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Inferno survivors demand justice

By Kathy Durkin

June 19 — In London, a raging inferno tore through Grenfell Tower in the early hours of June 14. As of today, officials say 79 people are dead or missing and presumed dead. Fatalities are expected to rise. Many people are still hospitalized, some in critical condition.

The 24-story residence held 120 apartments. Residents were working class, many of them immigrants from the Philippines, Somalia, Sudan and Syria or second-generation family members. Among the missing are retired people, youth, children and infants.

Some of them are Ligaya Moore, a 79-year-old Filipina; Jessica Urbano, 13; Fathaya Alsanousi; Raina Ibrahim and her daughters, aged 5 and 3; Lucas James, 12; Isaac Shano, 3; Miriem Elgwahry, teenager; the el-Wahabi family of five; a Bangladeshi family of five; Raymond “Moses” Bernard; and Abdel Salam, 75.

Reportedly, there were no fire alarms, no sprinkler system and no evacuation plan in case of fire. There was only one badly lit fire escape and one exit for hundreds of tenants. Sleeping residents were alerted by neighbors, including Muslims who were awake early to commemorate the end of the Ramadan holiday. Their quick actions allowed many people to escape the flames.

Protests in London

As the Tory government headed by Prime Minister Theresa May made no move to help the disaster’s survivors, fury against officials grew. Those displaced are left without money, housing or a list of their missing relatives.

However, local activists are organizing relief efforts, and people are coming from all over Britain to bring supplies and show solidarity.

Members of the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council and its public housing management company were nowhere to be seen. They avoided hearing the calls

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WORKERS WORLD PARTY

statement

Defend, disrupt, reclaim:

PRIDE MEANS SOLIDARITY

On the occasion of the 48th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion, Workers World Party issues this call for ‘Pride in solidarity.’

On the night of June 28, 1969, working-class Black and Brown queer and trans people rebelled against the unending policing and state violence waged on LGBTQ people at the Stonewall Inn, a popu-

lar place for LGBTQ people to gather in New York City.

Among the first to say “enough is enough” to the police raids were trans women of color, including Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, co-founders of S.T.A.R (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries), an organization committed to fighting for the rights of trans and

gender nonconforming people.

The following year, a Pride celebration took place in New York City to commemorate the courage and right of LGBTQ people to fight back against police brutality. Both Pride and the Stonewall Rebellion were major victories for LGBTQ people and cemented their place as part of

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Bay Area

Renters resist landlord lies

By Tristen Schmidt
Oakland, Calif.

Recently, the 12-square-mile island of Alameda in the San Francisco Bay Area has been overrun with aggressive signature collectors, spouting slogans about “democracy and voting rights” in an attempt to dupe people into signing a petition to end just-cause renter protections.

For many of the 56 percent of Alameda residents who rent, this protection of the basic human right to housing came after years of fighting unlimited yearly rent increases hiked up on units with poor maintenance. Hundreds of Alameda’s families have also been evicted for no reason in the past, so that money-hungry owners of multiple properties can double rent amounts.

GoCo, a notorious, for-profit, signature-gathering company, has hired young people who are desperate for work to go into Bay Area communities to collect signatures in order to overturn basic renter protections. Tactics they are trained to use include lying and intimidation, some recently captured on tape. Landlords, hiding behind front groups created to obscure transparency and accountability, use these dishonest tactics, fostered by the California Apartment Association, in an attempt to ensure unlimited income with little or no effort on their part.

However, if the petition signature gatherers are able to gather 5,000 legitimate signatures, more families will be needlessly put out on the street again between July and November, when the issue would again come up for a vote.

The stress on renters has intensified as wages have remained stagnant, and locals unable to find housing are moving further away from their jobs and paying more money for housing, while having longer commutes to work. The number of Alameda food pantry users has increased exponentially as renters who manage to secure a local unit find themselves spending a majority of their income on rent. (thealamedarenterscoalition.org)

To add insult to injury, management of the local shopping center, South Shore, has allowed paid signature gatherers to harass shoppers in front of two grocery stores,



PHOTO: ALAMEDA RENTERS COALITION

while denying local members of the Alameda Renters Coalition opportunities to provide signature removal forms to people who signed as a result of being misinformed. This is in clear violation of a 1980 Supreme Court ruling (Pruneyard Shopping Center v. Robins) which states that all California privately owned shopping malls must allow all individuals to speak and flier in common areas.

ARC members have been using social media, word of mouth and extensive public sign-holding to alert community members to the true nature of the petition. Many community members have come forward requesting to retract their signatures after petitioners came to their homes claiming their signatures were pro-rent-control.

Many long-term legal challenges to the wrongdoing of multiple institutions lie ahead. But in the short term, keeping children and elders in their homes is a first priority, necessitating all hands on deck to inform friends and neighbors of the falsehoods being circulated so that enough signature withdrawal forms can be submitted to the city clerk before the petition signatures are vetted. □

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WORKERS WORLD

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

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, joblessness and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it.

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Join us in the fight
for socialism!

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

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

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

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WORKERS WORLD
this week

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Justice for Philando Castile!

By Stephen Millies

Millions of people saw the sickening video of Philando Castile bleeding to death in his car on July 6, 2016. Police officer Jeronimo Yanez shot at the Black man seven times after stopping him in Falcon Heights, Minn., a suburb of St. Paul.

Millions heard Castile’s friend Diamond Reynolds scream, “Please don’t tell me that he’s gone. Please officer don’t tell me that you just did this to him. He was just getting his license and registration, sir.” (Associated Press, July 7, 2016)

And now millions of people are outraged that on June 16 Yanez was found “not guilty” of second-degree manslaughter and two counts of dangerous discharge of a firearm.

Both Diamond Reynolds and her four-year-old daughter, who were in the car, could have been killed, too. After seeing her boyfriend shot, Reynolds was handcuffed by police.

“The system continues to fail black people,” said Valerie Castile, the mother of Philando Castile. (Huffington Post, June 16) One hundred sixty years after the U.S. Supreme Court’s infamous Dred Scott decision, Black people still have, in the words of the ruling, “no rights which the white man was bound to respect.”

The night of the verdict over 2,000 people took to the streets of St. Paul, starting at the state Capitol. The #Justice4Philando Emergency Unity Response was initiated by many local organizations. (Fight Back News, June 16)

People blocked Interstate 94 and the light rail line. “No justice, no peace, prosecute the police” was one of the chants. Eighteen people were arrested. (CNN, June 16)

Six hundred people marched through

Harlem, N.Y., on June 17. They started at 116th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard and finally reached Trump Tower in midtown. New York police continually tried to block the demonstrators.

Black Teamster lives matter

Philando Castile was a worker and member of Teamsters Local 320. He had been employed in St. Paul public school cafeterias for 14 years. At the time of his assassination, Castile was nutrition services supervisor at the J.J. Hill Montessori Magnet School.

Children loved Philando. “He was [as] much a teacher than any teacher in that building,” said Joan Edman, a retired worker at the school. “He remembered their names. He remembered who couldn’t have milk. He knew what they could have to eat and what they couldn’t,” said Edman, who added that “five hundred real children are directly impacted.”

“He was just a nice, caring person who worked at the school, who should not be dead,” said Andrew Karre, whose 8-year-old son attends the Montessori school. (Time, July 7, 2016)

None of this mattered to police, who stopped Philando Castile 52 times in 14 years. (New York Daily News, July 9, 2016) Driving while Black is a real offense, and for Castile it carried the death penalty.

“Yanez claimed that as Castile drove past him in his car, the structure of Philando’s nose reminded him of the nose of a Black man he had seen in an armed robbery video,” wrote Shaun King. “You’d struggle to find a single white man in America who was ever pulled over for suspicion of armed robbery because of the shape of his nose.” (New York Daily News, June 16)

This is somewhat peculiar, even by U.S.

racial profiling standards. Wasn’t singling people out by their noses supposed to end with the defeat of the Nazis?

‘Whites only’ Second Amendment

Philando Castile told officer Yanez that he had a gun which he was licensed to carry. (Chicago Tribune, July 14, 2016) As Castile was complying with the officer’s request for identification, Yanez killed him.

Don’t African Americans have the Second Amendment right to possess firearms?

In fact, Black people are denied even the right to self-defense. Seventeen-year-old Black sharecropper Samuel Osborne was confronted in his South Carolina shack by white landlord William Walker on Aug. 17, 1941. Walker was drunk and carrying a .32 caliber pistol.

In justified fear for his life, Osborne reached for his rifle and killed his crackpot boss. Osborne’s right to self-defense didn’t matter to Judge Strom Thurmond, who sentenced Osborne to the electric chair. (Lars-Eric Nelson column, New York Daily News, Jan 8, 1999)

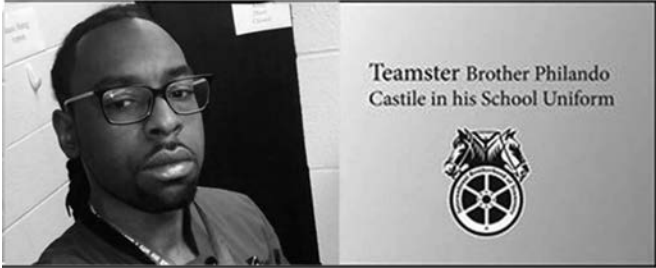
Super-racist Thurmond would later be elected South Carolina governor and also spend 46 years in the U.S. Senate. Thurmond’s support was vital to putting Richard Nixon in the White House.

Every time cops kill an unarmed person they claim they are in fear for their lives. But killing a drunken racist who was pointing a gun at him sent Samuel Osborne to the electric chair. The Black teenager was executed on Nov. 19, 1943.

Four months later, the Palmetto State electrocuted 14-year-old Black child George Junius Stinney, whose trial on phony murder charges lasted just two hours.

California Gov. Ronald Reagan signed the Mulford Act in 1967, banning the carrying of guns. The National Rifle Association was silent. This law was aimed to smash the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, as it was called at the time. Black Panthers would carry a law book in one hand and an unloaded shotgun in the other while observing police.

Claiming that they were armed and



dangerous was the excuse for police to kill Black Panther Party members. Among the victims were Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, who were murdered in their beds in Chicago on Dec. 4, 1969.

