



# Muslims, LGBTQ activists: ‘Blame the system for Orlando shooting’

By L. T. Pham

June 12 — As LGBTQ communities mourn — and vow to fight — in the wake of a mass shooting at a gay night-club in Orlando, Fla., the mainstream media has attempted to ratchet up anti-Muslim sentiment in response.

In the early morning hours of June 12 a shooter opened gunfire during the Latin night at the Pulse club in Orlando, resulting in the deaths of 50 people and nearly as many injured. At least half of those killed were Puerto Ricans, reflecting a recent large exodus from the U.S. colony, which has been forced into an economic crisis by money-gouging bondholders (see article, page 7). This tragedy comes at a time when anti-LGBTQ terror has been heightened by the passage of anti-trans legislation in North Carolina and across the South.

While initially ignoring that the attack targeted lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people, the big business media has begun crafting a narrative that fortifies the U.S.’s imperialist wars — at home and abroad — targeting people in the Middle East and followers of Islam. The greatest proponents of terrorism, however, are the U.S. capitalist government and the Pentagon, which attempt to dislodge progressive revolutions in Venezuela and Bolivia while still blockading socialist Cuba; kill thousands of civilians in countries like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan; and have invaded, occupied and killed countless millions from Mexico to the Philippines.

An organizer and a Cuban Muslim, Abdul Hakeem Peña, told Workers World: “What happened in Orlando is a disgustingly tragic event targeting the LGBTQ community and the Latino community. This is reflective of the hostile times we live in and the violent fervor instigated by [U.S. presidential candidate] Donald Trump’s rhetoric, as well as the U.S. government’s ‘war on terror’ and war on LGBTQ and other oppressed groups. This is not an Islamic attack, but an attack of anger and hatred that was misdirected. Anger and hatred have no religion.

“In this the holiest month of Ramadan,” continued Peña, “in which Muslims practice charity and goodwill to all humanity, let us not get worked up and be driven to acts of violence against our fellow working class and fellow strugglers against the capitalist system — which only teaches humanity to be bloodthirsty against the enemies of capitalism. Let us stand in solidarity. Let us unite with the Muslim community and say ‘As Salamu Alaykum! Peace be upon all of you!’

“We cannot make enemies of each other; anti-Muslim hysteria quickly becomes mass shootings that targets Muslims and those assumed to be Muslims — such as the shooting in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, in 2012 that killed six and injured three in a Sikh temple. Moreover, this hysteria is used to justify wars for profit and capital, disguised as a patriotic feat to defend the U.S. against foreign enemies.”

## Capitalist politicians = no solidarity for working class

Earlier this year, Florida Gov. Rick Scott supported the state Legislature as it attempted to pass an anti-trans “bathroom bill” which would criminalize trans-

*Continued on page 6*



West Philly girls basketball players mourn slain teammate; march to fight back [inset].



## SOLIDARITY with LGBTQ people

# Smash capitalism, racism and Islamophobia!

June 12 — Workers World Party’s election campaign, with Monica Moorehead and Lamont Lilly as presidential and vice presidential candidates respectively, sends our solidarity, condolences, and fight-back spirit to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities and all those impacted by the anti-LGBTQ mass shooting that occurred June 12 at the Pulse club in Orlando, Fla., which has taken the lives of at least 50 people.

Over 50 more have been wounded. The shooting happened as many communities across the country and globe kick off Pride month. Pride came out of the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969, in which queer and trans people — predominantly people of color, homeless people and youth — fought back against unending police raids.

While the media hesitates to name the mass shooting as an incident fueled by anti-LGBTQ bigotry, our

campaign calls it a direct attack on LGBTQ people. Its violence should not be taken lightly or viewed in isolation within a U.S. society in which Black lives don’t matter when it comes to police violence and mass incarceration; in which Mexicans and other immigrants of color are detained and deported in record numbers; and in which women are sexually assaulted on college campuses and in the U.S. military in epidemic numbers.

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# Open letter to our friends and comrades in the Sanders Movement

From Workers World Party

Single-payer health care, free tuition at public universities, a \$15 minimum wage, busting up the biggest Wall Street banks, taxing the financial speculation, expanding Social Security, imposing a tax on carbon, getting big money out of politics: this is the program of the Bernie Sanders presidential campaign. These are great ideas, ideas that shake the political and economic establishment to its very foundation and would greatly improve the lives of working and poor people.

When Black Lives Matter activists challenged the Sanders campaign, they won support for many of their demands, particularly to fight the terrible “road to prison” racist system that has trapped so many African-American and Latino/a young people.

And how would Sanders implement this program? “I do not believe that any president who’s standing up for the working class of this country can be successful without a mobilized, activist, grass-roots movement behind him or her.” His stance when it comes to insider vs. outsider politics is clear: “You make change not by sitting down with (Senate Republican leader) Mitch McConnell. You make change when millions of people in this country demand change.”

This clarion call for mass action to win major reforms struck a chord among tens of millions of people. Tens of thousands of people attended Sanders campaign rallies. Millions donated their hard earned money to the campaign. And millions voted for Sanders in caucuses and primaries across the country.

The success of the Sanders campaign sent a chill down Wall Street’s spine and caused big money to mobilize its minions in the Democratic Party establishment. They scheduled debates for “off hours,” withheld contact lists and funneled millions of dollars from the party to the Clinton campaign. They closed millions of independent voters out of the primaries.

The corporate media have certainly played their part, providing far more coverage to Clinton and the racist demagogue Donald Trump than to Sanders. Pundits have lined up to deride the Sanders campaign and candidate as “quixotic” and “unrealistic.” “He is getting in the way of the Clinton coronation,” is the constant refrain.

And just before the biggest primary, in California, the establishment and the media declared Hillary Clinton

the “presumptive” winner. The corporate media’s idea of democracy is to do a phone survey of Democratic Party “superdelegates.”

And what if Clinton is indicted for the email violations? Then the Democratic Party establishment is prepared to “slip in” Joe Biden as the candidate over Sanders. In 1968, faced with a revolt from below, the Democratic heads inserted the pro-Vietnam War vice president, Hubert Humphrey, over the anti-war senator, Eugene McCarthy.

So now the Sanders campaign is at a crossroads. Should it meekly capitulate to Clinton and the party establishment? Should it give up its program in the hope that Clinton’s appeal to disgruntled Republicans will be enough to defeat Trump? Shall millions of young people continue to suffer trying to pay off mountains of student debt? And when the next recession hits — and it will! — shall we quietly submit to more foreclosures, more layoffs and more cutbacks as both parties collude to help Wall Street rake in trillions while we endure new austerity measures?

Or was Bernie Sanders right when he called for a “mobilized, activist, grass-roots movement” that fights to win the campaign’s program?

All true advances of the people have come not through elections but through struggle. Union rights, Social Security and welfare were won in the 1930s through marches, general strikes and sit-down strikes. Civil rights were won through the struggle of millions of African Americans and white progressives who sat in and faced the police.

Anti-poverty measures were won by rebellions in cities throughout the country. Women’s rights were gained by marches and protests. The fight for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer rights began with the Stonewall Rebellion. Harsh anti-immigrant legislation was defeated by the historic strike of millions of immigrants on May 1, 2006.

Reforms are always a reflection of prior struggle. Workers World Party, a multinational, working-class, revolutionary party, calls on Bernie Sanders’ supporters to not give up, to fight for the campaign’s program. Where to begin? Let’s first go to Cleveland and then to Philadelphia to tell both political parties that we will not surrender to their rigged election machines. These demands are too vital to the lives of millions of working-class people to let go.

They may have kept Bernie Sanders off the ballot. But they cannot keep us out of the streets. □



## Who we are & what we’re fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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# Baltimore activists mobilize Workers’ Assembly

By Carl Lewis  
Baltimore

A determined group of activists met at the Enoch Pratt Library in the Waverley community on June 11 to strategize and plan actions to mobilize workers, especially those in the more underpaid and oppressed African-American communities, in the struggle for \$15 an hour now.

The alliance of different organizations included the People’s Power Assembly, the Ujima People’s Progress Party and the Industrial Workers of the World. Ian Schlakman, a Green Party candidate running for City Council in Baltimore’s District 12, and Allan Rebar, a rank-and-file teacher with the Baltimore Teachers Union, also attended.

Speakers representing the different organizations all focused on how to fight for \$15 an hour without a “phase-in stage” which would set back the struggle. Around the country, some city councils, as well as unions, are pushing a phased-in approach to \$15 an hour. Yet by the time the increase would be phased in (sometimes over two, three or four years), the raise would be meaningless. “Inflation would eat up any of the gains that low-wage workers [received] if there is an acceptance of this ‘phase-in’ formula,” stated one of the participants at the meeting.

The meeting’s chair, Diamanté Brown, introduced the members of the Assembly, who were each given a fixed time to discuss their position on what the struggle for \$15 should look like.

Nnamdi Scott talked about his organization, the UPPP, and why a Black workers’ independent electoral party is needed to change the political landscape of Baltimore. “There is a history of elections in Baltimore being led by a Black misleadership class that works in the interests of capitalism. We want to build a leadership of class struggle even if we are not presently in power, and build a real party, block by block, not only with the idea of \$15 an hour now, but the slogan of

\$15 an hour with a right to a union! The current campaign for \$15 does not talk about unions. People, by relying on the Democratic Party, have been trained to accept crumbs. We need to educate folks to change that dynamic.”

Scott is a candidate for City Council in District 7, which includes the communities of Asburton and Forest Park in the west, Penn-North and Druid Park in the center, and Sandstown, where Freddie Gray was murdered by the police, on the east side. The 80,000 African-American people in this large area, not to mention the other electoral districts in Baltimore, are plagued with extreme poverty, dilapidated and boarded-up housing, and unemployment and underemployment.

Mike Thompson, the Baltimore IWW delegate, discussed the goals of the organization and emphasized direct action at the point of production. An example of this, Thompson noted, was when the fast food chain Jimmy Johns had a policy that employees could not accept tips. The food workers proceeded to walk around the store with tip cups. Management soon gave in and allowed them to accept tips from customers. The IWW also won a National Labor Relations Board case on the issue of workers being fired for organizing at Jimmy Johns. The NLRB reinstated the workers with back pay.

Sharon Black explained that the PPA was founded after the murder of Trayvon Martin and how 10,000 people were mobilized to demonstrate and march in downtown Baltimore. The organization, which recognizes the need for the workers and oppressed to take power, focuses on a number of issues. In the area of police terrorism, the PPA challenges the occupation army of cops in the communities and fights for real community control of the police as envisioned by the Black Panther Party. The PPA also works with the Southern Workers Assembly and Black Workers for Justice.

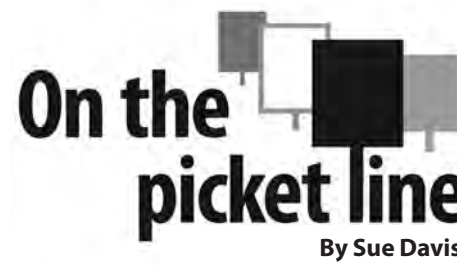
Black spoke about the idea that everyone agreed to: that capitalism was at a dead end. She pointed to how the new

world global economy impacts the youth, especially those of color, and that there must be a strategy beyond the traditional approach of business unionism and the U.S. unions’ uncritical ties to the Democratic Party.

Within that context, Black discussed her campaign for City Council president, along with Andre Powell, who is running for mayor. Both are running as socialists. Black pointed out how difficult it is to get independent candidates on the ballot; the Board of Elections requires 4,000 signatures. However, “we also use our petitioning to educate people about real

solutions outside of the traditional, non-struggle approach.” Black stated that the PPA supports Scott’s candidacy for 7th District councilperson, and announced the Workers World Party candidates for U.S. president and vice president, Monica Moorehead and Lamont Lilly respectively. Many of the participants at the meeting took literature about the candidates.

