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'Another budget is possible' Students battle Wisconsin austerity

By Workers World Milwaukee Bureau

Protests to oppose gutting all aspects of public education and related austerity continue in Milwaukee and across Wisconsin.

Another series of protest actions took place, including the June 11 "Another Budget Is Possible" protest at the state Capitol sponsored by unions and student and community organizations, including the Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement.

The Milwaukee Teachers Education Association, Schools and Communities United, and Youth Empowered in the Struggle have been leading ongoing actions in Milwaukee, including daily "walk-ins," packing school board meetings and engaging in numerous community activities to demand that public education austerity in the proposed state budget be stricken immediately. The progressive faith-based community also hit the streets on June 11 with an "Out of the Pews and Into the Streets" protest.

Faculty, students and staff in the University of Wisconsin System have been another leading force in the fight for public education. University of Wisconsin Students Against Education Cuts has been sponsoring and supporting demonstrations and other events in Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee and elsewhere.

"We oppose the privatization of education through austerity measures and the corporate restructuring of our universities and K-12 schools. We need to increase resistance and solidarity between people all over the country," said Paul Ahrens, co-director of UWSAEC.

The proposed 2015-17 state budget contains some of the worst austerity measures for public education in Wisconsin history, which are designed to benefit corporations, bankers and bondholders. It includes mass statewide expansion of charter schools, proposals to privatize Milwaukee Public Schools and fire union members, massive budget cuts, and the proposed complete elimination of tenure and shared governance in the UW System. This is on top of over \$1 billion in cuts to public K-12 and higher education since right-wing Gov. Scott Walker took office in 2011.

The proposed budget also attacks every poor and working person with provisions like gutting environmental laws and agencies, cuts to state parks, numerous deregulation schemes, and wiping out workers' compensation and prevailing wage laws. Wall Street operatives like the American Legislative Exchange Council and the Bradley Foundation helped formulate the majority of Wisconsin's 2015-17 austerity budget.

Virtually all public forums to discuss the budget have been reduced or eliminated by the right-wing controlled Legislature and Walker. Many poor and working people have been physically locked out of legislative chambers by the police when demanding their union and communities' voices be heard.

Ahrens stated, "Our only option is to unite and build a broad-based movement which grows into a social structure that is truly representative of the people who live and work in this economy that is crushing us. We need to take over the political system to serve our interests rather than the interests of a select few who only seek to increase their wealth and privilege."

For more information on the Wisconsin budget struggle, see UWStudentsAgainstCuts on Facebook, #NoMPStakeover and wibailoutpeople.org. □



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

Boston marchers, June 13.

By Gerry Scoppettuolo
 Boston

Black Lives Matter Boston, members of the Hispanic Black Gay Coalition and supporters challenged systemic racism and corporate "pride" by stopping the Boston LGBTQ Pride March on June 13 for 11 minutes to draw attention to the 11 trans people of color murdered in the U.S. last year and to the lack of representation of people of color in the organizing of the annual parade. (#WickedPissed)

The protesters' complete manifesto of demands served as an indictment, not just of what has become "corporate gay pride," but including mainstream lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer organizations in general. It is also a call for the liberation politics that followed the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, itself led by trans people of color.

As the march of 25,000 reached the corner of Charles and Boylston streets, BLM organizers and supporters entered the parade, stopping its forward movement to forcefully deliver their demands to cheering supporters

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Michigan law says 'OK' to bigotry

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder on June 11 signed into law House bills 4188, 4189 and 4190, which combined give "faith-based" child placement agencies a license to blatantly discriminate. These agencies, which receive state funding, no longer have to provide services when there are "circumstances that conflict with [their] sincerely held religious beliefs."

The law can be used to prevent lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer couples and individuals from adopting children in need of loving homes. Other potential parents who could face discrimination include unmarried heterosexual couples, single adults and people of a different religion from that of the agency, such as members of Michigan's large Muslim community.

The bills amend decades-old laws on public welfare, probate and child protection. The 1973 "act to provide for the protection of children," Public Act 116, required adoption agencies to act in the best interest of the child, with zero exceptions. Now, the more than 13,000 children who are waiting to be adopted in Michigan will have their futures put on hold while they wait for parents who meet the approval of taxpayer-supported religious bigots. This number of unplaced children is the fifth-highest in the country.

The bill package is an affront to the approximately

3,500 same-sex couples in Michigan who are raising their adopted children, as well as those providing foster care. Because they still cannot marry in the state, they are barred from jointly adopting their children. Only one partner is considered the legal parent; the other has no legal standing if harm should come to the legal parent. This is the reason April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse, two Detroit-area nurses raising four adopted special needs children, took the fight for marriage equality all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. A ruling is expected by the end of June.

The new law has ramifications beyond the right to adopt children. "We know it will only embolden proponents of the dangerous ... bill that would give any individual or business a 'license to discriminate' against LGBT Michiganders," said Jay Kaplan, staff attorney for the Michigan American Civil Liberties Union's LGBT Project. The ACLU plans to sue to overturn the anti-adoption bills. (Between the Lines, June 11)

The Michigan Legislature is under the sway of Tea Party politicians, but Gov. Snyder, when it suits him, presents himself as a "moderate" Republican. Yet from day one, he has signed into law one reactionary bill after another -- attacking women, unions, people of color, low-income residents and the LGBTQ community. All of the attacks emanating from the state capital of Lansing -- which hurt Michigan's children the most -- create an objective basis for a united mass movement. □

Come out for Pride! Come out for Workers World!

June is Pride month, with rallies and marches all over the world commemorating the 46th anniversary of the historic Stonewall Rebellion. Workers World has a proud history of reporting on the living struggle for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer justice and equality. But WW also contributed theoretically to that struggle by publishing WW contributor and staff member Bob McCubbin's book, "The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View" (World View Forum, third ed., 1993).

Drawing on the theoretical work of Frederick Engels and Dorothy Ballan to provide a dialectical materialist explanation of LGBTQ oppression, McCubbin showed how early communal societies accepted all forms of human interrelations, but after material surpluses developed and male supremacy arose, rigid rules governing gender and sexuality were adopted. That's what we're fighting to end today.

That analysis drives WW's view that the LGBTQ struggle is

a vital component in the overall struggle to end capitalist oppression.

We invite you to donate to the Workers World Fund Drive, a bi-annual campaign to help print and distribute this pro-worker, pro-activist newspaper and maintain its website at workers.org. Send checks to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Include your name and address and put "Fund Drive" in the memo line. Additionally, we encourage you to join the WW Supporter Program, set up 38 years ago to help us publish anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-LGBTQ oppression, working-class truth and to build the many campaigns needed to end capitalism and usher in socialism. Donate online at workers.org/donate/. Or send checks to the above address, with "WWSP" in the memo line.

We are grateful for your help in growing the revolutionary press in the U.S. □

WORKERS WORLD PARTY

Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a handful of billionaires! But we need a revolution to make that change. That's why for 56 years WWP has been building a revolutionary party of the working class inside the belly of the beast.

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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Racism, police terror & NBA Finals

By Monica Moorehead

Cleveland has made major headlines — and rightfully so — since the Nov. 22 shooting death of Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old African American, by a white police officer. Rice was killed outside of a recreation center for holding a fake BB gun.

Once Rice was shot in his torso, no medical attention was given to him until an ambulance arrived eight minutes after the shooting. His sister was not allowed to come to his aid. Instead, the police threw her to the ground and assaulted her.

According to a June 11 New York Times article on Rice's killing: "In his ruling, Judge Ronald B. Adrine, presiding judge of the Municipal Court, found probable cause to charge Officer Timothy Loehmann, who fired the fatal shot, with murder, involuntary manslaughter, reckless homicide and dereliction of duty. He also found probable cause to charge Officer Loehmann's partner, Officer Frank Garmback, with negligent homicide and dereliction of duty." Now it is in the hands of the prosecutor whether these officers will actually be charged or not.

In another high-profile case of police murder, Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell, both African American, were killed in a hail of bullets while in a car

on Nov. 29, 2012. One of the nine white Cleveland police officers involved was acquitted at the end of May.

These cases come on the heels of a recent U.S. Department of Justice ruling calling for "reform" of the Cleveland Police Department based on "excessive force" with the use of guns, tasers, pepper spray and fists, based on a two-year study in a city that is over 50 percent Black.

Because of the police killings of Rice, Williams, Russell and others, Cleveland has become a major focal point of the Black Lives Matter upsurge. In light of the National Basketball Association Finals featuring the Cleveland Cavaliers and Golden State Warriors, protests against the Cleveland police have taken place outside of the Quicken Loans Arena, also known as "The Q," home to the Cavaliers.

Other forms of racism

During the NBA Finals at the Q, other forms of racism have been exposed that should not go under the radar screen. During a recent Cavaliers' game where the home crowd was shown during ESPN's Sports Center pregame and post-game segments, a huge sign showing the offensive racist mascot of the Major Baseball League's Cleveland "Indians" loomed

large in the background.

Indigenous activists have organized many protests outside of the Cleveland Major League Baseball home games that have attracted growing numbers of anti-racist supporters. Similar protests have taken place to change the name of the equally offensive National Football League's "Washington Redskins."

In close proximity of the "Indians" sign was another offensive one being held by a white Cleveland fan showing photos of the current NBA's Most Valuable Player, shooting guard Stephen Curry of Golden State and his two-year-old daughter Riley, who appears with her father at his press conferences.

The sign shows Curry asking Riley, "Who's your daddy?" with Riley answering, "Delly." Delly refers to Cavaliers' guard, Matthew Dellavedora, a white reserve player assigned to guard Curry, who is African American. The quotes are meant to express that "Delly" is able to shut down Curry, considered the most prolific shooter in the NBA.

"Delly" has been hyped by the main-



Stephen Curry with daughter Riley Curry.

stream media as the latest version of the NBA's "great white hope," similar to how the Boston Celtics' Larry Bird was used to whip up racism against the Los Angeles Lakers' Earvin "Magic" Johnson during the 1980s. To his credit, Bird publicly disavowed himself from this hype.

For a white fan to exhibit such a sign shows utterly racist disrespect for a Black father and his child, as well as for the child's mother, Ayeisha Curry. ESPN should be roundly criticized for not blocking both the racist "Indians" insignia and the anti-Curry signs from its worldwide audience.

