hiroshima-Japón el 27 de mayo, será la primera visita de un presidente estadounidense en ejercicio. Esta visita tiene un fondo histórico y un significado actual; tendrá una fachada pacifista, mientras que EUA se prepara para una guerra imperialista. La visita de Obama se produce casi 71 años después de que una bomba atómica estadounidense, como relámpago, destruyera el 60 por ciento de la ciudad y su gente.

Una breve historia

La Segunda Guerra Mundial estalló en el Pacífico en diciembre de 1941 después de décadas de competencia entre los imperialistas de Japón y EUA por la dominación de los mercados, materias primas y fuerza de trabajo de Asia.

Millones de trabajadores y agricultores lucharon en esa guerra, que sólo sirvió a los intereses de los súper-ricos. Las víctimas de la guerra incluyeron a trabajadoras/es y agricultores de China, Corea, Sudeste de Asia, las Filipinas y las islas que ahora son Indonesia. Japón ocupó estas áreas y más tarde luchó contra las tropas estadounidenses, así como contra los movimientos de liberación nacional. Tanto las tropas japonesas como las estadounidenses tuvieron bajas, al igual que millones de civiles japoneses que vivían en 68 centros de ciudades, reducidas a cenizas por las bombas incendiarias estadounidenses.

Las víctimas finales de la guerra fueron las/os más de 100.000 japoneses muertos al instante por las bombas atómicas en las ciudades de Hiroshima el 6 de agosto de 1945, y en Nagasaki el 9 de agosto. Junto a ellas, estaban 30.000 coreanos que el ejército japonés había forzado a trabajar allí, más otras 100.000 personas que murieron lentamente por envenenamiento radioactivo. La guerra en Asia estaba a punto de terminar. El propósito de Washington de usar estas terribles armas al final, era intimidar a la Unión Soviética - demostrando que el imperialismo estadounidense tenía los medios militares para dominar el mundo de la posguerra.

Poco después, Tokio se rindió a EUA, que entonces ocupó Japón. A pesar de las enormes ventajas militares y económicas de EUA en 1945, sin embargo, las revoluciones china, coreana y vietnamita pasaron a liberar a gran parte de Asia del control imperialista.

Lleguemos a mayo del 2016

De acuerdo con la edición del 16 de abril del Military Times, “Las Fuerzas estadounidenses en Japón consisten en cerca de 2.000 soldados, 6.000 marineros, 15.000 aviadores y civiles de la Fuerza Aérea, y alrededor de 18.000 marines basados en su mayoría en Okinawa. En la pequeña Okinawa, que Japón reclama

a pesar de existir un fuerte movimiento independentista, la población local lleva a cabo protestas masivas contra el ejército de Estados Unidos y sus crímenes, que van desde la destrucción del medio ambiente hasta violaciones sexuales.

El New York Times del 12 de mayo, informó que la charla de Obama en Japón abogará por no usar armas nucleares en el futuro - a pesar de que evitará condenar el bombardeo estadounidense de Hiroshima. En una visita llena de contradicciones y doble discurso, el presidente Obama no viene como un pacificador, sino como comandante en jefe del imperialismo estadounidense. Detrás de la fachada pacífica está el llamado “pivote hacia Asia” estadounidense.

Incluso durante su apogeo de poderío en 1945, los EUA no podían dominar el mundo unilateralmente. Relativamente más débil ahora, pero aún poseyendo un enorme poder destructivo, el “pivote hacia Asia” de Washington significa fortalecer su alianza con la clase gobernante de Japón para que, bajo el liderazgo de Estados Unidos, las dos potencias imperialistas puedan intimidar, amenazar e incluso hacer la guerra contra China y el norte Corea, la RPDC.

Los gobernantes japoneses, representados por el gobierno derechista de Shinzō Abe, han aceptado la insistencia de EUA para que aumenten la militarización como si fuera su propia política. El gobierno de Abe ya ha aprobado planes para permitir que las “Fuerzas de Autodefensa” de Japón intervengan en el exterior, a pesar de la masiva oposición popular. Washington ha instado a esta política en Tokio, del mismo modo que insta a sus aliados de la OTAN a gastar más en armas.

A pesar de su doble discurso sobre el desarme nuclear en todo el mundo, la administración Obama ya ha empujado para que se modernice el arsenal de armas nucleares estadounidense, planeando gastar tanto como \$1 billón a través de tres décadas.

Disfrazado como un paso hacia la paz, la visita a Hiroshima es realmente una obra maestra para consagrar una alianza imperialista agresiva.

En respuesta al viaje de Obama y en solidaridad con el pueblo japonés y de Okinawa, la campaña presidencial del Partido WW-Mundo Obrero exige que EUA saque todas sus tropas y bases fuera de Japón y Okinawa. WW-MO se compromete con la solidaridad y el apoyo a la lucha del pueblo japonés para revertir el agresivo armamento militar de Japón.

En solidaridad con los otros pueblos de Asia, el Partido WW-MO exige la retirada de las fuerzas militares estadounidenses de todos los países y territorios de la región de Asia y el Pacífico.

WWP hace un llamado a la clase obrera de los EUA y Japón a fortalecer su solidaridad mutua contra los patronos imperialistas de ambos países. Nosotras/os en los EUA, nos comprometemos a luchar contra toda agresión militar o económica del imperialismo estadounidense a través de Asia y poner fin a la intolerancia contra las/os asiáticos aquí en EUA. □

Golpe en Brasil enfrentado por el pueblo en las calles

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

En la mañana del jueves 12 de mayo, el Senado brasileño afirmó la decisión de comenzar un juicio de impeachment contra la presidenta Dilma Rousseff. Esta larga sesión, comenzada el día anterior, en la que cada miembro del senado tenía 15 minutos para declarar sobre el juicio, fue una demostración del poder de la clase oligarca brasileña alineada al imperialismo estadounidense para imponer un plan totalmente neoliberal que haga retroceder cualquier avance logrado que haya beneficiado al pueblo pobre.