Nearly 50 years later, poor people aren’t supposed to have First Amendment free speech rights, either. State legislators in Arizona and Texas last year introduced bills to bar video recording of police. (Arizona Republic, Jan. 12, 2016)

What’s needed? Millions in the streets

Minnesota is considered a liberal state. But between 2000 and June 2016 — that is, before Philando Castile’s death — 147 people were killed by Minnesota police. (Star Tribune, June 7, 2016)

The biggest mass hanging in U.S. history occurred in Mankato, Minn., on Dec. 26, 1862, when 38 Indigenous Santee men were executed. (unitednativeamerica.com)

After attacking Somali immigrants living in Minnesota, Donald Trump came within 44,000 votes of winning the Gopher State.

Racism is rejected by many workers in Minnesota who are appalled by the killer of Philando Castile going free. “Philando was a good man who is missed by the people who loved him and by hundreds of children and educators in the St. Paul Public Schools,” said President Denise Specht of Education Minnesota, a labor group affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

“More than 100,000 Minnesota children who look like Philando will wake up tomorrow in a society that still treats them far differently than white children,” said Specht. Teamsters Local 320 proudly declared its member Philando Castile to be a union brother.

But where is the statement by Teamsters President Jimmy Hoffa Jr.? And why is AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka silent? Stopping racist police killings is a labor issue.

A movement of millions is needed to stop the racist police. Every protest is a step toward building it. □



Oakland, Calif.

Rally against racist verdict

Hundreds rallied June 17 at Oscar Grant Plaza in downtown Oakland, Calif., angered by the not-guilty verdict for the cop who killed Philando Castile. The rally was called by a 16-year-old Oakland High School student, who opened the rally talking about Black Lives Matter and the need to use the phrase “police terror,” rather than police brutality. She opened the mic to any of the Black people in the audience who wished to speak. One at a time, people got up and told how this police murder and the not-guilty verdict affected them.

— Report and photo by Terri Kay



Chicago

WW PHOTO: JEFF SOREL

Demonstrators marched June 18 on Chicago’s South Side to demand justice for Philando Castile.



By David Sole
Detroit

Exactly two years and six months after being locked up, Michigan’s political prisoner, the Rev. Edward Pinkney, walked out from behind the bars. His spouse, Dorothy Pinkney, waited for him at the Brooks Correctional Facility in Muskegon Heights, Mich., on the morning of June 13, ready to drive him to their home in the small town of Benton Harbor in southwest Michigan.

Two nights before his release, Workers World asked Pinkney whether he was “packed and ready to go.” He replied, “I’ve been packed and ready for two-and-a-half years.” Those familiar with the case cannot believe that this 68-year-old African-American community leader could have been charged, tried and convicted on no evidence.

Pinkney faced a white judge, a white prosecutor and an all-white jury on frame-up charges of having altered some dates on a recall petition against Benton Harbor’s then-mayor, James Hightower.

There were no confession, no forensic evidence and no witnesses against him.

All activists are threatened by his conviction, which was upheld last year by the Michigan Court of Appeals. That court ruled that Rev. Pinkney had the greatest animosity to the mayor and therefore could be assumed to have committed the crime. The case is now headed for the Michigan Supreme Court. Even if that court were to exonerate Rev. Pinkney, they cannot give him back the hard 30 months he has already served.

Detroit area supporters are holding a “Welcome Home Rev. Pinkney” dinner on Saturday, July 8, at which Rev. Pinkney will speak. It will be at the St. Matthew – St. Joseph Church, 8850 Woodward Ave., Detroit, and will run from 2 to 5 p.m.

A “Welcome Home” fund has been established to help the Pinkneys get back on their feet. On line, you can go to YouCaring.com, search for “Fund for Rev. Pinkney” and click on that to make your donation. Or send a check to Moratorium Now Coalition (memo – Rev. Pinkney), 5920 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48202. □



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Juneteenth celebrated in Houston

A new page in the proud history of Houston’s African-American community was turned on June 17 when a completely new and newly named park opened on the site of what was the first public park in Texas.

The original 7-plus acres for the park — a full square city block — were originally purchased in 1872 by a group of people freed from slavery. The park served as the epicenter for Juneteenth celebrations as well as for many other community events over those 145 years.

The Juneteenth celebration commemorates the day that news of the Emancipation Proclamation reached Texas: June 19, 1865 — two-and-a-half years after it was signed — with the landing of Union troops at Galveston Island. The park was donated to the city of Houston in 1916.

The \$33 million complete redo was facilitated by donations from several foundations. The sight of new street signs on the street which the park borders further sweetened the celebration. They read “Emancipation Avenue.” The park’s name was changed from that of a Confederate military officer to the name that recent community efforts demanded.

A jubilant all-day festival was preceded by a community parade in which the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement and the Black Panther Alumni Association marched together honoring Carl Hampton, the Houston Panther leader assassinated in 1970, and called for an end to executions, whether by cop or by the state at the Huntsville death sentence facility.

— Joanne Gavin

Chicago ‘Stop raids and deportations’

Hundreds of activists marched and rallied outside Chicago City Hall on June 15 to demand the mayor and city council amend Chicago’s Welcoming City Ordinance — which makes it a sanctuary city — to eliminate “carve-outs” allowing Immigration and Customs Enforcement to continue its abusive and devastating raids and deportations of immigrants and migrants. Speakers from

organizations representing Latinx, Asian, Arab and African-American communities described the terror felt by the victims and their families of these raids and urged continuing street actions until the current ordinance is strengthened and ICE is banned from Chicago.

— Report and photo by Jeff Sorel



NYC tenants: ‘We want affordable housing!’



Public housing tenants in New York City gathered on Wall Street on June 12 after hearing that new Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson was to address the Stock Exchange there. East Harlem’s Community Voices Heard mobilized housing and community groups for the rally against Carson, who has said, “Poverty is a state of mind.”

The protesters, mostly from Black and other oppressed nations, suggested that Carson spend the day in their projects instead of with stockbrokers. Some asked if he knew that 600,000 people live in New York City Housing Authority apartments, which encompass 178,000 units. The average household income is \$23,500, and there is a long waiting list for such affordable housing.

Instead of adding more needed apartments, HUD and NYCHA plan to allow pri-

vate developers to build private homes on government-owned property, which will then belong to the developers. In reality, the public housing safety net is being torn down.

At the Wall Street rally, helmeted police on motorcycles suddenly made the demonstrators move aside for government cars bringing Carson and his entourage to mingle with stockbrokers and other millionaires. Instead of intimidating the community leaders and other activists, the police and government security emboldened them further. They chanted, “Ben Carson, can’t you see? All these cuts are killing me!”

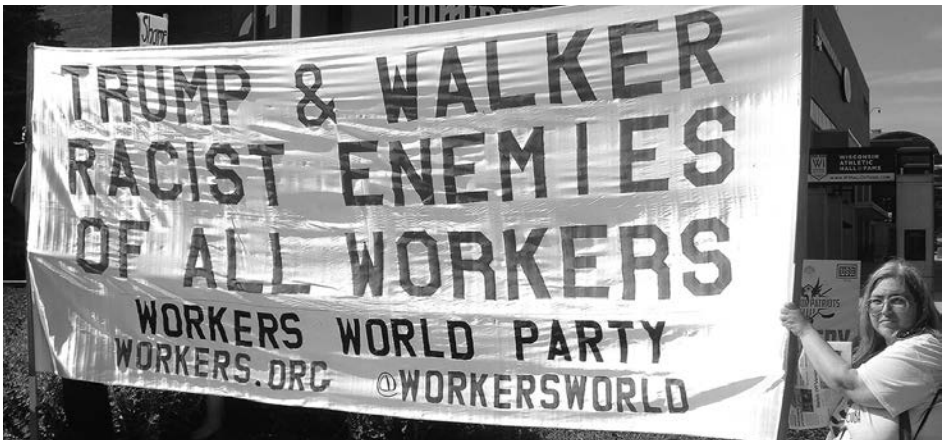
The next rally for affordable public housing will be in Harlem on June 24. Remember the strength of the Civil Rights’ song: “We Shall Not Be Moved!” Support affordable housing!

— Report and photo by Anne Pruden

Wisconsin Workers protest Walker-Trump duo

Dozens of angry protesters joined a demonstration against Donald Trump and Scott Walker in Milwaukee on June 13. Sponsored by Fight For \$15 Wisconsin, the “Low-Wage Walker” protest included members from a diverse variety of organizations including the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association, the

American Federation of Teachers, Service Employees, Amalgamated Transit Local 998, other unions and worker organizations, community organizations and political groups such as Workers World Party. Donald Trump came to Wisconsin on June 13 to “tour” the Waukesha Technical College and then to be a speaker at



a fundraiser at the local Hyatt hotel for Scott Walker’s third gubernatorial campaign. Both racist, anti-worker politicians were protected by Milwaukee cops and sheriffs and other repressive state

forces, but this didn’t stop protesters from engaging in an hours’ long militant protest.

— Report and photo by WW Wisconsin Bureau

Hundreds of Iraqis in U.S. rounded up for deportation

By Joe Mshahwar
Detroit

A fresh wave of state terror against the Iraqi community began on June 11 in Michigan. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, targeting primarily Iraqi Christians called Chaldeans, began kidnapping people from their homes, restaurants, gathering places in the Iraqi community and even churches!

This situation has proceeded unhindered, as 1,444 Iraqi people are on an ICE list with final orders for removal. Their fate is to be kidnapped and deported to a country destroyed by ongoing war.

There is an important context for these deportations: Iraq has not accepted peo-

ple deported from the United States for the last seven years. Recently, Washington squeezed the Iraqi government into accepting deportations by offering to take the occupied country off Trump’s “Muslim Ban” list. This is a list of countries that should really be referred to as “victims of imperialism.”

Washington’s arm twisting makes the current attack on the Iraqi diaspora an unprecedented event, leaving the door open for a serious resistance effort and the exposure of U.S. hypocrisy.

Many families with members facing deportation are struggling to find legal assistance. Many are joining an American Civil Liberties Union lawsuit against the deportations. The ACLU is suing on

the basis that it is against U.S. law and international treaties to send someone to a place where they are likely to be violently persecuted. The suit goes before a judge on June 21, although a ruling may be delayed. A demonstration will take place outside the Detroit federal court building located at 321 W. Lafayette at 12 p.m. that day.

Even if the suit is successful, it will not guarantee that those represented will be able to stay in the U.S. It only buys time for people to build their cases.

Kary Moss, executive director for the ACLU of Michigan, said in a statement released June 15: “We are hoping that the courts will recognize the extreme danger that deportation to Iraq would pose for

these individuals. Our immigration policy shouldn’t amount to a death sentence for anyone.”

Why would deportation amount to a death sentence? This answer lies in the reason many of these Iraqi people live in the U.S. today. Since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire following World War I, Western colonial powers have worked hard to dominate the entire Middle-East-North-Africa (MENA) region by any means necessary, often using destructive and genocidal tactics.