These not-so-subtle racist images add fuel to the fire in the battle against white supremacist attitudes and police terror. □

Denver cops cleared in killing of Latina

By Viviana Weinstein
Denver

On June 5, Denver District Attorney Mitch Morrissey announced that he had cleared officers Gabriel Jordan and Daniel Green in the January shooting of Jessica Hernandez, 17. Morrissey apparently hoped the late Friday announcement would delay the news reaching the community.

The DA concluded that criminal charges were unjustified. He said the officers were "reasonably fearful of their lives" and that "responding with deadly force was justified." No one was surprised since this DA has never charged a police officer in a duty-related killing in 23 years.

Here is the story as pieced together from the Denver news blog westword.com and conversations with Hernandez's family:

In January, five teenage women who had been drinking and smoking were in an alley sleeping in a stolen car. The police moved in screaming, "Get out of the car!" Visibility was poor and the windows were fogged.

Jessica Hernandez, who was the driver, started to get out of the car and then closed the door. Eight shots rang out. Hernandez, a Latina whom friends called Jessie, was hit with three bullets.

In the panic of the moment the car moved. The police say the car came at them. The officer stated he pushed his hand out and "bounced" off the car. The car did not hit him.

When police fired, their shots did not strike the front windshield but rather pierced the side windows. Three bullets struck Hernandez, killing her, and another wounded one of the four passengers. All the bullets went in the side window, indicating that the officer was not firing from in front of the car. The car may have moved after Hernandez had been shot.

Police themselves create a grave dan-

ger if they shoot into moving cars when they are not being shot at.

Others shot by police

There were four shootings by police in the seven months prior to and including Hernandez's death. Another unarmed young person of color, Ryan Ronquillo, 20, was killed in his car by a hail of 12 police bullets in July 2014. Three others were seriously injured in the other shootings.

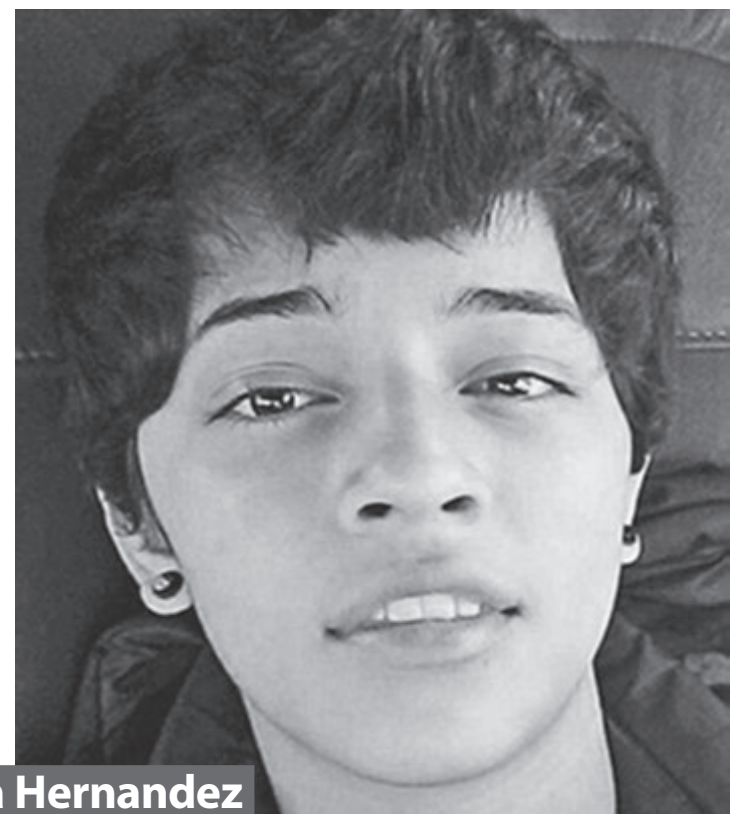
In the past, the police have often claimed that a car is a "loaded weapon." On June 9, the police announced a change in policy and police will no longer be permitted to shoot into moving cars unless shot at. They can no longer consider a car as a weapon. They will just have to get out of the way as a first response. (Denver Post, June 9)

For months there have been community protests against the excessive force used by the Denver police. Petitions were gathered to demand a federal investigation. Memorials and fundraisers were held to help pay for Hernandez's burial, support for her family and legal expenses.

DA Morrissey has told the family and the public that Hernandez would not have died if she had "simply complied with lawful police orders." (Denver Post, June 6) Blaming the victim of a police murder for her own death is a common practice by police in order to justify their crimes and avoid responsibility for their acts.

An attorney for Hernandez's family, Qusair Mohamedbhai, said the officers were too quick to use deadly force. "Jessie and her friends were placed in danger by Denver police officers' decision to employ unnecessary deadly force as a matter of first resort." (abcnews.com, June 5)

The American Civil Liberties Union also expressed dismay in a statement to the June 6 Denver Post at the predictable pattern of DA Morrissey in refusing to bring charges against the officers. The ACLU said there was a "serious conflict of interest" since Morrissey has not filed a single indictment of a killer police offi-



Jessica Hernandez

cer in over two decades.

The ACLU is currently calling again for the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate not only Hernandez's killing but "the pattern and practice of using excessive force and violating the civil rights of Denver residents."

Other important issues regarding Hernandez being Latina and identifying as "queer" are thought to have intensified police feelings when dealing with the car of five young women. The officers stated they initially thought they saw a "male" — Hernandez has short cropped hair — who started to get out of the car and then jumped back in.

Family to pursue justice

The June 6 Denver Post reported that the family was "disappointed but not surprised" about the DA's ruling since "Morrissey is a guardian of the Denver Police Department and officers only have to claim that they feared for their lives

to justify a shooting. ... The family will seek lawful means for justice and change within Denver and throughout the nation."

Many individuals and groups support the family. The Colorado Latino Forum was outraged. According to the Denver Post, Lisa Calderon, co-chair of the Denver Latino Forum, said, "We are sickened and saddened by the decision to exonerate the officers, but we are not surprised."

Supporters of Hernandez say that an outside investigation must take place due to the close relationship of the DA's office with the police. Since the police and the DA's office are both parts of the state repressive apparatus, the community must continue to unite and mobilize to demand justice.

Still, stopping the police from wantonly shooting into cars is a small victory and could have saved the lives of Jessica Hernandez and Ryan Ronquillo. Their lives mattered! □

Texas laws threaten access to abortion

By Sue Davis

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit on June 9 upheld two of the strictest, most unscientific and potentially life-threatening limits on abortion services passed by the Texas Legislature in 2013. The provisions impose the most stringent restrictions on access to abortion in the United States since 1973 when *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion.

Reproductive rights activists and women's health care providers immediately vowed to fight the ruling, and the Center for Reproductive Rights is appealing it to the Supreme Court.

One restriction is that women's health clinics providing abortions must meet all the physical and staffing requirements of a hospital-like ambulatory surgical center. The other provision requires doctors who perform abortions to have admitting privileges at a hospital within 30 miles of the clinic.

Passed under the patronizing guise of

protecting women's health, both rules have been exposed as "sham" or "junk science." First-trimester abortions, nearly 90 percent of all abortions performed in the U.S., are among the safest medical procedures, with less than 1 percent of patients requiring emergency care. In fact, the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists submitted a joint brief opposing the law, saying that instead of protecting women's health, the law "jeopardizes women's health by restricting access to abortion providers."

But that is precisely the lawmakers' anti-woman goal. They are hellbent on restricting women's right to control their own lives and that of their families.

Great burden for working-class women

If the Supreme Court does not intervene and allows the Texas law to go into effect on June 30, only eight clinics will remain open, all in the eastern part of the large state. That will put 900,000 women

of childbearing age, about 17 percent of the state's total, 150 miles or further from the nearest clinic. (New York Times, June 11)

These geographical constraints will impose huge burdens on working and oppressed women who need access to abortion, especially low-wage workers, women of color, youth, immigrants and women who are disabled, live in rural areas or are victims of domestic violence. In addition, "undocumented" women immigrants face great risk at border patrol checkpoints of being discovered, detained and deported.

Expenses to have an abortion would quickly increase when a woman has to take off from work for at least three days and then pay for gas, lodging, food and child care, on top of the cost of the abortion.

Some estimates run as high as \$2,000. That divides women into two camps: those who can afford to get abortions despite such obstacles and those who can't.

The big question is, how will the Supreme Court rule in this case? Either way, it seems likely that the Texas law will end up before the court in a form that could ultimately affect millions of women in the U.S.

Even though the court's conservative majority is well known, there is a vital social factor beyond the court that could force it to rule for reproductive justice: a massive turnout of angry, determined women and their progressive allies in the streets all across the country.

That is how *Roe v. Wade* was won. That is how we will keep abortion legal and make it accessible for all. □

After third court victory, Woodfox still not free

By Kathy Durkin

Forty-three years in solitary confinement is 43 years too long. Albert Woodfox, the last imprisoned member of the Angola 3, should be released immediately. Yet, although a federal judge three times has ordered him freed, the state of Louisiana is hell-bent on keeping him in prison.

U.S. District Judge James J. Brady ordered Woodfox's immediate release on June 9 and barred prosecutors from trying him a third time. But Woodfox's much-anticipated freedom was not to be. Louisiana Attorney General Buddy Caldwell quickly appealed this ruling, requesting an emergency stay to block the release.

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ordered on June 12 that Woodfox be imprisoned while the state appeals this ruling in its attempt to try him for a third time for an Angola prison guard's murder in 1972 — despite his convictions being overturned twice. Oral arguments for and against Judge Brady's order are scheduled for the week of Aug. 31.

Judge Brady twice reversed Woodfox's convictions, including in 2013, due to racial discrimination in grand jury selection in his 1998 retrial. The state appealed. Then Woodfox was reindicted in February.

George Kendall and Carine Williams, Woodfox's attorneys, stressed the unfairness of a third trial, citing, for example, the deaths of witnesses: "The fact that two previous convictions have been reversed demonstrates the weakness of the state's case, even when the witnesses were living." (The Advocate, June 14)

Woodfox maintains his innocence, and the facts of the case are on his side.

