Claudia Patricia Gómez González, an unarmed woman from Guatemala, was shot in the head and killed on May 23 by Customs Border Police in Rio Bravo, Texas. She was 20 years old.

Al Jazeera news noted: “González was an Indigenous Maya-Mam woman who had graduated from a forensic accounting program in 2016. Her family said she was going to the U.S. to find work as they did not have enough money for her to continue her studies.”

(May 26)

Karina Alvarez, the founder of Laredo Immigrant Alliance, told Al Jazeera that Trump’s rhetoric on migrants had emboldened agents in border towns: “He was describing us the other day as animals and look now, they shoot us like animals.”

The U.S. has stepped up a campaign of terror against migrant workers and refugees fleeing the U.S.-spawned violence in their home countries. The current campaign is spearheaded by President Trump, his arch-racist Attorney General Jeff Sessions, his Chief of Staff John Kelly and his bigoted presidential coterie. The new policies are designed, by intimidation and terror, to prevent those facing repression and murder in their homelands from traveling to the U.S.
Welcome to this very special celebration of the 200th birthday of Karl Marx, the founder of scientific socialism, who was one of the greatest revolutionaries of all time. It was in 1818 that Karl Marx was born in Trier, in present-day Germany. His father, a lawyer, was a member of the Prussian diet. His mother, Maria Marx, was a devoutly religious woman. She was the daughter of a prominent Jewish merchant and an inheritor of a large fortune. His father was a leading figure in the conservative movement, and his mother was a member of the liberal movement. Karl Marx was a product of the changing political landscape of the time, and his political views were shaped by his experiences as a young man. He was a member of the Young Hegelians, a group of philosophers who were critical of the conservative and liberal movements of the time. Karl Marx was a prolific writer, and he wrote on a wide range of topics, including history, philosophy, politics, and economics. His most famous work is *The Communist Manifesto*, published in 1848, which outlined his vision for a classless society. Karl Marx was a tireless organizer, and he was a key figure in the formation of the First International, a worldwide labor organization that was created to promote international solidarity among workers. He was also a key figure in the development of the socialist movement, and he played a key role in the founding of the German Social Democratic Party. Karl Marx was a deeply committed socialist, and he fought tirelessly for the advancement of the working class. He was a masterful writer, and his works continue to be read and studied today. In 1886, workers around the world celebrated the 30th anniversary of Karl Marx’s death. In the U.S., a conference was held in Trier, in present-day Germany, where Karl Marx was born. The conference was attended by many of the key figures in the socialist movement, including Engels, a close collaborator of Marx. The conference was a key moment in the development of the socialist movement, and it helped to solidify the vision for a classless society. Today, we celebrate the 200th anniversary of Karl Marx’s birth. He was a masterful writer, and his works continue to be read and studied today. In 1886, workers around the world celebrated the 30th anniversary of Karl Marx’s death. In the U.S., a conference was held in Trier, in present-day Germany, where Karl Marx was born. The conference was attended by many of the key figures in the socialist movement, including Engels, a close collaborator of Marx. The conference was a key moment in the development of the socialist movement, and it helped to solidify the vision for a classless society. Today, we celebrate the 200th anniversary of Karl Marx’s birth. He was a masterful writer, and his works continue to be read and studied today.
Another city votes for Cuba

By Cheryl LaLash

Minneapolis is now the eighth U.S. city to call for ending the U.S. blockade of Cuba. The City Council unanimously voted on May 25 to build “a new cooperative relationship between the U.S. and Cuba and to immediately end all aspects of the U.S. economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba including all restrictions on travel to Cuba.”

The Minnesota Cuba Committee organized support for this resolution. Its primary author was City Councilmember Andrea Jenkins. According to her city biography, Jenkins is “a writer, performance artist, poet and transgender activist. She is the first African American openly trans woman to be elected to office in the United States.”

Minneapolis also called on the Trump administration to “reestablish the diplomatic staff withdrawn from the U.S. Embassy in Havana” and restore the diplomatic staff expelled from the Cuban Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Although the U.S. formally maintains an embassy in Havana, which was reestablished in 2015, staff reductions made permanent on March 2 have turned the building into a shell, unable to process visas for Cubans wanting to visit or migrate to the U.S. At the same time, the U.S. ordered 17 Cuban diplomats to leave the U.S., targeting staff who work to develop the blockade-limited commercial relations between U.S. entities and Cuba.

An essential part of regime change plots hatched in the U.S. State Department is to block the truth about Cuba’s socialist revolution from reaching the general U.S. population. But polls show that the Trump administration’s hostile Cuba policy is out of step with popular sentiment in the U.S. as well as across the globe. The United Nations General Assembly annually votes against the unilateral U.S. economic strangulation, most recently by 191 to 2 with only the U.S. and Israel defending the blockade.

From May 8-20, Cuban artists participated in the two-week “Artes de Cuba: From the Island to the World” festival held in Washington, D.C. This celebration of Cuban music, film, visual art, culture and dance has been extended through June 3. How will other such artists now be able to wow U.S. audiences without visas?

In Cuba, art and sports are human rights along with health care and education. The Trump administration is trying to administratively choke off people-to-people “points of contact” between Cuba and the U.S. Recently inaugurated Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said that the two countries can still build bridges. He told the artists: “I don’t believe that the current position will be eternal, and things like what you have accomplished in Washington...can open the way” (tinyurl.com/yckoqoz7)

The Minnesota Cuba Committee also sponsors an annual Cuban film festival and has developed long-standing collaboration with Cuban universities, including exchange programs. It recently welcomed the Rev. Joel Ortega Dopico, executive director of the Cuban Council of Churches, who also visited Detroit and Washington, D.C. Dopico met with City Councilmember Andrea Jenkins during his visit to Minneapolis.