U.S. targeted Iraq

Iraq specifically has been targeted with some of the greatest horrors of the

Continued on page 11

Detroiters condemn racist hate crime

By Koba Wright
Detroit

Activists rallied in Detroit’s busy Eastern Market on Saturday morning, June 17, to condemn the attempted murder of a homeless Black man in broad daylight by white supremacist thugs. Members of Workers World Party and the Michigan Peoples Defense Network called the action to condemn the heinous hate crime.

On June 1, three racists attacked Randolph Davison as he was sitting outside a mental health treatment center in the historic Eastern Market commercial district of Detroit. The attackers shouted the n-word and repeatedly stabbed and slashed Davison with a knife.

Local corporate media described the attack as a “jumping” in which Davison was supposedly stabbed in the leg. However, Davison revealed multiple gashes across his chest at a June 13 press conference held to announce the rally.

Organizers say the attack was a hate crime of attempted murder and should



WW PHOTO: KOBA WRIGHT

Black men in New York and Maryland, as well as the murder of two bystanders who intervened against a white supremacist in Oregon.

Activists gathered at the corner of Russell and Wilkins streets in Eastern Market and distributed leaflets condemning the attack on Davison. Speakers analyzed the attack in the context of the gentrification of the Eastern Market area.

Under the guise of Detroit’s “revitalization,” the Detroit city government and the wealthy developers that control the city have used Eastern Market, one of the largest farmer’s markets in the U.S., as a tourist attraction for whites coming from the well-off Detroit suburbs and elsewhere.

Speakers and protesters said that a hate crime as brazen as Davison’s attempted murder could only have hap-

pened in an environment in which racists feel emboldened. Gentrification, along with the racist green light coming from the U.S. president and his cabinet, have provided that environment in Detroit, a majority-African-American city.

Activists also contrasted the police response to the attack to the fast arrests of graffiti artists in gentrified areas of Detroit, who are quickly identified via video surveillance and charged.

Following the rally, protesters marched down the main thoroughfare of Eastern Market, disrupting the shopping and brunches of market goers and chanting anti-racist messages as well as “Justice for Randolph!” Several passersby joined the march.

Detroit police harassed the marchers, at first falsely claiming protesters had no right to assemble on a public sidewalk and then denying that the hate crime ever took place.

Several pro-choice clinic escorts also joined WWP and MPDN members at the action. □

North Carolina

Protest counteracts anti-Muslim hate

By Meghan Watts
Raleigh, N.C.

On June 10, ACT for America held Islamophobic “anti-sharia” marches in more than two dozen cities across the country, including one staged at the state Capitol building in Raleigh, N.C.

ACT, categorized as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, has grown since its inception in 2007 to the largest grassroots anti-Muslim group in the U.S. ACT founder Brigitte Gabriel has stated that a practicing Muslim “cannot be a loyal citizen to the United States of America.” (tinyurl.com/j6nhd45)

ACT and groups like it are promoting an “anti-sharia movement” that is nothing more than a thinly veiled cover for white supremacy and Islamophobia. ACT’s campaign has gained legislative power and propagated hate violence, like the recent white supremacist murder in Portland, Ore., of two people defending two young Muslim women.

The planning of the Raleigh counter protest, United Against Islamophobia and Racism, was heavily influenced by the current climate and the timing of the anti-Muslim rally during the holy month

of Ramadan.

A call for action was first coordinated via Facebook and then turned over to Muslims for Social Justice and the Movement to End Racism and Islamophobia to ensure that the voices of those directly affected were heard. MSJ and MERI were joined by Electrical Workers Local 150 — N.C. Public Service Worker Union, Comité de Acción Popular, the Triangle People’s Assembly, Workers World Party, International Workers of the World and others in organizing to oppose the ACT rally.

The anti-Islamophobia/anti-war working group, along with MSJ, had previously hosted a few “know your rights” clinics at local mosques as trainings on how to look out for FBI and police repression. Members of the TPA also did outreach for the action by leafleting at Arab stores and at iftar at local mosques, to build mass support among the Muslim community.

The June 10 racist, anti-Islam rally drew around 75 people, many of whom claimed to be marching against “radical Islam” and for “human rights” under the pretense of “protecting women.”

Fatema Ahmad, member of MSJ and an organizer of the counterprotest, re-



March against racism and Islamophobia, June 10.

sponded: “They’re not out here to protect everybody. It is a mostly white group and it’s only about protecting white people against a supposed threat from us. There’s no threat here, and we are actually fighting for our rights to live here safely and in [the] community.”

The counter protesters vastly outnumbered the ACT bigots. More than 250 people gathered in solidarity in Raleigh at the Legislative Mall to hear speakers, predominantly comprised of women of color, and then march to the Capitol to

stage a noise protest aimed at drowning out the ACT speakers.

After the rally, the entire contingent of counter protesters, many of whom were Muslim families, joined in the march and directly confronted the racists. The United Against Islamophobia and Racism demonstration ended in great success and with no harm to that contingent.

Battling Islamophobia, racism and other oppressions is imperative. And this action is a reminder that all struggles must be linked. □

Pride forum hits capitalism

BOSTON

By WW Boston Bureau

The Action Center in the Boston neighborhood of Jamaica Plain was packed June 16 for Stonewall Warriors and Workers World Party's LGBTQIA Pride forum on "Capitalism, Racism, LGBTQIA Oppression and the Class Struggle."

The forum was a follow-up to and celebration of the historic Stonewall Warriors Queer and Trans PoC Liberation, Anti-Capitalist Contingent in Boston's LGBTQIA Pride demonstration on June 10. (Workers World, June 14, tinyurl.com/yalc8fl8)

The forum opened with a report by Christine Allsopp on the reopening of the Sexual Minorities Archive in Holyoke, Mass., with the dedication of the Sylvia Rivera Room and the Leslie Feinberg Library. A video was shown of WWP member Minnie Bruce Pratt reading a poem in memory of Feinberg, who was her spouse. Several participants spoke of the impact of becoming aware of key LGBTQIA history for the first time at the SMA dedication. (Workers World, June 7, tinyurl.com/y74ech54)

Nate Heathman followed, with a moving tribute to Black and other trans women of color murdered in the last two years. He led the group in saying the names of these many trans women.

Diva T. Williams gave the main report, followed by discussion, on the historic Stonewall Warriors Queer and Trans PoC Liberation, Anti-Capitalist Contingent in Boston's LGBTQIA Pride demonstration. Williams' report included video footage from both the main contingent and from the direct action at the front of the march, which lifted up the names and images of Black and other trans women of color killed in 2017. It also highlighted the coordinated demands to rid the annual parade of big-bank sponsorship, police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement presence, and return Pride to the protest spirit of the historic Stonewall Rebellion.

Two direct-action participants attested to how empowering the actions were. Williams concluded her report with a proposal to organize an expanded effort to bring this revolutionary spirit to the entire march in 2018.

The forum ended with a review by Frank Neisser of the origins of the oppression of LGBTQIA people, the overthrow of the patriarchy and the subsequent division of society into classes, as explained in two books by Workers World Party comrades: Bob McCubbin's "The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression, a Marxist View" and Leslie Feinberg's "Transgender Warriors." □



Boston Pride forum, June 16.

DETROIT:



WW PHOTO: JAMIE SMEDLEY

'Queer Liberation and Socialism'

Following on the heels of Motor City Pride, Workers World Party in Detroit held a public forum June 17 on "Queer Liberation and Socialism." Speakers went over the history of the LGBTQ struggle; how colonialism and imperialism impact queer oppression; the history and gains of

LGBTQ liberation in socialist Cuba; and a retrospective on a year of struggle since the Pulse tragedy last June 12, including the fight to overturn the transphobic "bathroom law" in North Carolina. After the speakers' presentations, a lively discussion on queer liberation took place, with many

attendees providing further insights and dropping more knowledge on the audience.

Pictured here from the left are speakers Mond Jones, Martha Grevatt, Cosmo Angelopoulos and L.T. Pham, and chair Kayla Pauli.

— Kris Balderas Hamel

Come out for Pride!

COME OUT FOR WORKERS WORLD!

June is Pride month, with rallies and marches all over the world commemorating the 48th anniversary of the historic Stonewall Rebellion. Workers World has a proud history of reporting on and participating in the living struggle for LGBTQ justice and equality. In the forefront these days is fighting for trans and gender nonconforming people, like making sure youth and adults can use the public bathrooms of their choice and ending the increased violent attacks on and murders of trans women of color.

Workers World made an early and vital theoretical contribution to the LGBTQ struggle with publication of WW contributor and staff member Bob McCub-

bin's 1976 book, "Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View" (World View Forum, third ed., 1993). Drawing on Frederick Engels and Dorothy Ballan to provide a dialectical materialist explanation of LGBTQ oppression, McCubbin shows how early communal societies accepted all forms of human interrelations. But after the development of surpluses and then male supremacy, rigid rules governing gender and sexuality became the norm. That's what we're fighting to end today.

That analysis drives Workers World's view that the LGBTQ struggle is a vital component in the overall struggle to end capitalist oppression. So if you want to

fight for the liberation of LGBTQ people, it's time to join the struggle against capitalist exploitation and help build Workers World newspaper.

We invite you to join the WW Supporter Program, set up 40 years ago to help us publish anti-racist, anti-sexist, pro-LGBTQ, working-class truth, and to build the many campaigns needed to crush capitalism and usher in socialism. Write checks to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or donate online at workers.org/donate/. We are grateful for your help in building the revolutionary press in the U.S. □

WORKERS WORLD PARTY ✧ st

Defend, disrupt, n

PRIDE MEANS

Continued from page 1

the vanguard against state violence, capitalism, racism and more.

Pride celebrations have grown in number across the U.S. and world in the past several decades. In most cities, it is the one time of year when LGBTQ people are able to gather and explicitly say "No!" to closets, to hiding and to anti-LGBTQ bigotry. In more recent years, unfortunately, Pride has also become the ground for corporate propaganda and co-optation by major banks like Wells Fargo and Bank of America. These corporations flaunt support for LGBTQ "equality" but ultimately are only using LGBTQ people to further their anti-poor and anti-worker practices that leave all working-class people either homeless, displaced, unemployed or further pushed to the margins of society.

But on the night of Stonewall, Sylvia, Marsha and countless others picked the side of history that made LGBTQ people synonymous with anti-police and anti-capitalist fightback. LGBTQ people today, particularly those of color, are not letting the pinkwashing and corporatization of Pride happen in silence.