Longtime support for Angola 3

Workers World has actively supported the struggle for justice and freedom for the Angola 3: Woodfox, Herman Wallace and Robert King.

A WW article dated June 8, 2012, explained that "Woodfox's case began 40 years ago, deep in rural southern Louisiana, when he and two other young Black men, Herman Wallace and Robert King, were silenced for exposing racial segregation, systematic corruption and horrific



Albert Woodfox

abuse in the biggest prison in the U.S. at that time, an 18,000-acre, former slave plantation called Angola."

Prisoners organized hunger strikes, work stoppages and political education classes — even forming a Black Panther Party chapter, reported WW. They called for investigations into "unconstitutional and inhumane practices. After a prison guard was killed in a 1972 rebellion, officials framed the three activists and threw them into solitary confinement."

Robert King was let out in 2001. After 41 years in solitary, Herman Wallace was released on Oct. 1, 2013, but died of cancer three days later. As Wallace lay dying, state authorities were feverishly trying to imprison him again.

Incarcerated at Angola for 40 years, Woodfox was then transferred to the David Wade Correctional Center and is now at the West Feliciana Detention Center. He is one of the longest-held prisoners in solitary confinement.

Woodfox's unbending fight for freedom has garnered international support. Thousands of actions have been held and tens of thousands of petition signatures obtained calling for his release. On June 11, 18 Louisiana legislators voted to allow Judge Brady's release order to stand.

Albert Woodfox reaffirms that he remains strong and will never give up until he gets justice. See angola3news.blogspot.com for updates and this courageous prisoner's address, to send letters of support. □

Safety board: Con Edison guilty

After more than a year of investigations, the National Transportation Safety Board finally found that a faulty Con Edison gas connection caused an East Harlem explosion in March 2014. But the finding was no surprise to activists who have been advocating for stricter measures to avert natural gas disasters originating from Con Edison's pipelines.

The NTSB also concluded that the city agency responsible for protecting our environment actually contributed to this tragic environmental disaster. The New York City Department of Environmental Protection had failed to repair a gaping hole in a sewer main in front of one of the buildings destroyed by the explosion.

An improper connection between two plastic Con Edison gas pipes installed in 2011 led to the gas leak and explosion that killed eight people, leveled two houses and injured dozens in adjacent build-

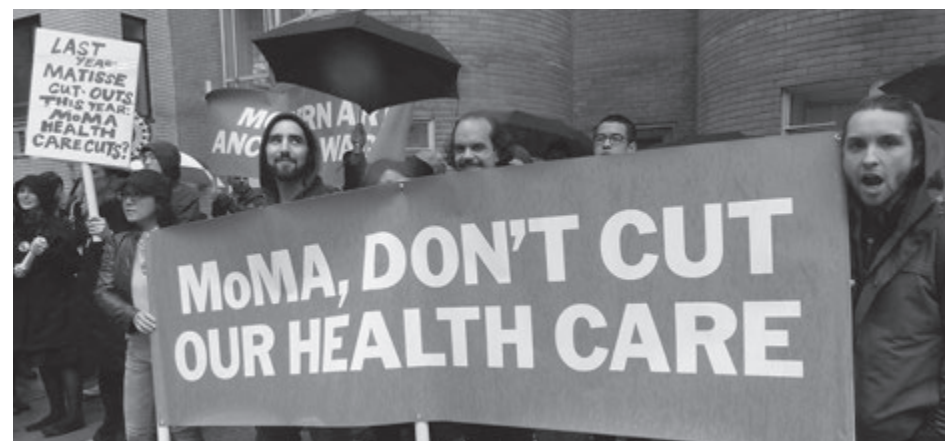
ings. The connection was installed by an uncertified worker.

Now is the time for the community and those residents who have suffered because two organizations failed to do their job properly to speak out in their own neighborhood where the disaster took place.

New Yorkers in Solidarity with the Survivors and Community of East Harlem and El Barrio, a coalition of tenants, activists and environmental organizations, has urged the NTSB to call a special hearing so community residents and small businesses in the area can determine what must be done to prevent such disasters from recurring, with those responsible for causing them present and accountable. The group has delivered 620 signed petitions to the NTSB supporting the call for a public hearing.

— Larry Littman

MoMA workers fight for their health



It was pouring on June 3 outside a garden party thrown for the wealthy contributors to the privately funded Museum of Modern Art in midtown Manhattan, but the rain couldn't dampen the shouts of 150 MoMA workers fighting to prevent cuts to their benefits. It was the first such union protest since United Auto Workers Local 2110 held a prolonged strike there in 2000.

Chanting "MoMA says cut back, we say fight back!" "Modern art, ancient wages!" and "Share the wealth, protect our health," the demonstrators distributed a statement to the public, which read: "We are the Museum of Modern Art's curators, educators, visitor assistants, registrars, librarians, researchers, designers,

photographers, editors, conservators, accountants, and more. We love our work and are proud..."

"We're here tonight because MoMA management is demanding deep cuts to our health care coverage. Some of us make as little as \$29,000 a year ... most of us earn less than \$50,000. Without a secure benefits package, we cannot make ends meet in New York City.

"Please urge the museum to offer us a fair contract. ... #WeAreMoMA." Though the contract expired on May 20, negotiations were extended until June 20. (Huffington Post, June 6) For the latest information on the strike, visit UAW Local 2110 on Facebook.

— Report and photo by Anne Pruden

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper available at major online book sellers.

PHILADELPHIA

Victories against killer cops

By Scott Williams
Philadelphia

In the struggle against racist police brutality, winning the smallest victories from the state has taken monumental struggle. On June 9-10, those who have been struggling against killer cops in Philadelphia gained two small, yet important, victories.

The first, the release of details involving the two police officers who killed 26-year-old Brandon Tate-Brown, came after a six-month struggle and dozens of demonstrations. The second, the acquittal of 10 protesters involved in a police Town Hall meeting on March 19, was a crucial step in the struggle against repression of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Philadelphia police have long been known as the most violent, brutal and openly racist of any city in the U.S. Philadelphia, the country's fifth-largest city, is 45 percent Black and the vast majority of the population are people of color. In 2013, some 185,000 people here lived on less than \$10,000 per year (census.gov),

while 80 percent of the young people qualify for free lunch based on income guidelines. Philly cops shot nearly 400 people between 2007 and 2013. (U.S. Department of Justice) These same police have a long history of political attacks against Black and working-class liberation movements.

Philadelphia police killed Tate-Brown, a young Black worker at Hertz Rental Cars, after he was stopped for "driving while Black" on Dec. 15. An immediate media smear campaign included lies about how Tate-Brown was driving at night with his headlights off, that he struggled with the officers and that he was reaching for a gun when he was mowed down by police.

Within days, protests led by Tate-Brown's family and friends marched on the 15th District Police Precinct to demand basic details of the case, including the officers involved, information collected at the scene, witness testimony and the surveillance video. Yet the police released nothing to the family or the public. Philadelphia Police Chief Charles

Ramsey declared that he would rather protect the safety of the officers than seek accountability and transparency.

On March 19, Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams announced that he would not charge the officers involved in the shooting, nor would he release any more details on the case. Later that day, about 40 protesters from the Coalition for REAL Justice disrupted a Town Hall meeting involving Ramsey and Williams. The activists were met with police brutality and practically a police riot. Ten of them were arrested and became known as the "Lawncrest 10."

Details released

Finally, on June 9, after countless demonstrations and a wrongful death and excessive force lawsuit brought by Tate-Brown's mother, Tanya



After acquittal of protesters, June 10.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Brown-Dickerson, the names of officers Nicholas Carrelli and Heng Dang were revealed, along with video footage of the incident and eyewitness testimony.

Ramsey immediately started backtracking on previous claims about the case. Speaking to the TedEx forum entitled "And Justice for All" on June 11, he said that police often misrepresent the facts when they are released to the public, saying, "The first story is one that usually does not have everything down 100 percent in terms of accuracy." The police had lied about many of the basic facts, such as that Tate-Brown was pulled over because his headlights were off, when the

Continued on page 10

Assembly calls for actions on Ferguson anniversary

By Workers World Baltimore Bureau

Baltimore

Some 150 people gathered for a Baltimore Tribunal and Peoples Assembly on June 6 at a downtown church. The major themes were "Stop police terror" and "We need jobs and livable wages, not jails." One section of the two-part agenda was dedicated to hearing from friends and families whose loved ones were killed by police or who have been victims of police abuse.

The first session was opened by the Rev. Johnnie Golden, who welcomed everyone, and the Rev. C.D. Witherspoon, activist and president of the Greater Baltimore Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Co-chairs were Peoples Power Assembly organizers Kira Lynae and Andre Powell, who is also an American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees delegate to the Baltimore Metropolitan AFL-CIO Council.

Renee Washington, whose fiancé was beaten to death by cops in 2009, described how police violence and killings are not new in a majority Black city like Baltimore. She recounted the names of many people who were killed by police.

Tawanda Jones, whose brother Tyrone West died due to police violence, spoke at the opening plenary. She has fought a heroic battle and led weekly "West Wednesdays" protests for years calling for justice for her brother.

When the floor was opened, youth from Gilmor Homes in West Baltimore where Freddie Grey was killed testified to police abuses. So did many others. The testimony was all captured on video, which will become part of an ongoing record documenting police abuse in Baltimore.

Lynae gave direct testimony and also a special tribute to Black women and girls and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community who have been the victims of police terror. She called for major Baltimore protests on June 20 and 21 for #BlackWomenandGirlsLivesMatter.

Steven Ceci, a Baltimore PPA volunteer, made a special announcement about the formation of a "Know Your Rights/Cop Watch" campaign for Baltimore. Some 70 people signed up to participate.

Performing at the event were Pam

Parker who sang and Leonora Knowles who led the assembly in song. She also opened the meeting with libations to ancestors.

The second part of the plenary included activists who had traveled from across the region and the country to attend. Co-chairs were Los Angeles Workers Assembly members John Parker, who spearheaded a \$15-an-hour-minimum-wage referendum, and filmmaker Rebecca Jackson, who was beaten badly by police. Jackson was instrumental in videotaping the event.

