

From G7 to Shanghai summit

U.S. swagger falls flat

By Sara Flounders

The response to President Donald Trump's arrogant withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and wild threats of tariffs on U.S. allies has exposed declining U.S. influence on a global scale.

This became all too obvious at the gathering in Quebec, Canada, of the G7 summit of the seven major imperialist powers — United States, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Japan. With the exception of Japan, the other six countries are also leading members of the U.S.-commanded NATO military alliance.

Trump's insults and contradictory statements before and after the G7 meeting, and his threats of new tariffs unleashing an unpredictable trade war, reinforced the disarray in the global capitalist order that U.S. imperialism has commanded for 70 years.

Washington is increasingly unable to control the global agenda. U.S. corporate power finds it can no longer order the nations of the world to isolate the People's Democratic Republic of Korea or Iran.

The U.S. has less to offer except threats of military destruction, unpayable debt and broken agreements. This untenable situation is the cause of Trump's rants, tweets and temper tantrums.

In past years G7 summits were usually weekend photo ops, with a vague unity statement to paper over deep economic rivalries behind the scenes.

The only agreement among these top officials, who represent the largest bankers and corporations, is about imperialist wars. They agree on the NATO bombing of Libya, the concerted regime change effort in Syria, the expansion of NATO to the borders of Russia, and the effort to pull Ukraine into the NATO military alliance. They agreed to impose harsh sanctions on Russia and expel Russia from what was then the G8 when Russia moved in 2014 to save its only naval port in Crimea from being captured by NATO.

In past decades, the U.S. had great influence in establishing, and steering for its benefit, this gathering of the world's largest imperialist powers. In essence it is a gathering of thieves and robbers in an alliance to loot the developing world through international banking agreements, utilizing the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, and imposing starvation sanctions on countries that have stepped out of line. But at the same time, these pirates are also ruthlessly competing with each other.

A different alliance

As one meeting of world leaders of the major imperialist countries ended in Canada, another very different meeting was opening in China.

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A milestone for Korea

The joint declaration signed on June 12 by Kim Jong Un of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Donald Trump of the United States is a victory for the DPRK and for the progressive people of South Korea. Just holding such a meeting is a sharp retreat from Trump's threats last fall of nuclear war

against the DPRK. The Korean people as a whole are celebrating this unprecedented event.

Progressive forces in the U.S. must remain vigilant, however. First, there are no guarantees that the political and military agents of the U.S. ruling class won't sabotage this process. And second, no

one should assume that this move means President Trump is any less racist, anti-worker, pro-big business and anti-immigrant than before. The struggle continues to get the U.S. to end its state of war with the DPRK, sign a peace treaty, and bring U.S. troops home from Korea.

— Workers World Editorial Board



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Black anti-imperialist defended

By Julie Varughese

The irony of the first full-blown demonstration against a speaker at the Left Forum in New York City being aimed at a Black anti-imperialist calls into question the motivations of supposedly anti-genocide protesters.

An article being circulated throughout the conference weekend on June 1-3, as well as a walkout protest during the closing plenary of the annual event, decried Black Alliance for Peace national organizer Ajamu Baraka’s support for the Syrian state.

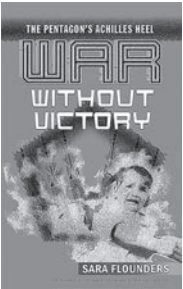
Syria has been devastated by a seven-year, U.S.-led intervention that has armed so-called rebels and created millions of refugees. An international attempt to investigate Syria for allegedly possessing chemical weapons, used to allegedly commit genocide, was thwarted by an April 13 attack by a U.S.-led coalition that included France and the United Kingdom.

Protesters at the Left Forum called Baraka an “Assadist” and a Trump supporter, as well as a “genocide deni-

alist.”

“This was not an attack against me personally, but against all of us who take an uncompromising stance on U.S. and European imperialism,” Baraka said. “The Black Alliance for Peace will continue to call out the petty-bourgeois moralism that aligns itself with the humanitarian fiction of the ‘responsibility to protect’ — the 21st century version of the ‘white man’s burden.’”

The United National Antiwar Coalition issued the following “Defense of Anti-Imperialism” on June 6:



WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

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– Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann,
President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009;
Foreign Minister of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government.

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“Two organizations used Ajamu Baraka’s presence at the recent Left Forum in order to attack anti-imperialism itself. They falsely accuse him of being a defender of genocide and a Donald Trump supporter as a ruse to hide their support of imperialism as carried out not just in Syria but around the world.

“Ajamu Baraka’s history of activism and his role as National Organizer and National Spokesperson for the Black Alliance for Peace demonstrate a commitment to democracy, justice, and the rights of all people to self-determination.

“United National Antiwar Coalition is a partner with BAP on initiatives such as the Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases. BAP is also represented on the UNAC Coordinating Committee. The two groups work together because we share the same determination to end U.S. state-sponsored violence wherever it is carried out. In just one year since its founding, the Black Alliance for Peace has made great strides in reviving the black radical tradition of opposing ‘the greatest purveyor of violence in the world.’

“While the lies and vitriol directed at Ajamu Baraka were not strictly personal, they were in essence attacks carried out against this black-led movement as well. BAP’s success in a short period of time makes it a target of faux leftists, whose goal is to legitimize U.S. foreign policy while cynically appearing to oppose it. The attempt to silence a leading black anti-war organization is therefore racist and makes their actions all the more insidious.

“These organizations reveal themselves to be supporters of the U.S. hegemon, telling slanderous falsehoods in order to hide their true political stance. They have a history of disrupting anti-war actions and forums hosted by UNAC and others whenever an anti-imperialist position on Syria or other issues are being discussed.

“UNAC stands with everyone who is clear about the necessity of ending the U.S. goal of reaching full-spectrum dominance in Syria and everywhere. As such, it is vital for us to stand with Black Alliance for Peace and against any effort to denounce its work and its leadership. We encourage other organizations to add their names to this statement or to issue their own statements of support and solidarity.”

Varughese is a communications advisor for Black Alliance for Peace.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

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Motor City PRIDE

‘Keep bigotry out of our bakery!’

By Thomas Kalish
Detroit

A coalition of comrades and allies marched on June 10 in Detroit in the Motor City Pride parade, an event dominated by the banking and corporate institutions that have ignored and exploited LGBTQ+ people for decades.

In an effort to bring the narrative of queer liberation back to its radical roots, Workers World Party members and others in the struggle engaged with Pride attendees, staffing a booth at the Pride festival on

June 9 and 10 and drawing large groups of visitors, despite the remote location we were assigned.

The Detroit WWP branch, which has maintained a presence at Pride for years, connected the struggle for LGBTQ+ rights to the issues of racial and economic inequality nationally and internationally. Members reminded all who heard us that the struggle is not over and invited everyone to a forum on Stonewall the following weekend.

Despite heavy marketing and propa-



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

ganda at the event, comrades received enthusiastic responses from the queer community. Chants of “Keep your bigotry out of our bakery!” and “We’re here! We’re queer! Immigrants are welcome here!” were met with cheers and applause, with many onlookers joining in.

Despite funding from the banks and companies that are ravaging Detroit, the police presence and even active recruiting, and a clear capitalist message, Motor City Pride retained radical, communist voices like the ones who started the LGBTQ movement nearly 50 years ago. □

Stonewall Warriors continue radical legacy

By Belladonna Ashman
Boston

Stonewall Warriors gathered as a contingent for the Boston Pride parade on June 9, joined by activists from United American Indians of New England, Act Up Class War and the Justice for Siham Coalition. Led by trans women in a contingent heavily made up of trans and non-binary folks, their messaging focused on the anti-worker SEXTA/FOSTA bill as well as on a Massachusetts Nov. 8 referendum that would strip rights from transgender people; they totally rejected the narrative that it is simply a “bathroom bill.”

The contingent challenged the repressive state with chants such as “Oink! Oink! Bang! Bang! Every day the same thing!” — which decried the involvement of police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Pride. Other chants denounced U.S. imperialism on all fronts. Speakers on the sound truck raised a number of issues, including the death of Roxana Hernández, a migrant trans wom-

an who died in ICE custody from HIV-related complications. They tied fascistic ICE tactics to police killings of Black and Brown people.

Other chants underlined the central points of the contingent, such as “Stop killing trans people!” The contingent expressed LGBTQ solidarity with all oppressed people through chants like “Justice for Puerto Rico! Justice for Palestine!”

As they reached the festival at the end of the march, the contingent continued moving through the crowd, chanting “Stonewall means fight back!” and then held a speakout. Reaffirming the messaging and issues carried in the march, members of the contingent came forward and shared their anger.

Near the front of the parade, No Justice, No Pride Boston, a group of queer and trans people of color, carried out a disruption in front of the Santander Bank contingent to call attention to many of the same issues, including Santander’s exploitation of Puerto Rico and the real death toll of Hurricane María. □



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

Alabama

40 years of LGBTQ Pride

By Minnie Bruce Pratt
Birmingham, Ala.

More than 1,000 people rolled, walked, watched and cheered on the night of June 9 as Alabama celebrated 40 years of marching in the streets for LGBTQ rights and liberation. Central Alabama Pride organized the week’s events, with people attending from all over the state, including from regional associations: Rocket City Pride (Huntsville), Equality Shoals (Muscle Shoals), Druid City Pride (Tuscaloosa), Pride on the Plains (Auburn), Montgomery Pride and Mob Pride (Mobile).

Over 100 exuberant contingents were there, with a significant number of churches making a statement against extreme right-wing Christian nationalism, like that of former Alabama Supreme Court Justice Roy Moore. Notoriously anti-LGBTQ, Moore was recently defeated in a bid for the U.S. Senate.

Grand marshals included the Magic City Acceptance Center, an affirming space for LGBTQ 13-to-24-year-old youth; PFLAG Birmingham (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays); and TAKE Resource Center (Transgender Advocates Knowledgeable Empowering), which supports trans women of color.

been disregarded or tokenized.

The outcome of this workshop was a commitment toward action and future workshops. Saldivar-Soto noted that transgender and queer youth represent 40 percent of homeless youth. Even in spaces trans youth consider the safest for them, sexual exploitation and other forms of violence prevail.

Future workshops have been planned. Workers World Party is organizing a public forum on LGBTQ issues in July and specific programming on trans issues has been outlined. □

Connections between liberation struggles were made through a small group from the local National Organization for Women and a larger representation from Planned Parenthood. Some participants wore vests marked “Clinic Escort,” a reminder that defense of clinics offering abortion has been necessary in Birmingham since a fascist right-winger bombed the New Woman, All Women Health Care Clinic in 1998, killing one person.

The largest contingents were hundreds of dramatically enthusiastic workers. They were marching under the logos of their corporate bosses — Apple, Honda, T-Mobile and others. Companies trying to co-opt Pride events for advertising and recruitment is not a new capitalist tactic. It dates at least from 1977, when racist, anti-labor Coors Beer first sponsored an anti-LGBTQ event in Colorado.

But the huge contingents of workers suggested another possibility, springing from the recent pushback of Google workers against their company’s Pentagon contract. (WW article, tinyurl.com/yc5vrf2n) On this Birmingham night, hundreds of workers marching in the heart of the Deep South, waving rainbow flags and exulting in LGBTQ lives, offered hope of their uniting to fight independently for social justice and workers’ rights.

Lessons for the continuing LGBTQ struggle from the historic battles and campaigns of the Black Civil Rights Movement in Alabama are alive in the present moment. In September, Birmingham became the first Alabama city to pass an LGBTQ-inclusive human rights ordinance. The recently elected young Black mayor, Randall Woodfin, has asserted: “Birmingham is the cradle of the Civil Rights Movement,” with a duty to lead in ensuring the rights of everyone, “no matter their race, sexual orientation, religion, or gender identification.” (randallwoodfin.com) □

WWP San Diego

Honors trans struggle

By M. Matsemela-Ali Odom
San Diego, Calif.