The following cities have also passed resolutions calling for ending the cruel U.S. blockade of Cuba, its much smaller island neighbor: in California, Richmond, Berkeley, Oakland and Sacramento; New York, Brooklyn; Hartford, Conn.; and Helena, Mont. In 2016 the California Federation of Labor passed a strong resolution against the blockade.

Read the Minnesota resolution at tinyurl.com/yhhtspsld.

Poor People’s Campaign: ‘We shall not be moved’

By Anne Pruden
Albany, N.Y.

The second week of the Poor People’s Campaign found several hundreds gathered here on May 21 in the capital of New York state for protest and civil disobedience.

Launched on May 14, the campaign is holding themed protests on Mondays throughout the U.S. against systemic racism, poverty, the war economy and environmental devastation. These protests will end on June 23. The campaign is inspired by the original Poor People’s Campaign found several hundreds gathered here on May 21 in the capital of New York state for protest and civil disobedience.

The contingent marched silently for a mile to the Capitol building. During the march, Puerto Rican PPC volunteer Taina Asili gave a passionate speech on the struggles of her island and the U.S. government’s continuing oppression. She connected this to the campaign’s themes of fighting systemic racism and poverty and winning justice for immigrants.

When the march reached the Capitol, PPC volunteers proceeded with a sit-in at the doors of the building to dramatize their demand that legislators take immediate steps to confront racism, poverty, war and ecological devastation. Others in the contingent sang the Civil Rights Movement song, “We Will Not Be Moved,” in solidarity.

The campaign’s call for a “moral revival” intensified with the arrests of 27 sit-in volunteers. Later protesters learned of police brutality against the Rev. Peter Heltzel who was framed on charges of resisting arrest and disorderly conduct while suffering a head injury after being attacked by a cop. As buses rolled pedestrians toward home, including back to a Harlem church, PPC attorneys remained at the ready to defend arrestees.

The day spoke eloquently of the need for a nationwide united movement and struggle for justice on these crucial issues.

Andrea Jenkins

Minneapolis

Support for Palestine

Hundreds of demonstrators rallied in New York City’s Times Square on May 18. They marched to the Consulate General of Israel to protest the 70th anniversary of al-Nakba, the genocidal attack on Palestinians by Israel in 1948 and to support the Great March of Return by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

The march was organized by the Palestinian American Cultural Center. Chanting “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!” and “Israel, Israel, you shall learn, by the millions we’ll return!” a strong and determined march by Palestinian youth came to downtown Buffalo on Friday evening, May 25, in solidarity with Palestinian protesters in Gaza. They brought the demand that the U.S. end all money to the racist, terrorist state of Israel and that all “border” walls must be torn down.

— Report and photo by Ellie Dorritie
Workers challenge Walt Disney’s evil kingdom

By Mike Kuhnenbeck

May 27 — The Walt Disney Company is an entertainment conglomerate with famous amusement parks and resorts, including Disneyland (Anaheim, Calif.) and Disney World (Biloxi and Lake Buena Vista, Fla.). While these locations are touted by the company as “the happiest place on earth,” this slogan is challenged by workers struggling to make ends meet.

As reported in the “Corporate Rap Sheet” compiled by the Corporate Research Project, Disney “has a history of anti-union animus going back to its early years, has also faced criticism over its U.S. labor practices and has recently emerged as one of the leading corporate opponents of the campaign to enact paid sick days laws.” (www.corp-research.org/dney)

A survey published in February titled “Working for the Mouse” (referring to the company’s iconic mascot Mickey Mouse) describes the daily struggles facing roughly 30,000 Disneyland workers. According to the survey, 85 percent of Disney’s hospitality staff do not make a living wage of $15 an hour. Many workers cannot afford such basic needs as food, shelter, and affordable health care.

Another disturbing finding is that 11 percent of Disneyland workers are either homeless or have been homeless in the last year. In addition, 66 percent of employees “are worried about being evicted from their homes or apartments.”

The survey was undertaken by the Coalition of Resort Labor Unions, comprised of 11 unions in various stages of negotiating contracts on behalf of Disneyland workers. One of the largest unions in this coalition at UNITE HERE Local 11, which represents nearly 5,000 food service and hotel workers, with 2,700 currently in bargaining.

Local 11 Press Secretary Andrew Cohen was a hotel worker during the last labor dispute with Disney, which involved negotiations from 2008 to 2012. He joined the union in 2009 and two years later helped organize union drives at restaurants and hotels in Hollywood. He joined the Disneyland campaign last October.

Cohen told Workers World: “The company is making record profits, but conditions for Disneyland’s workers have never been worse. Like so many places, workers are being squeezed by a rich company, and the entire city of Anaheim reflects it.”

A similar fight has been raging at Disney World, which has over 62,000 employees. The company agreed to a minimum wage of $15 an hour for union workers by 2021 and to $1,000 bonuses that had been withheld by the company from Service Trades Council Union workers during contract negotiations. But Disney’s proposal includes the dropping of “key union protections” involving grievance procedures, holiday pay, overtime and sick pay. Food and Commercial Workers Local 11625 President Ed Chambers told the Orlando Weekly: “Almost every one of those proposals was taking back benefits or conditions on employment we had bargained for over the last 45 years. They’re basically wiping out 45 years of progress.” (May 2)

According to Cohen, both Disneyland and Disney World have “seen a similar coalition formed between most of the unions at the respective resorts, and we have been working closely together. Many of our issues are nearly the same. The goal in both resorts is to stop the poverty at Disneyland and Disney World. Wages need to go up. Disney can afford to pay all its workers a living wage.”

Disney CEO and Chairman Robert Iger has continued to apply the anti-worker convictions of company founder Walt Disney. “Walt was a man who knew in company lore, had a history of anti-Semitism, racism and labor abuse. He was also an enemy of unions. According to Marc Eliot, author of “Walt Disney: Hollywood’s Dark Prince,” “Disney discovered how the passions and power of political activism could be used as weapons for personal gain.”