The Assembly broke into two groups, one on outreach and logistics and the other on outreach to unions and workers. The day concluded with plans for two demonstrations in support of fast food-workers. □



## NLRB limits hiring of ‘permanent replacements’

On May 31, the National Labor Relations Board — no trusted friend to labor — decisively curtailed bosses’ justification for hiring “permanent replacements” for workers “forced to strike for economic reasons.” In the important 2-1 decision between the Piedmont Nursing Home in Oakland, Calif., and SEIU/United Health Care Workers West, the board ruled that bosses must prove they do not have other, “unlawful” motives for permanently replacing striking workers. Over the past 35 years since President Reagan fired all PATCO air traffic controllers in 1981, the threat of replacement has been the stick that the bosses hold over the workers. No wonder the number of strikes, theoretically legal in the U.S., has dropped sharply. (dclabor, May 31) Some companies have even threatened to hire scabs before a strike begins, which is what happened at Piedmont in 2011.

This ruling could not come at a better time. While bosses are pressing workers for deep concessions, more and more unions are taking strike votes and forcing the bosses back to the negotiating table, as happened in the successful Verizon strike. Though capitalist mouthpieces like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Wall Street Journal have not yet responded to the Piedmont decision, that doesn’t mean the ruling class will accept it. The crisis of capitalism at a dead end grows and deepens. Stay tuned.

## Honeywell locks out aerospace workers

Case in point: The nearly 400 aerospace parts workers represented by the United Auto Workers at two Honeywell Aerospace plants — Local 9 in South Bend, Ind., and Local 1408 in Green Island, N.Y. — must have known something was up when the company had “replacement workers,” supplied by a notorious union-busting firm, observe the workers doing their jobs in March. They found out on April 20, when Honeywell offered contract terms that would double health care premiums for a family of four to \$114 weekly, plus a per-person \$350 deductible. The UAW estimates that some workers would then be taking home less than \$15 an hour! In addition, the contract would unilaterally increase health care costs each year of the contract, while the security contract clause would be weakened, allowing the company to contract more work to nonunion employees. No wonder the membership of both locals voted down the union-busting contract as their five-year contract expired on May 3. On May 9, Honeywell locked out the workers in both plants. The unions and Honeywell are currently in talks with a federal mediator.

Over the last five years, Honeywell has locked out workers across the country in four separate instances while increasing its profits by 152 percent. Mike Elk, writing on paydayreport.com, states, “The workers expect the lockout to go on for several months as it appears that the company is digging in to fight them tooth and nail.” Honeywell even appealed granting unemployment benefits to the locked-out Indiana workers, in violation of a state law. (May 27)

The question remains: Will the recent NLRB ruling uphold union workers’ right to a job if Honeywell tries to hire scabs as “permanent replacements”?

## Triumph aerospace workers locked out, fighting two tiers

After more than 400 aerospace parts workers at Triumph Composite Systems in Spokane, Wash., walked off the job at midnight on May 11 and set up a picket line, the company shut down the second and the third shifts, declaring the members of Machinists Union District Lodge 751 locked out. The union is fighting to get rid of Triumph’s unequal two-tier pay system, which eliminated pensions and offers significantly lower wages for newer hires doing the same work as higher-paid co-workers. Overall, the union is fighting so all workers have fair wages, retirement security and reasonably priced health care coverage, and for their jobs to stay in Spokane, rather than being moved to Mexico as the bosses threaten.

To mark the first month on the picket line, District 751 called a solidarity rally on June 10. Thanks to broad support from area unions and the Spokane community, the rally “lifted spirits for everyone involved and reminded us that an injury to one is an injury to all,” noted IAM 751 President Jon Holden. Meanwhile, at the request of federal mediators, the District 751 negotiation committee is returning to the bargaining table on June 14-15, even though Triumph has not changed its position on the wage structure or pension benefits. Negotiators vowed to continue the fight, adding that the union’s struggle is gaining support across the IAM and the labor movement in both the U.S. and Canada. (iam751.org, June 13) □

## D.C., Durham, N.C. Approve \$15 minimum wage

By Sue Davis

The District of Columbia City Council voted unanimously June 6 to raise the District’s minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2020, joining California and New York state and cities like Seattle and Durham, N.C., that have approved \$15 wage floors.

The Durham City Council voted June 9 to raise the minimum wage for full-time city workers to \$15 an hour by 2018. Starting this July, the minimum wage

will be raised to \$13.35 an hour. Next year, it will bump up to \$14.15, and by July 2018, it will hit \$15 an hour.

The city will also look into how to bring part-time workers up to \$15 per hour next year. “This is due to the weekly pickets [by United Electrical Workers Local 150, Durham City Workers,] Raise Up and Durham Beyond Policing, held in front of City Hall every Monday for 10 weeks with strong, broad community support!” wrote union organizer Dante Strobino in a May 10 email. □

## CUNY employees win contract

By G. Dunkel

The City University of New York and District Council 37, which represents staff who don’t have a direct role in educating students, reached a tentative contract May 10.

DC37 employees will get a 7-year contract covering Nov. 1, 2009, through Jan. 31, 2017. The contract provides 10.41 percent in compounded wage increases. There will also be a \$1,000 signing

bonus and an annual \$200 increase to the welfare fund per employee, active or retired.

The Professional Staff Congress, which represents staff with a more direct role in students’ education, like teachers and librarians, issued a statement that same day asking its members to put pressure on state lawmakers in Albany. The latest offer the PSC has gotten from CUNY was for 6 percent over seven years, which doesn’t even cover inflation. □



# Philly officials act to limit DNC protests

By **Betsey Piette**  
Philadelphia

June 13 - Politicians and police in Philadelphia — the so-called “Cradle of Democracy” — appear to be working overtime to limit, discourage and intimidate demonstrators from gathering and speaking out during the Democratic National Convention in July, despite the “right to assembly and free speech” supposedly guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution.

Of the dozen permit requests for rallies and marches submitted to the city, only five have been approved. Two are for marches by Food and Water Watch and by Global Zero for events on July 24, the day before the DNC formally starts. Three are for marches and a weeklong protest by supporters of presidential candidate Bernie Sanders.

It appears, however, that the city intends to prohibit marches during the actual convention, July 25 to July 28. A permit request from the Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign (PPEHRC) to march on July 25 from City Hall to the Wells Fargo Center, site of the convention, was denied.

Cheri Honkala, leader of the group, said they will defy the police and march down Broad Street to the convention. PPEHRC’s march will highlight Philadelphia’s 26 percent rate of poverty, the lack of affordable health care and the homelessness that has gone unaddressed by the city, which is spending \$43 million on security for the convention.

Other groups also vow to be in the streets, with or without permits. Organizers for “Shut Down the DNC” activities on July 26 said their events will go ahead, including a people-of-color march in North Philadelphia led by the REAL (Racial, Economic and Legal) Justice Coalition, combining with a “Shut Down” rally at City Hall, and then a march to the convention itself at the Wells Fargo Center.

The broad coalition of groups behind

the “Shut Down” rally and march include REAL Justice, the MOVE organization, the International Action Center, the Black and Brown Workers Collective, the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Workers World Party, Comité Boricua Filadelfia-Camden (Philadelphia-Camden Boricua Committee), the Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign, Philadelphia Food Not Bombs - Affinity, the People’s Power Assemblies, the Philly South Asian Collective, Move to Amend and Penn SDS.

Many event organizers have been involved in street protests against racism and police brutality during the past two years. Over 25 leaders of these actions have been arrested during protests, but to date none have been convicted.

The “Shut Down the DNC” action is linked with a “Shut Down the RNC” protest against Trump scheduled for July 17 in Cleveland. Organizers say that both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump bring more racism, economic hardship and destructive wars.

While Trump’s overt racism and dangerous attacks on Muslims and immigrants threaten the lives of people of color, Clinton’s policies have cost the lives of millions around the world. And during the Bill Clinton administration, Hillary Clinton defended laws the president promoted that resulted in the mass incarceration of millions of Black and Brown people.

### Mayor’s so-called ‘protest decriminalization’ bill

Trying to further discourage protests, Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney’s office is also pushing through a special bill in the City Council prior to the DNC. The ordinance would penalize activities that commonly occur at protests as “civil offenses.” Police officials and lawyers for the city helped draft the bill.

Trying to sugarcoat this bill, the Kenney administration is calling it a “protest decriminalization” bill in that it gives

police the option to fine demonstrators \$100 instead of arresting them on criminal charges. However, the bill omits a key provision of a Pennsylvania statute dealing with obstructing highways that civil rights attorneys have frequently used to defend clients’ First Amendment activities.

The excluded clause reads: “No person shall be deemed guilty of an offense under this subsection solely because of a gathering of persons to hear him [sic] speak or otherwise communicate, or solely because of being a member of such a gathering.”

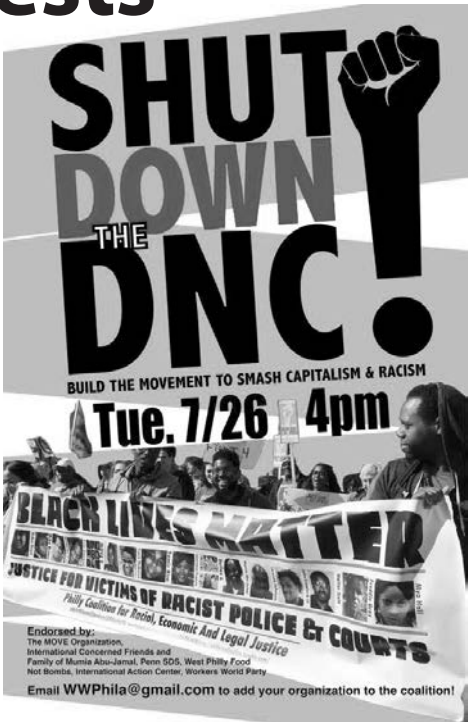
Philadelphia civil rights attorney Lloyd Long III, called the ordinance a “round-up” clause that lets police take people into temporary custody to clear the streets and then justify their detainments by issuing tickets under the ordinance. Exactly how police would corral protesters to give out citations is not spelled out in the proposed law.

Philadelphia Councilperson Helen Gym is seeking to amend the bill to include “an explicit protection for purely First Amendment activities.”

While these citations would not become part of one’s permanent criminal record, for many workers and poor people the economic hardship they impose could discourage them from participating. Even under current city law, citations for so-called “nuisance offenses,” including disorderly conduct, public drunkenness, carrying an open container, blocking streets or failing to heed an order to disperse are leveled disproportionately against people of color.

And demonstrators have little reason to trust Kenney. After campaigning on a platform of ending Philadelphia’s stop-and-frisk policy, upon taking office in January 2016, Kenney quickly reversed course to maintain this racist program implemented in 2009 by another Democratic mayor, Michael Nutter.

Several lawsuits have challenged the way stop-and-frisk is used by police to



disproportionately stop and often arrest Black and Brown people. Given the well documented legacy of racism within the Philadelphia Police Department there is no reason to assume Kenney’s new ordinance will be any different.

Just in case they can’t curb protesters’ First Amendment rights through new laws, the city is now talking about purchasing “law-enforcement liability insurance” to cover potential claims of police brutality and violations of other civil rights. Similar insurance purchased by Philadelphia prior to the 2000 RNC helped pay for lawsuits that resulted after more than 400 demonstrators were arrested and jailed for days.

Lawrence Krasner, a civil rights attorney who defended many of those protesters, questioned spending tax money so that police have financial coverage when they deliberately violate civil rights. He commented, “In order to prove a civil rights violation, you have to prove deliberate indifference to the rights of others. To me, this is profoundly offensive.” (newsworks.org, June 8) □

# Shut down the RNC! Resist state repression, racism!

By **Martha Grevatt**

Cleveland has been the butt of jokes for decades. Much of it is rooted in class arrogance, reflecting bourgeois contempt for an overwhelmingly blue-collar town, along with racism towards the city’s African-American majority. Attacks on Cleveland in the 20th century were rooted in anti-immigrant sentiment directed at workers from Poland, Slovenia and Ireland.