Workers World Party comrade Rahui Suré Saldivar-Soto organized a public workshop here on the transgender struggle and origins of Pride on June 6. Transgender people and butch lesbians, especially working-class Black and Brown transgender people, have always been at the forefront of the struggles for queer liberation. Special attention was given to the stories of Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson and the late Comrade Leslie Feinberg of Workers World Party.

With a radical intersectional analysis, Saldivar-Soto showed how transgender people, especially transgender women, have faced alienation, violence and ostracization from society and even mainstream sectors of the queer community. As discussed in the workshop, there is practically no issue facing working-class people of color that is not magnified for transgender people. Transgender youth experience the highest percentage of unemployment, homelessness, mass incarceration, addiction and multiple health issues caused and exacerbated by the racist, transphobic health care system that has historically misdiagnosed and ignored trans people.

The state system of policing and mass incarceration has historically overlooked violence against working-class transwomen as well. As Saldivar-Soto pointed out, the average life expectancy for trans

people is 35 years, but for trans people of color that number is as low as 30 years. Saldivar-Soto recalled personal narratives of people as young as 14 who have died in San Diego.

Despite the acute struggles of transgender people and the centrality of trans leadership in queer liberation struggles — transgender people were at the forefront of the uprisings at both the Compton Cafeteria in San Francisco in August 1966 and the Stonewall Inn in New York City in 1969 — neoliberalization of the mainstream LGBTQ movement has erased the contributions of the most vulnerable of the community.

Comrade Bob McCubbin noted the way that the mainstream push for integration separated the movement throughout its long history. He pointed out the split between the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Activists Alliance in New York City in the 1970s, with the former committing itself to radical and internationalist work.

That this contradiction is especially sharp in San Diego came out during the workshop. The political economy of San Diego, which is based on real estate speculation, the military-industrial complex, private investment capital and tourism, is much different from that in other West Coast cities. With very little history of industrial labor outside of military contract work, working-class San Diegans have long experienced drastically uneven economic conditions. It is within this history that the issues of transgender people have

North Carolina

State workers win \$15 hour

By Dante Strobino
Durham, N.C.

After several years of struggle, state workers in North Carolina secured a wage increase of up to \$15 per hour when the state legislature adopted a Fiscal Year 2019 budget on June 1. If the maximum wage increase is paid, a worker's yearly salary would be \$31,200. The wage increase will begin on July 1, 2018.

Electrical Workers (UE) Local 150, North Carolina Public Service Workers Union, was the only organization fighting to raise the wages of the lowest-paid state workers at first, and they won.

The win results in over 10,000 housekeepers, food service workers, health care technicians, developmental technicians, transportation workers, groundskeepers and others getting wage increases of several thousand dollars. Many of these workers now earn only between \$26,000 and \$29,000. Prioritization of the lowest-paid workers was balanced by state employees who already made above \$15 per hour receiving a 2 percent raise.

This victory came weeks after teachers and education workers across the state called out of work for a “personal day” of protest to demand more investments in public education and wage increases. Over 20,000 education workers rallied at the state legislative building on May 16, shutting down more than 42 school districts, affecting about 67 percent of the state’s public school students and canceling classes for more than 1 million students. However, public school workers are excluded from the June 1 raise, though state university workers and others will receive it.

The week of May 21, UE Local 150 called for a “Political Action” week, where members from across North Carolina

pushed a workers’ agenda in meetings with state legislators. The Raising Wages Coalition held a “Lobby Day,” where over 100 people, including union members, seniors, immigrants rights activists, and members of other community and worker organizations, showed up for the main demand: to raise the minimum wage of all workers in the state to \$15 per hour.

After passage of the 2019 budget, Nathanette Mayo, president of UE Local 150, said at a June 4 press conference, “While we certainly welcome these modest wage increases, we condemn the state legislature’s lack of transparency and the fact that the people did not have the opportunity to review the budget to voice their input.”

Right-wing maneuvers, backroom deals in election year

The historic wage increase, for which many had fought for many years, occurred in an election year when the entire state legislature is up for re-election. Mayo noted: “The Republican super majority was so arrogant that they felt they did not even need to bring the budget bill to committee, as is the usual democratic process in the legislature.” She continued, “Instead, it was simply brought to the chamber floor and voted up or down, without any open debates or amendments.”

Darrion Smith, a therapeutic support specialist at Central Regional Hospital, stated at the press conference, “These backroom deals leave state workers in the cold and are despicable.” Smith demanded: “Stop dividing state workers from teachers. We are all the same and should have all been granted at least a \$3,000 raise.” Smith is chair of the UE Local 150 Department of Health and Human Services Council.

The NC Justice Center, which monitors the General Assembly closely, stated in a press release: “They raided federal money intended to extend the reach of programming to young children, and they cut off rural counties with high poverty from tools to revitalize.” This is a reference to \$50 million from the federal government meant for pre-K programs, which was spent elsewhere to appease the legislators’ political base.

The Justice Center continued: “They failed to put state dollars toward health care as needed, and they earmarked millions for special interests rather than invest in services for all. They missed the chance to make genuine progress on investing in each child’s education. This new low is a missed opportunity for our state, made worse by the fact that they kept in place \$900 million in new tax cuts that will begin in January 2019 and force more bad choices in the future.”

These additional tax cuts, added to annual revenue losses since 2013, mean an estimated \$3.5 billion less in revenue each year to fund community and voter priorities like protecting children from abuse, building healthy schools, serving seniors meals, protecting the water and air, and training the future workforce, according to the Justice Center

Lowest corporate tax rate in the U.S.

In 2017, the North Carolina General Assembly passed a draconian revenue plan slashing taxes on corporations to only 3 percent, and to 5.5 percent on the income of wealthy individuals. This gave North Carolina the lowest corporate tax rate in the U.S.

In 2018, the legislators cut those taxes even further, so corporations pay only 2.5 percent. This gutted over \$900 million from the state budget, using the claim the

money wasn’t needed because there was a “surplus.”

But this so-called surplus does not account for the billions of dollars for state programs cut since the 2008 capitalist crisis. Meanwhile, Republican legislators are now attempting to add a work requirement for Medicaid recipients.

Additionally, the Republicans in “leadership” will create a permanent revenue crisis for the state if they succeed in their attempt to add a permanent cap of 5.5 percent on personal income taxes. They have introduced a “Tax Payers Bill of Rights” to insert into the state constitution. If passed, this amendment would have to be voted on in a state referendum in the November elections, giving the right wing a key issue for mobilizing their base.

But state, city and other workers across the state and country are fighting back.

UE Local 150’s statewide membership continues to grow in North Carolina as more workers engage in union actions across the state, from Charlotte to Kinston. The largest mobilization of city workers in decades occurred in April, as over 300 Charlotte city workers flooded City Hall twice during budget hearings.

On June 11, fast food workers took the lead, rallying at the state legislature. They were acting as part of the Poor People’s Campaign, focusing that day on the theme, “Everybody’s Got the Right to Live: Education, Living Wage, Jobs, Income, Housing.”

Hundreds have already been arrested in nonviolent civil disobedience as part of this 40-day national campaign of “moral outrage” against racism, poverty, militarism and environmental destruction. The Poor People’s Campaign actions will continue through June 23, when there will be a national convergence in Washington, D.C. □

Encampment residents demand end to evictions

By Workers World Durham bureau

Residents of a tent encampment on W. Chapel Hill Street in Durham, N.C., along with community supporters, held a press conference and rally on June 8 to demand that they not be forcibly evicted by the police.

According to a statement from the residents: “Last Friday, on June 1, we received a letter from Captain Reitz notifying us that we would all be evicted within seven days. We have nowhere to go. The shelters are full and all have waiting lists. Many of us do not feel safe staying in a shelter. We feel safe living in our tents and wish to remain here until we find more permanent free housing.” Durham currently faces a huge gentrification and evictions crisis, with more than 900 people getting evicted every month.

The tent encampment residents released a statement demanding that the state Department of Transportation and the city of Durham:

Do not evict us until we are found permanent, free housing.

Do not cut down the trees in our encampment. The trees keep us shaded from the elements, especially the hot sun during the summer, plus they provide us an important environmental buffer from the highway.

Provide us with a few trash receptacles and provide us weekly collection service, like all other residencies in Durham, so that we can keep our encampment clean.

Transition the old Durham Police headquarters, just across the street from our encampment, into affordable housing and provide us all free housing in the building.

“Allow us to be — we just want to live. We are trying to get by best we can and get back into society,” said Sandra McCuller, an encampment resident.

“I don’t want to be evicted. I don’t want to live in a shelter and worry about being a victim,” stated resident Edward Prettyman.

A statement from the United Residents of the Chapel Hill Street Tent Encampment reads in part: “This is our home. We live here. The state is not using this land. All of us have lived here between four months and a year. We have a trusting, strong community of residents. We all support each other in various ways in feeding ourselves and staying safe. ... There is already a housing and eviction crisis in Durham. Do not add us to that tragic list.”

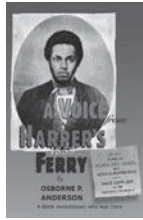
Durham activists have set up a rapid response group to mobilize in case the police show up at the encampment at any time, and to keep public pressure

and actions going to deter them from evicting the residents. Supporters are urged to contact North Carolina Department of Transportation Secretary James Trogdon at jhtrogdon@ncdot.gov and 919-707-2800. Tell him, “Don’t evict the Durham



tent encampment!” #DefendDurham #HousingisaRight #stopevictionsnow □

Find them at: www.workers.org/books



A Voice from Harpers Ferry
Osborne P. Anderson’s account of the raid on Harper’s Ferry appeared in pamphlet form in 1861 right after the start of the Civil War. Includes essays by Mumia Abu-Jamal, Monica Moorehead and Vince Copeland.



The Klan & Government: Foes or Allies?

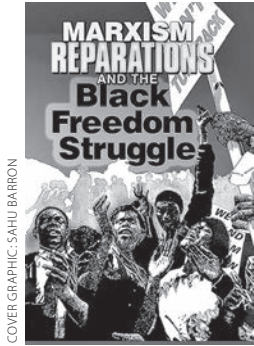
Examines the special relationship with the state that has allowed the Ku Klux Klan to exist for over a century despite its criminal history of lynchings, murders, and intimidation.

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper.

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The 1941 Walt Disney cartoonists’ strike

By Mike Kuhlenbeck

Union workers employed by Disney amusement parks in California and Florida are currently fighting for a fair contract. See WW article at tinyurl.com/DisneyWorkers.

The 1941 Walt Disney Cartoonists’ Strike resulted in a major victory for animators, the influence of which is still being felt today.

When the National Labor Relations Act became law in 1935, there were large-scale efforts to organize Hollywood talent. The Writers Guild of America, the Screen Actors Guild and the Directors Guild of America had won recognition. The Screen Cartoonists’ Guild, founded in 1938, sought to organize animators.

In the late 1930s, the SCG (later renamed the Animation Guild Local 839, Hollywood, IATSE) fought for recognition by the major studios. After a handful of victories, their biggest challenge, and their most important campaign, would be at the largest animation house in the world: Walt Disney Studio in Burbank, Calif.

At this time, Walt Disney, along with his brother and Walt Disney Company co-founder Roy Disney, employed more than 800 animators, with nearly 1,300 employees in total. Walt Disney was a former cartoonist who was more of a

businessman than an artist, one strongly opposed to unions.

As the studio went into production with “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” (1937), many animators were promised bonuses upon the film’s release. But most of the artists did not reap financial gains from their efforts. Disney’s empty promise was among many grievances voiced by the artists.

Animation Guild President Emeritus Tom Sito, a professor at the University of Southern California, wrote about the strike in his book “Drawing the Line: The Untold Story of the Animation Unions from Bosko to Bart Simpson” (2006).