In addition to continuing to organize and push for a fair contract, Disney workers will be advocating for the Anaheim Living Wage initiative that may be on the ballot in November. As reported in the Hollywood Reporter, the measure proposes to raise the minimum wage for those businesses to $15 an hour next year, then rising in $1 increments annually, reaching $18 an hour by 2022.” (May 1)

“It’s ongoing,” Cohen said. “There is hope and workers are still asking Disney to do the right thing.”

Revolting in education

By Christian Noakes

Labor organizing has been explosive in the U.S. in 2018. Much of the militancy and organized rank-and-file opposition to ever-increasing austerity have come from education workers—public school teachers in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma and Colorado; school bus drivers in California, New York and Georgia; striking workers throughout the University of California system; graduate students on strike at Columbia University; and worker-student solidarity at the occupied New School cafeteria.

At the same time, teachers and students in Puerto Rico have been battling in the streets against U.S. economic coloni- dents in universities around the world. The question remains whether edu- cation workers, students, parents and communities is a testament to the potential power of the working class.

The recent battles to defend public schools and universities are perhaps most inspiring because they bridge divisions between intellectual and physical labor, as well as between students and workers. The collective resolve of the education workers, students, parents and communities is a testament to the potential power of the working class.

The question remains whether work- ers in more industries and locations will follow their lead and help impel labor or- ganizing to come back stronger and with a better understanding and commitment to solidarity forged through mutual struggle.

WW Commentary:

Such developments are particularly significant because labor organizing has simply not been true. Public education bud- gets remain constricted below 2008 lev- els. Teachers and other education work- ers are some of the lowest paid workers in the U.S. High tuition makes education an increasingly inaccessible realm for working-class college students. At the same time, military spending increases and tax cuts are put in place to benefit the wealthy.

The struggle of education workers arises from necessity— as it does for all work- ing and oppressed people — in the face of stagnant wages, race and class discrimination attacks on benefits and the right to organize.

Meanwhile, students are not limiting themselves to their own immediate in- terests. In New York City, New York University students at the New School occupied the university cafet- eria in solidarity with workers threat- ened with job loss. Expressing unity and mutual recognition for human dignity, the students marched on May 1, chant- ing, “All of us or none of us.”

The students embodied the power that stems from awareness that they cannot freely liberate themselves while others are held in bondage. This is what Marx and Engels had in mind when they pro- claimed that “the free development of each is the condition for the free devel- opment of all.”

In 1968 a similar fervor gripped stu- dents in universities around the world. From the strike to demand an Ethnic Studies program at San Francisco State University to the upsurge of May-June in France, students were central to a revolu- tionary shift in consciousness. These and other student rebellions were grounded in both immediate conditions and the in- international student revolt against impe- rialism and oppression.

On Feb. 8, 1968, at South Carolina State University, a group of 200 Black students and community members pro- testing segregation were fired on by the state’s Highway Patrol. The state’s kill- ing of three people and injuring of 27 at this historically Black college (HBCU) became known as the Orangeburg Mas- sacre. On Oct. 2 in Mexico City, the re- pressive Díaz Ordaz regime carried out a horrendous assault on student demon- strations, the Tlatelolco Massacre, with conservative estimates of the death toll in the hundreds. Two years later came state murders of students at Jackson State University in Mississippi, also an HBCU, and Kent State University in Ohio. These massacres highlight the ruling classes’ extreme fear of both organized revolt and the uncompromising resolve of students to participate in creating a better world.

The violently repressive nature of cap- italism makes both unity and selfless commitment necessary.

Today’s struggles are taking place at some of the same crossroads as 50 years ago. The question remains whether edu- cation and organized rank-and-file opposition to ever-increasing austerity have come from education workers—public school teachers in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma and Colorado; school bus drivers in California, New York and Georgia; striking workers throughout the University of California system; graduate students on strike at Columbia University; and worker-student solidarity at the occupied New School cafeteria.

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Supreme Court ‘justice’ is theft from workers

By G. Dunkel

A recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that allows companies to replace collective-bargaining agreements with individual arbitration is going to make wage and time theft from workers more likely. The May 21 decision involved three cases, Epic Sys-terms Corp. v. Lewis, Ernst & Young LLP v. Morris and National Labor Relations Board v. Murphy Oil USA.

Under the combined decision, non-unionized workers will find it much harder to recover the wages they have earned but have not been paid.

Wage and time thefts are big problems costing workers billions of dollars.

Wage theft occurs when you have worked overtime and the company takes this happens when a worker quits or gets fired in the middle of a pay period, and management just “forgets” to send you your last paycheck. Or the bosses have a policy of not paying for time spent cleaning up your workstation, or not paying for your travel time when you start working at one store and then are asked to go to another which is short-staffed. And so on and so on.

This kind of chiseling affects all work-ers but is particularly hard on low-wage workers. A 2014 study by the Economi-cs Policy Institute established that “the average [wage] loss per worker over the course of a year was $2,634, out of total wages. The average annual wage theft from front-line workers in low-wage industries in the three cities was $2,500 from their employers?”

Workers were expected to keep their jobs, once the presses started rolling and they worked through it. In a print shop producing long-run jobs, once the presses started rolling, workers were expected to keep them running, skipping lunch or dinner or break-fast, depending what shift you were on. But the computer software used by management still assigned every worker a half-an-hour meal break, even if they worked through it.

So the 100 workers in this print shop involuntarily “contributed” 300 unpaid hours to their boss every week. (They generally worked 6 days a week.) When they complained to the wage-and-hours office in New Jersey, they were told that, for such a small claim (around $100,000 a year), they were better off getting their money in a personal injury lawsuit. This reporter quit before a lawyer was found. But after the recent Supreme Court ruling, workers like the ones in the print shop won’t be able to band together to get a lawyer. Legally, they would have to have 100 individual arbitrations, one for each employee.