These days, however, comedians are having a field day with the siege-like restrictions being imposed during the five days that Clevelanders will be subjected to the omnipresence of the Republican National Convention. The lengthy list of prohibited items includes everything from “sabres” to tennis balls. Toy guns, including squirt guns, are prohibited. City administrators, however, have cited the Second Amendment as the reason for allowing neofascist Trump supporters to carry firearms in this “open-carry” state. Even those of us who grew up here, who would bristle at the old Cleveland jokes, are getting a chuckle.

But quickly humor is replaced with anger as it becomes obvious that all these

restrictions are strictly one-sided and intended to suppress dissent. The Democratic city administration, in collusion with the RNC and Homeland Security, is treating the Second Amendment — allowing possession of arms — like a sacred cow for the far right. Meanwhile, they trash the First Amendment — allowing freedom of speech — for the militant anti-Trump activists who will be coming from near and far.

The process for obtaining permits to protest has been one of ongoing chaos. Many groups and organizations started filing in February for permits to march and rally during the RNC. Then on May 26, city officials, flanked by the Secret Service and the RNC Welcoming Committee, announced that everyone had to electronically re-submit applications for permits.

There were many glitches in this new “system.” City workers are cutting and pasting to help various groups secure needed paperwork. There still has been no confirmation of approval by Cleveland officials, four weeks before the convention.

### New toys for cops = terror against the oppressed

There is widespread outrage, locally



and around the country, over the invasion of Cleveland by Trump’s army of immigrant-bashers, Islamophobes, misogynists, anti-LGBTQ haters and right-wing racists. For these forces to hold their convention in Cleveland, a symbol of racist police violence, is an affront to the families of Tamir Rice, Tanisha Anderson, Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell, victims of police killings — and to the whole Black Lives Matter movement.

On top of that, a consent decree with the Department of Justice, which found in the Cleveland Division of Police (CDP) a pattern of excessive use of force, has been lifted for the purpose of maintaining “order” during the four days of the RNC.

Some of the materials secured for the CDP include 2,000 sets of riot-control suits,

including upper-body and shoulder protective gear; tactical hard-knuckle gloves; shin guards; 2,000 sets of batons, baton caps and collapsible baton holders; pepper balls and OC (tear-inducing) pepper spray; as well as night vision goggles for police horses, new horse trailers; and new vans to transport arrestees. (Cleveland.com)

All of these “goodies” are being paid for by a \$50 million Homeland Security grant, but the CDP gets to keep these new toys! The CDP inherits a whole arsenal of the most modern anti-insurrection weapons. Who will they be used against? To pose the question is to answer it.

The world knows the name Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old murdered in cold blood while playing with a toy gun in typical “shoot first, ask questions later” fashion. His murderers are still on the force, as



## California election

# Tens of thousands vote ‘socialist4senate’

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

A bright ray of hope radiated from the California primary election on June 7, despite victories by big-business presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump.

John Parker, a Los Angeles-based organizer, activist and revolutionary socialist running for U.S. Senate on the Peace and Freedom Party ballot, garnered tens of thousands of votes. Parker’s candidacy was aligned with the Workers World Party presidential campaign.

Parker’s campaign invitation to an after-vote party summed up his revolutionary platform: “Over twenty-two thousand Californians voted for a socialist, militantly anti-racist, militantly anti-imperialist, full-rights-for-immigrants, jail-killer-cops, demonstratin’, picket-sign carryin’, in-your-face, anti-capitalist activist!”

In an interview with *Workers World*, Parker reflected on the importance of the campaign: “The campaign verifies that



John Parker speaks.

working people will respond to principled and honest politics calling for solidarity with the struggles of the oppressed and the abolition of capitalism. Our campaign put the struggle for Black lives and ending the war on Black and Brown people as primary, and made sure it was listed first. We also made the connection between that struggle and the demand to end endless wars and the destruction of the planet.”

California Attorney General Kama-

la Harris, Parker’s main primary opponent, spent \$11 million plastering TV airwaves and billboards with ads as the Democratic Party’s endorsed candidate.

Campaigning on a shoestring, Parker spent less than \$5,000, but reached many more voters per dollar than Harris. Vivid yellow signs at congested intersections listed his platform as “Black Lives Matter, Stop Deportations, Jobs Not War” and gave the website to contact for more information: Socialist4Senate.org.

Parker emphasized, “Almost everyone who heard our message agreed with it — even the call to jail killer cops, for self-termination for communities of color and

an end to the ownership of the means of production by the less-than-1%.”

The most memorable moments of Parker’s campaign were street meetings and protests with Black youth in Oakland; a demonstration against Hillary Clinton with a young woman who taught in Los Angeles schools; and a rally against Donald Trump in Hollywood with a Latino activist and musician. At each of these, Parker said, “Participants voiced their experiences to echo the demands of the campaign’s platform eloquently and powerfully.”

Parker intends to take the lessons of his campaign and continue the struggle for socialism, as he pushes even harder for WWP’s presidential and vice presidential candidates Monica Moorehead and Lamont Lilly.

All indications from Parker’s electoral run are that the working-class movement is going to thrive — no matter which capitalist politician ends up in the White House. □

## Q&A with WWP Presidential candidate Monica Moorehead

By Jim Brash  
Editorial Board, *The North Star*

*This excerpted Q&A with Workers World Party U.S. Presidential Candidate Monica Moorehead was published by The North Star on June 8. (thenorthstar.info) The full interview is available at workers.org.*

**The North Star:** Why are you running?

**Monica Moorehead:** To expose the hypocrisy and bogus nature of these elections that attempt to convince the U.S. masses that real change will come from them. As a revolutionary working-class party, we use these elections to present a real alternative to the empty promises of the Democrats and Republicans.

Our campaign is unique in showing class solidarity with the most oppressed in the struggle against racist police vi-

olence, deportations and raids against immigrants, mass incarceration and for revolutionary socialism. Another important aspect of our campaign is to help orient revolutionary activists on how to push the class struggle forward beyond the elections. An independent, anti-capitalist perspective is the way. We are contributing to the discussion and interest in socialism in this country.

**TNS:** Is the idea of the vanguard party dead?

**MM:** A party is needed to defeat our class enemy; only a cadre organization can be steered, prepared and ready to do the work necessary to abolish capitalism. But we cannot substitute ourselves for the masses.

**TNS:** What are your thoughts on Black Lives Matter?

**MM:** The BLM movement is at the forefront of the fight against police violence,

mass incarceration and white supremacy. Our party views the struggle against racism as the acid test in the quest to build solidarity among the multinational working class. Fighting white supremacy is the lynchpin to every issue in the U.S.

**TNS:** What are your thoughts on the Fight for 15?

**MM:** The Fight for 15 is a critical struggle led by some of the most oppressed sectors of the working class, including low-wage workers who are disproportionately Black and Brown women. This struggle for survival helps expose the criminality of the capitalist system that denies workers their right to a living wage, the right to organize and for dignity.

**TNS:** What are your thoughts on Podemos in Spain and Syriza in Greece?

**MM:** These parties are a manifestation of a movement of a section of the masses to the left, but not so far to the left that they support a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. The election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labor Party leader in Britain, the Sanders movement and the Nuit Debout movement in France are manifestations of a similar shift. The problem for revolutionaries is to join the struggle these movements are engaged in while keeping organizational and political independence and winning the activists to a more revolutionary ideology.

**TNS:** What are your thoughts on the thawing relations between the U.S. and Cuba?

**MM:** If the U.S. is “thawing” its relations it is only because it was not able to bring Cuba to its knees. Its interests are still the same: sabotaging the Revolution and bringing down socialism. We are confident that the Cuban Revolution, its leadership and its people are not abandoning socialism or their Revolution.

**TNS:** What are your thoughts on the situation in Syria?

**MM:** U.S. imperialism and its NATO allies took advantage of an opening from the so-called Arab Spring to foment a reactionary insurgency against the al-Assad government. We oppose all U.S., NATO, Israeli, Saudi and Turkish intervention in Syria.

**TNS:** Do you think a new cold war is brewing?

**MM:** The U.S. is expanding NATO

eastward to surround Russia with weapons and an ever-growing alliance of hostile forces, including all the old imperialist powers of Western Europe and the new bourgeois states of the East. Washington is trying to strengthen its military alliance with Japanese imperialism directed at China and north Korea.

The old Cold War was between two clearly demarked social systems, capitalist and socialist. The current situation is of growing imperialist threats from U.S.-led alliances. We oppose the U.S., NATO and Japan and demand disarmament of the Pentagon.

**TNS:** Do you think Russia and China are imperialists?

**MM:** Russia is a capitalist country, which nevertheless confronts U.S.-NATO imperialism on its own borders. China still retains its socialist foundations even though it is home to a growing class of very wealthy capitalists.

Wherever these countries confront the U.S.-NATO-Japan imperialist alliance, we oppose that alliance and work for its defeat, regardless of the class character of Russia or China.

**TNS:** What are your thoughts on the electoral defeat of the left in Venezuela and Bolivia?

**MM:** This is a setback. U.S. imperialism has worked 24/7 to turn back the gains of the revolutionary anti-imperialist momentum in South America. But the Bolivian and Venezuelan masses have tasted liberation and power and will not go back. International solidarity is urgent.

**TNS:** Which way forward: more reforms or revolution?

**MM:** We may win some reforms here or there — which communists should fight for — but organizing mass actions and people’s power is the only way forward.

**TNS:** What does socialism mean to you?

**MM:** Socialism is an economic system that will empower the workers to seize the reigns of production to collectively meet all human needs. Those who have been denied the most under capitalism will have the greatest opportunity to develop their skills. All workers will have a say in terms of how a new society is developed free of racism, war and bigotry. □

are the killers of unarmed Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell, who died after the infamous 137 bullets were fired into their car. Tanisha Anderson was asphyxiated to death after police forced her to the ground; her family had called 911 for an ambulance — not police — during a medical emergency.

Now the racist CDP, which has long operated like an occupying army in the African-American community, will be equipped like a real army. Part of the DOJ Consent Decree signed by Cleveland has mandated the wearing of body cameras by police. Unfortunately, the new riot control suits will not be able to accommodate body cameras. The last time the city was under DOJ supervision was from January 2002 to February 2004. Nothing changed then and nothing will change now unless forced to by a mighty mass movement that insists that Black lives matter.

**No protection for Trump-stumpers! Shut it down!**

This blatant disregard for Black lives and for all oppressed peoples is being challenged. Various marches and a “People’s Convention,” are being planned to counter the RNC. These include a march and rally on July 17, the Sunday before

the RNC opens, to “Shut Down Trump and the RNC.” Initial sponsors are the New York and Baltimore chapters of the People’s Power Assembly; the Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement; the Moratorium Now! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs; the International Action Center; and the Solidarity Center NYC.

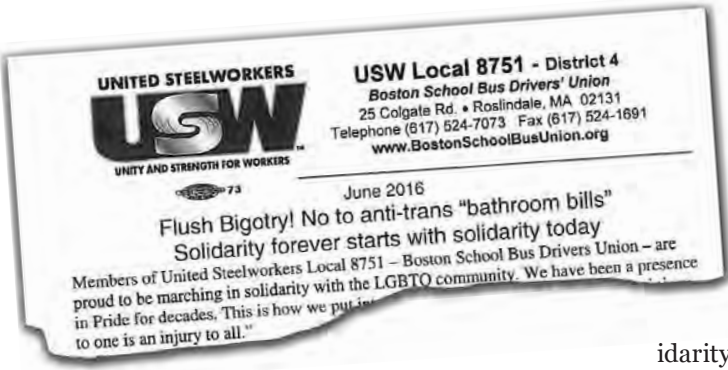
People from as far away as Texas and North Carolina are talking about car-pools or even chartering buses to come. The endorser list is growing and includes the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression; the Milwaukee Anti-War Committee; People’s Opposition to War, Imperialism and Racism (POW-IR); Students for a Democratic Society at College of DuPage; the United Workers Organization of Wisconsin; the Detroit Active and Retired Employees Association (DAREA); Minnie Bruce Pratt, United Auto Workers Local 1981, National Writers Union (for ID only); the United National Antiwar Coalition; and Muslims for Social Justice.