Sito told Workers World, “The artists worked a six-day workweek, even before overtime. Pay scales were all over the place, from some artists being able to afford maids and others making less than a local house painter. Nobody got credit on the films but Walt Disney.”

Animators attempted to join the SCG, but Disney would not allow it. Disney even threatened to turn his company into a solely live-action studio to intimidate them. Disney’s cartoon mascot, Mickey Mouse, would have been more accurately portrayed as “Mickey the union-busting rat.” SCG leaders included veteran labor organizer Herbert Sorrell, and top Disney animators David Hilberman and Ar-

thur Babbitt.

Violating federal law, Disney fired 17 pro-union artists, including Babbitt. This was the last straw for the nearly 400 animators who had signed union cards. They walked off the job, and the strike commenced on May 29, 1941.

“For the artists, it was always about respect,” Sito said.

When Disney arrived at the studio, he was greeted by hundreds of strikers with picket signs that read: “Disney Unfair!” “Are We Mice or Men?” and “800 Artists vs. One Genius.” The strikers blocked trucks from entering the studio, urged theaters to boycott Disney films and pressured suppliers to not process Disney footage.

The strike was recognized by the National Labor Relations Board on July 5. Disney soon felt the pressure. Fearing a loss of government contracts as well as a recall of bank loans, Disney surrendered. President Franklin Roosevelt dispatched an NLRB mediator, who sided with the Guild during negotiations.

After several weeks, Disney workers celebrated a victory against the greed of “Uncle Walt.” This battle marked a turning point in labor rights for animators according to Brooke Keesling, Animation Guild director of communications and culture.

Keesling told Workers World: “When a federal mediator decided in favor of the union, it set a tone that continues to this day. All major animation studios and employers in Los Angeles are unionized – and the union agreements set a tone for wages and working conditions that has a ripple effect throughout the industry.”

According to Sito, “The Disney Strike really settled that ToonTown was going to be a union town. By the end of that year, 98 percent of all production was being done under a union contract. Paid vacations, wage scales, overtime compensation, forty-hour week.”

Regarding current struggles, Keesling said, “Many challenges facing all creative workers are similar: the gig economy, the globalization of work, and political pressure to erode worker protections.”

Seventy-seven years after the strike, “bread and roses” have not always been bountiful in the Magic Kingdom. Unions are still not embraced by Disney’s top brass. As the kingdom has expanded into the amusement parks and resorts in the U.S. and around the world, the struggle for workers’ rights continues in “the happiest place on earth.”

There are two important lessons to be learned from the strike: the importance of solidarity, and that the union struggle is always an ongoing fight. □

Jobs report confirms Poor People’s Campaign

By G. Dunkel

When the Bureau of Labor Statistics released its May monthly employment report, one figure in the jobs report — the official unemployment rate, at 3.8 percent — drew boasting from President Donald Trump, puffery from much of the big-business media and a stock market bump.

These spokespeople for capitalism implied that this report of the lowest unemployment rate since 2000 meant that the capitalist economy was finally on the way to vigorous growth after the Great Recession that began in 2008-2009.

How is it possible, then, that the organizers of the Poor People’s Campaign, which began May 14 and is scheduled to last 40 days, see a need to restart the campaign that Martin Luther King Jr. began 50 years ago? This campaign involves protests and demonstrations throughout the U.S.

According to its national co-chair, the Rev. William Barber, this campaign’s demands are “calling for a higher minimum wage and a repeal of the 2017 federal tax law, ending gerrymandering [of election districts]. It also calls for an expansion of Medicaid in every state and an end to systemic racism, ecological devastation and military aggression, among other things.” (NPR, May 14)

The truth behind the statistics is that low pay, lack of hours and no benefits drive many workers and their families into poverty, and figures for each of these phenomena can be teased out of the full BLS report.

Another, broader figure in the report, which measures the number of people working only part time who want to work full time, and includes discouraged workers — those who have given up looking for work — and workers “marginally attached” to the labor market, was basically ignored by the media. This rate, which the BLS calls the U6 rate, was 7.6 percent. It was 6.9 percent in 2000, when



the economy was growing vigorously.

An even more important figure for measuring economic growth is the Labor Force Participation Rate. The LFPR measures the proportion of the adult population that is in the labor market. This rate also decreased in May. That’s not a sign of good times.

The authors of some articles in the big business media say they don’t understand why this 3.8 percent unemployment figure, which they assumed is the equivalent of full employment, hadn’t led to bigger wage hikes for lower-paid workers. Workers on the bottom of the wage scale, who are predominantly people of color and women, have seen only a 2.8 percent increase — barely over inflation — since May 2017. (Whether or not even this small increase is due, at least in part, to the Fight for \$15, that is, the struggle to win a higher minimum wage, wasn’t addressed.)

The truth is that the low official unemployment rate doesn’t really mean full employment. And you must also consider some of the legal and political steps big business has taken to keep wages low. These steps include imposing “non-compete” contracts, refusing to raise the legal minimum wage, and turning full-time, permanent jobs into temporary gigs that disguise workers as independent contractors and leave them with no benefits or minimum wages.

Labor Force Participation Rate

The Labor Force Participation Rate is a better measure of economic health. This

rate takes the number of people in the labor pool, both employed and unemployed, divided by the working-age population, that is, everyone over 16 who is not in the military or in prisons or in hospitals or nursing homes. Currently the LRPR is 62.7 percent.

Historically, the LFPR was below 60 percent from 1948 until the mid 1960s, when women started to enter the labor force in much greater numbers. The LFPR reached its maximum of 67.3 percent in 2000.

In general, the LFPR has been falling since 2008 and is unlikely to improve. The U.S. population is getting older as the baby boomers retire from the workforce. When these older workers lose their job because of automation or outsourcing to a low-wage area, if their skills don’t match what employers currently require, they either drop out of active job-seeking or are forced to compete for the lowest paying jobs.

In addition, the lack of health care, especially for diseases of poverty like high blood pressure and diabetes, keeps tens of thousands out of the labor pool.

Another reason the LFPR is unlikely to increase is the much greater use of opioid medication. According to economic and business news writer Kimberly Amadeo, “Almost half of prime age men not in the labor force take pain medication daily to treat chronic health conditions.” The opioid epidemic affects about one million people according to recent studies. (thebalance.com, June 1)

How the bosses keep wages low

The political power of those that control the economy, who also control vast wealth, makes it much more difficult even for union workers to bargain collectively to win higher wages and better working conditions. Better wages for unionized workers in an industry or area has historically also helped raise wages for unorga-

nized workers there, as their bosses have made concessions to keep unions out.

Hundreds of firms have paid billions of dollars in penalties since 2000 for practices such as forcing off-the-clock work and job title misclassifications to avoid paying overtime, as well as overtime, minimum wage, meal break and tip violations. Some 1,200 successful collective actions challenging large companies’ bad behavior have cost top corporations a total of \$8.8 billion. (Jobs with Justice, June 2018) But this is just the tip of the iceberg — small violations of labor laws often go uncaught.

There are fewer “company towns” in the United States today. Still, nurses, aides, medical technicians or even doctors in a town where there are only a few hospitals, have to take what wages the owners of these facilities are willing to offer, or move. The same goes for many other dominant industries in small towns.

Some 30 to 40 million workers in the U.S. — including Amazon pickers and minimum-wage sandwich makers — are covered by non-compete contracts which forbid them from going to work for a competitor. (New York Times, June 7) Google, Microsoft, Oracle, IBM and Cisco have no-raid pacts, which keep them from hiring workers who work for their competitors. Even smaller firms than these giants, in areas where the minimum wage has been boosted, refrain from hiring workers from jurisdictions where it hasn’t.

If you are an undocumented worker, all these extortions and exploitations can be used against you without any practical hindrance.

So, when you examine the more telling statistics, like the LFPR, the government report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, designed to let companies make informed hiring and investment decisions, they confirm many of the charges and complaints made by the Poor People’s Campaign. □

U.S. actions show solidarity with Palesti

Events around the U.S. expressed solidarity with Palestine during the first two weeks in June. Here is a sampling from WW correspondents.

Within Our Lifetime/United for Palestine held a community Iftar on June 8, Al-Quds Day, at the Solidarity Center in **New York City** to celebrate the Palestinian people's right to resist until return and liberation.

More than 100 demonstrators gathered at CNN headquarters in **Atlanta** for Al-Quds Day. There, they held a rally, with speakers from Christian, Islamic and Jewish organizations as well as secular solidarity groups, including the International Action Center and Jewish Voice for Peace. The rally was followed by a march through downtown Atlanta to Troy Davis (Woodruff) Park, another short rally and then a march back to CNN.



WW PHOTO: BILL DORES



WW PHOTO: JOSHUA HANKS

A midday protest on June 5 in **Milwaukee** focused on the Israeli ambassador, who was speaking at the war memorial. The protesters were a multinational group, outraged that the ambassador came to peddle U.S.-Israeli genocidal lies during a luncheon. At the 3-hour protest, which began outside the war memorial

building, participants chanted, "Free, free Palestine!" and other slogans loud enough to be heard clearly inside the luncheon. The protesters then moved to where those who attended the luncheon were exiting the parking lot and chanted, "Shame!" for their complicity in the slaughter of Palestinians and in the

U.S.-Israeli theft of Palestinian lands. Numerous labor, community, peace and anti-war organizations united to publicize and participate in the protest.

Members of the Workers World Party **Portland, Ore.**, branch organized a demonstration June 8 in response to the Palestinians' call for support of their on-

Protesters honor nurse slain in Gaza

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

As demonstrators gathered outside the Municipal Services Building in Philadelphia for a solidarity protest with Palestine on June 8, passersby were drawn to a large display of photos of Razan al-Najjar, the 21-year-old nurse murdered by Israeli snipers while providing emergency medical support at a protest in Gaza on June 1. Razan, who lived less than 100 meters from where she was shot, was not the first Palestinian medical worker killed by Israelis in the weekly border demonstrations that began in late March.

The Philadelphia Don't Orchestrate Apartheid campaign called on supporters to heed the call from Palestinians in Gaza to join in an international day of protest and solidarity: "We urge all free people everywhere to join the Palestinians by organizing solidarity events to demand that their governments exert pressure on Israel to end its oppression and occupation of the Palestinian people." June 8 marked the 70th anniversary of Israeli forces' violent seizure of Jerusalem.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

The PDOA coalition specifically reached out to nurses, paramedics and other medical workers to stand in solidarity with al-Najjar to honor her memory and to stand up for medical workers in Gaza and around the world. Their call received messages of solidarity from health care workers, including members of Rebellious Nurses and the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals.

The action was endorsed by Black and

Brown Workers Cooperative, the MOVE Family, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, International Action Center, Workers World Party, Foods Not Bombs-Solidarity, Temple Students for Justice in Palestine, Philly BDS [Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions], Jewish Voice for Peace, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Philadelphia Socialists and REAL Justice.

Since April 6, activists in Philadelphia

have made international headlines with weekly demonstrations opposing the Philadelphia Orchestra's apartheid tour in Israel. The orchestra is now back, but the overwhelming message from the protesters was "we are only getting started."

A march following the rally stopped outside City Hall, where speakers addressed the reality that the genocide in Palestine is funded by the U.S., at the same time that Israeli soldiers are training police in Philadelphia. One demonstrator's sign read, "Their snipers train our cops."

The demonstration ended at the Kimmel Center on south Broad Street, where the orchestra performs. Police at the site were prepared to block protesters with stacks of barricades. Protesters ignored the fences, filled the sidewalk outside the center, and took over the southbound lane of Broad Street, handing out flyers to people in cars passing by.

Speakers noted that on June 6 the orchestra played for Israeli Defense Forces soldiers, including those who may have murdered al-Najjar, totally ignoring their crimes. The orchestra's "cultural" visit made no mention of al-Najjar's death. Their overall messaging has been about

Global actions oppose Israeli violence

By **Kathy Durkin**

On Al-Quds Day (Jerusalem Day), June 8, Israeli soldiers fatally shot four protesters, including a 15-year-old, in **Gaza** and wounded 600, with 254 people hospitalized. They were among the 10,000 Palestinians walking to the Gaza border fence. Protests took place in five locations that day. Overhead, Israeli drones hovered, dropping flammable materials and tear gas.