Protest Aug. 8-9: Ferguson rebellion anniversary

Larry Holmes, a national PPA organizer from New York City, motivated the need for the movement to remain strong and go forward. He proposed national protests in every city on Aug. 8-9, the anniversary of the Ferguson, Mo., rebellion.

A Detroit delegation called for freedom for wrongfully imprisoned Rev. Edward Pinkney, former president of the Benton Harbor/Twin City NAACP chapter. Dave Sole, from the Michigan Emergency Committee against War and Injustice, spoke about Pinkney's case and also related the struggles against home foreclosures, water shutoffs and austerity in Detroit.

Lamont Lilly, a Workers World Party organizer from North Carolina, spent weeks in Baltimore going door to door doing outreach. He documented events in the Baltimore uprising and connected police violence cases in North Carolina to those in Baltimore.

Co-chairs of the last plenary session were Lilly, Witherspoon and Sharon Black, PPA organizer. Witherspoon reiterated the movement's support for Black whose car was shot up after she appeared on the national Fox TV program of right-winger Sean Hannity on May 29. On the show, Black characterized the Baltimore Police Department as racist and called for community control of the police.

This session formalized many proposals and key actions. These included pressing forward to continue the fight for justice for Freddie Grey and calling for the indictment, conviction and jailing of the police responsible for his murder and for those responsible for the many oth-

er police victims in Baltimore. Another important proposal was pushing for amnesty for all youth facing charges from the uprising, including activists Larry Lomax and Allen Bullock, and attending Lomax's upcoming trial.

The assembly agreed to support the #BlackWomenandGirlsLivesMatter protests on June 20 and 21 and the PPA "Know Your Rights/Cop Watch" campaign. The gathering called for reparations from the state government for a comprehensive jobs program and for

charter amendments for a \$15 minimum wage and community control of police. And the body agreed to call for public destruction of guns and drugs confiscated by the police and for any money raised to be put back into the community.

Everyone supported the call for freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, Rev. Pinkney and all political prisoners. Finally, the full assembly issued a call to hold protests nationally on the Aug. 8-9 anniversary of the Ferguson rebellion. □

Baltimore activist tells it like it is

By Deirdre Griswold

Telling the truth about the Black Lives Matter movement on Fox TV is not easy, to say the least, especially when the anchor is Sean Hannity, a notorious attack dog for the racist right-wing.

But a spokesperson for the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly, Sharon Black, held her ground so well in a May 29 interview on Hannity's program that he had to resort to the tactic of just talking over her as she responded to his questions. When that didn't work, because she refused to shut up, he just cut her off.

However, the PPA representative said she had gotten out the message that the people of Baltimore, especially the Black youth, have every right to militantly oppose the murderous actions of the police.

Hannity asked her a loaded question that was supposed to leave her unable to answer, about the Baltimore police feeling "intimidated" and not making arrests because every time they drove into the community "30 to 50 people in hostile fashion were now surrounding them," and that this had led to a crime wave.

Black replied clearly and firmly that if the police were in fact conducting a slowdown, "that was insubordination and negligence. ..." Hannity broke in, "You want to fire them all?" She replied, "Yes, I do believe we should fire them. We need community control of police."

Black told Hannity that his argument amounted to saying that "Either the people of Baltimore have to put up with rac-



Sharon Black takes on Sean Hannity.

ism and total police abuse, degradation in their daily lives, or else they have to put up with murders. This is a falsely manufactured thing. The system is structurally racist."

Seeing that despite all his gross bullying, the PPA representative was still succeeding in getting her message across, Hannity abruptly said, "All right, I gotta go," and cut her off in the middle of a sentence.

The Hannity program also attacked Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, the Black woman mayor of Baltimore, for holding a press conference in which she "seemed outraged and upset over the death of Freddie Grey." Grey was the young Black man whose spinal cord was severed while in police custody, the last straw that led to the uprising against decades of police murders and racist oppression.

The Baltimore PPA on June 6 held an assembly at which many people from the community were free to speak their mind about the torments they have endured at the hands of the police without getting rudely cut off. □

Black Lives Matter statement at Boston Pride

We demand fair and equitable **Pride fees**. It is an outrage that community organizations and nonprofits, serving the most vulnerable of our LGBTQ community, cannot afford to march. We demand a higher corporate rate that covers the expense and fees for small nonprofit organizations to participate in Pride. If corporations are going to use Pride to profit from our community, they can at least pay more for the opportunity.

We demand that Boston Pride take their **hands off** Black and Latino Pride.

We demand that the funding allocated to Black and Latino Pride events be **free of interference** from Boston Pride's predominately white board of directors, and used by the Black and Latino LGBTQ community as they see fit.

We demand **more diversity** in the board of directors for Boston Pride.

We demand that the **board represent our community** by recruiting people of color, trans people and working-class people. We demand a Pride board as diverse as our community, and not solely comprised of wealthy white capitalist gays and lesbians.

We demand that **corporate sponsors** be approved not only based on how they treat their LGBTQ employees, but on how they treat their customers and the communities in which they operate.

Big-bank sponsors and participants are complicit with **gentrification** and predatory lending that have had devastating impacts on communities of color. There's no pride in corporate **destruction of Black and Brown communities!** We demand a review board of all corporate sponsors that will reject corporations that exploit the most vulnerable of our community.

We demand a Pride parade **route that marches through a community of color**. Hosting Boston Pride in the South End and downtown area purposely **excludes communities of color** and perpetuates the idea that communities of color are somehow more homophobic than white people. We all know better and demand a Pride that includes our neighborhoods!

We demand that Boston Pride **remembers** that Pride started as a riot led by trans and gender non-conforming people of color!

Our liberation as LGBTQ people isn't finished. Without the liberation of all oppressed people, it will never be complete. We demand that Pride themes focus on the **political issues of our diverse community**. We don't need more parties and meaningless themes. We need justice.

Our Demands of the Boston LGBTQ community:

■ We demand Boston's mainstream LGBTQ organizations hire more LGBTQ leaders of color in senior management positions.

■ We demand more transgender women of color hired in leadership roles at Boston's mainstream LGBTQ organizations.

■ We deserve shelter reform for LGBTQ youth of color and trans individuals of color. LGBTQ youth are over-represented in homeless youth, and yet there is currently **only one youth shelter** in the area that accommodates their needs. We demand fully funded youth shelters and reform of the Department of Children and Families to provide help to LGBTQ children from homophobic and transphobic families.

■ We demand the mainstream LGBTQ community acknowledge the growing HIV and STI [sexually transmitted infection] rates in neighborhoods of color in Boston. Despite the rates of HIV/STIs decreasing for white gay men, it has increased in Black and Latino MSM [men who have sex with men] and trans communities. We demand our community respond by developing an LGBTQ health center in a community of color. We demand **accessible education and resources** that aren't coupled with criminalization and racism.

■ We demand all transgender health

care, including **gender-affirming surgeries**, be included into MassHealth and all Massachusetts health care plans at no extra cost, under an informed consent model and without gatekeepers, especially for transgender minors.

■ We demand that our community come together to fight the recent closing of health centers operated by and for people of color, such as the **Latin-American Health Institute** and Massachusetts for Asian and Pacific Islander Health.

■ We demand that our community come out publicly against holding the **2024 Olympics in Boston**. The Olympics will bring unprecedented gentrification, surveillance, cutting of social services and punitive policing to our city.

■ We demand that more city funding be funneled to LGBTQ organizations of color and safe spaces.

■ We demand that our community finally acknowledge the systemic racism in this city.

Boston is consistently listed by many media sources as one of the most racist cities in the U.S. We demand the city of Boston commit itself to ending the assault/harassment of LGBTQ people of color by the Boston Police Department.

See 'Pride confronts racism' on page 1 or therainbowmass.com for more information.

Uniting struggles ~ LGBTQ P

Pride confronts racism

Continued from page 1

who lined both sides of the street.

As BLM leader Daunasia Yancey was delivering an "occupy-style" mic check about murdered trans women of color, a contingent of Boston police confronted her and the other protesters, threatening arrest. But organizers refused to back down one inch until the planned protest was over, while the entire scene unfolded before hundreds of cheering onlookers.

A phalanx of supporters from Stonewall Warriors, Boston Feminists for Liberation, the Women's Fightback Network, Boston FIST, the Boston School Bus Drivers Union and the Boston Homeless Solidarity Committee moved between the police and the demonstrators at one point to defend the action.

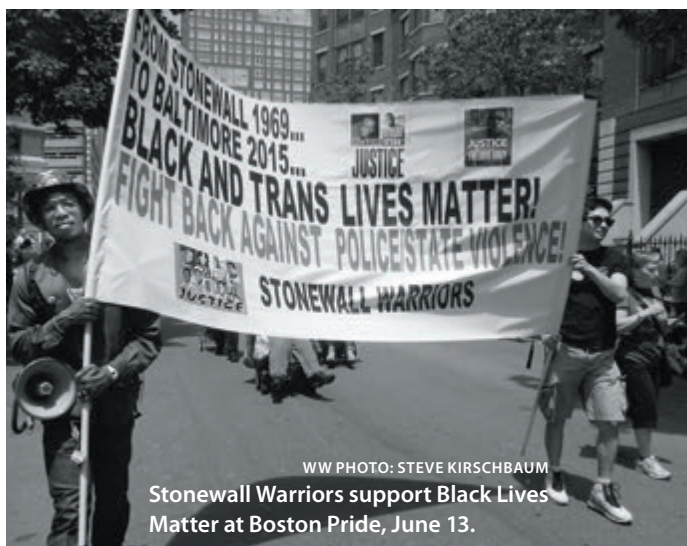
Over the years, the Boston Pride Committee has raised fees for marching in the parade to as high as \$2,500 per group, with similar charges for reserving a booth at the official Pride Festival.

(bostonpride.org) Grassroots and community groups with few resources are effectively prohibited from marching.