Practically, they would probably never ask for arbitration because the legal fees would be too much for them to bear.

Unions helpful but no panacea

At the City University of New York, one of the largest universities in the country with near-ly 280,000 students, a large proportion of its technical staff is in the same union, the Professional Staff Congress.

The PSC also represents the faculty, both full-time and adjunct.

For decades, even though the contract between the PSC and CUNY called for a work week of 35 hours, the technical staff, especially at registration time, worked tens of hours of uncompensated overtime.

Then in 2002-03, the union filed and won a grievance about this practice.

CUNY management didn’t give in but came up with a compensation scheme so complicated that it is not adhered to. The scheme doesn’t protect staff from being obliged to work through lunch or put in extra time at the end of the day. But it does keep staff from being called over in the weekend without compensation and it is a positive step in protecting the staff.

Even though union representation may not fully solve worker grievances, union struggle, especially with worker militancy can advance concrete demands from management that improve workers’ lives.

New unions, and especially those for public employees, are under a sustained and powerful attack, both by the Supreme Court and by the Trump administra-tion.

The Supreme Court has a case, the so-called Janus case, that has the potential of being a major financial blow to public sector unions. The Trump administration published a series of three executive orders the Friday before the Memorial Day weekend designed to severely limit the rights of federal workers.

“It’s basically an attempt to make fed-eral employees at-will employees, so you can fire them, as political appointees or lawyers, so you can hire anyone who had a bumper sticker for you in the last election,” said J. David Cox, president of the American Federation of Government Employees, the largest union representing federal employees.

These attacks are a call to all workers to follow the militant example of the educa-tion workers in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arizona, Georgia, Michigan and Puerto Rico. These public employees marched, rallied, walked out and struck, most of them in “right-to-work” (for less) states. They acted for themselves, their students and their communities. They have shown the way to unite to push back against the capitalists’ theft of our wages, time and lives.

Anti-war GIs relive their resistance at Midwest conference

By John Catalinotto

A three-day conference celebrating the history of the movement of active U.S. Armed Forces members who opposed U.S. wars against Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan ended May 22 at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind.

While the Kroc Institute for Peace Studies provided an academic setting, the need for this event went beyond scholarly discussion. Many were them-selves veterans from the front lines of the struggle, and plenty served time in stock-ades, brigs and military prisons for their resistance to war, racism and officers’ bullying. Civilian supporters also took their share of arrests. The racist cops in bullying. Civilian supporters also took their share of arrests. The racist cops in bullying. Civilian supporters also took their share of arrests.

Along with civilian supporters, the military veterans produced dozens of memoirs, histories and novels and at least 13 of these were subjects for one opera, chronicling these struggles.

These focused on the period beginning in 1969, when the U.S. began to send as many as 46,000 troops to occupy Viet-nam, to 1975, when the last U.S. officials. The liberation struggle’s presence per-dured, beyond scholar and academic circles.

One of the main themes of the conference was the ways in which the anti-war movement of the 1960s was an important part of the liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people.

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Trump administration attacks low-income women and workers

By Sue Davis

May 31, 2018

The Trump administration is targeting Title X, which since 1970 has successfully provided comprehensive, scientifically effective reproductive health care for low-income women, predominantly women of color. It is the only such federal program, so Trump is exerting his executive power to destroy it and restrict poor women’s rights in the process.

This blatantly ideological attack on the Title X network would affect about 4,000 health centers that nationally serve about 4 million clients. According to the latest Guttmacher Institute statistics, two-thirds of patients have incomes at or below the federal poverty level, nearly half are uninsured and another 35 percent are covered by Medicaid. The federal poverty level was $20,090 for a family of three in 2015.

The effectiveness of Title X is undisputed. In 2015 Title X-funded providers helped women avoid $222,000 unintended pregnancies, which could have led to 387,000 unplanned births and 278,000 abortions. Without such care, U.S. rates of unintended pregnancies would have been 31 percent higher, with the teen rate 44 percent higher.

Rewire Newspoints out that the new rule would force “an unnatural split between contraception and abortion services,” while forcing already vulnerable women, including im/migrants, youth, rural residents, disabled women and survivors of domestic violence “to take unnecessary risks to end unwanted pregnancies.” (May 22)

The restrictive rule was first introduced during the reactionary Reagan administration, and though upheld by a Supreme Court ruling in 1991, it was never implemented. Clinton dumped it in 1993.

But anti-abortion zealots have resurged and plan to use it aggressively to defund Planned Parenthood, a long-time goal. They claim that the 40 percent of Title X patients who currently rely on Planned Parenthood for basic medical care could be served by other federal health care clinics. However, a Guttmacher study shows that other current Title X sites would need to increase client caseloads by about 70 percent to accommodate Planned Parenthood patients — forcing many to go without care, with predictably negative consequences.

Both U.S. and international laws declare that asylum seekers who cross illegally into the U.S. to seek protection, ease suffering, and reconsider their place in the world to the extent they are not going to let our country be overwhelmed.” Sessions announced that every person stopped crossing into the U.S. “illegally” will be arrested and reviewed by the Department of Justice for prosecution. As for families, children will be taken from parents and turned over to government agencies. (San Diego Tribune)

The San Diego Tribune commented: “The decision to prosecute asylum seekers who cross illegally into the U.S. goes against the [U.N.] Refugee Convention of 1951.” The convention states that countries signing the agreement, as the U.S. did, “shall not return any person to a country where he would have a well-founded fear of persecution.”

But the U.S. administration international laws declare that asylum seekers who cross the border are not violating any law and dictate that U.S. officials must allow refugees to have a legal hearing to rule on their application for asylum. Trump and his

Family members and neighbors in the Indigenous community of Pataxo in Cachoeira Gomez, dying in Texas, grive in her home in Los Alonzo, near San Juan Ostuncalco, depart- ment of Quetzaltenango, Guatemala.