Since 1979, hundreds of thousands of people in the Middle East have protested Israel's occupation of Jerusalem on Al-Quds day, the last Friday of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, to show wholehearted solidarity with the Palestinian people.

The February decision by White House resident Donald Trump to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move the U.S. Embassy there triggered mass protests in Palestine, elsewhere in the Middle East, and in cities around the world, including in the U.S.

Since March 30, Palestinians have participated in the Great March of Return to the border fence separating Gaza and Israel, insisting on their right to return to their homeland of Palestine, now Israel. Gaza's population comprises Palestinians violently forced from their houses, farms

and villages during Israel's founding in 1948 and their descendants. They object to the theft of their land, Israel's inhumane blockade of Gaza and the U.S. Embassy's relocation to Jerusalem.

The Israeli Defense Forces have responded with brute force, killing at least 129 Gazans and wounding another 13,300. (TeleSUR, June 9) World outrage has soared at Israel's murderous war on the Palestinian people, held in Gaza's "open-air prison." Global demonstrations have shown concrete solidarity with this besieged, but resolute people, including on Al-Quds Day.

Solidarity on Al-Quds Day ...

Syrians and Palestinians marched together in **Damascus**, in the old city to the Umayyad Mosque. A Palestinian in Syria, Hamid Hassan, said that Al-Quds Day "means a lot for us. Jerusalem is an Arab land." (The Daily Star, June 9) Israel annexed East Jerusalem in 1967.

Tens of thousands marched in **Tehran** and 900 other Iranian cities and towns to condemn Israel's occupation and murderous violence. Thousands marched in **Baghdad**, Iraq. In **Islamabad**, Pakistan, protesters burned Israeli and U.S. flags, as well as an effigy of Trump.

Protests also took place in **New Delhi**, India, and in **Sydney** and **Melbourne**, Australia.

Chants of "Freiheit für Palastina" (Freedom for Palestine!) resonated in **Berlin** and **Vienna**. Some 2,500 people, a larger-than-usual crowd, marched in the German city, calling for a boycott of apartheid Israel. Hundreds of medical workers carried photos of 21-year-old Palestinian medic Razan al-Najjar slain by an Israeli sniper on June 1.

Hundreds of demonstrators were on the streets in Vienna; many carried a replica of the apartheid wall on Gaza's border. They called for global solidarity for Palestinians fighting the occupation and oppression and for worldwide action against Israel's atrocities.

In **London**, chants of "1, 2, 3, 4! Occupation is no more!" rang out. Signs read, "No more genocide!" and called for a boycott of Israel.

In Canada, thousands, including medical workers, marched in **Toronto** to the U.S. Consulate General's office. They called out, "Gaza, Gaza, Don't you cry! We won't let you die!" "Viva, Viva Palestine!" and "Justice for Palestine!" Some signs read, "Zionism is racism!" A Walk for Palestine Liberation and Gaza Freedom took

place in **Ottawa** to the Israeli Embassy.

Anti-Zionist rabbis from the Neturei Karta International community marched in Berlin, Toronto and New York City in opposition to Israeli apartheid.

Actions took place in 23 U.S. cities, including Cleveland, Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

... And more Palestinian protests

Hundreds of people took part in two demonstrations in **Haifa**, Israel, on June 1, against Israeli attacks on Gaza. Early in the day, 300 people rallied, including Arab legislators and activist Jafar Farah, who said a police officer shattered his knee in detention after a demonstration protesting Israel's violence in mid-May. That night, hundreds of youth and others protested IDF assaults on Gazans.

In Nabi Saleh on the Occupied West Bank, Israeli soldiers fatally shot 21-year-old Izzedine Tamimi, cousin of 17-year-old Ahed Tamimi, Israeli political prisoner, after removing him from his house, on June 6. He was the third member of the Tamimi family executed this year by the IDF. Eyewitnesses say military forces prevented paramedics from treating him. Subsequently, soldiers attacked angry village residents.

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The Arab world and the struggle against austerity



WW PHOTO: JIMMY RAYNOR

going anti-colonialist struggle. Demonstrators joined an event for housing justice and were given a platform to speak. They condemned the deliberate murders of medic Razan al-Najjar on June 1 and journalist Rachel Corrie on March 16, 2003. □
Bill Does, Jimmy Raynor and Joshua Hanks contributed to this article.

the “sanctity of the concert hall.”
Meanwhile, when demonstrators disrupted a football practice in Barcelona on June 6 after Israel announced it was moving a soccer game between Israel and Argentina from Haifa to Jerusalem, players didn’t respond by talking about “the sanctity of the football pitch.” They responded by boycotting Israel.
The Electronic Intifada reported: “Argentina’s newspaper Clarin confirmed that when protesters using a megaphone called individually on players not to take part in the match during a practice in Barcelona it had an impact.
“‘The players looked at each other surprised. The megaphone began to name the names of the Argentine stars one by one, starting with Messi. The request, never with grievances, was the same: ‘Do not play that game,’ Clarin reported. ‘It was no longer possible to be indifferent to what was happening.’” (June 6)
If only the Philadelphia Orchestra management had as much integrity. □

Then, on June 10, in central **Ramallah** in the Occupied West Bank, 1,500 people demanded that the Palestinian Authority lift its sanctions on Gaza. “It is the biggest popular show of solidarity toward Gaza in the West Bank since the beginning of the Great March of Return in Gaza,” reported Israeli newspaper Haaretz on June 11. Several Palestinian residents of Jerusalem participated, while the demonstration size kept increasing.
Palestinian political leaders walked alongside university students. The crowd chanted pro-Gaza slogans and held photos of martyr Razan al-Najjar. Other slogans were “Shame on you, you sold Gaza in dollars” and “With soul and blood, we will save you, Gaza.”

LGBTQ, Jewish activists: ‘End the siege!’
Hundreds of LGBTQ activists blocked the LGBTQ Pride march in **Tel Aviv** on June 8, saying, “There is no pride in occupation.” A video posted at NYC Solidarity with Palestine on Facebook shows a self-identified queer activist asserting that Israel uses “pinkwashing” to “distort horrible atrocities in the West Bank, Gaza and across Palestine.”

Organizer Tamar Ben Davi explained, “We came here to protest the cynical exploitation of the LGBTQ struggle for the good of the Israeli government’s crimes, which is why we came with a fence.” Nearby Israeli soldiers “are shooting people exercising the right to protest.” Yuli Novak said the LGBT community’s challenges “are

By Julia Kassem
Jordanians took to the streets for five days, beginning May 30, to protest measures by the government to increase taxes. Demonstrators also demanded access and improvements to city services, the lack of which compounds the high rate of unemployment to which Jordan’s population is subjected.
In the largest protests the country has seen since 2011, Jordanians unseated Prime Minister Hani Mulki in a matter of days due to popular discontent with staggering austerity, lack of affordability and poverty.
The protests were launched following the announcement of International Monetary Fund measures, which included a new draft, income-based tax law and a sharp tax increase that enraged the widely unemployed and underemployed populace.

The IMF put \$723 million into the country ostensibly to lower debt and enhance equitable growth. Yet the inflow has only supported the country’s staggering \$35 billion debt service. Jordan joined five other Arab countries — Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen — in approving IMF loans in August 2016. These austerity agreements are detrimental to social programs and especially antagonistic to the population’s already suffering from devastation wrought by imperialist warfare, high unemployment and rampant corruption.
Like its Arab neighbors, Jordan has become beholden to the debt trap of finance capital, in which capitalism and cronyism by governments and institutions prove accountable to no one other than international banks and bankrollers. These entities buy their way into economic and political dominion over countries and thereby deny their self-determination.
Nations continue to be destabilized by the effects of capitalism, as economic

not disconnected from the struggle for the rights of others. In every struggle that celebrates freedom and liberation, we will be here to protest against the crimes committed in our names.” (TeleSUR, June 9)
A flier distributed in Tel Aviv read: “The Israeli Government markets Tel Aviv as a city of freedom, and yet 70 kilometers away from here there are two million Palestinians jailed in Gaza. ... As members of a community that is still fighting for full rights and equality, we will not be silent in the face of human rights violations and repression of the freedom to protest. We will stand in solidarity with Palestinians living under occupation and under siege.”
Israeli Jewish activists, self-named “RETURN,” hung photos of martyrs of the Great Return March on **Gaza’s** “Apartheid Fence” on June 7, in response to the call for international solidarity. They called for worldwide sanctions on Israeli industries.

A participant said: “The Palestinians besieged in Gaza are marching home, back to the villages and cities from which they were expelled. They are marching out of the desert that Israel has transformed Gaza into, and because of this, the Israeli occupying army is murdering them in cold blood. The courage and sacrifice of these people demand all of us to stand up and ensure an end to Israeli impunity. Apartheid must end, and we are the ones who must end it.” (Mondoweiss, June 7)
Bill Does contributed to this article.

austerity helps fuel social and political instability throughout the Arab world. In Lebanon the ratio of debt to gross domestic product, at 148 percent, is the highest in the Middle East and third highest in the world. It’s the legacy of finance inflows that made their way into the pockets of bourgeois party elites. The 1989 Taif Agreement, a post-civil-war decree signed in Saudi Arabia, instituted sectarianism and reinforced the colonial French legacy of divide and conquer. As a result, Lebanon remains without a decent infrastructure, yet is a favorite of the World Bank and European Union for its continuous acceptance of loans for unsuccessful public-private infrastructure ventures.

Egypt too is no stranger to austerity. It has its own share of IMF loans triggering austerity squeezes, including slashing food and fuel subsidies amid stagnant pay and high poverty. In Tunisia in January, seven years after mass demonstrations toppled dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, 1,000 young activists were arrested after a month of protests against austerity and unemployment. And the Ansarullah in impoverished Yemen forced President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi into exile in 2014 for his compliance in enforcing IMF-style austerity. Such neoliberal policies had continued to rob citizens and extinguish any semblance of civil services from the people.

Arab and Muslim governments that don’t neatly comply with international banks are met with hostility. Syria was pressured to adopt neoliberal economic policies over the past few decades — financial policies that failed to assist its large agricultural sector struggling from the aftereffects of a five-year drought. Syria’s refusal to take on IMF loans and its relative independence from foreign debt has made it the target of finance capitalist institutions and U.S.-NATO aggression. Libya’s state-owned bank, nationalization of the economy and plans to implement a pan-African gold standard led to the violent NATO-led toppling of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

Between the lavish Gulf and the impoverished nations in the Levant and North

Africa, income inequality dominates the Middle East, representing one of the highest disparities seen in any region in the world. The top 10 percent of the population holds more than 67 percent of the region’s wealth. Wealth inequality across Arab nations replicates the class divides within their respective societies. As Gulf Cooperation Council nations rack up wealth, claiming nearly 50 percent of the region’s income despite having only 15 percent of the Arab world’s population, an ascension of instability and unrest threatens to quell reactionary regimes.

The increasingly apparent alliance between the GCC nations, Britain, the U.S. and Israel — the U.S.’s longtime settler colonial outpost in the Middle East — exemplify their steadfast commitment to reinforcing economic and political hegemony. The openly warm relations between the U.S.’s two closest Middle East allies, Israel and Saudi Arabia — which are also Britain’s original neocolonies — and their camaraderie with the U.S. over military aggression and genocide continue to foster austerity among the peoples and lands of Palestine and Yemen, which are kept brutally impoverished and underdeveloped. Worldwide, austerity policies are inextricable from the war economy that is their main perpetrator.