'Corporate scum don't give a damn'

At this year's Pride parade in Washington, D.C., a group of queer and trans people of color staged a disruption under the banner of #NoJusticeNoPride. Demonstrators that day were chanting, "Capital Pride is a sham, corporate scum don't give a damn!" Those who organized the disruption wanted to bring attention to the ways Pride has been co-opted to cater more to police and corporate sponsors than to the community that made Pride happen for the first time nearly 50 years ago.

In Columbus, Ohio, four #BlackLivesMatter organizers were arrested at a Pride



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

Statement reclaim: S SOLIDARITY

parade for staging a similar disruption to intervene in the corporatization of Pride.

We are facing a time of tremendous possibility, challenges and contradictions. The Trump administration’s blatant attacks — on immigrants, women, people with disabilities and others in the working class — are fanning the flames of white supremacist vigilantes of all stripes. This bigoted campaign is winning over isolated sectors of our class to fight against their best interest while promoting divide-and-conquer strategies that pit marginalized communities against each other.

The “anti-sharia law” protests on June 10 across the U.S. were called by a reactionary white gay Republican who claimed the action was organized in the interest of “protecting women and LGBTQ people.” Pride goes in Columbus, Ohio, were captured in photos cheering the police on as they arrested the four Black LGBTQ people resisting racism and corporate injustice.

We must wrestle with these internal contradictions and lift up the leadership of LGBTQ working-class people, especially those who live at the intersections of multiple oppressions.

We must learn and remember that we are not each other’s enemies. Our enemies are the capitalist state and its corporate cronies who exploit LGBTQ people for profit, that prop up false narratives about who LGBTQ people are and what we stand for, and that have turned Pride into a publicity stunt to cover up their crimes against working people.

‘Our Pride means socialist revolution’

Now more than ever we are called to use Pride as a site of struggle against the capitalist state. But in order for this to be possible, we must be ready to defend, disrupt and reclaim Pride for all of us.

A Southern trans worker on how to end poverty

By Devin Cole

To be honest, looking back now, working in fast food like I used to wasn’t the problem itself. I’ve been thinking about this a lot, especially since graduating college.

I didn’t mind flipping burgers or making processed scrambled eggs or whatever I was doing. None of the work itself bothered me, besides the fact that I was providing a basic human right — food — that people had to pay for. But that’s a story for another day.

What bothered me about working in fast food, and also in retail, is the overarching issue that I was being exploited and underpaid. I was giving so much of my labor, strength and time to a system that didn’t even pay me enough to get by.

People say, “You should be grateful you even have a job!” But is it really any better if you still can’t pay the bills on time? What is the difference between being unemployed and in poverty, and making \$120 a week and still being in poverty? That money dries up fast. You can’t save up anything when you bring in maybe \$500 a month, and you’ve got the rent and

the utilities and the groceries and the car (if you’re even lucky enough to have one).

Working at McDonald’s was basically like being unemployed, in that respect. And many people treat fast food workers horribly. Many customers think they’re entitled to bad behavior because you serve them. They’re condescending, rude, demeaning, and that is also what is exhausting.

Our society teaches that blue- and pink-collar jobs are to be looked down on. We hear as children: “You don’t want to be a garbage truck driver, do you?” or “Go to college or you’ll be flipping burgers for the rest of your life!” Those jobs are seen as unfortunate stepping stones or a negative consequence of a bad upbringing.

But there’s nothing wrong with working these jobs except the way that they and the people who work in those jobs are represented.

The other issue I had working in food service was the homophobia. That was also exhausting. At the time, I knew better than to come out to my co-workers as transgender. But due to the grave error I made in trusting my manager with my

being gay, my co-workers found out and tormented me about that.

The manager was eventually let go, and a new manager came in who fired the most homophobic co-worker I had to deal with. But that wasn’t enough. The harassment continued, and I quit eventually because of it.

My experience is a stark reminder of how workers, no matter our race, sexual orientation, gender, dis/ability, citizen status, etc., have to stick together, because our labor is being exploited. We are all being exploited.

Busting our asses for \$8.05 an hour was and is unacceptable. If we want better, then we have to come to understand and support one another’s lives and identities. That is the only way.

Devin Cole is president of Pensacola STRIVE (Social Trans Initiative) and director of operations for the Florida Transgender Alliance. They most recently organized a Pensacola “Welcome Home” rally in honor of recently freed trans activist Chelsea Manning and Puerto Rican national hero Oscar López Rivera.



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

A queer and trans people of color contingent stopped the June 13 Boston Pride Parade of 25,000 for an 11-minute sit-in to bring awareness to the continued deaths and oppression of trans women of color and LGBTQ communities of color.

We must resist the lure of corporate flags and empty promises by the state to keep LGBTQ people safe. That promise was false 50 years ago and is still a lie today as the epidemic of violence against trans women of color goes on, as LGBTQ youth continue to struggle with homelessness, and as queer and trans people battle addictions that go unresolved by a failing, profit-driven health care system.

LGBTQ people are our own heroes. The working class has the utmost potential to wage revolution in this society in part because of our ability to build class unity and solidarity.

One year ago we lost 49 LGBTQ kindred to a bigoted shooter at the Pulse night club in Orlando, Fla. We remember and mourn the lives stolen, and we re-

member our firm solidarity with LGBTQ Muslims and against anti-Muslim and islamophobic bigotry. We remember in the wake of HB2 in North Carolina how LGBTQ youth of color refused to be divided and stood firm in solidarity with workers who were also under attack. We remember that Black Lives Matter organizing across the U.S. and the globe is led by LGBTQ women and people of color.

Since before the Stonewall Rebellion, Workers World Party has been in the struggle to defend LGBTQ people against patriarchy and anti-LGBTQ bigotry. For the past several decades, from the AIDS epidemic to solidarity with Cuba and the Black Lives Matter movement, WWP has been in the streets raising the banner of LGBTQ liberation across all struggles.

We raise our fists in solidarity with all LGBTQ people who continue to bring to Pride its original and true revolutionary fighting spirit.

Solidarity with all LGBTQ people for whom Pride is a safe haven and refuge! Solidarity with all LGBTQ people for whom Pride is a site of struggle, victory and celebration!

We continue to fight for Pride, for our Pride means Black Lives Matter; Indigenous sovereignty; a free Palestine; U.S. out of Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and Africa; and housing, health care and jobs at livable wages for trans women of color, young people and all workers and oppressed people.

Our Pride means socialist revolution and a world where all of us can be free. □

U.S. vet fights for Donetsk People’s Republic

By Mike Kuhlenbeck

Russell Bonner Bentley was born in the United States and is now an “Information Warrior” for the Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR), which declared its independence from Ukraine in 2014. This former U.S. soldier went there to fight against fascism in Ukraine and around the world.

Back in the 1990s when he was in the states, Bentley spent much of his adult life fighting for justice, including the struggle to free U.S. political prisoners Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu-Jamal, both of whom he called “great men and true American heroes.”

Although he describes himself as a poet by nature, Bentley left the U.S. in 2014 to join the Essence of Time (EOT) unit in the newly independent Donetsk, which was being attacked by the Ukrainian army, including many openly fascist units. Bentley served as a rifleman and RPG gunner on the frontlines at the Donetsk airport and the village of Spartak.

The DPR and the Lugansk People’s Republic (LPR), which also broke away from Ukraine three years ago, formed a federation called Novorossiya. Bentley’s call sign in the army of Novorossiya is “Texac,” which is Russian for “Texas.”

In addition to being a DPR soldier, Bentley is a war correspondent combatting the lies of the U.S. government and the European Union, both of which have supported the Ukrainian government. Bentley has made scores of videos and penned numerous articles on the situa-



tion, otherwise largely ignored or distorted in the country of his birth.

“There has been very little accurate reporting about this war and the people of Donbass by Western mainstream media,” Bentley has written, “but I have done my part to get the real story out, to people in the West, and to the world.”

There are over 100,000 soldiers on the side of the Ukrainian government, including mercenaries backed by the U.S. and the European Union. According to Bentley, “The Novorossian Armed Forces (NAF) facing them have less than 30,000 defenders on the front at any given time, and about 20,000 ready reserves on bases in the rear. We also have about 30,000 civilian reserves who are former soldiers and volunteers who can be called up in less than 48 hours.”

Fascists massacred workers in Odessa

This May 2 marked the third anniversary of a massacre at the House of Trade

Unions in Odessa, in southern Ukraine. Dozens of civilians were forced into the building by fascists in the Ukrainian Pravy Sektor (Right Sector Party), who then set the structure ablaze. Over 40 people were killed, many of their bodies unrecognizable. To this day none of the perpetrators have been brought to justice.

U.S. media outlets downplayed the massacre, calling the incident “a fire” in headlines as opposed to what it was: fascist murder. Bentley was in Rostov, Russia, on the anniversary of this tragedy. The occasion was a solemn one, and was observed in the DPR, the LPR and Russia.

“We do not forget this horrendous crime, and we will bring the murderers to justice,” Bentley said. “For myself and most people here, May 2, 2014, was the day Ukraine died and the day the U.S.-backed Kiev [Nazis] showed their true colors.”

Ukraine was formerly part of the Soviet Union, and before that, Russia. It was occupied by Nazi troops during World War II, who killed nearly 4 million people.

Aid for victims of today’s war

Bentley also works with Donbass Human Aid and Spendenaktionen für Novorossia, as well as EOT, on bringing humanitarian aid for young orphans, wounded soldiers and others ravaged by the perils of war. Together, they have brought medicine, food, clothing and

other necessities to those most in need.

Bentley told WW: “The current military situation is very tense all along the Donbass front. The only people who say it is quiet there now are people who are not there.”

Bentley is writing a memoir about his journey from the U.S. to Donbass, primarily covering his six months with the EOT. The book is about halfway finished and will be called “Lucky Man,” a title reflective of Bentley’s feelings about his new mission in life. Working from a journal he kept at the frontlines, he describes the book as being a “human story” as opposed to a “war story.” Bentley is raising money to help edit and publish his “testament to history and redemption” in paperback, as well as in e-book format, and plans to narrate an audio version.

“The money raised from this book will fund further human aid and journalistic projects. I would also like to write my full biography at some point in the future. My life before I came to Donbass was also pretty interesting and unusual.”

On April 13, he was honored with citizenship and a DPR passport, which he called one of the proudest moments of his life and being like “my birthday.”

“We are seriously outmanned and outgunned,” Bentley said. “But our homes and families are behind us, and we are highly motivated by this and the fact that our cause is just.”