Continued from page 1

find jobs or seek shelter. The vi- olent policies are rooted in white supremacy and clearly violate U.S. and international law.

The administration’s racism was rampant in Sessions’ May 7 speech at the U.S. border in San Diego. According to Fox News, he brought to the message to the world that “we’re not going to let our country be overwhelmed.” Sessions announced that every person stopped crossing into the U.S. “illegally” will be arrested and reviewed by the Department of Justice for prosecution. As for families, children will be taken from parents and turned over to government agencies. (San Diego Tribune)

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benchmen are openly defying those laws.

Settler-colonial borders

Beyond legality, many migrants from Central America are Indigenous, like Gonzalez herself, or have Indigenous her- itage, “sin que se esperan de la población” who cross the border not only as a result of the genocide and land theft carried out by Spanish and English settlers. The extreme force being used by the U.S. to police its border comes from a racist settler-colonial mindset.

The new DOJ policy authorizes border agents from the CBP and Immigration and Customs Enforcement to strip all children, even infants in arms, from parents seeking

work or asylum in the U.S. and to place the children in military bases in Texas and Arkansas. (ti-

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New York City demonstration in support of Planned Parenthood.
In defense of women’s lives and liberation

New York City demonstration in support of Planned Parenthood on May 24.

Women win landslide vote for reproductive justice

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Refugee Council, Doris Luzimmi, and the Migrant and Refugee Rights Center called for full access to legal restrictions on travel for immigrants, its exorbitant costs and document requirements, many migrants could not access abortion services, particularly difficult for asylum-seekers, refugees, and undocumented individuals and trafficking victims.

Among other organizations that supported the amendment’s repeal were the Communist Party of Ireland; Sinn Fein, the Irish nationalist party; the Trade Union Campaign to Repeal the 8th Amendment; and the Artists Campaign to Repeal the 8th Amendment. Members of Britain’s Labour Party flew to Ireland to assist the mobilization.

Women make history

There was a higher than usual voter turnout countrywide: 66 percent of the electorate opted to eliminate the Eighth Amendment, one of the strictest anti-abortion laws in Europe. Enthusiastic young women were the majority of voters in many polling places. Thousands of Irish people living abroad returned to their homeland to vote, some traveling huge distances, as happened with the same-sex marriage vote in 2015. The repeal referendum won in every county, except one.

Although abortion had been illegal in Ireland since 1983, this cruel amendment, which bestowed a fetus with rights equal to those of a woman, was added to the constitution in 1983. The law banned abortions, even where pregnancies resulted from rape or incest or would endanger a pregnant woman’s health or in cases of severe fetal abnormalities. It only allowed an abortion if a woman’s life was at stake. Even so, some seriously ill women died af- ter being denied the procedure when they needed it, as doctors quibbled over whether an abortion would be legal in each case.

Today, 3,000 to 4,000 women leave Ireland annually to obtain abortions. Many women illegally use imported abortion-causing pills — secretly and without medical supervision. Under current law, those who seek or provide abortions risk up to 14 years imprisonment.

The referendum did not establish a new law setting forth women’s right to abortion; but will substitute this language: “Providing may be made by law for the regulation of termination of pregnancy.”

The majority vote gives the government the green light to legalize abortions up to the 12th week of pregnancy and to allow the procedure later in pregnancies under certain circumstances. The public health care system will provide abortions. Women will gain the right to make their own medical decisions while pregnant, not be forced into or denied care.

Ireland’s Prime Minister Leo Varadkar stated that “the culmination of a quiet revolution in Ireland” resulted in voters giving the government a clear mandate to enact legislation legalizing abortion. He has pledged to enact new laws by year’s end. (Guardian, May 26)

1983-2018: 35 years of struggle

Some 1.43 million people voted to repeal the ban, while 723,632 opted to retain it. The number of pro-choice votes demonstrates the changes in Ireland since 1983. That year, when divorce was still illegal, and the Catholic Church hierarchy’s grip on the population was still strong, 841,000 people, the majority of voters, approved the Eighth Amendment.

The Irish women’s movement fought back then and continued to fight for a woman’s right to choose free, safe, legal abortions. During the recent campaign, organizers, many young women wearing “Repeal” T-shirts, met with residents of every county and held rallies and meet- ings throughout the country.

Two stunning events strengthened support for the pro-choice movement. In 1992, the government tried to prevent a suicidal 14-year-old pregnant rape victim from traveling to England to obtain an abortion. After international condemnation, Ireland’s Supreme Court allowed her to go to England for the procedure. Subsequently, the law was changed to permit women to leave the country to access abortions.

Twenty years later, on Oct. 28, 2012, Dr. Savita Halappanavar, a 31-year-old dentist, and member of the Indian community, died of septicaemia after the three-day miscarriage of a nonviable fetus in University Hospital Galway. She had repeatedly requested, and been de- nied, an abortion. Her needless, excuria- ting death became global news.

Outrage grew in Ireland against the inhumane abortion ban. Organizing against it intensified with mass protests around the country. Thousands marched in Dublin and other Irish cities, and in London, following Halappanavar’s death.

In recent years, as more women have joined the workforce, the women’s move- ment — and pro-choice sentiment — have grown. Irish emigrants have brought back news of progressive reproductive rights laws abroad. Women have publicly told their heart-breaking abortion stories and related their horrifying experiences about being denied critical medical care while pregnant. International human rights groups and women’s organizations have increasingly pressured the Irish government to overturn the law. These factors have elevated consciousness and increased reproductive rights activism inside the country.

Revolt against church and state

The landslide victory by the Irish peo- ple was the latest revolt against the Cath- olic Church’s conservative, patriarchal dogma. The exposés of priests’ sexual and other physical abuse of children as well as the Magdalene laundries’ exploitation of women and forcible adoption, often involving the sale, of their babies, had weakened the Church’s influence over the population.