Need for 'inclusion and empowerment'

Corey Yarbrough, executive director of Boston's Hispanic Black Gay Coalition, the largest people of color LGBT organization here, delivered this statement to Workers World:

"While many view Pride as a time to celebrate and connect with community, it is often a painful reminder for me of the lack of genuine inclusion and empowerment of faces who look like mine. I felt it was my duty to support the protest to bring awareness to what many people of



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM
Stonewall Warriors support Black Lives Matter at Boston Pride, June 13.

color are still experiencing in Boston's LGBT community and force those in power to put action behind their symbolic and meaningless rhetoric of diversity and inclusion.

"As the executive director of one of the only LGBT organizations of color in Boston, it is often overwhelming to meet all the unique and important needs of our

community. It is more difficult to face these challenges in a climate where resources for LGBT people of color in the city are evaporating and leadership of color at mainstream organizations is becoming more rare. I hope this protest will boldly move the conversation of getting diverse representation of board members and senior staff positions at other organizations forward while opening up avenues for securing greater resources for existing LGBT organizations of color."

Earlier in the parade, the Boston School Bus Drivers Union carried a banner confronting Mayor Marty Walsh and demanding that he support a fair contract for their union. The union local, more than 800 members strong and 99 percent Haitian, African-American, Latino/a and Cape Verdean, is defending itself against the Veolia Corp., which unjustly fired four union leaders 19 months ago. The union has provided sexual orientation and domestic partner provisions for its members since 1978, years before the city of Boston implemented these laws. (visit tinyurl.com/FBteamsolidarity) □

New Yorkers fight for rent protection

By G. Dunkel

About 1 million apartments in New York City and some surrounding communities are covered by a rent-protection law, which limits the amount of rent that tenants can be charged. It appears likely that the New York state Senate will allow this law to expire at midnight on June 15.

New York City is the largest city in the United States with an effective program to limit rents and defend the rights of tenants. This system has been under attack by landlords since it was established in the early 1940s.

On June 9, a coalition of tenant groups

and unions brought hundreds of supporters of better rent laws to the Capitol in Albany for a day of protest.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo indicated that he did not want to risk the social eruption that would occur if billions of dollars were shifted from the pockets of tenants, mainly workers, to NYC landlords, some of the biggest real estate companies in the United States.

A letter from Cuomo to NYC landlords warned them not "to use a temporary lapse in the rent stabilization laws to break existing leases," or to intimidate tenants or coerce them to leave their homes. (Daily News, June 14)

Cuomo will probably move for a weak extension of the current laws that have allowed landlords to remove 35,000 apartments from rent protections since 2011. Tenant groups estimate that 100,000 apartments are in danger of being flipped out of stabilization in the next year if the law is not strengthened.

Anecdotes abound about landlords offering thousands of dollars to tenants whose apartments can be deregulated to move out, while denying them services like heat and hot water.

New Yorkers face other crises

But the attack on rent stabilization is

not the only crisis affecting the housing needs of poor and working people in New York City. There are more than 59,000 homeless people living in shelters, and those numbers are growing.

The 400,000 people in public housing run by the New York City Housing Authority are living in a system that has been allowed to deteriorate to such an extent that NYCHA estimates it needs about \$15 billion to make repairs to roofs, elevators, boilers, plumbing and more to make its units livable.

One plan for resolving this lack of funds is to turn over large chunks of land devoted to public housing to private developers and

Actions confront cops for man's death

By Terri Kay
Oakland, Calif.

Over 500 people came out to the Lakeshore Shopping District here on June 12 to angrily mourn the loss of yet another young Black man at the hands of the Oakland Police Department. The vigil, called by Demouria Hogg's family and the Anti-Police-Terror Project, shut down for over two hours the busy intersection where the OPD killed Hogg. The two hours symbolized the time in which the OPD created a crime scene and then killed this father of three young children.

Organizers, who had created a replica of Demouria Hogg's car, placed it in the middle of the intersection. There a number of Black activists, other people of color and white allies locked themselves to the front and back of the car for the entire vigil. The OPD had to reroute traffic and close down the I-580 exit ramp, at the bottom of which was the spot where Hogg was shot and killed by cops for sleeping in his car.

Hogg was found on June 6 unconscious behind the wheel of his car, which was stopped at the curb in a lane exiting from I-580 near the Lake Merritt shopping district. Firefighters called the po-

lice after they approached the car to provide assistance, but saw a gun on the passenger seat. Two hours later Hogg was taken to the hospital and pronounced dead, after only regaining consciousness for less than a minute, according to the OPD's own dispatch tapes.

After the two-hour vigil and shutdown of the intersection, the activists unlocked themselves from the car and protesters proceeded to march in the streets to the Alameda County Courthouse. This was after a night march on June 10 which the Black Youth Project called to defy Mayor Libby Schaaf's curfew, which she imposed on May 21, against night marches in the streets.

Marchers defy police curfew

The BYP march was the last in a series of marches held by activists to protest and defy the curfew. The June 10 action of more than 100 people was successful in that the crowd marched through the streets of downtown Oakland without



Protesters take streets demanding justice, June 12.

any attempt by the police to block them. It was clear that Schaaf had finally been forced to back down.

However, the June 12 march was confronted by a huge police presence. Cops didn't initially try to stop the march, but maintained a strong presence of motorcycle and police forces on foot along its entire length. Police aggressively pushed marchers, including young children, who were trying to maintain the line. When

authorities blocked the march from getting to the courthouse and the downtown area, marchers headed back up the other side of Lake Merritt and along Grand Avenue toward the starting point.

When the marchers turned onto Grand, the OPD tried to confine them to one lane. Protesters broke through the lines, taking all the lanes of eastbound traffic and for a while the westbound lanes as well. When the marchers reached a point close to the Lakeshore shopping district, the police formed a line blocking the march from going any further.

Protesters quickly outmaneuvered the cops and ran on the grass around their lines, forming up on the street opposite the police lines. The march continued to the rally starting point, where the action was brought to a successful close. Family and friends lingered to light candles and mourn at the site where Demouria Hogg was killed.

A video commemorating the vigil can be found at tinyurl.com/qbj6clv. □

Pride and Black Lives Matter

Book Review

'Out in the Union'

By Martha Grevatt

"Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America," by Miriam Frank, Temple University Press, 2014

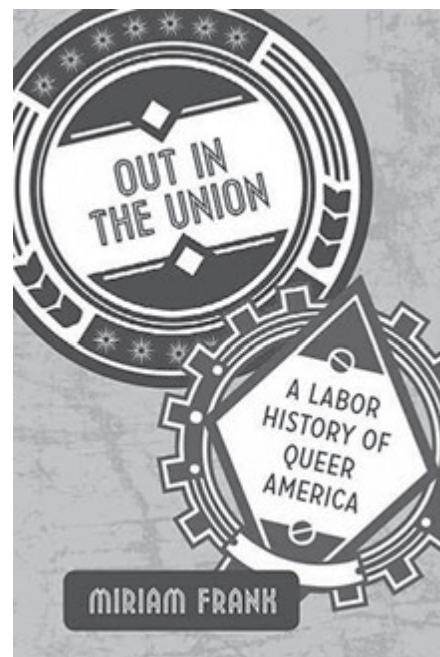
The importance of "Out in the Union" is clear from the first page. Here is a book devoted solely to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer labor history, a contribution that is long overdue. Frank is a master teacher of humanities at New York University. The paper edition was released this year.

All civil rights struggles impact the labor movement and vice versa. The struggle for LGBTQ liberation is no exception. Yet if you go to the library, even at a university, you will find nothing about the LGBTQ movement in the labor studies section and nothing about unions in the

LGBTQ or queer or gender studies sections.

Much of the book is based on oral histories taken from LGBTQ union members, including both leaders and rank-and-filers. Therefore, the history begins in the late 1960s, when some of the interviewees were starting their working lives. Frank acknowledges that LGBTQ labor history begins earlier, in the 1940s and 1950s, when, for example, the communist-led Marine Cooks and Stewards Union took a bold position of "no Red-baiting, no race-baiting, no queer-baiting."

The book is well organized, is a readable length and does not attempt an encyclopedic view. Frank takes a topical rather than chronological approach, devoting each chapter to a different aspect of how LGBTQ workers participate in the life of their unions. Frank discusses coming out



on the job, being LGBTQ and in union leadership, and the shaping of alliances through important, game-changing projects, like the Coors beer boycott of the 1970s and the defeat of California's 1978 Briggs initiative, which would have prevented LGBTQ teachers from teaching.

Frank details how the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 1990s impacted the labor movement. Union members were dying or watching their life partners die. Workers with HIV/AIDS were subject to horrible discrimination, including firings. At the same time, workers at HIV/AIDS service agencies wanted to be represented by a union.

The process of transitioning on the job is told through the eyes of Joni Christian, a now-retired trans woman on the assembly line at General Motors' Lordstown, Ohio, plant.

An essential force

There are instructive stories of LGBTQ union organizers. There are unique features to every workplace, differences in the nature of the work and in the composition of the workforce. Those differences

require a thoughtful approach to union organizing.

In one story, the United Food and Commercial Workers sent in a gay man, a top union officer, to talk with workers in quality control at a meatpacking plant. The entire department, primarily gay men, went union.

There are some shortcomings to the book. Some individuals who played key roles inside their unions to advance the cause of LGBTQ members are barely mentioned.

While the working lives of the book's protagonists begin after the 1950s, it would have strengthened the book to look at how that period changed the orientation of the U.S. labor movement. The Congress of Industrial Organizations' purge of the left-led unions and of leftists in other unions had a hugely negative impact on civil rights unionism. Civil rights groups that worked closely with the CIO, including the Committee for the Defense of the Foreign Born, the National Negro Congress and the Congress of Spanish-Speaking Peoples, were destroyed by the witch hunt. Inside the labor movement, the Cold War shifted labor's political orientation in a more conservative direction and, years later, likely hampered the advancement of an LGBTQ civil rights agenda.

Shortcomings aside, however, "Out in the Union" is an important book to read, one that has opened up an essential field of study. With all the pain and abuse in the workplace that this book documents, the book is essentially optimistic, pointing towards the growing solidarity of all workers against exploitation, bigotry and oppression.

Grevatt came out in a hostile work environment at a Chrysler plant in Ohio in 1989. Ten years later, she helped win nondiscrimination language covering sexual orientation in the Big Three-UAW contracts, along with health benefits for domestic partners. □



New York City tenant protest in May.

use some of the funds the developers fork over for repairs. The details are in contention between NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio and Cuomo — but both of them support privat-

izing a large portion of public housing.