For more information about how to contribute to these efforts, visit Bentley’s website at www.russelltexasbentley.com or visit tinyurl.com/ybadudrn. □

Inferno survivors demand justice

Continued from page 1

for “corporate manslaughter” and “criminal negligence” charges to be brought against those responsible for this catastrophe, especially since fingers are being pointed at them.

Angry residents and their supporters marched June 16 through the Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall, chanting, “We want justice!” for the fire victims’ families and survivors. They demanded to meet with officials. Hundreds of protesters gathered outside. Socialist Workers’ signs read: “Tories have blood on their hands! Justice for Grenfell!”

Demonstrators also marched on Whitehall, site of government buildings in central London, chanting, “No justice, no peace!” A sit-in took place on Oxford Street, and a candlelight vigil was held in memory of those who died.

Protesters are demanding the council’s commitment to house everyone dislocated by the fire in the borough; release of funds to cover victims’ losses; investigations into the tower’s renovation and into all like buildings in the borough to identify and correct safety risks; and release of all victims’ names.

Illustrating the breadth of solidarity with the residents, by June 19, nearly 200,000 people had signed a petition promoted by the internet-based organization 38 Degrees calling on “the government to improve fire safety in tower blocks to make sure the tragedy in Grenfell Tower is never repeated.” (tinyurl.com/yalkot8f)

Prime Minister May was booed when she went to the site of the fire. After much criticism and pressure and with protests getting louder, May finally met with survivors on June 17. She agreed to allocate \$6,156 to each household rendered homeless by the fire — but it’s a pittance, given what residents have lost and how expensive housing costs are.



Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn and other Labour MPs called for taking possession of uninhabited houses in the wealthy Kensington neighborhood to provide shelter for those rendered homeless by the fire. Corbyn said it is not acceptable that luxury apartments are empty while people go homeless. (Guardian, June 15)

The demand to seize luxury housing for those newly homeless is timely. It exposes class inequality, can be embraced by various political forces, and moves the struggle forward to gain some justice for the Grenfell Tower survivors.

Tenants’ warnings of ‘firetrap’ ignored

A key question arises: Was this fire avoidable, or was there deliberate neglect of a multinational residence, which housed hundreds of low-income and oppressed workers and their families in the midst of luxury townhouses in a wealthy area? Some residents suspected managers were allowing the building to decay to make way for new housing for the wealthy on this prime land. That is no idle concern as politicians push for demolishing public housing, especially in London.

Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organization operates Grenfell Tower, which was constructed in 1974, and other public housing properties in the borough, for the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council, which owns them.

Grenfell Tower tenants had asserted for years that the building was a “fire-

trap,” citing problems starting in 2004. Neither the government nor the managing company responded; residents’ complaints were ignored. So were calls by fire and rescue services and coroners for government-mandated installation of life-saving sprinklers in high-rise residences, even after firefighters had died in a similar building fire.

Laura Murray, whose family lived in Grenfell Tower, told of past fire hazard complaints. “But the council doesn’t consider the working class and immigrants in the same way which it does the rich, which is unacceptable in one of the world’s richest countries.” (New York Times, June 17)

The Grenfell Action Group, which represents building residents, warned of the fire dangers and years of neglect of tenants’ health and safety to the council. In 2016, the council paid \$10.9 million for a major renovation, but tenants asserted that it turned the building into even more of a firetrap. They told of intimidation by the landlord and contractors and of collusion with the local council to ignore tenants’ concerns. At a June 2016 council meeting, they stated that 90 percent of residents disliked the renovations and 68 percent reported being lied to or harassed by the management company. (Guardian, June 17)

Cladding and contempt

Refurbishing included installing a cheap building covering — cladding. Safety experts warned years earlier that the type of cladding used on Grenfell Tower endangered residents’ lives’ as it could propel a fire upwards and spread it vertically to quickly surround a building. Made of plastic and aluminum, it is cheaper than safer steel or concrete — but is used worldwide.

Arconic, a U.S. company subsidiary, makes this cladding. Costlier materials are more fire resistant, but a lower-priced

product was used at Grenfell. It’s even banned as unsafe in the U.S. for use on high buildings.

David Sibert, fire safety advisor, said that the cladding “certainly did play a part” in the Grenfell Tower fire, and that the “cost to install the fire-resistant product would have been as little as \$5,600.” (!) (Guardian, June 17) Cutting expenses by this meager amount cost lives. That’s capitalist greed at its core — as well as racism and elitist contempt for workers and poor people.

Use of the unsafe cladding caused a huge conflagration in Dubai in 2016, destroying a 72-story hotel, and has triggered terrible fires in the Middle East, France, Turkey, Australia and even in Liverpool, England.

Housing construction rules in Britain were weakened after 1986 when Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was slashing workers’ rights; materials used on outer walls did not have to be non-combustible. This let builders use dangerous cladding despite fire department opposition. Former Fire Chief Ronnie King said, “Urgent requests for meetings with ministers and actions to tighten rules were stonewalled.” (Guardian, June 17) Conservative politicians let housing regulations slide and cut funding to local councils.

The Grenfell tenants’ group accused management of not providing fire safety instructions, only telling tenants to stay in their apartments if a fire occurred. Victims’ relatives ask if tenants were told to remain in their apartments for too long as the fire engulfed the building — and if this policy factored into the number of casualties in the Grenfell catastrophe.

Safe public housing should be constructed and provided for all who need it in Britain, one of the world’s wealthiest countries. □

Cuba replies to U.S.

‘Steps to change our system are doomed to failure’

Statement by the Cuban revolutionary government in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's June 16 announcement that he was unilaterally reversing some of the steps taken by the last administration to improve relations.

Havana, June 16. Any strategy aimed at changing the political, economic and social system in Cuba, whether it seeks to achieve it through pressures and impositions, or by using more subtle methods, will be doomed to failure.

On June 16, 2017, the president of the United States, Donald Trump, in a speech full of hostile rhetoric, which recalled the times of the open confrontation with our country, pronounced in a Miami theater, announced the policy of his government to Cuba that reverses progress achieved in the last two years, after the Presidents Raúl Castro Ruz and Barack Obama on Dec. 17, 2014 announced the decision to re-establish diplomatic relations and begin a process towards the normalization of bilateral ties.

In what constitutes a setback in relations between the two countries, Trump made a speech and signed in the same meeting a policy directive called “Presidential Memorandum of National Security on Strengthening U.S. Policy towards Cuba,” in which is established the elimination of individual “people-to-people” educational exchanges and a greater oversight of U.S. travelers to Cuba, as well as the prohibition of the economic, commercial and financial transactions of U.S. companies with Cuban companies linked to the Revolutionary Armed Forces and intelligence and security services, all with the aim of depriving us of incomes.

The U.S. president justified this policy with alleged concerns about the human rights situation in Cuba and the need to rigorously apply the laws of the blockade, conditioning its lifting, as well as any improvement in bilateral relations, for our country to make changes inherent in its constitutional order.

Trump also repealed the presidential policy directive “Normalization of U.S.-Cuba Relations,” issued by President [Barack] Obama on Oct. 14, 2016, which, while not obscuring the intrusive nature of U.S. policy, nor the goal of advancing its interests in the pursuit of changes in the economic, political and social order of our country, had recognized the independence, sovereignty and self-determination of Cuba and the Cuban government as a legitimate and equal interlocutor, as well as the benefits it would bring to both countries and peoples, a relationship of civilized coexistence within the great differences that exist between the two governments. He also admitted that the blockade was an obsolete policy and should be eliminated.

Again, the United States government resorted to coercive methods of the past, adopting measures to intensify the blockade, in force since February 1962, which not only causes damage and deprivation to the Cuban people and constitutes an undeniable obstacle to the development of our economy, but also affects the sovereignty and interests of other countries, inciting international rejection.

Measures impose additional obstacles

The announced measures impose additional obstacles to the very restricted opportunities that the U.S. business sec-

tor had to trade and invest in Cuba.

In turn, they further restrict the right of U.S. citizens to visit our country, already limited by the obligation to use discriminatory licenses, at a time when the United States Congress, as a reflection of the broad sectors of that society, calls not only for an end to the travel ban, but also for the lifting of restrictions on trade with Cuba.

President Trump's announcements contradict the majority support of [U.S.] American public opinion, including that of Cuban emigration in that country, to the total lifting of the blockade and the normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States.

Instead, the U.S. president, again badly advised, makes decisions that favor the political interests of an extremist minority of Cuban origin in the state of Florida, who for petty reasons do not give up their claim to punish Cuba and its people for exercising the legitimate and sovereign right to be free and to have taken the reins of their own destiny.

Later we will do a more thorough analysis of the scope and implications of this announcement.

The Cuban government denounces the new measures to tighten the blockade, which are destined to fail as has been repeatedly demonstrated in the past, and which will not achieve their purpose of weakening the Revolution or bending the Cuban people, whose resistance to aggressions of any type and origin has been proven over almost six decades.

The government of Cuba rejects this manipulation for political purposes and double standards in the treatment of human rights issues. The Cuban people enjoy fundamental rights and freedoms, and exhibit achievements of which they are proud and are a chimera for many countries in the world, including the United States itself, such as the right to health, education, social security, equal pay for equal work, children's rights, and the right to food, peace and development.

Cuba contributed to human rights worldwide

With its modest resources, Cuba has also contributed to the improvement of human rights in many parts of the world, despite the limitations imposed by its status as a blockaded country.

The United States is not in a position to give us lessons. We have serious concerns about the respect and guarantees of human rights in that country, where there are numerous cases of murders, brutality and police abuses, particularly against the African-American population; the right to life is violated as a result of gun deaths; child labor is being exploited and there are serious manifestations of racial discrimination; there are threats to impose more restrictions on health services, which would leave 23 million people without health insurance; there is wage inequality between men and women; migrants and refugees are marginalized, particularly those from Islamic countries; there is an intent to erect walls that denigrate neighbors; and the government is abandoning international commitments to preserve the environment and address climate change.

Human rights violations committed by the United States in other countries, such as the arbitrary detention of dozens of prisoners in the territory illegally oc-

cupied by the Guantánamo Naval Base in Cuba, where they have even been tortured, are also a matter of concern; extrajudicial executions and the deaths of civilians caused by bombs and the use of drones; and the wars unleashed against various countries like Iraq, based on lies about the possession of weapons of mass destruction, with dire consequences for the peace, security and stability of the Middle East region.

We recall that Cuba is a state party to 44 international instruments on human rights, while the United States is party to only 18, so we have much to show, speak up about and defend.