In the interests of imperialism, Western-backed monarchs were placed to guard artificially carved-up states, ensuring that the tools of sectarianism and neocolonial governance would safeguard wealth. Today, this status quo is sustained, yet faces an unprecedented threat from the masses who reject its murderous attacks on the sovereignty of working people worldwide. In the U.S., the cost of warmongering is the crumbling of U.S. infrastructure and institutions, even as it has worked to help tear down the infrastructure of countries abroad.

It is up to the working people across all hemispheres to resist economic and political forces that consign us all to death and destruction.
Kassem is an organizer with U.S. Palestinian Community Network-Detroit.

Call for a unified Korea



A coalition of groups, including the Korean American National Coordinating Council and the Korean Peace Alliance, held an event on June 4 outside the Korean Consulate in downtown Los Angeles and organized the hanging of a moving ribbon that called for a unified Korea. The coalition emphasized the need for peace

with the U.S. and a formal declaration to end the Korean War. People collected ribbons from around the U.S. and hung them in the front of the consulate. The unified flag of one Korea was duct taped to the building and passersby were encouraged to add their messages to the display.
— Report and photo by Susan Schnur

Organizing workers to fight for solidarity

Part 2 of a talk by Larry Holmes, first secretary of Workers World Party, at the May 6 meeting titled “Marx@200: Class Struggle in the Age of Trump” in New York.

By Larry Holmes

We have to begin to overturn the narrow conceptions of how workers are organized.

Conventional trade unionism, that is, business unionism, says, “Well, we’ll organize workers if we feel that they can win recognition and get a contract and be able to negotiate the terms of their exploitation. If they can’t do that, we don’t know what to do with them.”

This is the main reason why several unions gave up on trying to organize fast food workers. The argument was: “You can’t organize McDonald’s. You’ll never get recognition. We’re throwing good money after bad.” All kinds of excuses. So they gave up.

That’s very dangerous, because from a revolutionary Marxist perspective, if you don’t organize as many workers as you can, under whatever circumstances they’re toiling, then you make it easier for the system to pit workers against each other.

There’s something we can learn from the teachers who are striking in Arizona and Colorado and other places. They’re also going out in North Carolina. This is revolutionary. I don’t know whether everybody gets this.

These education workers — it’s not just teachers — are fighting in so-called right-to-work, anti-worker, anti-union states. They are not recognized by the government. Their strikes, according to

bourgeois law, are illegal. Which means it’s a rebellion where tens of thousands of them are saying to hell with it. They could get fired. They could get fined. But still they’re walking out.

It’s a message to every worker everywhere. Regardless of your circumstance, regardless of the laws in your state, you can organize if there are revolutionaries and activists and militants like ourselves who understand and who will help you any way that we can. And that’s the big challenge for us.

We need what one might call “real internationalism.” There’s a big struggle going on in France. It’s very important. It’s basically the workers again rising up and fighting against what the bourgeoisie has been trying to do there for several generations — take back all the gains of the workers so it can be more competitive.

The problem is, the other workers in Europe should be standing with them. And actually, it should be more than just a European struggle. It should be a worldwide struggle. Why? Because if the bourgeoisie is victorious there, then they’ll try it everywhere else, like they already have in Detroit and Puerto Rico.

We need to give a new revolutionary scope to our struggle: That it’s really a global class struggle.

This is from the “Communist Manifesto,” written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels about 170 years ago: “Now and then the workers are victorious, but

only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever-expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralise the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one nationwide struggle between classes.”

I think what they just did here was give you a Marxist analysis of social media. It’s communications technology that has made it easier to organize across large distances. The bourgeoisie uses it for its purposes, and the working class uses it for its purposes. Now you can contemplate the unimaginable possibility of a global strike. It’s going to happen one day.

Capitalism throws workers into violent competition with each other. And in a crisis, this competition is exacerbated; it gets worse. It’s only when the struggle reaches a certain momentum that it changes that problem, and solidarity becomes stronger. Then solidarity has a lot of gravity and the workers come together.

This is where the danger of Trump comes in. We can say a lot about Trump. As bad and dangerous as Trump is, actually he’s a sign that the system is falling apart. He’s a sign of desperation. However, let us not forget what Trump is about, primarily. He’s about smashing the working class. He’s about dividing the workers from the most oppressed sections of the working class.



WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN
Larry Holmes at Marx anniversary meeting.

If we understood what Marx was about, we probably would have tried to do more in solidarity with the immigrant workers who came to this country in a caravan recently, whom Trump has been attacking and attacking for weeks. He sent troops down there, and more cops, and more judges, and more of the state apparatus to repress them.

I’m not saying that the reason why we need to zero in on solidarity with immigrant workers is because their plight is necessarily worse or greater than that of other workers in another part of the world, or that it’s a moral question. No, that’s not it at all.

If we get what the ruling class is up to — if we really understand how they want to keep the working class chained — then we would know that it was time to find a way to solidarize ourselves with these migrant workers. Fortunately we’re going to have another opportunity to do that. As a matter of fact, many opportunities.

I hope Workers World Party and all of our allies, communists and socialists or however you characterize yourselves, those who want revolution, those who want to help the working class and lift it up, and those who want to go beyond immediate demands and see something else at the end of the tunnel called socialist revolution — let us work harder. Let us use Marx’s 200th birthday to inspire us to do that. □

From G7 to Shanghai summit U.S. swagger falls flat

Continued from page 1

More than 2,500 domestic and foreign reporters and 2,000 guests came to Qingdao, a coastal city in Shandong province, to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit on June 9 and 10. A dozen agreements on economic cooperation and security were signed.

The SCO summit involves eight Asian countries in the developing world. Four of them — China, Russia, India and Pakistan — are large countries. The Central Asian countries Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are also members. Several other Asian countries have observer and dialogue partner status. The member countries account for 3 billion people, almost half the world’s population.

SCO’s newest member, as of this summit, is Iran.

This meeting of global significance has received scant attention in the U.S. media. One headline of CNNMoney, however, summarized the new reality: “Forget the G7. A summit happening in China is what really matters.” (June 8)

The SCO is not a revolutionary alliance. Nor is it an international coalition that challenges capitalist property relations or the global order in any fundamental way.

It is an international gathering outside of all imperialist-dominated forums. Many of the member countries are targeted by imperialism and seek mutual assistance and cooperation in order to develop.

Initially established as a regional security grouping, the SCO nations have

increasingly focused on expanding trade and strengthening wider cooperation among developing countries.

Plans already underway for vast modernization, the introduction of new industries and advanced communication will lead to a large expansion of the working class throughout the entire region.

China’s agenda in hosting the SCO summit is to expand its regional influence and bypass U.S. military encirclement through numerous trade and infrastructure agreements. It now has the nationalized resources and the expertise to help fund large-scale development projects and to upgrade the infrastructure of major roads, railways, ports, pipelines and telecommunications to meet the needs of neighboring countries.

U.S. breaks Iran deal

Trump’s May 8 announcement on Iran unraveled an international agreement, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed by seven countries — U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China, Iran and the European Union — after years of dire U.S. threats. Although Iran had met every provision of the restrictive treaty, stringent sanctions and harsh new penalties to any country doing business with Iran will be imposed.

France, Germany and Britain, along with the EU, denounced the unilateral action because it blocked their unfolding business deals. In a joint statement, they officially reminded Trump that a U.N. Security Council endorsement had made this a binding international agreement. Despite their opposition to Washington’s decision, they began clos-

ing down their projects in Iran.

Trump’s withdrawal from the Iran agreement is hardly a surprise. From the hundreds of treaties made with Indigenous nations to the Vietnam Peace Treaty, agreements with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia, Washington has never respected or abided by any pact made with oppressed, developing or targeted nations.

But Washington’s decision to withdraw from the signed agreement, reimpose sanctions and demand every other country follow suit or face penalties no longer has the impact it did even five years ago.

China’s invitation to Iran

China — Iran’s number-one energy partner — used Washington’s effort to isolate Iran and undercut Wall Street’s European rivals by turning the tables.

President Xi Jinping invited Iranian President Hassan Rouhani for a bilateral meeting on trade and cooperation. Xi also publicly invited Iran to participate in the SCO meeting.

Iran is a key transport hub between Asia and Europe and provides maritime access to landlocked countries. China’s proposal for a high-speed railway across Central Asia is advantageous to Iran and to the development of the whole region.

Iran recently signed a free-trade zone agreement with the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union.

Russia, Iran and China can trade in the Chinese yuan, now an international currency. This means they can avoid U.S. sanctions on both Iran and Russia, which

complicate all U.S. dollar transactions.

Attendance at the SCO

It is significant that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India and President Mamnoon Hussain of Pakistan attended the SCO summit and shook hands. These two nuclear states have fought three wars against each other. British and U.S. policy for decades was to do everything possible to keep India and Pakistan in hostile contention.

Presidents of four central Asian countries that are former Soviet republics — Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan — attended as members. Each country secured very favorable new economic and trade agreements. For example, in return for greater access to regional energy, China offers lesser developed countries like Kazakhstan, the largest world exporter of uranium, access to world markets for its exports as well as increased regional trade among member states.

Russian President Vladimir Putin attended the summit. Russia’s economy is much smaller than China’s and is growing slowly. But Russia is one of the world’s biggest energy producers. It also faces U.S. and EU sanctions.

Qingdao was a symbolic choice to host the SCO summit. It is at the eastern end of a vast railway network across Eurasia and a logistical center linking the Silk Road Economic Belt with the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

According to Chinese news reports, this 18th summit is expected to “ratify a five-year outline for the implementation of the Treaty on Long-term Good Neighbor-

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Fracked gas pipeline explodes in fireball

By Stephanie Tromblay
Huron/Metis nonstatus &
Tsalagi heritage unenrolled

A fireball shooting up from an exploding natural gas pipeline in Moundsville, West Virginia, on June 7 was seen as far away as western Pennsylvania. (Pennsylvania Real-Time News)

When TransCanada’s Columbia natural gas pipeline blew up at 4:15 a.m., the explosion lit up the sky for miles. Marshall County emergency management director Tom Hart received calls from throughout three area counties of residents’ visual reports.

TransCanada shut down the Columbia Gas Transmission’s Leach Xpress Pipeline and legally declared pipeline delivery contracts in failure. The 160-mile, 36-inch-diameter pipeline had only recently entered service on Jan. 1, 2018.

TransCanada is infamous for many similar blowouts on its TransCanada pipeline in western Canada. The corporation is the fossil fuel giant pushing to build the Keystone XL and Potomac pipelines against widespread opposition.

Keystone XL is planned to carry tar sands oil from Alberta, Canada, across the Plains to the Gulf for export.

Its route would run through the precious Sandhills habitat, across many Indigenous sacred and burial sites, and through prime farmland—all of which



Explosion on the Transcanada Pipeline at Nixon Ridge in W. Va., June 7.

would be threatened with destruction.

Indigenous communities joined by white farmers and ranchers in the Cowboy-Indian Alliance protested against the KXL pipeline from Lincoln, Neb., to Washington, D.C. This struggle stopped KXL in 2015, but it has been restarted by a 2017 permit greenlight from the Trump administration.

“The fight to kill the Keystone XL pipeline begins anew — and Donald Trump should expect far greater resistance than ever before,” said Dallas Goldtooth for the Indigenous Environmental Network. “We’ve stopped the toxic Keystone XL Pipeline once and we will do it again.” (www.cbc.ca)

Goldtooth continued: “We hope that everyone around the world who stood with Standing Rock [on the Dakota Access Pipeline] will continue to stand with us and all the tribes as we continue to fight these dangerous and short-sighted infrastructure projects that serve only

the interests of billionaires.”

TransCanada plans for the Potomac pipeline to run under the Potomac River and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and carry natural gas from Pennsylvania to West Virginia. A leak on the Potomac pipeline would foul the drinking water not just of residents of the District of Columbia, but also of the millions who live in the potentially affected area.