You will want to be there. For more information, go to Shut Down TRUMP & the RNC on facebook, email notrumprnc@gmail.com or call (216) 452-8473.

*Susan Schnur contributed to this article.*



# DEFENDING TRANS LIVES: Solidarity forever starts with solidarity today



The following statement was distributed by United Steelworkers Local 8751, the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, at Boston Pride on June 11

Members of United Steelworkers Local 8751 — Boston School Bus Drivers Union — are proud to be marching in solidarity with the LGBTQ community. We have been a presence in Pride for decades. This is how we put into practice the classic union slogan, “An injury to one is an injury to all.”

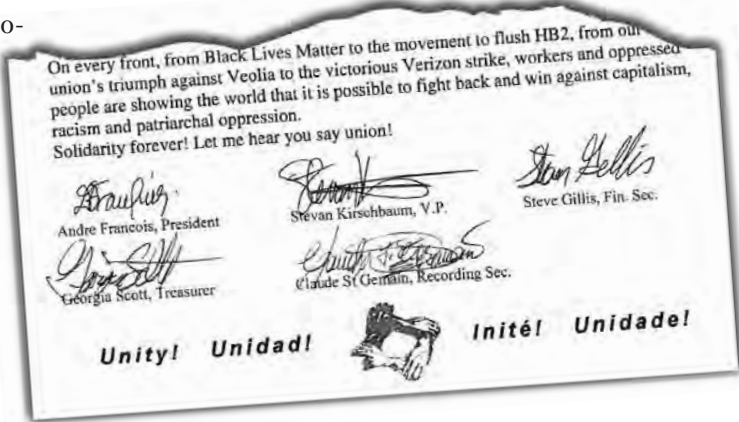
In December, after a 26-month fight, our united, fighting membership won the reinstatement of our four fired union leaders. Simultaneously, we got the union-hating Veolia/Transdev to sign a contract that maintained and improved upon everything our local has fought for and won through 40 years of struggle. This included an amendment to our non-discrimination clause to add the words “gender identity” and “gender expression.” The security of a union contract, backed up by the solidarity of a rank-and-file and leadership committed to eradicating bigotry of every kind, is the best protection a worker has.

Defending the trans community, especially trans people of color, has never been more important. Thus far this year 20 transpeople are known to have been murdered, nearly all of them Black and Brown. North Carolina has passed HB (“Hate Bill”) 2 that criminalizes anyone who uses a toilet stall not coinciding with their sex assigned at birth. Anti-trans bathroom bills are popping up all over the country.

We say that it is no crime to break the rigid codes of gender conduct imposed on the LGBTQ community and on women. In fact, it is a heroic act of defiance that will make the world a freer place for everyone to be who they are!

On every front, from Black Lives Matter to the movement to flush HB2, from our own union’s triumph against Veolia to the victorious Verizon strike, workers and oppressed people are showing the world that it is possible to fight back and win against capitalism, racism and patriarchal oppression.

Solidarity forever! Let us hear you say union! □



## Motor City Pride revs up

By Kris Hamel  
Detroit

The Motor City Pride Fest took place in downtown Detroit on June 11-12. The annual event is Michigan’s largest LGBTQ Pride gathering, featuring booths, tables, food, entertainment and the Sunday Pride parade, which kicked off at noon on the 12th.

Many of those gathering on the parade route had not yet heard of the mass shootings at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Fla. News of the anti-LGBTQ character of the massacre continued to come in throughout the day.

Thousands participated in the parade, with many of the contingents sponsored by corporations such as the Ford Motor Co. and Bank of America. Some unions were represented, including UNITE HERE and the American Federation of Teachers. Other groups and organizations in the LGBTQ community, including community allies, took part.

Those lining the parade route cheered as the contingent from the Moratorium Now! Coalition, Workers World Party and FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) marched past, militantly chanting, “No justice! No



WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL

peace! No bathroom police!” and other slogans demanding the abolishment of “bathroom laws” targeting transgender people from North Carolina to Michigan.

There was steady traffic at the booth shared by Moratorium Now!, WWP and FIST, according to activists with these organizations, with many people expressing an interest in socialism. More than 100 people signed letters to the Michigan Department of Corrections to demand an end to the rape and sexual abuse of LGBTQ prisoners at the Cotton Correctional Facility in Jackson, Mich.

On Sunday evening, hundreds attended a vigil in Ferndale, Mich., to mourn those who died in Orlando. □

### Muslims, LGBTQ activists:

## ‘Blame the system for Orlando shooting’

Continued from page 1

gender people for using the restroom that best aligns with their identity.

Following the tragedy in Orlando, reactionary, anti-LGBTQ, anti-poor, racist Gov. Scott wants the state to do everything in its power to defend against this “act of terror.” It comes as no surprise that capitalist politicians want the working class to forget their reactionary positions in order to serve the interests of big media and the bosses.

Imani Henry, a Black trans activist with the People’s Power Assembly, said, “The irony of this tragedy is that we live in a country where Black and Brown lives, especially LGBTQ ones, DO NOT matter. Black and Brown LGBTQ people are treated as second class on a daily basis — we are discriminated against at every turn and struggle just to have jobs, housing, health care, and access to education in the U.S. We live in constant fear of anti-LGBTQ violence, which many times goes unreported because of the further humiliation and violence we experience at the hands of cops and courts. Does the U.S. government care about trans women of color, many of whom live below the poverty line, and are murdered in record numbers in the U.S.?”

“It is a shame,” said Henry, “that the Black Lives Matter movement, a specifically Black LGBTQ-led movement, is deemed a ‘terrorist’ organization and vilified in the press, with cops sanctioned to have a militarized presence at our demonstrations. That right-wingers can shoot BLM activists and not be prosecuted, but BLM leaders — most recently Jasmine Abdullah, a Black and queer activist in Pasadena — can be sentenced to 90 days in jail under a ‘public lynching’ law while the cops who murdered Freddie Gray, Akai Gurley, Shantel Davis, Ramarley Graham and countless more get no time at all.”

Teresa Gutierrez, campaign manager for the Workers World Party election campaign of Monica Moorehead for President and Lamont Lilly for Vice President, stated: “As a Mexican lesbian, my heart is heavy today for my sisters and brothers and all my LGBTQ family gunned down on Latino Party Night at Pulse Night Club. But I blame the system, not the shooter, for this tragedy. It is Trump’s racist rhetoric that is to blame. It is President Barack Obama’s mass deportations, [presidential candidate and former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary] Clinton’s war machine that is to blame. Mexicans and others have shown in California, New Mexico and Illinois the answer: Fight back, shut it down. We will not go back. Let us dedicate Pride this month to the Pulse martyrs.” □

## WWP candidates say: Solidarity with LGBTQ people — Smash capitalism, racism and Islamophobia!

Continued from page 1

In the middle of the political circus called the presidential elections, we are reminded that workers and oppressed people will always bear the brunt of the violence so long as capitalism and its bourgeois democracy are in place. Millions of people are excluded from the existing political process — prisoners, youth, the undocumented and many others who cannot access the polls because of disability, gender identity and/or race. Yet when the crisis of capitalism is exposed in the form of massive layoffs, tuition hikes, police brutality — and even mass shootings — it is those who are excluded from the bourgeois political process who are blamed.

### Blame the system and fight back!

We cannot expect any of these conditions to change just because there is another presidential election. Trump’s unapologetic anti-migrant, anti-Mexican, anti-Muslim and misogynistic rhetoric has mobilized and effectively misled millions of workers to believe that a billionaire has the best interest of the working class in mind. Trump’s rhetoric cannot be separated from the events in Orlando, nor from any attacks on oppressed peoples. Clinton is no better, as the political dynasty she has been a part of for decades —

the Democratic establishment — has approved wars, mass deportations, and austerity measures taken in the form of mass incarceration, cuts to social services and much more.

U.S. democracy only serves the ruling class in its efforts to consolidate wealth and profit by waging war against Black and Brown people at home, at the borders, in the Global South and in every corner of the earth that imperialism can latch its claws.

The capitalist crisis becomes more intense day by day. This system is no longer able to pull itself out of crisis. It relies on tragedies like the mass shooting in Orlando to stir up panic and pull allegiance from the masses, who are tricked into believing that the greatest threat to their safety exists anywhere but inside the U.S., the belly of the beast.

We stand shoulder to shoulder with LGBTQ people, Muslims, migrants, immigrants, Black and Brown youth, women, workers, and all oppressed people who refuse to be used in imperialist wars and divide-and-conquer strategies. In the spirit of the Stonewall Rebellion, the Compton Cafeteria Riots and the resistance LGBTQ people display everyday, we say: Unite the Working Class! LGBTQ Liberation Now! Smash Racism and Islamophobia! Abolish Capitalism! Fight for Socialism! □



# GLOBAL SOLIDARITY FOR ORLANDO

By **LeiLani Dowell**  
New York

Solidarity events have been held across the U.S. as well as in Albania, Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada, China, Ecuador, France, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Morocco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Poland, Serbia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden and Tunisia in response to the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Fla., on June 12. (weareorlando.org) Here are reports on just a few of those in the U.S.

In **NEW YORK CITY**, LGBTQ people and their allies gathered in front of the Stonewall Inn, site of the rebellion against police brutality in 1969 that heralded the modern LGBTQ liberation movement, on June 12. Many activists there demanded that the Orlando shooting not be used as a pretext for more Islamophobia, and that the U.S. government’s systemic racism and anti-LGBTQ bigotry was to blame for the tragedy.

In California, several thousand gathered at the half-staff rainbow flag in **SAN DIEGO’S** Hillcrest community on the evening of June 12 to mourn. One woman’s sign read, “This was an assault on queers, Latinos, immigrants, Americans, the men and women I love, my people, my gente, mi familia.”

An estimated 5,000 people — Latinos/as, Blacks, whites and Muslims of every gender expression — came out on the day after the killing horror in Orlando at **PHILADELPHIA’S** City Hall. Religious, political, Latino/a queer spokespeople and others began the rally as the large gathering spilled into the street. After officials left, along with the sound system pro-

vided by the city, activists brought out their own sound system, allowing more community representatives to speak. The West Philly Catholic High School basketball team showed up to speak and march to mourn the loss of 18-year-old Akyra Murray, a recent graduate and one of the 49 killed in Orlando. The event ended with a march in the streets around City Hall.

*Bob McCubbin and Joe Piette contributed to this article.*



WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN



New York

WW PHOTO: LEILANI DOWELL



London



Philadelphia

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE



PHOTOS: MECHE ROSALES-MAUPIN

## Reflections of a Puerto Rican in the Diaspora

# Puerto Rico at the crossroads

By **Berta Joubert-Ceci**

Just as capitalism is at a dead end, the colonial status of Puerto Rico, the so-called Commonwealth, is in the same position, with no way out.

June 9, 2016, will go down in history as the day of the death of the Free Associated State (ELA).

That day, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the case known as the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico v. Sanchez Valle et al. It is one of double jeopardy, in which two Puerto Rican subjects were accused of selling weapons to an undercover police officer. The Puerto Rican court accused them under Puerto Rican law, but the federal grand jury also accused them of the same crime in which

they pleaded guilty. Because of this, the defendants asked that the case be dismissed in Puerto Rican courts. The case was then filed before the U.S. Supreme Court for resolution.