Los argumentos lógicos de senadoras/es y del mismo abogado de la presidenta que rechazaron el juicio, basados en hechos que mostraban sin lugar a dudas la ilegitimidad de los cargos de corrupción y la falta de pruebas contra Rousseff, de nada valieron.

Como dijo Vanessa Graziottin, senadora por el Partido Comunista de Brasil (PcdoB) “no es un proceso de impeachment. Es un golpe para cambiar el proyecto político-económico de la nación”. (Telesurtv)

Ya la decisión estaba tomada de antemano; quienes votaron por el juicio se basaban en la crítica situación de la economía del país y la necesidad de avanzar políticas en beneficio de la inversión privada y no del pueblo.

Aprobado el juicio con una mayoría de 55 votos a favor y 22 en contra, Rousseff fue removida de su cargo por hasta 180 días y el vicepresidente Michel Temer, del derechista Partido del Movimiento Democrático Brasileño (PMDB), fue nombrado presidente interino. El juicio comenzará a mediados de mayo.

Mientras tanto Temer, contra quien también pesa una posibilidad de impeachment por la Corte Suprema, y quien según la agencia de encuestas Datafolha, solo un 2 por ciento de la población votaría por él en unas elecciones presidenciales.

No es de extrañar entonces que se haya optado por un cambio bajo un golpe congresional, ya que no se ganaría por métodos electorales. Es interesante un artículo del Wall Street Journal (WSJ) de septiembre de 2015 que decía: “El Partido del Movimiento Democrático Brasileño se convirtió en una de las fuerzas políticas más poderosas de la nación mediante la adopción de una estrategia inusual: en vez de buscar la Presidencia, durante mucho tiempo ha funcionado como hacedor de reyes de Brasil, negociar su apoyo al partido gobernante a cambio de clientelismo e influencia”.

Pese a ser parte del gabinete de Rousseff, la tendencia al neoliberalismo y la crítica a los gobiernos de Lula y ahora de Rousseff, se han documentado anteriormente. En un reciente artículo en La Jornada de México del 14 de mayo titulado ‘Michel Temer fue informante de la CIA en 2006, asegura Wikileaks’, “Temer criticaba a Lula por su “visión estrecha” y el “acento excesivo en los programas sociales que no promueven el crecimiento o el desarrollo económico”.

Ahora, el PMDB a través de Temer no ha perdido tiempo en presentar su gabinete y programa neoliberal al que el sec-

tor empresarial, tanto el brasileño como el transnacional, acogen con beneplácito. Según un artículo del WSJ en español del 12 de mayo titulado ‘El sector empresarial le da la bienvenida al cambio en Brasil’ menciona que “La reacción inicial en el mercado de divisas de Brasil fue positivo. El real subía 1 por ciento. ...”.

Receta neoliberal

Su programa neoliberal, llamado ‘Un Puente para el Futuro’, y develado ya en octubre de 2015, es una verdadera transferencia de bienes del pueblo hacia manos privadas y compañías transnacionales. En el documento de 19 páginas se establece la “evaluación” de varios programas de protección social establecidos durante los gobiernos de Lula da Silva y de Rousseff que ayudaron a elevar el nivel de vida de miles de brasileños, como el de viviendas (Mi Casa Mi Vida), de indemnizaciones cuando termine un contrato de empleo, de subsidios en educación para estudiantes pobres y negros/os, de inversión en salud, y reducirá la ayuda social solo para el 10 por ciento más pobre. (tinyurl.com/h6zhztq)

Respecto a los derechos laborales, busca el aumento de la edad de jubilación y altera provisiones que garantizan el salario mínimo. Atenta privatizar la Petrobras, reformar el sistema de jubilaciones, etc.

Para lograr esto, ha nombrado un gabinete de 22 ministros, eliminando a su vez, a varios ministerios como los de Cultura, Desarrollo Agrícola, Ciencia y Tecnología, de la Mujer, de la Equidad Racial y de los Derechos Humanos.

Ya anteriormente João Pedro Stédile, coordinador del Movimiento de los Trabajadores Rurales Sin Tierra (MST) había declarado ... –“Un gobierno de Temer sería totalmente alineado a los intereses norteamericanos. ... centrándonos en Estados Unidos creo que lo más grave es que están aplicando una política para que sus empresas dominen nuestra economía. El modus operandi norteamericano consiste en aliarse con parlamentarios brasileños para lograr esa dominación. Esto pasó con la petrolera Chevron, que a través del senador José Serra, del Partido de la Socialdemocracia Brasileña, está impulsando la modificación de la ley petrolera para avanzar hacia la privatización de los recursos en aguas ultraprofundas, en la zona de pre-sal”. (pagina12.com.ar)

Gabinete derechista, sexista y racista

En el país con la mayor población negra fuera del África, ha sido una verdadera bofetada contra esa población, contra las mujeres y contra las poblaciones indígenas y LGBT el gabinete Temer compuesto solo de hombres blancos con intereses empresariales.

Por cierto, siete de los nuevos ministros están bajo investigación sobre el caso Lava Jato de corrupción y fraude a la Petrobras.

Para muestra, un botón. Éstos son algunos de los nuevos ministros: Blairo Maggi, ministro de Agricultura, es un millonario terrateniente conocido como el “rey de la soja” a quien activistas ecol-

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