Another point of contention between Cuomo and de Blasio is the 421-A program, which gives developers substantial tax relief for creating "affordable" housing when they build market rate projects.

The "affordable" rents range from \$800 a month for people earning over \$28,000 a year in the South Bronx, one of the poorest neighborhoods in New York, to \$2,800 a month in midtown Manhattan for people making \$100,000 a year. In neither case would reasonable people consider such rents "affordable" — except the developers.

Housing, or shelter, like food and water is a basic human right that is being severely challenged in New York City. A movement is growing to defend this right. □

U.S. supports rich in Ecuador

Bulletin: In a speech late on June 15, Ecuador's President Rafael Correa said that the Inheritance Law proposal, which is discussed below, will be temporarily halted while opening a public debate that will further clarify the law's goals.

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Once again, rightists inside a country, together with international imperialist support, have leveled their attack against another Latin American country that seeks, like many others in the region, a change in favor of the excluded masses. This time the country is Ecuador.

Before Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa left for Europe to attend the second CELAC-EU Summit, he submitted to Ecuador's Congress a bill on redistribution of wealth, also known as the Law of Inheritance, which will be discussed for 30 days before being voted on. This new law would increase inheritance taxes for those inheriting more than \$35,400. The current law taxes heirs for amounts over \$68,000, under legislation dating from 1927.

The project, which is backed by Correa's party, Alianza PAÍS, is intended to ensure fair taxation and that the rich pay what they should. It is a progressive tax, where the percentage applied would range from 2.5 percent up to 77.5 percent depending on the amount inherited.

Says the president: "Of course, this goes to the heart of the matter, the excessive concentration of wealth, but we estimate that it will affect less than 2 percent of the population. This absolute minority of the people are the owners of the media, of economic power." (TeleSUR, June 11)

According to a study cited by President Correa, only "three of every thousand Ecuadorians receive an inheritance each year and three in every 100,000 inherit more equity than \$50,000. Between 2010 and 2014 only five Ecuadorians, of the 16 million inhabitants, inherited over a million dollars."

This project has aroused the right-wing opposition, who not only want to defeat the bill, but who aim to overthrow the government of Correa and Alianza PAÍS's program, called the Citizen's Revolution. The rightists also have in their sights the 2017 presidential election and aim to weaken the support of the masses for the current government.

Since Monday, June 8, it seems that they are taking advantage of the absence of the chief executive. The extreme right, along with national corporate media and the international imperialist media have unleashed a wave of protests against the government, primarily in the capital Quito but also in other Ecuadorian cities. These forces have tried to mount a campaign of misinformation directed at the people in the middle and the working class, arguing that the new law will affect all the people, including the middle class and the working class. The government has tried to combat this misinformation by explaining the law in detail.

The people are sovereign

Sometimes this rightist swamp of rich people, entrepreneurs and right-wing politicians has become violent, attacking pro-government demonstrators who have also taken to the streets to defend the government's political process. A police force standing between the two sides has prevented more direct confrontations.

The Citizen's Revolution, like every political process, has contradictions, errors and strengths. However, anti-imperialists and progressive forces internationally

must have the priorities very clear. It is the people who are sovereign and who have to decide their destiny for themselves. So far, the masses are defending the process laid out by the Citizen's Revolution. A retreat would be a gain for the rightists and the imperialist plans, led by Washington.

It comes as no surprise that the alternative information source Cubadebate published an article about Ecuador's Foreign Minister Ricardo Patiño on June 6, just before the start of opposition protests on June 8. In it, he responds to some allegations sent on June 4 in a tweet by Roberta Jacobson, deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. State Department for Latin America. Jacobson's tweet reads, "Call on the government of #Ecuador to respect freedom of expression and democratic rights as fundamental #libertaddeprensa [freedom of the press]." (Twitter.com/whaasstsecty)

It would appear that Jacobson, on behalf of the Empire, was subtly preparing the scenario that would unfold only days later.

Calling "offensive" the allegations of the government in Washington, Ecuador's foreign minister stated that instead of responding, the government in Quito will send to the U.S. State Department documentation highlighting freedom of expression in the Ecuadorian media. He added that the U.S. has no moral high ground to make such an indictment when it continues to imprison people in Guantánamo. He said thousands of copies of this response will be sent to all those targeted by the U.S., including surviving victims of U.S. drone attacks and their relatives and survivors of the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

The Ecuadorian people are still taking to the streets and at the time this article is being written (Monday, June 15) are carrying out a massive demonstration in support of the government of Rafael Correa in front of the Palace of Carondelet in Quito. Expressions of support for the Ecuadoran government also flood the different social networks. □



Right, Tariq Aziz, shown here with the late South African freedom fighter Nelson Mandela.

Tariq Aziz 1936–2015

WW publishes the following obituary for Tariq Aziz, written by two former United Nations humanitarian coordinators for Iraq who both resigned in protest of how the U.N.-imposed sanctions caused enormous suffering among the Iraqi people in the 1990s.

By Hans von Sponeck and Denis Halliday

June 8 — Tariq Aziz, former deputy prime minister of Iraq, has passed away. Twelve years of suffering in Iraqi jails have ended and he can finally rest in peace.

Unwell, deprived of adequate medical help and abandoned by the outside world, he was held hostage by Iraqi governments following the illegal invasion of Iraq by the U.S. and the U.K. governments in 2003. Tariq Aziz was needed by a struggling authority as a symbol of victory after having inherited a destroyed nation following years of sanctions and a failed occupation.

It does not matter to us that our words of sadness and respect for Tariq Aziz — a leader during many dark days of his country — will be used by some to discredit us for alleged support of a dictatorial regime.

Tariq Aziz impressed us again and again by his commitment with which he cooperated with the United Nations when we served at different times as U.N. humanitarian coordinators in Baghdad. His relentless efforts to prevent the 2003 war will not be forgotten. He was a hard but highly principled task master without whom the inadequate U.N. Security Council response to human suffering in Iraq would have had an even worse impact.

We have a good idea how the scales

of justice would react were it possible to quantify the weight of wrongdoing against the people of Iraq contributed from within Iraq and from the outside.

During the past years, we had hoped that influential leaders would see it as their moral responsibility to see that Tariq Aziz, a sick and elderly statesman, would be allowed to live his last days in the comfort of his family. We were wrong. We had appealed to former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who co-chaired with Tariq Aziz the 1991 Geneva negotiations on Iraq, to support calls for humane treatment of his former counterpart. Baker refused to act as a statesman.

We also had hoped to hear the pope's voice for fellow Christian Tariq Aziz following our contact with the Holy See's foreign minister. The Vatican remained mute. Other leaders in Europe and elsewhere preferred silence to compassion.

Not even our own organization, the United Nations, could muster the courage to demand fair treatment for the man whom the organization had known over decades as a convincing and credible defender of Iraq's rights.

As time passes, we are certain that Tariq Aziz will increasingly be remembered as a strong leader who tried his best to protect the integrity of Iraq against all odds within his country and against outside interference by self-serving political forces. □

U.S. support for Ukraine fascists exposed

By Greg Butterfield

Representative John Conyers of Michigan, a veteran of the Civil Rights Movement and a longtime member of the Congressional Black Caucus, has introduced amendments to the 2015 Defense Appropriations Act to block the training of Ukraine's fascist Azov Battalion and prevent the transfer of shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, known by the acronym MANPADS, to Ukraine and Iraq.

The amendments passed the House of Representatives on June 11.

"I am grateful that the House unanimously passed my amendments last night to ensure that our military does not train members of the repulsive neo-Nazi Azov Battalion, along with my measures to keep the dangerous and easily trafficked MANPADS out of unstable regions," Conyers said in a statement on his website.

The Ukrainian government immediately denounced Conyers. Anton Gerashchenko, advisor to Kiev's Interior Minister, urged U.S. intelligence agencies to "pay attention" to him. (Russia Insider, June 12)

In a tragic irony, on the same day

Conyers' amendments passed the House, a bloody attack in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkov confirmed the role of fascists in the misnamed "new, democratic" Ukraine championed by Washington officials.

On the night of June 11, a group of masked neo-Nazis stormed a group of foreign students outside their dormitory. Five Arab and four Nepali students, as well as two Russian speakers who came to their defense, were brutally attacked. The students were hospitalized, some with serious stab wounds and head injuries. (Inter novosti. net, June 12, and email report from Donetsk People's Republic Communists)

Local media reported that the attackers were followers of Andrei Biletsky, a notorious white supremacist from Kharkov who was jailed under the previous Ukrainian government for acts of fascist violence. Biletsky was freed during the U.S.-backed coup in 2014 and is now a leader of the Azov Battalion.

"Ukraine's Azov Battalion is a 1,000-man volunteer militia of the Ukrainian National Guard that Foreign Policy Magazine has characterized as 'openly neo-Nazi' and 'fascist,'" notes Rep. Conyers' website.

"Ukraine's Interior Minister Arsen Avakov, who oversees Ukraine's armed militias, announced that Azov troops would be among the first units to be trained by the Pentagon in Operation Fearless Guardian, prompting significant international concern."

In fact, training is already underway, since the deployment of hundreds of U.S. troops to Lvov in western Ukraine in April.

Conyers' amendments are largely symbolic, since the misnamed "defense" bill will have to be reconciled with the Senate version before final passage.

Those amendments are likely to face stiff opposition from the Obama White House and Senate Republican leader John McCain, who have worked hand in hand to support the Kiev junta of oligarchs, neo-liberal politicians and neo-Nazis and their brutal war against the independent Donbass republics of Donetsk and Lugansk.

Further, the U.S., International Monetary Fund and NATO are moving full steam ahead with plans to bolster the bankrupt Kiev regime with money, heavy weaponry and troops to threaten the Donbass republics and Ukraine's eastern neighbor, the Russian Federation. □

TPP dangerous to world's workers, poor

By Gene Clancy

On June 12, as part of a legislative maneuver, Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives voted against and defeated part of a package bill that would have given “fast track” authority to President Barack Obama to negotiate the Trans-Pacific Partnership. The result in the U.S. Congress is still pending. The union and environmental movements in the U.S. have mobilized to defeat the TPP.