Indigenous women leaders inspire resistance

The Indigenous women leaders of the KXL water protectors inspired youth from Standing Rock. The youth returned home to kick off the powerful struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) at Standing Rock reservation. These included the youth making long distance runs to broadcast the threat of DAPL to the drinking water of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

Indigenous women built the struggle of the Lakota/Dakota/Nakota Nation against DAPL. The struggle was joined by thousands of Indigenous people and supporters from all over Great Turtle Island and beyond. The water protectors faced brutal repression by county and state cops from many states, the National Guard and illegal mercenary thugs.

This was a fight to protect Standing Rock’s “Winters Rights” — guaranteed by

the 1908 Supreme Court case *Winters v. United States* — to, and to protection of, clean water needed by the reservation. Many of those arrested during the assault by the state and corporate thugs are still facing trial dates and further repression.

After Trump’s inauguration, Energy Transfer Partners got final approval to finish DAPL. Now millions of gallons of crude oil from western North Dakota are flowing under the Missouri to a pipeline in Illinois to refineries in the Gulf of Mexico for export. A Missouri spill would destroy clean water for Standing Rock and 18,000,000 people downstream.

The U.S. is densely crisscrossed with fossil fuel pipelines, and pipelines corrode and rupture. There are about two pipeline incidents a day in the U.S. (tinyurl.com/y9bml2zw) And Big Oil never totally cleans up spills — from Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico to Exxon Valdez in Alaska.

Spills, leaks and petrochemical explosions damage the environment — the waters, the air, the land — as well as habitats, wildlife, and people’s health. All humanity and all species are threatened by global warming, which is a result of the use of fossil fuels. More pipelines are not needed. Stopping global warming will require transition out of the fossil-fuel economy.

Clean water is a human right. Water is Life! ☐

China #1 in renewable energy

By Deirdre Griswold

It’s easy to feel gloomy when all your news input comes from the powerful media conglomerates controlling what most people in the U.S. see and hear. Their focus is on horror and violence, and there is plenty of that to go around.

When it comes to the environment, we read about melting glaciers, deaths from

sweltering heat, destructive storms and rising sea levels. We also hear about the Trump administration’s reactionary retreat from even the mildest government efforts to mitigate global warming. And, of course, all of this is true.

But something else is going on in the world, and it’s very big. Yet, for obvious political reasons, we don’t hear much about it.

You see, something CAN be done about global warming. And the country that is doing the most is one that just two generations ago was mired in poverty and underdevelopment: the People’s Republic of China.

A report on how much new investment around the world was spent on renewable energy in 2017 was published this April 5 by Bloomberg New Energy Finance, the sustainable energy finance center run by the United Nations Environment Programme, and the Frankfurt School of Finance & Management.

This report got barely any attention from the powerful mass media in this country. To them, it wasn’t newsworthy that almost half of the world’s new investment in wind, solar and other renewables — not even counting large hydroelectric projects — came from China. For every dollar that the U.S. invested in renewables, China spent three!

For China, it was a 30 percent increase over 2016. U.S. investment in this sector, however, actually dropped by 6 percent last year. The exact figures on new renewable energy investments in 2017 were China \$126.6 billion, the U.S. \$40.5 billion.

More than two-thirds of China’s investment went into solar energy, adding some 53 gigawatts of capacity. Wind was second, at nearly a third of the total.

This is not at all where China intends to be in the future, however, as renewables still account for only 20 percent of its total energy use. China has four times the population of the U.S. and has also become a huge factory for the world, so it uses a lot of energy.

A planned economy

What is important about these investment figures is that the Chinese government is carrying out an economic plan for the overall development of its economy — and that plan extends well into the future.

It has consistently reached its goals, year after year. It has proven that rational planning on this scale is not only possible but absolutely necessary to bring its huge population up out of poverty — and to meet the challenge of global warming.

The United States has no such plan. How could it? The economy here is owned by competing and colluding billionaires whose driving purpose is to make as much money as possible. The government has long been the tool of this billionaire class. Trump has only made its totally chaotic and venal character more obvious.

Yes, there are capitalist enterprises in China. There are even billionaires. And that’s a real danger for a country building socialism. The Chinese Revolution has had great advances, but also great setbacks.

But the state, created by a profound revolution of the masses of people and led by the Communist Party, has not been overthrown. The working class itself has grown enormously since the revolution. In 2015, there were 225 million registered rural migrants working in the big cities — in other words, 225 million former peasants who had recently become proletarians.

And they are not passive. The power of the workers in China has been seen over the last decade in the hundreds — maybe even thousands — of strikes that have demanded better wages and working conditions, mainly against capitalist companies owned by foreigners.

Global warming is not an inevitability. It is tightly linked to which social class is in power. The day when capitalist exploitation is finally abolished, and the means of production are liberated to serve the needs of humanity, will be the day that planning can truly begin on a world scale to heal the wounds inflicted on our mother Earth. ☐

U.S. swagger falls flat

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borliness, Friendship and Cooperation,” as well as “approve more than 10 cooperation deals covering areas including security, economy, and people-to-people exchanges.”

Changing balance

U.S. imperialism’s economic domination has declined dramatically. So has the economic weight of the EU countries.

In contrast, the Asia Pacific region’s share of the global economy is expected to rise to 39 percent by 2023, while that of North America is estimated to fall to 25 percent, according to the IMF.

French President Emmanuel Macron tweeted that the other G7 members wouldn’t “mind signing a 6 country agreement if need be.” The six other G7 countries now form a larger market than the U.S. market.

But, as Putin pointed out, the combined purchasing power of the SCO now outstrips that of the G7.

News reports and commentaries at the SCO focused on this new alliance challenging the existing world order led by the U.S.

All of this will have an impact on Trump’s talks with the DPRK. Trump

faces a common determination to not allow U.S. threats or sanctions to isolate any country or destabilize whole regions.

Pentagon threatens all progress

The Pentagon’s response to the historic SCO gathering was to send U.S. B-52 bombers on maneuvers in the South China Sea on June 5. Earlier, on May 27, two warships sailed near the South China Sea islands claimed by China. China denounced U.S. militarization of the region and its willful trespassing as highly provocative.

While fighting among themselves at the G7 meeting, both Britain and France agreed to have their warships join the aggressive U.S. naval operation, labeled the “Freedom of Navigation Flotilla,” in the world’s most important shipping corridor.

It is hardly a coincidence that the announcement among these imperialist pirates was made in Singapore days ahead of Trump’s meeting with President Kim Jong Un of the DPRK.

This old-fashioned gunboat diplomacy can’t stop the people of the world from pursuing development and communication.

Flounders is co-coordinator of the International Action Center.

WORKERS WORLD editorial

LGBTQ Pride smashes white supremacy



Roxana Hernández (center).

As of the beginning of June, LGBTQ Pride month, 13 trans people have been murdered in the U.S., the majority trans women of color. These are the deaths recorded by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation — the deaths that are reported.

Not counted in this heartrending number is Roxana Hernández, a migrant trans woman from Honduras who died in Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody on May 25.

She arrived at the U.S. border seeking

asylum, in a caravan of Central American migrants organized by the advocacy group Pueblo Sin Fronteras. The caravan included several dozen other trans women fleeing from countries wracked by destabilization and violence, seeded and encouraged by U.S. imperialist policies and interventions.

Hernández was immediately detained and sent to

the Cibola County Correctional Center in New Mexico. Ill with pneumonia and other HIV-related complications, she was hospitalized there. But seemingly she was then confined for five days in what immigrant rights groups call the “ice box” — ICE facilities notorious for freezing temperatures.

Roxana Hernández died there. She was 33 years old.

At the same time as she was dying, perhaps even in the same ICE facility, im/migrant families were being violently

separated under the “zero tolerance” for immigrants-of-color policy of chief-bigot Donald Trump and arch-racist Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

Gut-wrenching stories are coming from ICE jails of detained mothers who can hear their children in the next room screaming for them. Parents are forbidden to see or reassure the children in any way and do not know where their children are being taken. A Honduran man, separated at the Texas border from his wife, his 3-year-old son physically wrenched from his arms by border police, committed suicide in despair in custody. Relatives in the U.S. seeking to claim the stolen children are being targeted for arrest even as they come forward.

These incidents — the death of trans woman Roxana and the brutal separation of families — are linked by the fact of U.S. state violence and persecution toward im/migrants.

But there is another link — the ugly bigotry of those in power who decide that some people deserve to live and others to die, that some kinds of families deserve shelter and safety and other families should be torn apart.

The bigotry that declares LGBTQ lives

and families to be illegitimate, evil and undeserving of legal protection is also targeting migrant people and families, people of color, Indigenous families.

This is nothing new in a U.S. founded on the massacre of Indigenous people, families and culture and on the buying, selling and separation of African peoples and families.

But this month, LGBTQ Pride Month, the necessity to link the struggle against racism and the struggle for LGBTQ lives is made unmistakably clear, once again, by the death of Roxana Hernández.

Let us lift up the life of this trans woman of color, and the lives of the 13 other trans people we know of, mostly trans women of color, who have been murdered in the U.S. this year.

There is no Pride in a country where this racism, hatred and bigotry rages. There is no Pride in a country that assaults the rest of the world with racism, hatred and bigotry. This Pride month, we must act to stop the violence — we must act to forge unbreakable solidarity.

Let us march for liberation with signs held high and this determination in our hearts: “LGBTQ Pride smashes white supremacy!” □

John Parker for Senate: ‘We’ll continue fighting in the streets’

By Scott Scheffer
Los Angeles

The following is an interview with John Parker, the Workers World Party candidate for U.S. Senate in the 2018 elections in California.

Scott Scheffer: John, you — a long-time revolutionary activist in Workers World — ran for U.S. Senate. How did that come about?

John Parker: I was nominated by the Peace and Freedom Party, a coalition of socialist and left organizations, that especially allows socialist candidates to use its ballot status to run for office in California.

SS: What was the main message of your campaign?

JP: WWP was not running a candidate to in any way legitimize the election process. I was running to expose this bankrupt system and help motivate a movement independent of the Democrats and Republicans — the two parties of the ruling class — whose politicians are bought and paid to enable a system that increasingly gives us nothing but poverty, war and racism.

I wanted to make sure we hit some of the main contradictions of capitalism that need to be fought in order to unify our class and expose the barriers to moving humanity forward.

The first point on the platform was that I would immediately call for a state emergency to be declared in Black and Brown neighborhoods to stop police murders of Black and Brown youth. The second was to call for an immediate cessation of U.S. wars and proxy wars and divert the funding to vital social programs and for use in programs to reverse environmental damage. The third was to institute a referendum calling for the conversion of privately owned vital industry into public ownership.

SS: That’s a great platform. How was it built and how was it received?

JP: We were really happy with the response. There’s no doubt that it was a reflection of the growing problems imposed because of the crises of capitalism. In the official voter guide, I was able to reach 19 million people with a message calling for ending capitalism and not supporting its enablers in the Democratic and Republican parties.

The overwhelming response was positive and drew many new activists to the campaign. A Black woman who leads a Democratic club in northern California called me to say she voted for me because I was the only one bold enough to mention white supremacy. This campaign was endorsed by one of the most important grassroots Latinx organizations in Los Angeles, Unión del Barrio, because it addressed the fascist-like attacks against the migrant community and understood the roots of the refugee and migrant crisis: U.S. imperialism. I was also endorsed by the California Green Party and various socialist parties — a reflection of how the campaign was helping to build left unity. It was also endorsed by prominent Black officials in the labor movement.

People live in fear of cops on the streets, right-wing violence encouraged by Trump, and just the stress of trying to survive when all jobs being created are low-pay, rents are spiking and people are sleeping on sidewalks in record numbers. Hundreds on social media and in person told us they were voting for this campaign, which was openly socialist. We made sure that it was clear in our message that socialism means a complete displacement of capitalism and replacing it with a real workers’ society.

SS: The Democratic and Republican parties dominate U.S. politics so thoroughly. Why would a longtime left activist and leader run?