In confirming the decision to re-establish diplomatic relations, Cuba and the United States ratified their intention to develop respectful and cooperative ties between the two peoples and governments, based on the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In its declaration, issued on July 1, 2015, the Cuban revolutionary government reaffirmed that “these relations must be based on absolute respect for our independence and sovereignty; the inalienable right of every state to choose its political, economic, social and cultural system, without interference in any way; and sovereign equality and reciprocity, which are inalienable principles of international law,” as endorsed by the Latin American and Caribbean Proclamation as a zone of peace, signed by the heads of state and government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), at its II Sum-

mit, in Havana.

Cuba has not renounced these principles and will never give up.

The government of Cuba reiterates its willingness to continue respectful dialogue and cooperation on issues of mutual interest, as well as the negotiation of pending bilateral issues with the United States government. In the last two years, it has been demonstrated that the two countries, as the President of the Councils of State and Ministers, General of the Army Raúl Castro Ruz, has repeatedly expressed, can cooperate and co-exist civilly, respecting differences and promoting everything that benefits both nations and peoples, but it should not be expected that Cuba will make concessions inherent in its sovereignty and independence, nor will it accept any kind of conditionality.

Any strategy aimed at changing the political, economic and social system in Cuba, whether it seeks to achieve it through pressures and impositions, or using more subtle methods, will be doomed to failure.

The changes that are necessary in Cuba, such as those made since 1959 and those that we are undertaking now as part of the process of updating our economic and social model, will continue to be decided sovereignly by the Cuban people.

As we have done since the triumph of Jan. 1, 1959, we will assume any risk and continue to be firm and secure in building a sovereign, independent, socialist, democratic, prosperous and sustainable nation. □

New York City

Solidarity with socialist Cuba



A group of people in solidarity with Cuba picketed across from Trump Tower in New York City on June 15. They called the demonstration to preempt the bigot-in-chief's Miami speech the next day attacking the socialist country.

Despite the ritzy surroundings on Fifth Avenue, many people were friendly. One Black man walking by shouted “F—k Trump!” continuously. “Travel to Cuba Yes!, Trump No!” was one of the protesters' chants.

The action was organized on short notice by Joan Gibbs and Sam Anderson and was joined by Gail Walker, executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization/Pastors for Peace, and long-time activist and educator Esperanza Martell. Workers World Party First Secretary Larry Holmes was one of several WWP members who joined the picket line.

— Stephen Millies

Anomaly in Alexandria

The shooting of Republican politicians practicing baseball on a ball field in Alexandria, Va., was an anomaly — that is, something that deviates from what is standard, normal or expected.

And what unacknowledged crimes have become standard, normal and expected? Racist cops shooting or choking unarmed people of color and getting away with it. Unknown bigots killing trans women of color and getting away with it.

Especially since the election campaign and Electoral College victory of president #45, hate crimes perpetrated against Muslims, often against immigrants mistaken for Muslims such as Sikhs and other people from South Asia, have occurred with regularity. Attacks by vigilante militias against people near the southern U.S. border whom the racists believe are from Mexico or Central America have become standard crimes.

These attacks often lead to an immediate murder. They have been taking place at the same time that another assault, more gradual but also murderous, is going on. Led by the president and the Republican Party, this assault is on the working class, especially the poorest workers, which in the United States all too often but not always means people of color.

Then, in Alexandria, Va., on June 15, there was an anomaly. The targets of the shooting were reactionary Republicans. If the reports in the corporate media are accurate, the person carrying out the shooting felt threatened by the Republicans' attacks on the poor. Police shot and killed him on the spot.

When it comes to wars abroad, both Democrats and Republicans support U.S. military adventures and support U.S. imperialism in general. Those who understand the role of imperialism know

that all these politicians are ready to kill millions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere, and maybe some thousands of U.S. soldiers, too.

Back in the U.S., a prime example of the attack on the poor is the Republican attempt to eliminate whatever was progressive about the Affordable Care Act. This assault threatens to remove the more than 20 million people from health insurance that the ACA provided.

It is not surprising that a person dealing with a serious but treatable illness could believe that the Republicans are out to kill them and that the Democrats are either complicit or at best are doing nothing to stop their death.

Taking a step back and looking at it from an objective, Marxist viewpoint, it becomes clear that the Alexandria action arises out of the current climate of growing reactionary terror in the streets, aided and abetted by the cops and the

corporate flunkies of both parties in Washington.

This climate is exacerbated by frustration when the means of organized resistance are either repressed or seem inadequate to stop the right-wing assault.

The lesson then is that revolutionaries need to get better organized, to get more militant, to find the means of mass resistance and self-defense that will make it impossible for the ruling class to continue its deadly assault on the masses. Mass action, combined with revolutionary optimism that a future of justice for the workers and oppressed can be achieved through the struggle for socialism, will be a potent antidote to the killings, cutbacks and contempt for the people shown by the capitalist ruling class and its minions. □

Deadly imperialism

By Faiquan Sells

All across the globe, the greedy hands of U.S. imperialism are outstretched, exploiting the resources of nations (mostly in the global South), via unjustified “wars on terror” or using countless U.S. military bases in countries outside of the United States.

The U.S. has over 800 military bases in over 70 countries around the world, including in Kuwait, south Korea, Aruba, Kenya, Qatar, the Philippines and Colombia, just to name a few of them, with 113 bases in Japan alone, according to military scholar David Vine, in a 2016 report. (tinyurl.com/y9tstm55)

It's likely the U.S. has more military structures overseas than any other nation or empire that has ever existed in human history, according to Vine's report. That is simply appalling, considering that the U.S. will only have existed for 241 years this coming July 4.

These bases are for invading countries and exploiting land and labor. U.S. military personnel stationed outside of the U.S., often on a completely different continent, have created and will continue to create resentment against imperialism. This resentment has turned deadly and has cost thousands of lives since the start of the new millennium alone.

The key reason that Osama bin Laden, the late leader of al-Qaida (who himself was killed by U.S. Navy Seals invading Afghanistan), wrote two fatwas, one in 1996 and one in 1998, that called on Muslims worldwide to kill U.S. Americans, is directly because of the presence of U.S. military bases in Saudi Arabia. Thus, U.S. military occupation can be blamed for the Sept. 11, 2001, destruction of the World Trade Center buildings and the loss of nearly 3,000 lives in the first place.

In the aftermath of 9/11, the late President Saddam Hussein's Iraq issued a statement charging that “the American cowboys are reaping the fruit of their crimes against humanity.” (cnn.com, Sept. 12, 2001) Hussein himself, as well as all Iraq, would be victims of the imperialist U.S. war machine within 19 months of the 9/11 attacks. President George W. Bush accused Iraq of possessing “weapons of mass destruction” and then proceeded to invade Iraq under the false premise of looking for weapons that weren't even there.

The U.S. military invading Iraq may as

well have been looking for the tooth fairy. Oh wait ... They were looking for something that actually was there: oil.

Clarifying imperialism

Just to be clear, the U.S. is not the only imperialist nation and not the only nation that exploits the resources of other countries. Also, having military bases on foreign land is not the only way for a nation to engage in imperialistic practices.

Private banks and corporations can establish themselves in foreign lands in an attempt to control a piece of those economic markets, establish monopolies in the colonized lands through the concentration of capital and production, and place themselves in a position to export profits from the stolen land.

Britain, France, Germany and Japan's ruling classes also exploit labor and extract resources from other countries, accumulating profits from the commodities produced and sold. Britain's rulers still have their greedy hands on the north of Ireland, the Bahamas and Bermuda, just to name a few places. Japan, which occupied all of Korea and a huge portion of eastern China until World War II, still exploits through its industry and banks. Germany has military personnel and military apparatuses in African nations such as Tanzania and Cameroon, and dominates the economies of much of Eastern Europe. U.S. imperialism is not alone in stealing land or dominating economies to accumulate profit.

To expand the capital that these imperialist ruling classes already have — which they have in the first place due to the workers inside their nations working their asses off to make them filthy rich — the governments of the imperialist countries and/or private companies take the following steps: they colonize land that doesn't belong to them to exploit low-wage labor; they gain access to new, foreign economic markets; they influence if not outright control the foreign governments; they influence the religious preferences of the Indigenous people; and with blatant racism they impose the belief that the colonizing peoples are superior to the ones they are colonizing.

Not surprisingly, the previously mentioned imperialist nations support each other in exploiting their victims. An example: When 9/11 happened, the govern-

ments of Germany, France, Britain and Japan all supported the U.S. “war on terror” and invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Though France and Germany refused to join the 2003 U.S.-British invasion of Iraq, they later aided Iraq's occupation.

France continues to exploit African nations while the U.S. and Great Britain

compete for their own share of the spoils. All of these imperialist ruling classes turn their back on the workers, who toil for shit wages under dangerous, even fatal conditions. Imperialism is deadly; it is greedy and cruel by design; it is something that a socialist revolution will have to eradicate from the face of the Earth. □

Fracking Colorado, Part 1

Impact on environment and people

By Viviana Weinstein
Denver

More and more towns all over Colorado are being affected by the negative impacts of fracking, including explosions, noise, dust, water contamination, injuries and deaths. The magnitude of the industrial drilling sites and the miles of horizontal underground pipelines that are unknown to builders and the population of growing towns are causing increasing safety problems.

“For years we have known that leaking underground pipes carrying oil and gas and processing waste regularly contaminate soil and water and potentially threaten thousands of people around the state, records show,” wrote the Denver Post on May 17.

The process of fracking — hydraulic fracturing — involves drilling deep wells and injecting into them a mix of chemicals, sand and millions of gallons of water per well at high pressure. This splits the rock along fissures, allowing oil and gas to be released.

Fracking to obtain gas was introduced in Colorado in 1973, replacing earlier methods of extraction. By the early 1990s, such drilling was massive as companies became able to drill vertically and horizontally. Today it is possible to drill vertically as deep as five miles and then horizontally for five more miles. Colorado wells are usually two miles deep and two miles wide.

In a state concerned about having

enough clean water for agriculture and for people to drink and use, the amount of water used in fracking is astounding. It requires 6 to 8 million gallons to frack one well. Each well can be fracked up to 18 times.

There are now 53,000 active and 36,500 inactive wells in Colorado and thousands of miles of pipeline. Many of these pipes are encased in cement, which crumbles over time. It wasn't until 2016 that the state began monitoring underground pipes connected to wells, tanks and other equipment.

Leaks and spills from broken pipes and crumbling infrastructure cause thousands of incidents that pollute groundwater. This was known and reported in a 2014 risk study prepared for lawmakers by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission.