The TPP is a so-called free trade agreement, this one with 11 other Pacific Rim nations: Australia, Brunei, Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam and Japan. Secret negotiations for the TPP

have been underway since 2010.

Fast track authority means that the U.S. president is authorized to negotiate secretly to reach an agreement which then must be voted on within two months with a direct up or down vote. No amendments to the agreement are permitted, no filibuster in the Senate will be allowed, and only a simple majority is needed to pass.

The TPP bill has been surrounded by extreme secrecy: members of Congress must view the contents alone with no supporting staff. No smart phones, computers or cameras are allowed, and members are not allowed to take written notes. Drafts of the bill will remain classified for four years after the agreement is adopted!

On the surface, the vote appeared to

be an aberration. Right-wing Republicans, who usually profess their hatred for Obama, led the charge to give sweeping authority to him, while the majority of Democrats opposed the bill.

Free trade and imperialism

The TPP is just one of a triad of “free trade” agreements currently being negotiated around the world. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is a proposed agreement between the European Union and the U.S. The Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) negotiations cover the U.S., the EU and 23 other countries including Turkey, Mexico, Canada, Australia, Pakistan, Taiwan and Israel. The TISA is an attempt to recognize the fact that “services” now account for nearly 80 percent of the U.S and EU economies.

All three of these proposed pacts notably exclude the so-called BRICS countries — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — which have attempted to counter the U.S juggernaut towards world economic hegemony.

All of these agreements are being pushed under the slogan of “free trade,” which, it is claimed, will bring prosperity for all. Nothing could be further from the truth. As Sam Marcy, a former chairperson of Workers World Party, remarked in describing an earlier free trade agreement:

“In the contemporary world struggle, the bourgeoisie still postures as the champion of free trade. But it is not the free trade of the old competitive stage of capitalism. It is the free trade of giant imperialist monopolies.” (“Free trade, monopoly and NAFTA,” Workers World, 1993)

In fact, 95 percent of the TPP is not directly related to trade per se, but to the deregulation of investment by multinational corporations — to their advantage.

The Wikileaks revelations

Despite the extreme measures taken to keep the negotiations secret, a lot of information has leaked out about what the TPP contains. Since 2013, WikiLeaks, an organization which has in the past revealed secrets about war crimes by the U.S and its allies in Iraq and Afghanistan, has published dozens of secret documents from the TPP negotiations, including the negotiating positions taken by various countries.

Nevertheless, details of the massive

treaty, affecting 40 percent of the world's economy, remain secret. According to Julian Assange, the leader of WikiLeaks, who is still confined in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, “Six hundred U.S companies are part of the negotiation process and have been given access to various parts of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.” (quoted in inquisitr.com, May 31)

Assange warns that the deal could give corporations a massive advantage with environmental and labor laws.

“It's about regulating labor, what labor conditions can be applied, regulating, whether you can favor local industry, regulating the hospital health care system, privatization of hospitals. So essentially, every aspect of the modern economy, even banking services, are in the TPP.” (inquisitr.com)

An especially pernicious provision of the TPP is the establishment of unaccountable supranational courts that would allow multinational corporations to sue countries outside of their own judicial systems. Although the “Investor-State Dispute Resolution” tribunals mainly target the sovereignty of developing nations, they would also apply within the U.S.

The definitions empowering the ISDR's are so broad that they could be used to attack everything from regulating hydrofracking and anti-tobacco laws to the regulation of multinational banks.

According to the consumer advocacy organization Public Citizen, the TPP pact could “expose Medicare to pharmaceutical company attacks and constrain future policy reforms, including the ability of the U.S. government to curb rising and unsustainable drug prices.” (citizen.org, June 10)

One target of the new pact appears to be the public health care systems of New Zealand and Australia, which, because of their successful control of drug and medical devices prices, have been touted as models for many countries in the developing world.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership, along with the other so-called free trade pacts being negotiated, is a mortal danger to the laboring masses of the entire planet. These pacts are nothing less than an attempt to make an end run around the fierce resistance which is steadily building among the 99%. That's why so many popular organizations and unions are demanding: Stop the TPP! □

‘Stop U.S. proxy wars!’



Some of the protesters, holding Syrian flag, June 13.

Outside the New York studios of CNN June 13, hundreds of people had the opportunity to hear the truth about U.S. wars and interventions around the world that they don't get from corporate media outlets. The occasion was a rally and speak-out against U.S. proxy wars around the world and President Obama's plans to deploy 450 additional troops to Iraq.

Many people stopped to listen and talk to organizers on the bright early summer day. Anti-war and community activists distributed hundreds of flyers urging people to get informed and join in building a mass movement against war and racism.

“From Yemen to Donbass, it's one war on a global scale,” said Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center. “But no matter how many bases, troops and military hardware it uses, the U.S. is unable to impose its domination without meeting powerful resistance.”

Flounders explained how corporate media like CNN cover up the U.S. role in the Saudi bombing of Yemen, the Ukrainian shelling of the Donbass People's Republics and the funding of rebel movements from Syria to Venezuela by censoring information and spinning military aggression to Washington and Wall Street's liking.

“The Pentagon doesn't build bases anymore — in Iraq they now call them ‘lily pads,’ as if they were flowers,” said Flounders. “The U.S. doesn't deploy troops but ‘trainers and advisors.’ U.S. mercenaries are called ‘private contractors.’”

Johnnie Stevens, of the Peoples Power Assembly, said: “There's a war against the people of the world and a war against the people here at home. We need money for jobs, housing, schools and hospitals. We need to fight racist police terror here, not people resisting U.S. oppression around the world.”

Speakers and participants represent-

ed the Syrian American Foundation; Solidarity with Ukraine Antifascists Committee; Pakistan-USA Freedom Forum; Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST); U.S. Friends of the Soviet People; Workers World Party; and other groups.

Solidarity messages were received from the Union of Political Emigrants and Political Prisoners of Ukraine; Ukraine Antifascist Committee of Bologna, Italy; and the Donbass Anti-Nazi Committee in Rome.

—Report and photo by Greg Butterfield

Leftist party gains in Turkey elections

By John Catalinotto

The June 7 national parliamentary elections in Turkey resulted in both a leap forward for a coalition of leftist and pro-Kurdish forces, called the People's Democratic Party (HDP), and a setback for the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), led by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. This is a shift leftward that also destabilizes the Turkish government, sharpening the class and national conflicts.

Turkey's 83 million people live in a territory slightly larger than Texas that reaches from the tip of the Balkans in Europe into West Asia. Despite its membership in NATO and its large land army, Turkey has not yet been welcomed into the European Union.

Kurds make up at least 18 percent of the total population, concentrated in the southeast but spread throughout Turkey. Facing national oppression, Kurds have been waging an armed struggle for self-determination since 1984, led by the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK). In 2013, the Erdogan government opened negoti-

ations with Abdullah Öcalan, the imprisoned head of the PKK, but no permanent agreement has yet been reached.

Under Öcalan's direction, the PKK has dropped its demand for an independent Kurdistan and has reached out to other communities inside Turkish territory.

Voting shift

In the election, the AKP dropped nine points from its 2011 results to 41 percent of the vote, losing 71 seats. It now has 258, or fewer than half the members of the 550-member Parliament. The AKP was the first Islamic-based party to rule over Turkey since the secular revolution of the 1920s.

Some voters turned against Erdogan because of his brutal repression of environmental demonstrations in 2013. Some said they wanted to stop him from increasing his nearly dictatorial power. Probably the biggest issue was his active intervention to overthrow the Syrian government, which has created a disastrous situation for refugees on Turkey's border with Syria.

The relatively new pro-Kurdish-rights HDP raised its vote from 9.8 percent in

the 2014 presidential election to 13 percent. This means the HDP surpassed the high 10-percent minimum needed to win seats in Parliament, becoming the fourth-largest bloc with 79 seats.

The HDP is a coalition of leftist parties and organization. Its core consists of forces that have campaigned for Kurdish rights, but the coalition also includes different groupings from the left within both the Turkish and Kurdish populations. The coalition has backing from pro-feminist groups and from all the national minorities.

Of its 79 members in Parliament, 31 are women, at least one is openly gay, and many are from leftist parties. They represent all minority religions and national minorities on Turkish territory. One such woman is Dilek Öcalan, niece of Abdullah Öcalan, the jailed founder of the PKK. The HDP won seats away from the AKP not only in the Kurdish regions; it also won 11 seats in Turkey's capital, Istanbul.

The HDP campaign included demands to raise the minimum wage, improve ac-

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WORKERS WORLD

editorial

A very hot summer

It gets very hot in June in McKinney, Texas, 30 miles north of Dallas. So when 19-year-old high school senior Tatyana Rhodes invited her classmates to a “school’s out” pool party on June 5 at her subdivision’s facility, the Craig Ranch North Community Pool, dozens of students, Black, Latino/a and white, showed up.

But instead of everyone having a nice time taking a cool dip in the pool, the party’s host was physically attacked by a group of white adult residents shouting racist slurs. The Black youth were told to leave the pool and “return to Section 8 housing.” (nytimes.com, June 10) The racists then called the police.

A dozen white McKinney cops responded to a “disturbance” of multiple juveniles “who do not live in the area or have permission to be there.” One of the cops was Eric Casebolt. A white teenager named Brandon Brooks video recorded what happened next.

Shoving and cursing at only the Black teenagers and ignoring the white ones, Casebolt brandished his gun at them after he wrestled an already sitting and crying 15-year-old girl, Dajeeira Becton, onto her stomach, shoving her face into the ground and kneeling on her back. The young woman was clad only in a bathing suit when she was manhandled by Casebolt.

When Adrian Martin, 18, tried to comfort Becton, he was arrested by Casebolt. Charges were later dropped.

When Brooks released his video of this racist atrocity on YouTube, hundreds marched in protest on June 8 through downtown McKinney. This righteous outrage, along with the strong Black Lives Matter movement across the United States, has forced the resignation of Casebolt as well as the job suspension of one of Rhodes’ racist attackers. Community members and leaders are calling for Casebolt’s arrest and prosecution for assault.