Susan McKay, a writer in Ireland, said the church tried to influence this vote, but “the church does not have the moral au- thority it did in ‘83 … [with] revelations of..."
The opiod crisis

By Harmony Philadelphia

One would think that those in charge of public health might go all in to defeat the “opioid crisis,” yet that isn’t what’s happening.

Catalinotto has recently put out a report saying that having the medical industry curing people wasn’t good for business. This is no less true with treatments for addiction.

There are many different treatment methods available for drug addiction, and it is important to choose one that is effective. Some of the most common treatment methods include medication-assisted treatment (MAT), behavioral therapy, and support groups.

Medication-assisted treatment involves using medications to help manage withdrawal symptoms and prevent relapse. Behavioral therapy focuses on changing addictive behaviors and thought patterns, while support groups provide social support and encouragement.

It is important to find a treatment method that works best for you and to commit to it for a period of time. Recovery is a process, and it may take time to find the right treatment method for you.

It is also important to seek support from friends and family, as well as participating in support groups. Recovery is a journey, and it is important to remember that you are not alone.

The opioid crisis continues to be a major public health issue. It is important to be informed about the different treatment options available and to seek help if you or someone you know is struggling with addiction.

References:


Radical Black woman activist runs for mayor

By Terri Kay
Oakland, Calif.

May 22 — Workers World interviewed Cat Brooks, co-founder of the Anti Police-Terror Project and executive director of the California Justice Teams Network, who just announced her candidacy for mayor of Oakland. This is the first time a Black radical leader has run for this post since Bobby Seale of the Black Panther Party did in 1972.

Workers World: What is it about the political scene in Oakland that makes it the right time for Cat Brooks to run for mayor?

Cat Brooks: I think it’s the political scene in Oakland, but also the political scene nationally. We have said as an organization collectively since Trump got into office that the right time for Cat Brooks to run is now. It woke people up, it reinvigorated people in the movement, but I consider myself a part of that scene nationally. We have said as an organization that our vision is that capitalist greed, austerity policies and exploitation are among the things that are holding people back. If this is your vision, then join Workers World and help to build Workers World!

We marched on May 1, International Workers’ Day, to: 
• Honor workers all over the globe 
• Invite all workers to come out of the shadows 
• Celebrate workers’ myriad contributions to our lives 
• Unite in the struggle for our rights 
• Claim our right to freedom from oppression and exploitation 
• Say that capitalist greed, austerity and misery must be banished forever, and that all of these things are happening that require someone to be inside developing that require someone to be inside

We established the Workers World Supporter Program 41 years ago so readers can help promote Workers World by becoming a supporter. Supporter Program subscribers and greater online capability.

If you want to help us build our platform in partnership with the community, 

We need to be supporting these campaigns whether they directly impact us or not, because they do. Because the more of us that are in office, the more of us there are for us to hang from both sides of the system. The second thing is that this campaign is different in that we are truly building our platform in partnership with the community.

We've spent a lot of time saying De-fund OPD [Oakland Police Department] by 50 percent. Here in Oakland the police department gets close to 43 percent of the general fund, plus millions in over-time. That’s ludicrous. So what the team is working on right now is figuring out legally what can we do? How much can we divest from law enforcement? What are the resolutions that would have to be passed to be able to divest even more? Where would funding streams come from where we can beta test community safety teams and utilize neighborhoods as testing ground for what it would look like to call the police as 10, 15, 20, 30 and 40 percent? Is it possible to invest in prevention rather than criminalization, so all of these after-school programs and things like “Safe Streets” in East Oakland that are really working with the youth ... and the D boys, what does that look like? How do we build that program?

How do we build the cannabis eq- uity program that we have here so that we can give more licenses to people who have been criminalized for being Black and criminalized for engaging in the sale of marijuana?

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There are so many things that are hap-pening that require someone to be inside of that seat, who is going to drastically shift the city’s priorities and force that very different conversation. We don’t think it should be polite conversation about people sleeping outside, we want to talk about the gross reality about what’s happened in this city and really hold the current mayor accountable for what she’s done. We lead the Anti Police-Terror Project.

If s she’s your vision, then join Workers World and help to build Workers World!

BUILD WORKERS WORLD!

W W: You lead the Anti Police-Terror Project. How does that fit with a mayor who would be in charge of the police?

CB: Of course, I’m an abolitionist. I don’t believe that policing can be fixed in this country. I do believe in radical reform on the way to abolition, though. We have to be radically shifting the way we talk about community safety and secu-rity while enacting reforms that enforce transparency and accountability, and drastically decreasing the number of Black and Brown bodies that are falling at the hands of law enforcement.

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BUILD WORKERS WORLD!
Philippine Orchestras reaches Europe
Protests demand Cancel tour to apartheid Israel!

By Ted Kelly
Philadelphia

Palestine solidarity activists have held weeks of demonstrations since April 6 outside the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts here where the called on the Philadelphia Orchestra to cancel its planned visit to Israel, May 26.

Why we defend Korea

Ever since its establishment in 1948, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has been under the threat — at times open, at times implied — of nuclear annihilation at the hands of the U.S.

Especially tense was the period of the Korean War, when Gen. Douglas MacArthur was pushing toward Pyongyang, a radioactive cobalt belt along the border with People’s China. This threat came even as U.S. Air Force planes were destroying factories and cities — every building in North Korea over one story and millions of Korean people were dying in the war.

The real reason for that war was the great anti-colonial, pro-socialist revolution that had triumphed in the North, in which the equality of lords and bosses — collaborators with Japanese colonial rule since 1910 — was pulled down and the masses liberated. It is not hard to see that the Korean war were also a time of the most virulent attacks on progressive forces in the U.S. and the world.