JP: Many people working in the electoral arena struggle to justify their continual defeats trying to “take over the Democratic Party.” They are confined by

an idea that you have to stay within what the ruling class allows.

Capitalism itself wasn’t brought about using the vehicles allowed by the ruling monarchs during feudalism. It came into being when feudalism could no longer expand production. In other words, it could no longer produce what society needed, and poor farmers became the motor force of the revolutionary struggle that brought about capitalism, which was able to expand production. But, due to capitalism’s internal contradictions, it can no longer do that. In fact, it now deters the production of society’s basic necessities.

This is why half of the world lives on \$2 to \$10 per day and wages have gone down for the past 40 years. There are no livable-wage jobs for the majority, and 40 million people in the U.S. live in poverty, while 2017 saw the greatest increase in the number of billionaires. Capitalism is not only ripe, it’s overripe to be replaced by another system that puts working people at the helm. But to avoid this we’re taught to ignore the power of the working class and how workers create wealth.

Here’s an example. In 2006, a racist bill — H.R. 4437, the Sensenbrenner bill — would have severely hurt migrants in this country. The migrant community organized a protest of 1 million people on March 25, 2006, and then again on May 1, 2006. On that day, they withheld their labor and corporations lost hundreds of millions of dollars. Those actions brought back May Day in the U.S. and defeated the Sensenbrenner bill without lobbyists or legislative battles — just the power of workers withholding their labor. Electoral politics is a tool, but it can’t be the only tool.

SS: What would you do if you got elected?

JP: If I got elected, I would use the amplified voice I would have to expose not only the influence of the financial and industrial monopolies who run the politicians, but the war crimes and crimes



John Parker and a voter outside a polling place in Los Angeles.

against humanity and against our class both here and abroad.

I’d expose the fact that 8 million people from Yemen are expected to starve to death because of the U.S. war in cooperation with Saudi Arabia, while every few hours Black and Brown people here are murdered by racist genocidal police. I’d expose the real reason jobs and livable wages are being kept from us and the simple solutions that are not allowed by the banks and corporations. In other words, I’d motivate the movement to take over the reins of power.

I’d probably be able to do that for a very limited amount of time, but it is the only thing I should be doing. Stopping global warming; endless wars by the police, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Pentagon; and racist, sexist and anti-LGBTQ violence all begin by exposing the forces that allow them to continue and empowering the people to act outside the boundaries of what’s acceptable. It’s the only thing these so-called progressive politicians should be doing in office. But instead they are enabling and encouraging compliance with this system.

SS: What is next?

JP: Our WWP branch in Los Angeles will continue to fight against imperialist domination of the world, from Palestine to Korea. We’ll be fighting against police terror and for workers’ rights, and to smash white supremacy, sexism and LGBTQ oppression — to further unify our working class and provide solutions and ideas that empower and educate our class toward the necessity of breaking with this system. The movement in the streets is where we’ll continue fighting. □

Protests hit racist Rizzo statue

Philadelphia protesters gathered June 5 in front of the fascist monument to racist former Mayor Frank Rizzo. They demanded present Mayor Jim Kenney fulfill his promise to tear down the statue and end the racist stop-and-frisk policy of Philadelphia police. Speakers from Philly for REAL Justice affirmed that police abolition is the only viable solution for ending the state’s terroristic violence against Black and Brown com-

munities. These speakers stressed their demands for the city to redistribute the resources reserved for police, prisons and surveillance to community members and community programs. The rally was followed by a march against traffic, around City Hall. Participants chanted Assata Shakur’s words, which begin with the following sentence, to end the protest: “It is our duty to fight for our freedom!”

— Report by Steph Davies



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Baltimore activists target ICE



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

By Workers World Baltimore bureau

A very successful protest was held on the steps of the Baltimore field office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement on June 1, organized by the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly, Workers World Party and Youth Against War and Racism. The protesters demanded justice for Claudia Patricia Gómez González and migrant children and youth, and that ICE be abolished. Claudia Patricia Gómez González, a 20-year-old woman from Guatemala, was shot in the head and killed by U.S. Border Patrol agents on the U.S./Mexico border near Laredo, Texas, on May 30. She was unarmed. Among the protesters was a young im-

migrant family, including a mother from Mexico, a father from Guatemala and their daughter. The father’s nephew had frozen to death attempting to cross the desert into the U.S. The Facebook page announcing the event states that ICE “is forcibly separating children and babies at the border from parents. The Trump administration is making preparations to warehouse migrant children on military bases, according to Defense Department communications. ... “Recent investigations reported by Newsweek accuse custom and border control police of using stun guns on minors for amusement or punishment, kicking them and threatening to either rape or kill victims.” □

CUBA: We hear you and see you

By Cheryl LaBash

You have heard a lot about Cuba. Maybe your friends or neighbors traveled there after direct commercial flights from U.S. airports resumed in 2015. Or you could have been one of the hundreds of Venceremos Brigadistas who defied the U.S. ban on travel to see Cuba and work alongside Cubans, cutting sugar cane in 1969 and in annual solidarity brigades since then. In the past it was very difficult to get news directly from Cuba. During the anti-Vietnam-War years Radio Havana Cuba, on shortwave radio, told war news untold by U.S. corporate media. Print issues of Granma, the newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committee, were rarely seen and were already months old when they did become accessible in the U.S. Now you can read, listen or even watch what Cuba and Cubans — in Cuba — are doing and saying. Cuban media is now available on the internet, in English. Where can you find it? Granma is available on the web at en.granma.cu, on Facebook at GranmaEnglish and on twitter @Granma_English. Find the official website of Cuba’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs at minrex.gob.cu/en. The Confederation of Cuban Workers’ newspaper, Trabajadores, is available at trabajadores.cu/ingles. Other sites include:

- Prensa Latina news service: plenglish.com
 - The Cuban News Agency: cubanews.acn.cu
 - Radio Havana Cuba: radiohc.cu/en
 - Radio Rebelde: radiorebelde.cu/english
 - CubaDebate: En.cubadebate.cu, on Facebook at Cuba Debate (English), and on twitter @cubadebate_en.
- This sampling represents only major news outlets; provinces have newspapers and radio programming, too. In addition, in Spanish, the 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. news programs can be viewed live on Facebook at Cubatv - Canal Caribe. Other important Spanish-language programming, like Mesa Redonda, also broadcast live on Facebook. The National Network on Cuba, the umbrella organization of U.S. solidarity organizations, is working to overcome technology issues to enable representatives from the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples to communicate through future webinars. The U.S. economic, financial and commercial blockade against Cuba actively limits Cuba’s economy, but it also negatively impacts urban and rural communities in the U.S. Technology is now piercing the U.S. information blockade that has for nearly 60 years limited what U.S. residents learn about Cuba. LaBash is one of five NNOC co-chairs.

‘We are a new unsettling force!’

By Anne Pruden
Albany, N.Y.

New York state legislators were challenged on June 4, when a multinational force of more than 200 people blocked the entrance to the governor’s office and legislative chambers here in Albany, the New York state capital. Carrying banners and signs, the protesters — 27 of whom were arrested — chanted to demand decent health care and an end to the ecological devastation that most harms working-class communities and people of color. The protesters were with the Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. Before this fourth week of civil disobedience here, they have marched and rallied on the Capitol lawn and occupied its halls, singing civil rights songs and hanging banners. Speakers on June 4 included health care workers, who complained about insurance restrictions and poverty limits, demanding health care for all. Some health care workers cannot even afford needed insurance without working two jobs. Speakers also raised the problems of fossil fuel dangers, housing for the poor



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

near toxic dumps, highway pollution, and Puerto Rico’s devastation and lack of assistance after Hurricane María. PPC actions are being held in Washington, D.C., and 35 states. On June 4, hundreds were blocked from entering the Capitol in Frankfort, Ky., including the Rev. William Barber, founder and co-chair of the campaign. The city of Albany has attempted to bill the PPC \$1,451.49 in security costs — after they chose to heavily police our peaceful actions. The PPC plans to proceed with week five, demanding “the right for all to live and organize: jobs, income, labor and housing!” □

NY forum: Puerto Rican resistance fierce!

By Anne Pruden
New York

A new generation of revolutionaries shared their views with older ones at a program on Puerto Rico here on June 9, sponsored by the local ProLibertad Campaign and held at the Holyrood Episcopal Church in Manhattan’s Latinx community. Guests included Rogelio Maldonado and Jocelyn Velázquez with the Socialist Front of Puerto Rico. Velázquez explained to the gathering that their bilingual umbrella organization stands against the loss of their culture, with a strong love of Puerto Rico’s history. She said that “Puerto Rico doesn’t have a government. It has a colonial administration.” Discussing recent news of how Hurricane María has resulted in more than 4,695 deaths in Puerto Rico — with closed schools, homeless cities, a lack of electricity and health care in some areas, and people overall still deeply suffering six months later, Maldonado said, “The Puerto Ricans see how the U.S. doesn’t care.” Maldonado and others in the room wore t-shirts that read “Se Acabaron Promesa” — meaning “End Promesa,” a financial plan imposed on Puerto Rico by U.S. banks during the Barack Obama administration. Socialist organizers in Puerto Rico work to help provide food and a fightback that has succeeded in exposing privatization schemes, such as plans for charter schools and capitalist plans to take advantage of this time of crisis to cancel Puerto Rican workers’ benefits and rights. The June 9 forum explained how the island



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

Jocelyn Velázquez and Rogelio Maldonado. used to enjoy a publicly owned utility service and had more of a planned economy approach, in contrast to the direct control of services under Promesa, with private businesses and banks in charge. A fiscal board in Puerto Rico has imposed austerity measures on the people. Jocelyn spoke of how “the new generation of resistance sees the disaster is Puerto Rico’s imposed colonial relationship with the U.S.” A senior from ProLibertad spoke of the success of their socialist work against the storm difficulties, with more plans to fight further exploitation and the denial of self determination. Socialist organizers have helped lead the disruption of Promesa meetings and at least one San Juan Chamber of Commerce meeting, as well as the shutting down of a pro-capitalist newspaper. With reference to their 19-year-old socialist movement, Puerto Rican organizers insisted that “resistance is fierce in Puerto Rico!” □



MO/WW FOTO: SHARON BLACK

El capitalismo causó epidemia de opiáceos

Por Princess Harmony

Hay una epidemia de opiáceos que actualmente asola a la clase trabajadora en EUA. Decenas de miles de personas ya han muerto, y miles más morirán. La epidemia de opiáceos ha disminuido la vida promedio de las personas en EUA y es una de las principales causas de muerte de jóvenes.

¿Cómo sucedió? Hay que mirar las causas. Primero, aunque traficantes de drogas — como lo pintan los medios noticieros — es la juventud negra o latina, la realidad es que los principales narcotraficantes responsables de toda esta muerte y destrucción trabajan en salas corporativas.

Insys Therapeutics comercializó inapropiadamente Subsys, un aerosol sublingual que contiene el mortal fármaco fentanilo. Originalmente destinado a aliviar el terrible dolor del cáncer, los médicos -a instancias de Insys- engañaron a las aseguradoras haciendo parecer erróneamente que las/os pacientes tenían cáncer. Aunque las personas con trastornos de dolor crónico necesitan medicamentos para controlar su dolor, el fentanilo no fue diseñado para ser utilizado de esa manera.

Por eso, el gigante de seguros Anthem llevó a Insys a corte. Pero no fue solo un engaño a las compañías aseguradoras. También hubo sobornos a las/os médicos en forma de tarifas falsas a cambio de recetas.

Es este tipo de tráfico de drogas —del tipo que se lleva a cabo en los consultorios médicos y salas de juntas— el más responsable de la epidemia de drogas.