Following a 6-2 vote, Judge Elena Kagan wrote for the majority that “the final source of Puerto Rico’s supervisory power is the federal government, because when we trace the path of that authority, we arrive at the gates of the U.S. Capitol, thus the ELA and the United States do not have independent sovereignties.” Plainly, it is the U.S. Congress that gives the orders in Puerto Rico; in other words, PR’s colonial status is publicly confirmed.

Justices Stephen Breyer and Sonia Sotomayor, issuing the dissenting votes, recognized some validity in the

ELA as a state based primarily on its role in the United Nations. The U.S. had removed Puerto Rico from the list of its territories in the early 1950s, so it was not held accountable for its possessions, and to make it appear that Puerto Rico was a nation with a “certain” type of sovereignty — trying to purify Washington’s international image in order to deepen its anti-communist Cold War.

Minutes later on June 9, and a few steps from the Supreme Court, the House of Representatives approved the PROMESA project (Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act), which must now be endorsed by the Senate.

The day before, President Barack Obama, who is also

*Continued on page 11*

# Outrage as student rapist gets slap on wrist

By **Kris Hamel**

Powerful protests, both vocal and silent, punctuated the Stanford University commencement on June 12. Dozens of graduating students expressed their outrage over the meager sentence handed down to Brock Turner, 20, a convicted rapist and former Stanford athlete. Turner was convicted by a jury of three counts of sexual assault.

Judge Aaron Persky of Santa Clara, Calif., Superior Court, however, handed Turner a velvet-gloved six-month jail sentence on June 2 for the Jan. 18, 2015, sexual assault of an unconscious woman. Turner could be out in three months. His sentence includes three years of probation, and his name will be entered on the lifetime sex offenders list. The unconscious, unmoving

victim was being brutally attacked by Turner behind a campus dumpster when two male Swedish students, riding their bikes, came upon the crime in progress and stopped it. As Turner ran away, they tackled and held him until police arrived.

“Rape is rape,” “125 years of rape culture,” “You’re a warrior” (referring to Turner’s victim) and “1 in 3” (how many women in the U.S. will be raped in their lifetime) were among the messages on signs held aloft during the ceremony. Many others had “1/3” written on top of their mortarboards. Activists are demanding the university administration make public its list of students responsible for sexual assault and misconduct. #StanfordKnows is the hashtag for this struggle, which includes a petition drive. (latimes.com, June 13)

Outrage from coast to coast has emerged since the sentencing. More than 1 million petition signatures demanding the ouster of Judge Persky were delivered June 10 to the Commission on Judicial Performance in San Francisco. At least 16 California lawmakers have asked the commission for a review of Persky’s conduct in meting out the sentence, while attorneys and activists are considering a recall election. (mercurynews.com, June 10)

In the midst of the burgeoning backlash and fight-back generated by his lenient sentencing of a rapist who could have received 14 years in prison, Persky won another six-year term on June 7. There wasn’t even an

*Continued on page 11*



# Struggle continues after Oakland police chief firing

*The following edited statement was released by the Anti Police-Terror Project on June 8.*

Oakland Police Chief Sean Whent has been fired amid the recent sex scandal plaguing the Oakland Police Department. This is a victory that the people should claim. Were it not for years of organizing and mounting public pressure for police accountability, Whent would still have his job. [Oakland Mayor] Libby [Schaaf] is a smart and tactical politician. It is no coincidence that she fired him just prior to the week of action that is being planned by the community. Libby didn't want another San Francisco, so she got in front of

the ball. Good for her. We are glad Whent is being held accountable for these vicious and brutal attacks on women's bodies. This does not, however, signal a sea change in the Schaaf administration. This is the woman who spent her entire first day in office with the police department. She believes with every fiber of her being that policing is the path toward the Oakland she is trying to build. Last year, Oakland was third per capita in the country for officer-involved shootings. Under Whent's watch, seven Black men (we include Richard Linyard) were murdered by [the Oakland Police Department]. Libby stood with the police every

single time, even with Demouria Hogg's execution — and his only crime was to be Black and asleep in his car in the gentrified Lake Merritt neighborhood. Why was a string of murders of Black men by the OPD not enough to make Libby act? Because Libby doesn't care about Black life (though she has no problem appropriating Black culture), which is reflective in every policy and practice she has implemented since she took office — from displacing Oakland residents of color to cutting youth jobs and implementing violent protest curfews on the bodies of Black women and children. True community safety includes hav-

ing affordable and quality housing, living wage jobs, quality education and the lives of Black people actually mattering to the governing body of this city. That is the Oakland we have been — and will continue to be — fighting for. We cannot — and will not — allow Whent's termination to confuse our analysis. The problem with police in this country — and especially in Oakland — is not a couple of bad apples. The whole orchard is rotten to the root. Our work will not be complete until there is a new paradigm for community safety that does not rely on militarized gestapos and American concentration camps. □

# Protests fight Michigan prison conditions

By David Sole

Prisoners at the Marquette Branch Prison in Michigan's Upper Peninsula held a mass boycott of the facility's cafeteria on May 24. More than 700 of the 1,100 low-security inmates united in this action to protest the awful food provided by Trinity Corporation. Immediately following this nonviolent action, prison officials locked down the entire facility for 24 hours. Similar actions against bad food had occurred the previous months at the Kinross, Chippewa and Cotton Correctional facilities, all located in Michigan. The Michigan Department of Corrections cancelled its contract with Aramark Foods last fall, replacing it with Trinity because of numerous concerns. Prior to December 2013, prison food services were provided by state workers. Trinity's performance, as shown by the numerous protests, may even be worse. Political prisoner the Rev. Edward Pinkney was able to call his supporters after the lockdown ended on May 25. He told them that there are "maggots and



PHOTO: ALEJO STARK

A protest supporting LGBTQ prisoners was held outside MDOC headquarters in Lansing on May 26. rat feces in the food. It's disgusting food and the quantities are inadequate. We believe that the Department of Corrections is getting kickbacks from Trinity." (bhbancoco.org) Rev. Pinkney has vowed not to eat prison food while at the prison. He says he will subsist on quarterly packages of food from a vendor supplying prisoners and paid for by his spouse. Since the May 11 appeal on his 2014 conviction has been "held in abeyance" until the Michigan Supreme Court rules on a different case, Pinkney faces a likely

minimum of one more year before being eligible for parole. The Michigan Court of Appeals denied him bail again in late May. On June 8, Marquette-area ABC TV10 News broadcast a story about the May 24 food protest. Rev. Pinkney was able to call in to the station for a short powerful interview. (abc10up.com) Prison officials retaliated by barring Rev. Pinkney from contact with the media. In other prison news, supporters of gay and trans prisoners at the Cotton Correctional Facility in Jackson have been directing protests to MDOC Director Heidi Washington for mistreatment of LGBTQ prisoners. Seven prisoners filed grievances under the federal Prisoner Rape Elimination Act, citing years of harassment by guards and administration inaction. Retaliation against these prisoners soon followed, including three transfers and disciplinary action. Letters and calls to Director Washington continue as word of the mistreatment spreads. (517-241-7238; Heidi Washington, Director MDOC, 206 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing MI 28909) □

# Black Lives Matter activists targeted by the state

By Lamont Lilly  
Durham, N.C.

During the height of the Ferguson Rebellion in the summer of 2014, youth organizer Joshua Williams rose quickly to the call of duty. In the aftermath of officer Darren Wilson's brutal murder of Mike Brown, an unarmed Black teenager, 19-year-old Josh Williams, stepped forward in the most dedicated and courageous way possible — on the front lines. At protests, Williams stood his ground against armed police, national guardsmen, tanks and teargas, and encouraged others to do the same. In doing so, Josh not only earned the respect of his peers, he began to garner favor with longtime veteran leaders such as Cornel West and Al Sharpton. He also became a darling of the national media, from USA Today to the New York Times. From the perspective of the status quo, such potential and leadership qualities were seen as a threat. A few months after Mike Brown's dead body lay in the street for four hours, another Black teenager, Antonio Martin, was shot by the police in Berkeley, a small town just outside Ferguson. In a righteous rage, youth took to the streets in rebellion. In the process, Williams was caught on camera lighting a fire at the convenience store where Martin was shot and killed. In December 2014, Josh Williams was arrested by the St. Louis Coun-

ty police, and a year later pleaded guilty to first degree arson and second degree burglary. Were Josh's actions of "damaging property" illegal? Yes, they were. But so is the murder of innocent human lives. Did Darren Wilson serve time in jail? No! Did George Zimmerman serve time for murdering 17-year-old Trayvon Martin? No! Josh Williams, however, was sentenced to eight years in the Eastern Reception Diagnostic and Correctional Center in Bonne Terre, Mo. Neither Wilson nor Zimmerman ever served a day in prison. Another recent case of overt targeting of activists by the state is the case of 28-year-old Jasmine Richards (also known as Jasmine Abdullah). Jasmine, founder of the Black Lives Matter Pasadena Chapter, has become the first Black woman convicted of "felony lynching." You heard right, lynching! She was hit with this charge for trying to prevent the arrest of a Black woman accused of not paying her bill at a local restaurant, back in August of 2015. During the incident, Jasmine and others happened to be nearby at a protest against violence in the Black community. As the commotion spilled over, Jasmine and other protesters came to serve as witnesses and demand justice. At the time, the suspect accused of not paying for her meal was the only person arrested. Three days later, however, for her valiant pursuit

of justice, Jasmine was charged with delaying and obstructing officers, inciting a riot and felony lynching. On June 1, Jasmine Richards was sentenced to 90 days in jail and 36 months of probation time. In the state of California, lynching implies "the taking by means of a riot of another person from the lawful custody of a peace officer." The erroneous charges against Jasmine backfired, however, when the general public finally received word of such a ridiculous interpretation. Public outcry was heard worldwide, while an old phenomenon became quite clear. What we're seeing in regards to the intentional targeting of activists and organizers of the Black Lives Matter movement is nothing new — no different than the targeting of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Assata Shakur and Leonard Peltier. What we're seeing is the same strategy that Cointelpro used against the Black Panther Party, the Black Liberation Army

and the American Indian Movement. The intention of such repression is to halt the movement, to slow down the surge of the poor and oppressed, to "disrupt, discredit and destroy." The state apparatus will do anything to protect the elite. If they can't stop you permanently, they'll tie up your time, energy and resources in the jails and court system. And they'll use the media to demonize you in the process. As revolutionaries, we have to learn from these experiences and pass these lessons down. We already know the state is trying to prevent the oppressed from rising up; that's nothing new. We know what's coming: harassment, intimidation, imprisonment. What is new, is that a new generation must be armed with the proper information to protect themselves. Those on the front lines must be defended, by us, the people, the community, at all cost, by any means necessary. □

## MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. **Racism, National Oppression and Self-Determination** Larry Holmes **Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead **Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal **Domestic Workers Demand a Bill of Rights** Imani Henry **Black & Brown Unity** Saladin Muhammad **Racism & Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales **Haiti Needs Reparations** Pat Chin **Alabama's Black Belt** Consuela Lee **Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion** John Parker Available at major online booksellers.



# Justice for India Cummings

## Protesters shut down Main Street

By Gene Clancy  
Rochester, N.Y.

Protesters took over downtown streets during rush hour here to protest the death of India Cummings, who died in police custody in Buffalo, N.Y., in February. “India Cummings! Remember my name!” chanted protesters as they blocked intersections on May 24 and shut down the Rochester Transit System Bus Terminal for nearly two hours.

The demonstration followed a rally at the Liberty Pole, which was interrupted by a torrential downpour. The demonstration was organized by the Black Panther Party of Rochester and BLACK (Building Leadership and Community

Knowledge), an organization of African-American youth. They were joined by several other local community organizations including Workers World Party.