Since then, the Pentagon has organized, at great expense, semi-annual “war games” by the U.S. and South Korea that simulate an attack on the DPRK by nuclear-capable ships and planes. They have quite openly been described as exercises in “decapitating” the North’s leadership. As of late, they have included military forces from Japan, the hated former colonial power.

Now, some 70 years since the division of the Korean nation was formalized by the U.S. setting up a puppet regime in the South, there is a glimmer of hope that discussions among both Koreas and the U.S. could bring an end to the state of war declared in 1950 that persists to this day. The enthusiasm of Koreans in the South, as well as the North, for such a discussion was made clear to the world a year ago, when both Koreas marched together under one flag.

The nuclear weapons question

What has made it possible for such a discussion to even take place? The truth is that a new situation exists precisely because of the U.S. nuclear weapons, the means of those weapons, according to the U.S. administration, which tells the world one thing today and another tomorrow.

People who understand the dangers need to make their voices heard. We need more demonstrations and other public statements opposing the current dangerous trend toward war coming from the U.S.

The nuclear arms question

The U.S. hands off Korea! Sign a peace treaty now!

The struggle will continue to prevent a right-wing rollback of what was won and to legalize abortion in the British-controlled North of Ireland, where women are demanding this right. In solidarity with our comrades there who “support us unwaveringly,” Adoption Rights Campaign organizer Kavanagh pleaded to “support them in their separate but similar fight to gain abortion access.”

Ireland: Women win landslide vote for reproductive justice

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child abuse and cruelty toward pregnant women — scandals the church did its best to cover up. (nytimes.com, May 5)

Activist Bernie Linnane told McKay the anti-choice forces have “lost on divorce, gay marriage, contraception and sex education and the Catholic church knives on this campaign, it has lost everything.”

Cat Inglis, activist with Eirigi, a pro-socialist organization in Ireland, champions the right to abortion there and in the northern six counties. She explained: “Since the inception of the state the church has had a firm grip on every aspect of Irish life,” but it has lost many battles. “Revelations concerning the church’s abuses” in the last 20 years “have changed public perception of the church.”

And Gail McElroy, politics professor at Trinity College Dublin, stressed: “The vote is devastating to the Roman Catholic hierarchy. It is the final nail in the coffin for them. [...] Their hopes of re-establishing the old status are gone.”

Clearly, there has been a progressive shift within Ireland’s population on many social issues that has provided momentum for social changes and the Church’s waning influence. The Repeal vote demonstrates that the vast majority of people support the right to make decisions about their lives, instead of being dictated to by the Church or the State.

A May 23 Irish Times editorial said the “Yes” vote would reject the “worldview that relegates a woman’s bodily autonomy below the right of the State to tell her it knows best.” The referendum’s mass approval shows society’s growing respect for women’s equality — not just in Ireland, but the victory will resonate around the world.

Una Mullally, pro-choice campaigner, explained: “Since the inception of the state the church has had a firm grip on every aspect of Irish life,” but it has lost many battles. “Revelations concerning the church’s abuses” in the last 20 years “have changed public perception of the church.”

The orchestra can’t claim it was not aware of the international Boycott of Israel. His father, George Dreyfus, was a violinist with the Philadelphia Orchestra for nearly 50 years. Dreyfus said his solidarity lies “entirely with the protesters outside the halls.”

The orchestra has shown itself to be, regardless of its stated avowals to the contrary? I suspect Matias Tarnopolsky (the center’s incoming CEO, who starts in August) will have some damage to undo when he arrives on the scene.

The Philadelphia Orchestra told the Inquirer that it is now bracing for the fact that these demonstrations will follow it across Europe. No matter how “resolute” the orchestra management claims to be, its stubbornness does not compare to the growing international solidarity with the Palestinian people, especially as Isra- el steps up its brutal occupation of their homeland.

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Energy workers take ‘Robin Hood’ actions

By Rémy Herrera

May 27 — In numerous corners of France, workers and students’ struggles continue as May draws to an end. This prolongation during Covid has hardened the lines of conflict. The fundamental challenge to neoliberal policies implemented by President Emmanuel Macron’s government over a year ago has not wavered. This is true, even though it is hard for many striking families to see their reduced pay slips or to find enough strength to attend the many demonstrations called by general assemblies and trade unions.

In the transport sector — at SNCF (the French railways) for its railroad system) and sporadically at Air France — strikes have continued for two months on a regular basis. The strike pattern is two days on strike, three days at work. At the SNCF on May 23, the coalition of striking unions announced that 95 percent of the country’s major cities, civil servants joined contingents of militant railway workers, who were at the forefront of protest, and enlarged the common struggle.

In early May, Air France’s CEO was forced to resign following the results of an internal referendum that rejected his salary increase proposals, which the workers considered inadequate. Workers in the energy sectors have been at the heart of the struggle since the very beginning — since December 2017, even before the beginning of the railway strike. On Dec. 7 workers in the electricity and gas industries went on strike to weigh in during wage negotiations. A policy of austerity had imposed a freeze on basic national wages in 2017. The electricians and gas workers have long experience in the struggle. The energy sector has been largely privatized in recent years, under pressure from European Union policies of privatization, and opened up to competition. Recent French governments have gone along with the EU’s demands.

Impression of these destructive strategies, aimed at dismantling public energy service — which has an excellent reputation in France — has increased the risk of supply disruptions and caused recurrent restrictions and outages. It has also allowed for different prices to be charged to users in different regions. There have been frequent increases in energy prices driven by government policy. These policies have inflated the profits of private producers that have entered the market to capture the most profitable niches.

Against the continued occupation of Iraq

Manik Mukherjee, Vice President of the All India Anti-imperialist Forum, issued the following statement on May 15.