Fue la presión constante de OxyContin (oxicodona) sobre los pacientes por parte de los médicos a instancias de Purdue Pharma que causó esta epidemia. En asociación con la Administración de Alimentos y Medicamentos de EUA, Purdue Pharma mintió sobre el potencial de abuso de OxyContin y financió investigaciones que engañaron al público en cuanto a su naturaleza adictiva.

La Sociedad Americana de Medicina Adictiva (ASAM por siglas en inglés) dice que cuatro de cada cinco personas que prueban la heroína comenzaron con opioides recetados. Por lo tanto, las grandes empresas como Insys y Purdue, y los médicos que se ajustaron a su esquema, son los principales responsables de esta epidemia de heroína.

Los medios corporativos e incluso algunos políticos intentan pintar la drogadicción y esta epidemia en particular, como una amenaza que se propaga desde las ciudades a los suburbios. El gobernador racista de Maine, Paul LePage —que no ha hecho nada para subsanar esta crisis durante todo su tiempo como gobernador— culpó la epidemia de opiáceos en su estado a “traficantes de drogas fuera del estado”.

De hecho, esta epidemia no comenzó en las ciudades o en otros estados y se filtró a los suburbios; comenzó en las salas de juntas y se filtró a las oficinas de las/os médicos.

No hay solución a la vista, sin embargo, como marxista-leninista y persona en recuperación, sé que la solución es la revolución. Solo bajo un sistema socialista pueden desaparecer las condiciones sociales que llevaron a este problema. Solo bajo un sistema socialista puede abordarse la angustia mental y física que nos empuja hacia la adicción.

Sin embargo, eso no impide que se intente eliminar la adicción a través de métodos probados y fallidos de dictadores fascistas y de décadas pasadas. Tomando como ejemplo al presidente filipino Rodrigo Duterte, en una reunión Donald Trump hizo flotar la idea de la pena de muerte para los traficantes de drogas, recibiendo aplausos de sus seguidores. Trump integró estos

comentarios en su plan de política de drogas, como una exhortación a los fiscales.

Activistas que buscan una política de drogas progresista, junto con expertos en políticas y activistas contra la pena de muerte, rechazaron esta política que no solo no habría logrado nada —como nunca lo hace la pena de muerte— sino que se habría dirigido principalmente a las comunidades negra y latina.

Por ejemplo, ha habido una reciente oleada de arrestos en toda la región sur este y sur central de Pensilvania. Estos arrestos no son de doctores turbios en “clínicas contra el dolor”, ni de directores generales de grandes farmacéuticas; fue de hombres negros y latinos que fueron encontrados con heroína y fentanilo en su posesión.

Definitivamente, la heroína y el fentanilo son una gran plaga, y las drogas son un arma mortal contra la clase trabajadora. Sin embargo, el encarcelamiento no es necesario y, de hecho, fuerza a las/os ex encarcelados a sobrevivir en economías subterráneas.

Una de las soluciones a la adicción es una que se ha utilizado anteriormente en la China revolucionaria: ofrecer a los traficantes la opción de que entreguen su heroína y su fentanilo para destruirlas a cambio de empleo y una recompensa en efectivo. La mayoría de los traficantes lo son porque están atrapados en esa posición.

Estamos viviendo en un momento único. El capitalismo está en un callejón sin salida, se está produciendo crisis tras crisis, y cada vez más personas terminarán recurriendo a las drogas como una “solución” a sus problemas. No podemos permitir que la policía y los políticos repitan la perversidad de la guerra contra las drogas que llevó a una generación entera de hombres negros y latinos a ser encarcelados por delitos no-violentos relacionados con las drogas. Necesitamos examinar qué funcionó y qué no, para sintetizar una respuesta revolucionaria a este terrible problema.

Se pensaría que quienes están a cargo de la salud pública harían todo lo posible para vencer la “crisis de los opiáceos”, pero eso no es así.

Goldman Sachs publicó recientemente un informe describiendo que no es buen negocio el que la industria médica cure a las personas. Esto no es menos cierto con los tratamientos de adicción. El promedio de recaída en la adicción es entre el 50 y 90 por ciento, y los ejecutivos de rehabilitación usan adictos para llenar sus bolsillos con dinero de familias desesperadas que intentan salvar a sus hijas/os, o con dinero del gobierno que intenta responder a una epidemia que incluso causó parcialmente.

Como marxistas, debemos ver quién está ganando dinero y cómo.

Aunque las raíces de esta epidemia se remontan a la década de 1990 del engaño de Purdue Pharma, las raíces del tratamiento de la adicción se remontan mucho más atrás. Al 1935, con la apertura de la Granja de Narcóticos de EUA, un proyecto del Servicio de Salud Pública.

Parte cárcel, parte hospital, esa Granja alojaba a adictos que buscaban limpiarse, desde delincuentes adictos desconocidos hasta músicos famosos. También actuó como un sitio donde la CIA probó drogas en pacientes como parte del programa de “control mental” MK-Ultra.

La Granja finalmente se cerró y se convirtió en un hospital penitenciario común debido a las consecuencias del escándalo expuesto en los años 1970. Como abuelo de todos los centros modernos de tratamiento de adicciones, la Granja incluso organizó su propio grupo de 12 pasos —ahora difunto— llamado Adictos Anónimos.

La mayoría de los centros de rehabilitación

modernos no son muy diferentes en ese sentido, y muchos tienen un programa que consiste principalmente en los grupos de recuperación de 12 pasos de Alcohólicos Anónimos (AA). Esa fue la experiencia personal en la recuperación de esta escritora. El 74 por ciento de todos los centros de tratamiento se basan en los 12 pasos. (americanaddictcenters.org)

¿Pero cuán efectivos son los 12 pasos? Los números auto informados de AA, en 1955, se pueden encontrar en el segundo prólogo de su guía, “Alcohólicos Anónimos”: el 50 por ciento alcanzó sobriedad en su primer intento a través de los 12 pasos, el 25 por ciento después de unos pocos intentos y el último 25 por ciento no lo logró.

Otras fuentes, como el Dr. Drew Pinsky y la ASAM colocan las tasas de recuperación entre el 8 y el 12 por ciento. Un examen de múltiples estudios llamado Revisión Cochrane no pudo determinar de manera concluyente si los 12 pasos fueron efectivos para tratar el alcoholismo o la adicción. (tinyurl.com/y92pocbg)

Compare esto con otros programas como SMART Recovery, LifeRing y Women For Sobriety, a menudo ignorados por el monopolio virtual que tienen los métodos de 12 pasos, a pesar de que estos programas son tan buenos o mejores que los de AA. Los estudios demuestran que los programas que no son de 12 pasos, cuando se tienen en cuenta los diferentes objetivos de cada individuo, son igual de efectivos para ayudar a la persona drogadicta o alcohólica a recuperarse. (tinyurl.com/ybdckpe4)

Además, se ha demostrado que los programas basados en la metadona y la buprenorfina tienen los mejores resultados para las/os pacientes, aumentando su calidad de vida, lo que les permite mantenerse sobrios y disminuir los resultados negativos del abuso de drogas. (tinyurl.com/y94wxmp7)

Habiendo programas más exitosos que permiten a la persona en recuperación establecerse metas definidas, ¿por qué las rehabilitaciones dependen de un modelo de abstinencia total de 12 pasos que no permite la variación en función de las necesidades individuales?

Ganancias de la industria del tratamiento

Porque no es bueno para el negocio. La industria de tratamiento —los CEO y sus lacayos en las salas de juntas— están menos interesados en ayudar a las personas a recuperarse que en asegurar los pagos que hace un paciente. Con una enfermedad cerebral recurrente crónica como la adicción, el uso de un modelo de recuperación que no haya demostrado concluyentemente su éxito, esencialmente conlleva el fracaso de las/os pacientes.

Si un adicto sobrevive a una recaída posterior a la rehabilitación y desea volver al camino de recuperación, a menudo vuelve al centro de rehabilitación. Este ciclo de entrar y salir de los centros de rehabilitación se llama “síndrome de puerta giratoria”. La industria de rehabilitación genera su dinero a través de esto. (tinyurl.com/ycajasjy)

La industria de la rehabilitación es grande y sus principales actores, como Acadia Healthcare, son sus corporaciones médicas estándar. Gran parte de sus centros de rehabilitación operan con la filosofía de los 12 pasos y cobran mucho por esa experiencia. Luego, hay otros que, en el mejor de los casos, actúan como frente para el fraude de Medicaid. En el peor de los casos, pueden actuar como un sitio para el tráfico sexual, el abuso de drogas y la depredación. Las personas que buscan la recuperación, descubren que lo que debería ser su refugio de la tormenta adictiva es simplemente una casa de trata o de

inyección de drogas.

Este fue el caso con la Fundación Next Step en McKees Rocks. Ahí, el CEO David Francis, no solo se hacía de la vista gorda ante el abuso de drogas en su agencia; estaba él traficando drogas. Después de que un informante dijera que había recibido su heroína de él, arrestaron a Francis y cerraron la Fundación Next Step. (tinyurl.com/y8lkrfmz)

Si las/os pacientes no son drogados por el personal, es el personal quien se droga. En la casa de recuperación sin licencia Freedom Ridge Recovery Lodge del condado de Chester, dos consejeros licenciados sufrieron sobredosis, lo que demuestra que la crisis de los opiáceos ha comenzado a inundar la misma infraestructura financiada para combatirla. (tinyurl.com/ycj1q4tk)

Pero lo peor de lo peor fue Kenneth Chatman, el dueño estafador del Reflections Treatment Center. Chatman prostituía mujeres en sus casas de recuperación. También colocó a personas que trataban de recuperarse en su nómina, enviándoles a otros centros de rehabilitación para atraer a los adictos vulnerables a su centro de tratamiento. (tinyurl.com/y9qesfcr)

Si bien Chatman y Francis representan la corrupción más extrema en la industria de rehabilitación, los esquemas más comunes que usan los dueños de los centros de tratamiento son los planes de devolución de Medicaid. Los centros albergan adictos con cobertura de Medicaid, y les envían a centros de tratamiento que luego le dan reembolsos al dueño del centro (y viceversa). En 2017, el Consejo de la Ciudad de Filadelfia y los medios de comunicación señalaron a unos centros de tratamiento por este comportamiento. Muchas empresas como Women Walking in Victory/Empowered Men, ejecutan este esquema. Esta escritora, de primera mano, experimentó esto, aunque dieron un paso más y buscaron el control de mis cupones de alimentos. (tinyurl.com/yagwl86z)

Esperanza de recuperación en el socialismo

Aunque no existe una cura milagrosa para la adicción como una condición médica personal o como una enfermedad social, la condición es vencible. Se puede poner en remisión. Los métodos de tratamiento basados en la ciencia pueden tener éxito.

Sin embargo, mientras los delincuentes en las salas de juntas y oficinas de la industria del tratamiento continúan viendo adictas/os como cheques de pago en lugar de personas, no podremos eliminar la adicción.

Al trabajar para construir el socialismo, trabajamos para ayudar a las/os adictos. En China, la policía dejó de arrestar a los adictos por tener drogas; se les animó a presentarse y obtener ayuda. Tanto China como Vietnam cuentan con centros de tratamiento totalmente financiados que utilizan medicamentos para ayudar al adicto a superar la pesadilla de la abstinencia. (tinyurl.com/y9yz7ldu)

En Cuba, las/os médicos usan psicoterapia y medicamentos para abordar la adicción y las condiciones subyacentes de salud mental. (tinyurl.com/yajuz4tl)

A través del socialismo, el estigma de la adicción se disipa y se tratan las causas subyacentes de la adicción. Podemos aprender de los modelos de China, Vietnam y Cuba al mismo tiempo que integramos los tratamientos actuales basados en evidencia que tenemos hoy. Bajo el socialismo, se eliminaría el enfoque capitalista del tratamiento de la adicción. Junto con el derrocamiento de las demandas del capitalismo que matan el espíritu, el resultado sería una persona sana y recuperada que no necesita recurrir a las drogas para ser feliz. □