However, no monitoring program exists to identify crumbling and deteriorating pipelines or other problems, such as spills. Most regulations rely on company self-reporting. Yet audits show that the industry barely keeps records for about 10 percent of the flowlines — amounting to 2,700 wells.

Gas explosion claims lives

It has taken tragedies like the explosion and loss of life in Firestone, Colo., this April 17 and complaints from people in other communities across the state to shed light on this crisis.

The Firestone explosion, which caused

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Conference reaffirms Africa-Cuba solidarity

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

Africans caught in the Atlantic Slave Trade were taken to Cuba, where their presence made an indelible mark on the character of the political, economic and cultural fabric of the country.

Since the 1960s, in the early aftermath of the 1959 seizure of power by revolutionary forces led by Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and others, African independence and transformative struggles have constituted a major factor in Cuban foreign policy. President Castro noted in 1976 that socialist Cuba was populated by Latin-African people opposed to colonialism, racism and imperialism.

This historical tradition was reinforced at a recent conference held in Windhoek, Republic of Namibia, which brought together African leaders and Cuban government officials to renew ties among the geopolitical regions and to chart a way forward in the current period. The Fifth Continental African Conference of Solidarity with Cuba was convened June 6-8 and brought together over 200 delegates from 26 African states under the theme of “Intensifying Solidarity and Continuing the Legacy of Fidel and Che.”

The first of these conferences was held in South Africa in 1995, just one year after the racist-apartheid system’s demise brought President Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress to power. Subsequent gatherings took place in Ghana during 1997, Angola in 2010 and Ethiopia, the headquarters of the African Union, in 2012.

The year 2017 marks the 50th anniversary of the martyrdom of Che Guevara in Bolivia. He was in the South American country assisting revolutionary forces fighting against the neocolonial regime supported by the United States. The Cuban Revolution from its inception posed a challenge to U.S. imperialist dominance over the Caribbean, South America and other colonial and neocolonial territories around the world.

In November 2016, 90-year-old former President Fidel Castro died in Havana. His funeral was attended by many African leaders, including Namibian President Hage Geingob, who paid tribute to

the revolutionary leader in an address to the mourners.

In a statement to this year’s Windhoek conference, Namibian Deputy Prime Minister Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah emphasized: “The holding of this conference is all the more timely because it is taking place when retrogressive forces are bent on reversing the gains made recently to normalize relations between Cuba and the United States.” Under the previous U.S. administration of President Barack Obama, the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba after a breach of over 50 years had raised expectations of a possible lifting of the economic blockade imposed by Washington in October 1960.

Without the abolition of the blockade, relations cannot be fully normalized, despite the exchange of diplomats and the reopening of embassies. The U.S. Congress would have to approve the liquidation of the blockade, and there are political elements in it who categorically oppose full economic and trade relations with Havana.

Nonetheless, the Fifth Continental African Conference supported the address by Namibian President Hage Geingob, who said, “We applaud the positive development in this respect and we commend the U.S. government and Cuba for their efforts towards normalizing of ties. However, there is still much ground left to cover to ensure the complete lifting of the blockade against Cuba.”

Geingob emphasized the urgency of the conference to develop a unified African strategy in regard to supporting Cuba. In addition, the delegates passed resolutions demanding the return to the Cuban people of Guantanamo Bay, which remains under U.S. control more than a century after the so-called Spanish-American War.

A co-founder of the ruling SWAPO (Southwest Africa People’s Organization) Party, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, who died just days after the conference, noted: “Historically, Cuba assisted African countries in the fight against foreign domination. Through this patriotic support, Cuban people have shown us the meaning of solidarity, hence [we should show] our support for Cuba.”

In attendance as well from Cuba were Fernando González, president of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peo-

ples, and Giraldo Mazola, Cuban Ambassador to Namibia.

Call for continuing solidarity

African leaders viewed the current situation involving the status of U.S.-Cuban relations as critical in light of the political character of the administration in Washington. President Donald Trump used his prerogative of reversing the reforms instituted by his predecessor on June 16.

The conference stressed as a mandate for future actions to “continue developing and strengthening the Cuba solidarity movement in each one of our countries, struggling for unity and truth. We demand that Cuba’s right to self-determination and sovereignty, as well as its right to decide the political system of its choice, be respected.” (Granma International, June 7)

Moreover, the struggle to maintain and enhance the independence and sovereignty of Cuba is linked with other countries in the region. In recognizing this reality, the conference expanded its scope to encompass other states which have also been under pressure from successive U.S. administrations.

The final declaration pledged support to “the causes of all sister countries struggling for a better world. In particular, we pledge our support to Puerto Rico in its struggle for self-determination, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and the people of Brazil, Bolivia and Argentina, and all peoples of the continent defending their sovereignty.”

Legacy of concrete assistance

In 1961, in the aftermath of the assassination of Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, Cuban Minister of Economic Planning Che Guevara spoke out strongly in condemnation of the murderous act, carried out by the U.S., Belgium and other imperialist states utilizing local surrogates. Che toured Africa in 1965 in an effort to build solidarity and make preparations for Cuban internationalists to intervene in Congo in sup-

port of the revolutionary forces fighting for Lumumba’s ideals.

Although this mission was not successful, the experience taught profound lessons that laid the foundation for the deployment of Cuban military units in Angola in defense of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, beginning in October 1975. Angolan President Agostino Neto requested Cuba’s support from President Fidel Castro in the face of an invasion by the South African military, the U.S. CIA and the U.S.-backed surrogate rebel groups UNITA and FNLA, which were designed to derail the genuine independence of the oil-rich former Portuguese colony.

Cuban internationalists spent another 13 years in Angola, where they assisted in defeating the South African forces in a series of battles around Cuito Cuanavale in 1988. After the South African military’s humiliating losses, negotiations began that resulted in the liberation of Namibia, the release of South African political prisoners in 1990 and by 1994 the transition to nonracial, democratic rule in what had been the citadel of apartheid settler-colonialism.

In recent years, Cuba has educated thousands of African students in universities in the Caribbean socialist state. These students are provided with free tuition and lodging.

During the Ebola pandemic of 2014, Cuba deployed hundreds of physicians and other health care workers to Liberia and Sierra Leone, two of the hardest hit West African states. This was instrumental in turning the tide of efforts to halt and eradicate the crisis. The U.S. was forced to recognize the role of Cuba in the battle against Ebola, which paved the way for the reopening of diplomatic relations.

On June 7, outside the conference deliberations in Windhoek, the delegates visited historic sites, including Heroes Acre and the Museum of Independence. The next African Conference in Solidarity with Cuba will convene in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. □

Hundreds of Iraqis in U.S. rounded up

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last century. Beginning with the Iraq-Iran war in 1980, Pentagon militarists funneled massive amounts of arms into Iraq to sow the destruction of both states. Within a few years after the end of that war, the U.S. and allies launched Operation Desert Storm against Iraq, employing internationally banned weapons such as depleted uranium munitions, destroying lives and the ecology of the country.

The U.S. followed this up with devastating sanctions, which over the course of years claimed the lives of more than 1 million Iraqis, including at least 500,000 Iraqi children. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and later Secretary of State Madeleine Albright infamously said of these dead children, “I think this is a very hard choice, but the price ... We think the price is worth it.” (60 Minutes TV show, May 12, 1996)

The U.S. invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq beginning in 2003 has claimed the lives of millions more Iraqi people. The U.S. nurturing of counter-revolutionary death squads such as the so-called Islamic State to topple the Syrian state has also been used to justify a ceaseless occupation of Iraq and has ensured Iraqi people will feel the suffering of war for generations to come.

U.S.-sponsored terrorist groups in Iraq specifically target Shia and Christian

Iraqis like those now facing deportation.

Amid these possible deportations, the U.S. is leveling cities in Iraq like Mosul in the name of fighting terrorism, even though Washington has used terrorist groups extensively for political purposes. The level of destruction is so great that it has become apparent there aren’t enough resources or preparation to shelter those internally displaced in Iraq.

The deportations from the U.S. begun this June are an extension of the genocidal war against Iraq’s people. Families in the diaspora who thought their loved ones were safe from the bloodshed are being broken up and threatened with this virtual death sentence. Many of those deported are elders who have not been to Iraq through decades of destruction and completely lack family or community ties in the war-ravaged country.

Those who oppose U.S. military adventures must turn this terrible attack on the Iraqi people into an opportunity to resist all ICE kidnappings and U.S. militarism. Demonstrations have been held in Detroit as well as Sterling Heights, Southfield and other suburbs.

Because these deportations are unprecedented, there is an opportunity to set a precedent of resistance.

No war on the Iraqi people, in the diaspora or the homeland! □

Fracking Colorado

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two deaths in one family and serious injuries in others, resulted from cutting a pipe leading from a well that had been dormant but was reopened in January by Anadarko Petroleum Corp. The break happened only a few feet from the family’s basement. The pipe was still connected to a well only 182 feet away.

Gas from wells around a nearby housing development had begun to accumulate in the area. Since the explosion, Anadarko has shut the wells and put gas meters in the houses, but the local people are not convinced they are safe.

A few miles from the first explosion, a storage tank also owned by Anadarko exploded on May 25, killing one worker and injuring three more. Another gas leak in May forced residents of Peetz to leave their homes for three days.

According to Occupational Safety and Health Administration data covering 2003 to 2010, the workers in this industry suffer a very high death rate associated with explosions, fires, chemicals, sand, dust and fracking noise. The study reported 823 deaths in the oil and gas in-

dustry — a fatality rate seven times greater than the average for all U.S. industries.

OSHA found that jobs related to fracking caused more deaths and health hazards than any other industry. Despite these risks, workers continue to flock to these jobs because the pay remains higher, even as real wages decline in other industries.

Profit is driving factor

The state of Colorado has experienced a gold-rush atmosphere that is chaotic, thoughtless and selfish. While the Colorado oil and gas industry has made a great deal of money, inspections, health and environmental issues are not being addressed.

For the workers, fear of unemployment is a serious concern. They need to be retrained for jobs in renewable energy so they will be able to support their families without endangering their health and polluting the planet.

What types of fuels we use can no longer be dictated by companies making fabulous profits or paying better wages while destroying workers’ health. Profits are the motivating factor under capitalism, but people and the planet must come first.

To be continued.

Editorial WW-MO

Todavía está allí. ¡Fin al bloqueo!

El otoño pasado, como lo han hecho todos los años desde 1992, los países miembros de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas votaron a favor de una resolución pidiendo al gobierno de EUA que ponga fin al bloqueo económico, financiero y comercial de Cuba. La votación fue de 191 a 0. Estados Unidos y su compañero Israel por primera vez se abstuvieron, en lugar de votar en contra de la resolución.