The All India Anti-imperialist Forum strongly condemns the shifting of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem which finally puts a seal to Donald Trump’s earlier announcement of U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

This is a clear violation of international law. To add insult to the injury, this blasphemous act was perpetrated a day before the 70th anniversary of what the Palestinians observe as Nakba (catastrophe), when millions of Palestinians were driven out of their homes during the violent birth of the state of Israel in 1948, which fell in the proposed territory of Palestine. The resolution of 1947 clearly stipulated an international status for Jerusalem, and the UN condemning Israel as the violator of international law. But Israel paid little heed to these because of the support of U.S.A. and other imperialist powers.

The latest act of President Trump is a clear negation of the moral and international status of Jerusalem and will block any settlement of the Israel-Palestine conflict through dialogues and discussions. The Palestinians of West Bank, including women and children demanding their legitimate rights.

Against the continued occupation of Iraq

The International Anti-Occupation Network in Tunis issued this statement on May 13.

Fifteen years have passed since the U.S.-led invasion. For the Iraqi people, it has been fifteen years of destruction, death, violations and hardships.

Under the present circumstances in Iraq, holding fraudulent elections does not offer any solution. It is the continued foreign intervention, the political disenfranchise and the corruption that are the root causes of the continued violence and the suffering of the Iraqi people. Anti-war forces must continue to oppose the sectarian system, established by the U.S. occupation. It should come as no surprise that a majority of the Iraqi people refused to participate in this electoral farce. The results of such an election are not credible.

The right of the Iraqi people to make their own decisions must be fully respected and not be dictated by an occupation administration, in violation of international law.

Members of the International Anti-Occupation Network (IAON) from Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and Britain, meeting in Tunis, agreed that the occupation has destroyed all sectors of Iraqi society, and that the installed regime is incapable of solving any of the enormous problems that Iraq faces.

Under the pretense of fighting ISIS [the Islamic State group], eight major cities have been destroyed and left in ruins and many residents are unable to return to their homes. The Iraqi security forces and various militias have committed numerous war crimes.

The criminal justice system, which lacks an independent judiciary and perpetrators injustice, has failed to respond to arbitrary arrests, torture and summary executions.

The current state of impunity must be brought to an end. All those responsible for the destruction caused by the invasion and occupation, as well as the widespread violations of human rights must be held accountable and the victims compensated.

The IAON is a network of solidarity organisations that share information about developments in Iraq and mobilize support for resistance against all forms of the continued occupation and foreign domination of Iraq. We reaffirm the principles of our declaration in Le Fret in August 2008. This offered a way forward from the disasters the invasion and occupation have created. We will continue our efforts until Iraq has regained its full national sovereignty.
La nueva norma del Departamento de Justicia autoriza a los agentes fronterizos del CBP y del Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE por siglas en ingles) a separar a todas/os los niños, incluso a los bebés en brazos, de sus padres que buscan empleo o asilo en EUA y poner estas/os los niños en bases militares en Texas y Arkansas. (tinyurl.com/ya2fq0q)

Un artículo del New York Times del 20 de abril reportó: “El 20 de febrero, una mujer joven llamada Mirian llegó a la frontera de Texas cargando a su hijo de 18 meses. Habían huido de su hogar en Honduras en medio de una nube de gases lacrimógenos, le dijo a los agentes fronterizos que estaban allí. Esperaba encontrar refugio para ella y su hijo juntos. En su lugar, los agentes le ordenaron poner a su hijo en un vehículo del gobierno, dijo después en una declaración a la corte federal”. Al niño lo llevaron a otro lugar.

En solamente 13 días luego del discurso de Session, seiscientos cincuenta y ocho niños/os fueron separados de sus progenitores y puestos en centros de detención. Esto representa un aumento enorme, ya que 700 niños/os fueron separados de sus padres desde octubre 2017 hasta abril 2018 (immigrationimpact.com, 25 de mayo). ¿Qué nos enorgullece? Regímenes totalitarios quitan a los niños de sus padres para castigar a los disidentes,” tuiteó Frank Sharry, director ejecutivo del grupo de defensores de inmigrantes America’s Voice.

“América está quitando a los hijos de sus padres para castigar a los refugiados”. En realidad, las leyes y prácticas de EUA durante cientos de años han legalizado la separación inhumana de padres e hijos —tanto por la separación mediante “ventas de propiedad” de padres e hijos negros, hasta el secuestro “legal” de niñas/os indígenas y su colocación en “internados” creados para desconectarlos de su cultu- ra y de su pueblo.

A finales de marzo, el régimen de Trump anunció que no liberaría a mujeres embarazadas de los centros de detención, notorios por su falta de tratamiento médico adecuado. “Esta nueva política expone aún más la crueldad de las fuerzas de detención y deportación de Trump, poniendo en peligro las vidas de mujeres inmigrantes embarazadas”, dijo Victoria López, abogada de la Unión Americana de Libertades Civiles (ACLU en inglés). (US News, 29 de marzo)

El 25 de mayo, Trump nominó a Ronald Mortensen, fundador del Utah Coalition on Illegal Immigration (Coalición de Utah sobre la Inmigración Inicial), que ha sido clasificada como grupo de odio por el Southern Pov- erty Law Center, para ser el nuevo Secretario de Estado para la Oficina de Población, Refugiados, y Migración. “Él ha acusado a inmigrantes indiscriminados de “de- struir las vidas de los hombres, mujeres, y niños ameri- canos”, y ahora Trump quiere que maneje la agencia fed- eral cuya misión es la de ‘ofrecer protección, aliviar el sufrimiento, y resolver los problemas de la gente perse- guida y de la guerra del mundo’”. (New York Magazine, 25 de mayo)

La indignación sobre las atrocidades de Trump tiene que ser convertida en acciones populares militantes en sol- idaridad con las/os inmigrantes. Esta es la única forma de detener a este demagogo racista y su administración. ¡Abir la fronteras! Y #ShutDownICE (Cerrar ICE)