Cummings, who has roots in Rochester, was taken to an emergency room with cardiac arrest and showing signs of extreme trauma: a skull injury, bruises, life-threatening blood clots, broken ribs and severe dehydration. An investigation into the matter by the New York Commission of Corrections has so far revealed nothing, and family lawyers have been stonewalled at every turn by the Erie County District Attorney’s office.

Matthew A. Albert, who is representing the Cummings family, said that Cum-



mings “went from physically healthy to dead in three weeks. ... Ultimately, what we want is accountability. ... The silence is intolerable.”

“We want to draw attention to what happened. Sadly, these things happen everywhere,” said Tanya Noel, a leading

organizer of BLACK. “Agitate, organize, educate. It’s to get people together to begin the education and organization that’s necessary.” (Democrat & Chronicle, May 26) □

## Urban League report:

# African Americans ‘still oppressed’

By Abayomi Azikiwe  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

In its 2016 report on the “State of Black America,” the National Urban League, one of the oldest research organizations in the African-American community, documents continuing levels of national oppression and economic exploitation.

“Locked Out: Education, Jobs and Justice” is the title of the 40th annual study by the NUL, which began this work in 1976. It provides much evidence to show that African Americans remain an oppressed nation within the political and economic clutches of Washington and Wall Street.

Additionally, the report discusses the impact of the Great Recession in the United States on the African-American population.

Despite the advent of the first African-American president, Barack Hussein Obama, the fundamental problems facing at least 45 million people are still unresolved 151 years since chattel slavery’s abolition and the Civil War’s end.

The study uses an “equality index,” which found that African Americans do not have full equality, but actually have only 72.2 percent of what white people possess. Also, it is necessary to take into account systematic national discrimination imposed on this population through denial of economic and social opportunities. There are potential pitfalls in using this “equality index” framework due to class divisions among African Americans. However, this measurement acknowledges the disparities that have remained throughout the decades.

### Oppression, exploitation still intact

What is striking about NUL’s findings is the degree to which the social conditions of African Americans have remained essentially unchanged. This stagnation has continued through successive Republican and Democratic administrations. This conclusion does not discount or minimize gains made over the last four decades, particularly in educational achievements.

The report says: “Eighty-six percent of African Americans are high school completers; the share with a bachelor’s degree or more has more than tripled (from 6.6 percent to 22.2 percent); and roughly one-third of 18-24- year-olds are enrolled in college. While whites

have increased college enrollment faster than Blacks between 1976 and 2014, the college completion gap has narrowed 20 percentage points ... (from 43 percent in 1976 to 63 percent in 2014).”

Nevertheless, in essential areas such as job acquisition and retention, unemployment rates among African Americans are twice as high as whites, as in 1976. This is during a so-called recovery! These figures reflect the elimination of millions of industrial jobs, which then has had ramifications in education and public service sectors and consumer viability.

The NUL says “despite notable absolute progress for Black America, there has been much less relative progress towards economic equality with whites, especially when compared to the progress made toward educational equality. ... The Black unemployment rate has consistently remained about twice the white rate across time and at every level of education. Compared to 40 years ago, the income gap has remained basically unchanged (now 60 percent), and the homeownership rate gap has actually grown 6 percentage points (now 59 percent).”

An important area in assessing African Americans’ quality of life is homeownership. The NUL emphasizes: “The foreclosure crisis has left Black homeownership rates at approximately the same point they were in 1976, while the white homeownership rate is now 5 percentage points higher. [But] there has been slow, but ongoing progress in reducing poverty, in spite of the ... Great Recession. ... The Black poverty rate is now 2.4 percentage points lower than in 1976 (down to 27 percent from 29.4 percent).”

Well over one-quarter of African Americans are still impoverished. Aggravating this data on poverty is the high jobless rate, which could easily imperil the households of those not designated as impoverished.

In 2014, a survey indicated that nearly half of U.S. residents were either living in poverty or close to it. “This is based on the Census Department’s Relative Poverty Measure. ... The Economic Policy Institute uses the term ‘economically vulnerable.’ With this standard, 18 percent of [U.S. residents] are below the poverty threshold and 32 percent are below twice the threshold, putting them in the low-income category.” (Paul

Buchheit, Alternet, March 23, 2014)

The highest rate of African-American unemployment is in Illinois. Concentrations of poverty, inequality and joblessness exist in Chicago.

EPI notes: “During the first quarter of 2016 ... the unemployment rate among Black Illinoisans was 14.1 percent. That’s up from 13.1 percent during the fourth quarter of 2015, when Illinois also had the nation’s worst African-American unemployment rate. ... Illinois also tied with Washington for having the highest Hispanic unemployment rate, 7.8 percent, during the first quarter of 2016.” (progressillinois.com, May 20)

### Impact of current administration’s policies

This report provides much hard data necessitating a critical look at the lack of progress made during Obama’s administration. African Americans voted overwhelmingly for Obama in 2008 and 2012, securing his terms in office.

Unemployment rates in Illinois, the area from which Obama emerged politically, expose the futility of an electoral agenda which lacks substantive demands based on conditions facing the working class and poor.

These statistics pose a challenge for mass organizations, which must continue to put forward political programs calling for real jobs, decent housing, quality education and economic parity. Irrespective of who is next elected to the White House and Congress, oppression and exploitation will not wither away.

Joy-Ann Reid, a MSNBC correspondent, predicts in an article in the NUL report: “Whether the next president is a Democrat or Republican, Black leadership will likely be pressed as never before to deliver on the ‘hope floor’ laid by the election of the first Black president. ... In short, the ‘Age of Hope’ is poised to give way to the ‘Era of Radical Demands for Change.’”

To be effective, radical demands for change must take on an anti-capitalist character. There is a drastic need for the redistribution of wealth from the ruling class to the working class and the nationally oppressed. This transfer of wealth can only occur under a socialist system which guarantees full employment, income equality, housing and education for everyone, along with the total liberation of African Americans and all oppressed nations. □

## Mumia Abu-Jamal on:

# Muhammad Ali

## –‘the greatest!’

It was January 1942, when the baby Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. was born to a working-class Black family in Louisville, Ky.



In those days, Kentucky was famous for its distinctive blue grass, its championship horses and its whiskey. None knew that the brown boy born to the Clays would become one of the most famous and most revered men in the world.

In 1960, at 178 lbs., Clay would win an Olympic gold medal as a talented light heavyweight amateur. For many, that’s more than enough for a place in history.

But a mere four years later, he would stun the world by defeating the dreaded Sonny Liston, a man few expected him to beat, to become heavyweight champion of the world.

Soon thereafter he would announce his conversion to the Nation of Islam, and his acceptance of a new, holy name: Muhammad Ali. The world would come to know, and remember him today, by that name, and he would emerge as the biggest, boldest personality in the world of sports.

We forget today how his name, his faith and his steadfast refusal to fight for the American Empire in Vietnam marked him as one of the most hated men in America. We have forgotten how his fights occasioned many, many death threats against the world’s boxing champ.

When the World Boxing Association stripped him of his title in 1967, many thought this was the end of his career. For refusing military enlistment he faced five years in prison; but he sued all the way to the Supreme Court — and won! In the interim, however, almost four years had passed, and these were the prime years of a boxer.

In 1974, he regained his title, and won it again in 1978 before retiring a year later. He dazzled his opponents and his fans with his uncanny hand speed and fancy footwork, which became known as the “Ali Shuffle.” He was a beautiful fighter, not simply because he was a beautiful man. For an athlete of his impressive size, he danced around the ring and developed a fighting style that carried him through an outstanding career. (His motto: “Float like a butterfly; sting like a bee.”)

In 1975, he said, boldly (and presciently): “I am America. Only, I’m the part you won’t recognize. But get used to me: Black, confident, cocky; my name, not yours; my religion, not yours; my goals, my own — get used to me!”

And guess what? The world got used to him. He lived through 74 springs and became a beloved living legend. □



## Outraged New Yorkers say:



# ‘Boycott Israel for Justice’

By Anne Pruden  
New York City

On June 9, a crowd of several hundred in New York City vehemently voiced their protest of a recent anti-BDS executive order by Gov. Andrew Cuomo. BDS is the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement that supports Palestinian rights by boycotting Israeli economic in-

New York City rally supports right to boycott Israel for Palestinian rights.

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

terests. Rallying in front of Cuomo’s midtown office, the crowd chanted: “Not another nickel! Not another dime! No more money for Israel’s crimes!” and “Cuomo! Cuomo! Don’t you know, Israeli apartheid’s got to go!”

Demonstrators held high a defiant banner that read: “We will continue to boycott Israel for justice.” Cuomo’s order establishes state penalties against organizations that support BDS. The action was called by Adalah-NY: The New York Campaign for the Boycott of Israel and Jewish Voice for Peace. □

## Solidarity with French workers’ struggle grows

By G. Dunkel

From Athens, Greece, to San Francisco, Calif., passing through Italy and on to New York City and Butner, N.C., solidarity with the struggle of the French workers protesting the new anti-worker labor law is growing.

While the French big-business media is focusing on the workers at the Total refinery, who returned to work on June 12 after shutting down the plant for 25 days, they are ignoring the strong support the French public is giving to the strikes and protests.

Even though lines at gas stations have grown shorter, but not vanished; even though public transportation — especially in the Paris region — is strongly “perturbed”; even though electricity brown-outs are common; even though roads are often blocked by protests, a large segment of the French public blames the government and big-business bosses for these problems, not the unions.

Philip Martinez, head of the CGT union confederation, speaking at a rally of garbage workers blockading a sorting center at Fos-sur-Mer in southern France, supported their determination to continue



Butner, North Carolina.

their strike against the new labor law. He said that he and other CGT leaders are receiving death threats. (TV3, June 12)

After the national protest march on June 14, Martinez will meet with Minister of Labor Myriam El Khomri on June 16, but he says he doesn’t expect many results from the meeting.

Workers groups in Greece intend to have solidarity picket lines in front of the French consulates in Athens and Thessaloniki on June 14. There will also be picket lines in solidarity with the French workers’ struggle in New York City, Butner, N.C., and San Francisco. □



Dockworkers in LeHavre, France.



Solidarity in Italy.

## Germans protest U.S. drone war

By John Catalinotto

Between 5,000 and 7,000 demonstrators formed a 5.5-mile human chain around the massive U.S. Air Force Base at Ramstein in rural southwestern Germany on a rainy June 11 to protest its role in wars worldwide, especially involving the U.S. drone assassination program.

What is Ramstein? “With its staggering scope and scale, Ramstein ... serves not only as the headquarters of the U.S. Air Force in Europe and a NATO installation but also as a gateway to American military operations around the globe,” wrote Business Insider on Sept. 18, 2014.

The article says the base transmits information from operators in the United States — such as GIs at Hancock AFB near Syracuse, N.Y. — to pilotless drone aircraft in such places as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Syria, where thousands have been killed by drone attacks.

Last fall, an unnamed whistleblower leaked classified Department of Defense documents revealing that nearly 90 percent of people killed by drones in one five-month period were noncombatants

who were merely close to intended “targets.” (The Intercept, Oct. 15)

The German-based “Stop Ramstein - No Drone War” anti-war coalition said in a statement signed by dozens of organizations and individuals that Ramstein “plays a pivotal role for preparing and executing wars of aggression violating international law. Most of the lethal missions of U.S. combat drones, e.g., in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Syria, and Africa, are conducted via Ramstein’s satellite relay station. ...

“In Ramstein itself, about 650 personnel continuously analyze, update and pass on data from the surveillance of alleged targets. Without Ramstein, the whole drone war would be obstructed decisively and might come to an end.”