¿Significaba esto que Washington estaba dispuesto a levantar el cruel bloqueo? No.

El año pasado, el gobierno de Obama finalmente suavizó las restricciones de los Estados Unidos para viajar a Cuba, lo que condujo a un aumento del 118 por ciento en visitantes estadounidenses a la isla este año, en comparación con el número en 2016.

¿Esto significa que ahora somos libres de viajar a Cuba? No.

Cuba, a sólo 90 millas de Florida, sigue siendo el único destino en el planeta al cual los viajes están restringidos por ley de los EUA. Una ley promulgada por el Congreso en el año 2000 convirtió en un crimen para las/os ciudadanas estadounidenses las vacaciones en Cuba. Todavía

está vigente.

Desde agosto de 2016, vuelos regulares desde muchos aeropuertos de los EUA a varios destinos cubanos han creado la ilusión de relaciones normales. Las restricciones de viaje no parecen demasiado onerosas: una casilla de verificación, una firma o incluso una simple pregunta del agente de billetes al entregar la tarjeta de embarque. Pero las/os viajeros que leen la letra pequeña ven que están obligados a escribir y mantener registros de su calendario completo para lo que debe ser actividades de no-vacación en Cuba.

El sistema capitalista de los EUA ha tenido que reconocer que sus muchas décadas de guerra económica contra Cuba fracasaron en destruir la revolución. La “apertura” a Cuba por parte del gobierno de Obama fue vista como un nuevo enfoque con el mismo objetivo - esta vez para socavar la solidaridad del pueblo cubano con el consumismo capitalista que podría deshacer su construcción socialista.

A pesar del establecimiento de relaciones diplomáticas, el bloqueo continuaría.

El Departamento del Tesoro de EUA anunció el 8 de junio que la Honda Finance Corp., con sede en California,

había acordado remitir \$87.255 para liquidar unas 13 aparentes violaciones del Reglamento de Control de Activos Cubanos. Se trataba con el alquiler de varios vehículos Honda por parte de la embajada cubana en Canadá. Sí, el bloqueo está en plena vigencia.

Pero ese no es el final de la historia. La gente en EUA está respondiendo. Las resoluciones de consejos municipales contra el bloqueo están aumentando desde California hasta Massachusetts.

La administración tiene que lidiar con el hecho de que las aerolíneas y otros negocios con apuestas comerciales en Cuba no quieren que se renueve el bloqueo total.

Mientras este gobierno autocrático acusa a Cuba con denuncias ridículas de violar los “derechos humanos”, no puede ocultar el hecho de que las personas en Cuba son más saludables que las de EUA porque tienen atención médica universal.

Las/os profesionales médicos cubanos son reconocidos mundialmente. Cuando la gente se moría en Nueva Orleans a causa del huracán Katrina, cerca de 2,000 profesionales médicos cubanos fueron movilizados, dispuestas/os a ayudar. Pero se les negó el permiso estadounidense. Las/os cubanos luego lucharon

contra el cólera en Haití y estaban en la línea de frente contra el Ébola. Por eso ellas/os fueron galardonados con el premio 2017 de Salud Pública por la Organización Mundial de la Salud.

Ya ha llegado la hora definitiva de poner fin al bloqueo y los programas de cambio de régimen financiados con dólares de los EUA. Ya ha llegado la hora definitiva de poner fin a la ocupación ilegal de Guantánamo por la Estación Naval de Guantánamo de EUA y su despreciable prisión de tortura.

En Cuba, este año, el mayor contingente extranjero provino de EUA. La gente ya se está apuntando para la brigada “Caminos del Che”, que visitará Cuba del 1 al 15 de octubre para conmemorar el 50 aniversario el asesinato del legendario guerrillero.

En julio las dos organizaciones de solidaridad con Cuba más antiguas y más consistentes viajarán allí sin licencias. La Brigada Venceremos irá del 21 de julio al 4 de agosto y la Fundación Interreligiosa para la Organización Comunitaria/Pastores por la Paz viajará del 11 al 27 de julio.

Ellas/os ejercerán su derecho absoluto a viajar y asociarse con los pueblos del mundo, incluyendo el de Cuba. □

Mítines en EUA demandan: ¡Fuera EUA de Venezuela!

Por Kris Balderas Hamel

Mítines urgentes en solidaridad con Venezuela Bolivariana y en contra de la interferencia e intervención de Estados Unidos tuvieron lugar en varias ciudades alrededor de los EUA a principios de junio. Obedeciendo a un llamado del Centro de Acción Internacional (IAC-CAI), y con apoyo de otras organizaciones, se organizaron manifestaciones para mostrar apoyo y solidaridad con el asediado gobierno venezolano y el proceso revolucionario que el imperialismo estadounidense está tratando de sabotear y destruir. También para repartir información acerca de las actuaciones de las fuerzas contrarrevolucionarias quienes están detrás de los actos terroristas en Venezuela, e intentar derrumbar la terrible campaña mediática contra esa revolución. Es interesante que en todas las ciudades estos mismos medios rehusaron cubrir las manifestaciones.

He aquí reportes de algunas de estas acciones.

Un grupo pequeño pero decidido piqueteó el 2 de junio frente al Edificio Federal Ron Dellums en **Oakland, California**, para exigir “EUA fuera de Venezuela”. Las/os activistas sostenían carteles en defensa de la Revolución Bolivariana y contra las amenazas de EUA y la OEA de forzar un cambio de régimen en el país sudamericano. Las/os piqueteros se enfrentaron a consignas burlescas de un pequeño pero vocal grupo de venezolanos escuálidos. Las fuerzas que apoyan al líder bolivariano y presidente venezolano, Nicolás Maduro, gritaban ahogando las voces escuálidas: “¡No es tierra de EUA, no es petróleo de EUA,

fuera EUA de suelo venezolano!” Y “EUA lanza guerras interminables, Venezuela alimenta a los pobres”!

Una pequeña pero visible manifestación con el lema “USA, fuera de Venezuela” se llevó a cabo en **Portland, Oregón**, el 5 de junio en una concurrida esquina. La protesta del IAC-CAI fue recibida positivamente con toques de bocina, vítores y pulgar hacia arriba de conductoras/es y pasajeras/os que transitaban por los cuatro carriles de tráfico después del trabajo.

A pesar de una lluvia constante el 6 de junio, un grupo de partidarios de la Revolución Bolivariana convergieron en la sede del CNN en **Atlanta**. Expusieron el papel de las corporaciones estadounidenses, las agencias gubernamentales y los medios de propiedad de grandes empresas en la promoción del cambio de régimen en Venezuela. Iniciado por el IAC-CAI y apoyado por la Coalición de Paz y Justicia de Georgia, el mensaje de los letreros y pancartas atrajeron numerosos toques de bocina y saludos en muestra de aprobación por las/os conductores en la intersección del centro de la ciudad. La protesta siguió a la transmisión de “Lo que toda/o trabajador debe saber acerca de la revolución venezolana” en el programa Foro Laboral en WRFG 89.3 FM un día antes.

La rama del Partido WW-MO en **Durham, Carolina del Norte** organizó una proyección cinematográfica de “La Revolución no será televisada” en solidaridad con la Revolución Bolivariana en Venezuela el 4 de junio en el Centro de Solidaridad de Durham.

El día anterior, en la **Ciudad de Nueva York**, una gran audiencia, incluyendo



Filadelfia

una delegación de venezolanos, asistió a la presentación de la misma película patrocinada por el IAC y PWW-MO. Una manifestación de solidaridad con la Revolución Venezolana se celebró en Times Square el 6 de junio.

¡Arriba Con Maduro! ¡Abajo con Trump!

Las/os organizadores de la rama de **Filadelfia** del PWW-MO se unieron a ciudades de todo el país para apoyar al pueblo venezolano y a su gobierno el 9 de junio. Los medios de comunicación estadounidenses han pintado falsamente la lucha venezolana como una revolución popular contra un gobierno opresivo. Es justamente lo opuesto.

Miembros del PWW-MO y del Comité Boricua realizaron su demostración en el centro de la ciudad en la esquina de la calle 6 y Market, frente al Edificio Federal en solidaridad con el pueblo venezolano y para contrarrestar la desinformación de los medios corporativos. Un grupo de venezolanos de derecha pronto llegó y comenzó a acosar a las/os manifestantes. Estaban preparados para atacar, armados con un gran poste de madera al cual habían adherido una gigante bandera venezolana. En un momento dado, el grupo reaccionario rodeó a una camarada en la calle, creando una confrontación. La policía incluso intervino separando las dos manifestaciones a ambos lados de la calle.

Los escuálidos contrarrevolucionarios gritaban airadamente: ¡“EUA, necesitamos tu ayuda”! Dejando muy claro su

deseo de que Estados Unidos organizara una “intervención humanitaria”. Tal intervención por parte de los Estados Unidos y la OTAN en Siria, Libia y otros países en todo el mundo pronto ha llevado a bombardeo de esos pueblos, aparte de procesos desestabilizadores tanto financieros como otros.

Siguiendo la trama de los medios a nivel nacional de ocultar la verdad sobre Venezuela, cuando las/os manifestantes acudieron a dos cuadras, frente al edificio de la estación Fox, ésta rehusó incluso abrirle las puertas a una de las manifestantes que le iba entregar información sobre Venezuela, ignorando así Fox la oportunidad de demostrar públicamente la actuación violenta de los contrarrevolucionarios, quienes intentaban repetir frente a sus mismas oficinas en Filadelfia sus operaciones terroristas.

Después de llegar al Ayuntamiento, las consignas de ambos lados resonaron juntas hasta que los músicos callejeros comenzaron a tocar sus tambores con la consigna de ¡“Arriba con Maduro! ¡Abajo con Trump”!, lo que silenció a los venezolanos de derecha.

El 7 de junio en **Detroit, Michigan**, las/os conductores de la hora punta y transeúntes en el área del centro de la ciudad de Martius fueron recibidos por una manifestación de solidaridad convocada por WW-MO y el Comité de Emergencia de Michigan contra la Guerra y la Injusticia.

Las/os activistas de Solidaridad ALBA de **Chicago, Illinois**, Coalición Anti-Guerra 19 de marzo, Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano y WW-MO se manifestaron el 11 de junio en solidaridad con Venezuela, exigiendo el fin de la intervención de EUA.

Otras acciones fueron planeadas o llevadas a cabo en **Boston, Mass.; Baltimore, MD; Buffalo y Rochester, en N.Y.; Huntington, W.Va.; Houston, Texas; Salt Lake City, Utah; y en Los Ángeles, California.** □