### War threats in Eastern Europe

The statement makes the point that Ramstein is also a key player in “looming U.S. interventionist wars, including at the borders of Russia.” (codepink-in-germany.org)

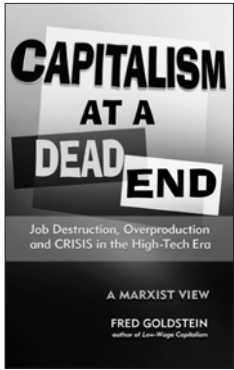
This June 7 the largest European war exercise planned for this year, known as

Anaconda, opened in Poland. This exercise is a provocation aimed at Russia. Anaconda involves 25,000 troops from 19 NATO countries and six other “partners,” including Georgia and Ukraine from the former Soviet Union, Kosovo and Macedonia from the former Yugoslavia, Sweden and Finland. They follow U.S. command.

The June 11 demonstration raised the following demands addressed to the German parliament and government:

- Ban the U.S. by law from using Ramstein as the basis of their drone wars.
- Close down Ramstein’s satellite relay station.
- Renounce the purchase of combat drones for the Bundeswehr (German armed forces).
- Proscribe the acquisition of combat drones for the military.
- End illegal spying by the U.S. National Security Agency, in cooperation with the German intelligence agency BND, for which Ramstein is a focal point.

*Elsa Rassbach of the “Stop Ramstein - No Drone War” coalition of Code Pink Germany supplied sources for this article.*



### Capitalism at a Dead End

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

### El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida



Fred Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tasa decreciente de ganancia, para demostrar por qué el capitalismo global ha llegado finalmente a un punto de inflexión.

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to **LowWageCapitalism.com**  
Available at all major online booksellers.



# Reflections of a Puerto Rican in the Diaspora

## Puerto Rico at the crossroads

Continued from page 7

betting on the so-called “Promise,” had met with Puerto Rican legislators Nydia Velázquez, José Serrano, Luis Gutierrez and Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi to let them know there was no “Plan B” regarding the proposed Fiscal Control Board by the Republicans. That is, the board would inevitably gain both Republican and Democratic endorsement.

### Fiscal board means ‘slavery’

What the independence movement has always maintained has now been publicly and officially confirmed: The Free Associated State is neither a “state” nor is it “free,” and it is not even “associated.” And to prove it, plunging the dagger into the depths of the Puerto Rican heart, Congress approved just hours later the dictatorial junta.

A prior article, “Imperialist Control Board to be imposed on Puerto Rico,” explained just what this junta is, but Puerto Rican patriot Rafael Cancel Miranda’s words describe it even more succinctly: “The Fiscal Control Board [JCF] is blatant slavery.”

We wrote in that article: “Among its points the following stand out. The FCB would be composed of seven members appointed by the U.S. president and chosen by the leaders of the House and the Senate, plus one nonvoting, ex-officio member appointed by the governor of Puerto Rico.

“Their powers — we have to remember that they are directed to pay the bondholders — would be overarching and autonomous, without being accountable to the Puerto Rican people or governed by its laws.

“The FCB must approve and certify all measures, regulations, budgets, loans, restructuring, in effect, all actions by the government of Puerto Rico and any of its instruments.

“[The junta will] determine and enforce the budget, over and above any budget approved by the island government. [It] will have the power to investigate and/or sanction anyone. [It] will institute automatic hiring freezes and require approval of contracts in excess of \$100,000. ...

“All debt related cases will be heard in federal court. ... Any plan of debt restructuring must be consistent with its financial plan, for the ‘best interest of creditors.’ [The JCF] will reduce the minimum wage of workers under 25 years old from \$7.25 to \$4.25.”

What are the consequences of these developments?

Since the U.S. Congress imposed the ELA, it has furiously maintained the big lie that the government of PR has autonomy and that there is a “pact” between the governments of the U.S. and PR as if they were equals.

This big lie was actively supported by the empire and its local island representatives covering all areas in order to create

and maintain a culture of subordination where the Puerto Rican people could only conceive of themselves as being bound to and “protected” by their U.S. masters.

### Since 1898 invasion

Since the U.S. invasion of the island in 1898, Puerto Rico’s independence fighters have been persecuted, maligned, repressed and even murdered. The ideal of independence and sovereignty has been made to appear the equivalent of a great misfortune. In Puerto Rican households — and this writer includes herself in this sad story of families — there was no mercy for those who proclaim that ideal, unless he or she was lucky enough to be in a family that held those ideals, too. This history of the independence movement is long, and includes forced exiles.

Now, after the recent decisions, a new stage of struggle in Borikén has opened. The colonial option is no longer possible. Many people mention that now there are only two options: “statehood” or “independence.” But the reality is that statehood is really no option, and according to Rafael Cancel Miranda, this would mean the total subjugation of the colony.

But how can Puerto Ricans take the road of independence when so much effort has been put into colonializing the Boricuan mind? At this point we must remember the words of historic independence leader Don Pedro Albizu Campos: “What’s on the table is the ultimate definition: We are either Yankees or Puerto Ricans.”

There is today in Puerto Rico a revival of the progressive and the independence movement, including organization of various forms of struggle and civil disobedience against the junta, incorporating demonstrations, forums and work in the Decolonization Committee of the United Nations that will take up the matter this summer, and others.

From the Diaspora, where we are more than 5 million Puerto Ricans, I add the following reflections:

The struggle cannot be limited to a reaction against the junta; it must necessarily be a struggle for independence.

For this we will need a broad educational campaign like that during the People’s Strike (against the privatization of the telephone company) in 1998. We need to go to every corner where there is a Boricua to explain the need for and the real possibility of independence.

Although the United Nations is important, remember that it has served, through the imposition of the Security Council, as an instrument of imperialist war and not peace.

The Puerto Rican struggle is taking place in a time of capitalist decay and right now, when the right wing wants to retake areas liberated by struggling peoples in Latin America, PR is part of those peoples and nations struggling worldwide, including the people of the United States. We must make the struggle for independence a common meeting ground for all struggles on an international level.

It is not a time for reform and halfway measures. We must go on the offensive. Remember the words of Che, “Don’t give imperialism an inch.” We should not ask or beg the U.S. Congress or renegotiate a debt that the people did not make and that is illegitimate.

What we should do is demand reparations for damages that the U.S. has caused the Puerto Rican people, the list of which is too long to reproduce here. And it is far more than the \$70 billion debt they all talk about.

Above all, we must expose the criminal role of U.S. imperialism in Puerto Rico in all possible forums.

No to the imperialist debt and fiscal control! Independence now!

*Joubert-Ceci is a retired physician born and raised in Puerto Rico who has resided in the U.S. since the mid-80s. She was part of the team of doctors who examined Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda and Irving Flores y Oscar Collazo upon their return to Puerto Rico after their sentences were commuted in 1979. A warm, lasting relationship was then established between Joubert and Lebrón, who used to call her “mi doctorcita.”*

# Student rapist gets slap on wrist

Continued from page 7

election since he was the only candidate.

Persky, a Stanford graduate, obviously took pity on Turner, a former member of the university swim team, stating at sentencing that he was impressed with the “character references” sent by the convicted rapist’s friends and family and noting his lack of a criminal record. “A prison sentence would have a severe impact on him,” Persky actually stated.

### Fight against growing racism and sexism

Totally offensive comments from Turner’s father and the victim’s compelling statement have further fueled the backlash against the rape culture which exists not only on college and university campuses around the country, but throughout U.S. society. “His life will never be the one that he dreamed about and worked so hard to achieve. That is a steep price to pay for 20 minutes of action out of his 20 plus years of life,” Dan Turner callously wrote in his letter asking for probation for his son.

The survivor of Turner’s sexual assault, who has chosen to remain anonymous, publicly issued to BuzzFeed News on June 3 the statement that she read to the court at Turner’s sentencing. Her courageous message described the “severe impact” that Turner’s actions have had on her life and her outrage at the sentence:

“What has [Turner] done to demonstrate that he deserves a break? He has only apologized for drinking and has yet to define what he did to me as sexual assault, he has revictimized me continually, relentlessly. He has been found guilty of three serious felonies and it is time for him to accept the consequences of his actions. He will not be quietly excused.” The entire statement, poignant and infu-


riating, can be found at buzzfeed.com, and is well worth reading.

Both Persky and Turner are well-off white men, revealing that this travesty of justice is rooted in white supremacy, class privilege and misogyny. The interplay of racism and national oppression; wealth, power and class oppression; violence against women and the LGBTQ community all come into play in this case and others like it.

The ongoing scandal of alleged sexual assaults by Baylor University football team members and their cover-ups by coaches and administration is a case in point. There, the head football coach has been fired and Baylor’s president, Kenneth Starr, was demoted. (Starr, who investigated U.S. President Bill Clinton’s conduct in office leading to his impeachment, is now Baylor’s chancellor.) The university is currently trying to settle a civil case of negligence and gender discrimination brought by victim Jasmin Hernandez in April.

In contrast to the slap on the wrist afforded Turner, former Baylor student and football player Tevin Elliott, an African American, was sentenced in January 2014 to 20 years in prison on each of two counts of sexual assault. (courthouse-news.com, June 13)

The movement to stop rape and eradicate rape culture and violence against women cannot be separated from the struggle against systemic racism and national oppression. Racism and sexism under capitalism are two pillars of oppression, used by the ruling class to “divide and conquer” and sow disunity among the workers and oppressed. Uncompromising solidarity with the most oppressed is the key to overturning these evils and the capitalist system which breeds them. □



# Moorehead-Lilly

Abolir al capitalismo—luchar por el socialismo revolucionario @wwp/016

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3. Queremos poner fin a TODAS las formas de racismo y la opresión nacional. ¡Apoyo incondicional a la autodeterminación de todas las nacionalidades oprimidas, incluyendo Negro, Latino, Indígenas, Asiáticos y los Árabes!
4. Queremos derechos plenos para todos los inmigrantes. ¡Alto a las redadas y deportaciones! Poner fin a la islamofobia ahora!
5. Queremos derechos humanos básicos: calidad de los alimentos, agua, vivienda, vestido, atención médica, educación de calidad y cuidado de los/as niños/as adecuado, libre o asequible. como derechos humanos básicos. ¡Poner fin a todas las formas de austeridad en todo el mundo! ¡Cancelar la deuda!
6. Queremos liberación PLENA y la igualdad para las mujeres, incluida la justicia reproductiva, y la liberación TOTAL de lesbianas, homosexuales, bisexuales, transgénero y personas queer. ¡Dejar de matar a las mujeres transgénero de color!
7. Queremos poner fin a la destrucción capitalista y corporativa de la Tierra y sus recursos naturales. ¡Liberar a la tierra!
8. Queremos poner fin a la conquista injusta y violenta del imperialismo de EE.UU., incluida la ocupación de todo el mundo. Fuera el Pentágono desde Palestina a Haití a América Latina y todo el mundo. Fomentar la solidaridad internacional de la clase obrera!
9. ¡Queremos pleno empleo y trabajo decente y / o ingresos para todos, independientemente de su raza, religión, edad, sexo, antecedentes criminales o discapacidad; sin racismo, sexismo, homofobia, clasismo, patriarcado, discriminación por edad y sin preferencia a personas sin discapacidades. \$15 y una unión ahora!!
10. Queremos poner fin al complejo industrial carcelario y al encarcelamiento en masivo. ¡Libertad para Mumia Abu-Jamal, Assata Shakur, Rasmea Odeh, Leonard Peltier, Ana Belén Montes, Rev. Edward Pinkney, los 9 de MOVE, Afia Siddiqui, Oscar López Rivera y TODOS los presos políticos!

Para ponerse en contacto con la campaña para invitar a los candidatos para que presenten un charla en su campus, sindicato, grupo comunitario, o reunión en su casa, o para más información, póngase en contacto con **Teresa Gutiérrez** administradora de la **Campaña Moorehead / Lilly** al 917.740.2628. Visita [www.workers.org/wwp/](http://www.workers.org/wwp/) o por correo electrónico [WWP2016@workers.org](mailto:WWP2016@workers.org).

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Monica Moorehead por la presidenta



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Libertad para Oscar López Rivera, ¡YA!

## El Campeón del Pueblo - bello, inteligente y grande

Por Larry Hales

El campeón, “El más Grande” se ha ido. Muhammad Ali ha muerto. Era inevitable que este día llegara - “el día”, cuando todo lo que una persona ha sido termina con una exhalación final. Nos llega a todas/os.

Cuando se anunció que Muhammad Ali fue hospitalizado de nuevo, esta vez con una enfermedad respiratoria, desgraciadamente parecía que era sólo una cuestión de tiempo. Y eso fue. Rodeado de su familia, murió en silencio por shock séptico el 3 de junio.

Desde su muerte, Muhammad Ali ha sido elogiado en los principales medios de comunicación burgueses, en las fuentes de menor importancia, en forma impresa y en todas las formas de medios de comunicación de todo el mundo. Es recordado por las personas que son demasiado jóvenes para haberlo visto boxear, y por las/os revolucionarios y reaccionarios. Todo el mundo tiene algo que decir acerca de Muhammad Ali.

¿Quién fue Muhammad Ali? Esto puede ser confuso. La gente es compleja. La historia también; es dialéctica. Así que las ideas y creencias de un individuo, como la sociedad en su conjunto, se ven afectadas por el mundo real que nos rodea. Los cambios se deben a factores objetivos y subjetivos.

Una forma más sencilla de decirlo es que el tumulto político de la época de 1960 que produjo a Muhammad Ali, no existía en los 1980. Por lo que el Muhammad Ali que apoyó Ronald Reagan era un diferente Ali. El fervor revolucionario en todo el mundo se había calmado, y la lucha de Liberación Negra que él defendió había sido violentamente reprimida por la policía, el FBI, los militares y los tribunales.

Años de reacción siguieron, con la destrucción del corazón industrial debido a la alta tecnología, y la unidad de los capitalistas para encontrar tasas más altas de explotación en el tercer mundo, junto con un asalto a trabajadoras/es y oprimidas/os en EUA.

Incluso entonces, no se puede decir que el desafortunado apoyo de Muhammad Ali por Reagan u otros políticos de derecha definió su vida después del boxeo. El establecimiento que lo abraza hoy lo presenta sólo como un ícono, una persona con una política nebulosa que fue querido y respetado por todos, que podría dar la mano a Fidel Castro o Nelson Mandela y luego sentarse con Bill Clinton en la Casa Blanca.

Las personas que elogian a Muhammad Ali hoy atacarían a aquel Ali a quien nosotros tenemos en nuestro corazón. Querían silenciarlo en la cima de su destreza física y trascendencia política.

### Un símbolo para las/os oprimidos

¿Quién fue Muhammad Ali? En tres palabras, era bello, brillante y grande. Era nuestra negrura, nuestra expresión de principio a fin y más. Era un símbolo para todas las personas despreciados y oprimidas que anhelan y luchan por más.

Era nuestra “religión” – lo que Karl Marx llamó, “el suspiro de la criatura oprimida, el corazón de un mundo sin corazón y el alma de condiciones sin

alma”. Él era todo lo que éramos y somos - transparente y desafiante para que todos veamos lo magnífico y valiente que somos y debemos seguir siendo.

El diálogo continuará sobre la importancia política de Ali. Pero lo que lo convirtió en el más grande se debe recuperar.

No fue sólo el boxeo lo que hizo grande a Ali y el campeón. Su habilidad como boxeador es parte. Algunos podrían resumir el boxeo como lo hizo él una vez, “El boxeo es muchos hombres blancos mirando a dos hombres negros golpeándose el uno al otro”.

Sería difícil argumentar en contra de esa percepción. La mayoría de los luchadores son del mundo oprimido. Así también lo son la mayoría de los aficionados, excepto aquellos que pueden permitirse el lujo de ver las peleas más grandes y los que se benefician de la mayor parte, son blancos.

Es el juego de dolor, un concurso brutal. Es tal vez una contradicción de este escritor, un revolucionario, que lo disfrute.

### En el panteón de los boxeadores

El boxeo es un deporte de ciencia y habilidad. Se trata de una partida de ajedrez que requiere una gran cantidad de pensamiento y ciertos atributos físicos. Ali lo poseía todo. Es difícil clasificar a los atletas de diferentes épocas porque los avances científicos han hecho el entrenamiento más eficiente y ayudado a aumentar el nivel de rendimiento de los atletas.

Algunos escritores califican a Ali en el tope del panteón de los boxeadores; algunos lo ubican entre los primero cinco. A menudo, estas clasificaciones las hacen personas que nunca han sido golpeadas.

Las habilidades y logros de Ali lo pusieron en una clase única. Él fue el peso pesado más rápido que el mundo había visto en cuanto a velocidad de manos y pies. Pero fueron sus manos y el espectáculo de vertiginosas combinaciones que él lanzaba, lo que asombraba a la gente. Además, era ligero de pies para alguien de su tamaño. Podía moverse hacia atrás y lateralmente, mientras pegaba. Podía poner el pie, descorchar una mano derecha y luego alejarse bailando lejos de su contrincante antes de que éste pudiera responder. Su balance era el de un bailarín, y sus golpes tenían la potencia tanto por la torsión generada, como por la fuerza que conseguía.

Si alguien quisiera crear otro Muhammad Ali, esa persona tendría que tomar la mano, velocidad de los pies y el equilibrio de un Floyd Mayweather; los reflejos de Roy Jones Jr.; la combinación de velocidad y fuerza de Shane Mosley; las payasadas de Emanuel Augusto, y luego ponerlo todo en un marco de 6 pies y 3 pulgadas. A continuación, añadir la voz suave de Sam Cooke, la habilidad lingüística de Michael Eric Dyson y la calidad cantarina del rapero Method Man - y así se logra Muhammad Ali.

Ali hizo de la violencia del boxeo algo casi bello de ver. Cuando sus reflejos se embotaron y sus pies perdieron su velocidad, fue su inteligencia en el ring y su voluntad superior lo que derrotó a sus oponentes. Se enfrentó a algunos de los boxeadores más eficientes en la historia del peso pesado - Liston, Shavers, Fore-



man, Ron Lyle, Joe Frazier - y los venció.

¿Quién podría olvidar la lucha de Ali contra George Foreman y las imágenes de Ali rodeado de multitudes en la República Democrática del Congo? Foreman era el favorito del establecimiento, un luchador de gran alcance con una reputación más temible que Sonny Liston. Ali tomó cada golpe de Foreman y se burló de su enemigo, cansándolo antes de avivarse noqueándolo en el octavo asalto. Fue una demostración de su grandeza en el ring como había anunciado.

### El ‘Campeón del Pueblo

El boxeador es parte del “campeón”, sólo una parte de lo que hizo Ali grande. Esa parte no puede ser separada del conjunto; sin ella no habría tenido el escenario del mundo o dibujado la ira de los políticos burgueses y sus voceros mediáticos.

Lo que lo convirtió en el “Campeón Popular” y aún más grande que sus hazañas en el ring, es lo que Ali hizo con su fama y encanto. Cuando se unió a la Nación del Islam en 1964, fue una declaración política mayor de lo que sería hoy en día.

Ali dijo: “Soy América. Soy la parte que usted no reconoce. Pero acostúmbrese a mí. Negro, confiado, arrogante; mi nombre, no el suyo; mi religión, no la suya; mis metas propias; acostúmbrese a mí”. Su declaración simboliza el período de la revolución contra el imperialismo occidental y la supremacía blanca, así como la lucha de Liberación Negra en EUA.

Ali se arriesgó a perder todo por lo que luchó, pero no se amedrentó. Dijo lo que sentían las masas negras. En tiempo de apartheid estadounidense, cuando los líderes de los derechos civiles estaban siendo encarcelados, golpeados y asesinados, se puso en pie como nacionalista negro y se burló de la nacionalidad dominante. No podía ser controlado ni ignorado.

El movimiento de derechos civiles seguía siendo el ala predominante del movimiento político negro. Pero la presencia de Ali era un componente importante de lo que sería el ala más temida de la lucha negra - el movimiento de Liberación Negra.

Cuando Ali fue reclutado por el ejército, pudo haber indicado que era un objetor de conciencia únicamente por motivos religiosos. Sin embargo, insistió, “Ningún Vietcong me llamó n —r”.

Ali incendió el mundo: ¿”Por qué me piden ponerme un uniforme e ir a diez mil millas de casa y arrojar bombas y balas sobre personas de color marrón en Vietnam, mientras las/os negros en Louisville son tratados como perros y se les niega los derechos humanos básicos”?

Su sentimiento internacionalista expuso la gran hipocresía de por qué EUA alegaba estar en el sudeste asiático. Si no se entendía que EUA tenía intereses ma-

teriales y razones ideológicas para hacer la guerra contra el pueblo del sudeste de Asia, el rechazo y las explicaciones de Ali dieron en el blanco.

### ‘He estado en la cárcel desde hace 400 años’

Ali explicó, “no esquivo el reclutamiento. No quemo ninguna bandera. No me voy a Canadá. Yo me quedo aquí. ¿Quiere enviarme a la cárcel? Muy bien, adelante. He estado en la cárcel desde hace 400 años. Podría estar allí por cuatro o cinco más, pero no voy 10,000 millas para ayudar a matar a otras personas pobres. Si voy a morir, moriré aquí mismo, ahora mismo, peleando contra usted. Usted es mi enemigo, no ningún chino, ni Vietcong, ni japonés.

Usted es mi oponente cuando deseo la libertad. Usted se opone cuando quiero justicia. Usted se opone cuando deseo igualdad. ¿Quiere que vaya a alguna parte y luchar por usted? Ni siquiera se pondría de pie por mí aquí en EUA, por mis derechos y mis creencias religiosas. Ni siquiera defendería mis derechos aquí en casa”.

Esta postura ayudó a unificar los sentimientos de las/os negros de todo el país y dar paso a más militancia en el movimiento contra la guerra y la lucha negra. Jim Brown, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Bill Russell, Willie Davis, Curtis Stokes y otros, atletas en el mejor momento de sus carreras, hicieron pública sus objeciones a la guerra de una manera unificada.

La postura de Ali ocasionó la pérdida de su licencia para pelear, sus cinturones de campeonato, dinero - y sus mejores años en el boxeo. El sabía de esta posibilidad y se mantuvo firme. Cuando regresó al ring, sus talentos físicos habían disminuido. Los reflejos y la velocidad son las primeras cosas que un luchador pierde.

### Amado en todo el mundo

Este es el Ali que el mundo - fuera de los círculos burgueses - recuerda. Es por eso que podía viajar a cualquier parte del mundo - a Cuba, Irak, Libia, Congo, Filipinas y otros lugares - y la gente por decenas de miles se reunían y esperaban para verlo. Esta es la razón por la que era respetado por revolucionarias/os y antiimperialistas.

También es por lo que un demagogo reaccionario como Donald Trump o cualquier otro político podría hablar elogiosamente de él hoy, pero lo habría odiado hace 50 años.

Ese no es nuestro Ali. Nuestro Muhammad Ali no estaba seguro. Nuestro Ali hablaba como nosotros y por nosotros. Lo tenemos en nuestro corazón, y ese es el Ali que lloramos. Nuestro Ali creía en hacer lo imposible: “Imposible es sólo una palabra grande que tiran alrededor de los hombres pequeños quienes encuentran más fácil vivir en el mundo que le han dado, en vez de explorar el poder que tienen para cambiarlo. Imposible no es un hecho. Es una opinión. Imposible no es una declaración. Es un desafío. Imposible es potencial. Imposible es temporero. Imposible es nada”.

Fue el más grande. Lo recordaremos mientras combatimos. Ali ¡PRESENTE! Venceremos. □