Swimming pool racism not new

Achieving the right of African-American youth to swim in pools and at beaches has long been a flashpoint of the struggle against racism. On July 27, 1919, a 17-year-old African-American named Eugene Williams was swimming with friends in Lake Michigan near Chicago. When Williams crossed the “boundary” into the “white beach” area, a group of

white men threw rocks at him. One of them struck Williams in the head, causing him to drown. The cops refused to arrest any of the whites involved in this assault and murder.

Violence broke out. White mobs attacked the Black community, setting fires that left 1,000 families homeless. Thirty-eight people were killed, with more than 500 injured.

In Pittsburgh in 1931, young Black men tried to enter a city pool. They were held underwater and beaten by white swimmers while the cops watched. When more than 100 Black people held a “wade in” in 1960 in Mississippi, a white mob attacked them with pool sticks, lead pipes and chains.

There have been many other such attacks against African Americans at beaches and pools over the years.

These racist attacks on the right of Black children just to be able to go swimming have a devastating impact. A recent study by “USA Swimming” indicates that 58 percent of African-American children cannot swim, almost double the rate of white children. Black children drown at nearly three times the overall rate.

There has been a stony silence of the capitalist political establishment, one that includes all the presidential candidates, about the racist McKinney pool attack. Nor have any of them spoken out against the numerous deaths of unarmed young Black men by racist police from Ferguson, Mo., to Los Angeles, from Cleveland to Staten Island, N.Y., and all across the country.

Hillary Clinton made a major policy speech in New York City on June 13, which in Texas is celebrated by the African-American community as Juneteenth, the day of liberation from slavery.

Yet Clinton said not one word about the well-publicized attack on Black children in McKinney. Nor did she voice any support for the Black Lives Matter movement. Capitalist politicians will not roll back this tide of racist killings and police attacks.

The historic Black Lives Matter movement, along with organized support by all workers and other oppressed peoples, is the force that will get killer cops jailed and achieve justice as the struggle against racism and national oppression continues to grow across the U.S. □

Philadelphia victories against killer cops

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video clearly shows that they were on.

The issue of his supposed struggle with the police is still questionable, as is where he was shot. The major dispute is whether or not Brandon had a gun in the car.

Brown-Dickerson has consistently challenged every aspect of the case against her son and has called on Ramsey and Williams to be charged with conspiracy and obstruction of justice. In an interview, she stated: “They staged a scene. They killed my son for no reason, and that’s a crime. There’s no evidence that Brandon hit anyone. His hands had no marks on them, but he did have scraps on his face and legs from where the officer dragged him. I watched (Officer) Carrelli grab him by the hoodie and jerk him around.” (phillyinfocus.com, June 12)

‘Lawncrest 10’ victorious in court

On June 10, the “Lawncrest 10,” represented by people’s lawyers Michael Coard and Larry Krasner, had their day in court. Charged with disorderly conduct, all 10 decided to fight this out in court in order to beat back the police attack against the movement.

The prosecution’s witness testimony quickly revealed itself to be a complete sham, including that of two cops who were not present for the arrests and a notorious mobster who admitted on the stand that he had a direct connection to organized crime and the police. Furthermore, the state could not prove that protesters had done anything other than engage their supposedly protected freedom of speech.

Coard said the protesters engaged in

WW COMMENTARY

Another Black youth lost to racism

By Teresa Gutierrez

Another mother has lost her child to the racist, brutal prison system. Kalief Browder, an African American who was only 22 years old, committed suicide on June 6, after having spent more than three years in jail at Rikers Island in New York City. He hung himself with an air conditioner cord at his home in the Bronx.

Browder was arrested in the spring of 2010 at the age of 16 for allegedly stealing a backpack. Bail was set at \$3,000, a sum his mother could not afford. Throughout his three-year ordeal at Rikers, Kalief heroically refused to plead guilty, always stating his innocence — even though it might have meant an early release.

Browder’s case caught the attention of well-known journalists. For example, a spotlight was shone on his tribulations in an article written by Jennifer Gonnerman in the New Yorker’s Oct. 6, 2014, issue. That article and others detailed that this young man, a teenager, a beautiful child who might have had a promising and wonderful life, spent more than a thousand days in jail where he was brutally treated, beaten and tortured.

Browder later related stories to his family about being starved and beaten by Rikers’ guards. Video footage acquired later by journalists sadly confirmed this nightmare.

Unbelievably, two of Browder’s three years at Rikers were spent in solitary confinement. While incarcerated, he tried to end his life several times. Clearly, the prison-industrial complex broke this young man’s fighting spirit.

Because of Browder’s horrific situation, there have since been a plethora of articles in the mainstream media about what he went through during his 1,000 days at Rikers Island. Articles of condemnation abound, rightfully calling Rikers a “house of horrors” and even comparing it to Abu Ghraib. Politicians like Mayor Bill de Blasio condemn conditions at Rikers Island.

But unlike what many media accounts are stating — that “New Yorkers did not fail Kalief” — the system did fail him. The working class of New York City is not to be blamed; its rulers are.

Browder the rule, not the exception

Browder garnered much attention and support. Upon his release, he was able to meet Jay Z. Rosie O’Donnell invited him to appear on TV on “The View” on Nov. 7, 2014. Anonymous donors paid for some of his tuition for community college.

Still Browder could not overcome the demons that had been planted in his young mind as a result of solitary confinement and torture.

Let this be a hard lesson for the liberal petty bourgeoisie. Charity or heartfelt generosity is not enough to save a life. One New Yorker article that exposes the terrible reality of so many prisoners can serve more to make a writer famous than deal with the root causes.

New Yorkers are not passive about prison conditions. Example after example abound of families and activists who work night and day to show what is happening in the prison systems in New York and throughout the country. However, their voices don’t seem to be heard as much as those who write for the New Yorker.

Reports from many legal sources, entities such as the United Nations, countless mental health experts and well-documented films have clearly demonstrated the dangers of solitary confinement and the horrors of prison conditions in this country. Solitary confinement has been shown to drive adult men insane. Imagine the effects on a young mind.

This is an age-old problem; it did not just begin. In her book “The New Jim Crow,” Michelle Alexander demonstrates that this government and the capitalist system it upholds are calculated and designed to jail the oppressed. The prison system — just like the killer cops who walk free — shows that Black and Brown lives do not matter under the capitalist system.

That is why the entire capitalist system must be overturned and uprooted in order to save the lives of future Kalief Browders. Until then, Rikers Island should be shut down immediately, killer cops should be jailed and the occupying police force disarmed. That should be the order of the day. □

Leftist party gains in Turkey elections

Continued from page 9

cess to university education and achieve gender equality. It promised to create a ministry of women and make International Women’s Day a national holiday. The HDP has a man and woman, respectively, as co-chairs: Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yukseldag.

In a statement following the election, Demirtas said: “This vote means a victory for all oppressed, ethnically identified and religious communities like Alewites, Sunnis, Christians and Jews in Turkey.

“noble activism” while the police “overreacted.” Defense lawyer Krasner added that “these 10 people are the reason we know who killed Brandon Tate-Brown.” All 10 were found not guilty.

With these victories, the two struggles — the fight for real justice for victims of racist police brutality, as well as the struggle against police repression of the Black Lives Matter movement — will continue to shake the foundations of Philadelphia for a long time into the future. □

This victory belongs to the workers, the unemployed, the village residents, farmers and all whose labor power is exploited.” (Junge Welt, June 9)

The AKP had run the government since 2001. President Erdogan, who was prime minister from 2001 until the December 2014 presidential election, had planned to push a change to the constitution to give more power to the presidency. He needed to control two-thirds of Parliament to do that. Instead, the AKP even failed to hold its majority.

The other two parties in Parliament are the Republican People’s Party (CHP), with 25 percent of the vote and 132 seats, and the ultra-right Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), with 16 percent and 80 seats. The MHP is also known as the Grey Wolves, and has carried out fascist-type attacks on leftists.

It is not clear what sort of coalition can be formed from these electoral forces, with an AKP-CHP “grand coalition” being the most probable. Failure to form a coalition in 90 days will lead to a new election.

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Talks stall as Saudis bomb Yemeni cities

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

In the first announced attempt to reach a political settlement, United Nations talks began June 15 — with the Ansurallah rebels absent — in Geneva, ostensibly seeking to end the escalating imperialist-coordinated war against the people of Yemen.

Since March 26, the Saudi Arabian and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) alliance has bombed the major population centers in Yemen daily. These forces are also providing materiel and logistical support to the Western-allied militias that are fighting against the advances of the Ansurallah organization, also called the Houthis.

The Saudi and U.S. governments charge the Houthis with having Iranian backing. Many characterize the war as a proxy conflict between Tehran and Riyadh.

The war has displaced as many as a half million Yemenis and killed between 2,000 and 4,000 people since the bombing began, creating an extreme humanitarian crisis.

Only Ansurallah's resistance to the U.S. and Saudi-GCC backed alliance has forced the talks in Geneva. Yet the terms impede any settlement. Fugitive Pres-

ident Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi said prior to the scheduled meeting that the talks must center around returning him to power in Sanaa.

A June 15 Wall Street Journal report notes that fugitive President Hadi is demanding that the talks focus on implementing U.N. Security Council Resolution 2216. This resolution insists that the Houthis pull back from the parts of Yemen they have seized. But the Houthis have said that the negotiations need to focus on a more inclusive political agenda that would result in Hadi's resignation, writing a new Yemeni constitution and scheduling democratic elections.

The Horn of Africa nation of Djibouti houses the largest Pentagon military base in Africa at Camp Lemonnier. Egypt's military-turned-civilian regime of President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi has been on board with the Saudi-GCC war against Yemen. Cairo is the second largest recipient of direct aid from Washington internationally, followed only by Israel.

In addition to the proposed talks in Geneva, the Organization of Islamic Conference arranged in Riyadh for Iran to participate in other discussions about resolving the situation in Yemen for the first time since the Saudi-GCC bombing started.

Behind the problems in the talks

The BBC reported on June 15 that despite the absence of Ansurallah representatives who remained stranded in Djibouti and Cairo at that time, the talks were started anyway. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed that the parties should resolve their differences, otherwise Yemen would be destroyed.

However, the source of the conflict is U.S. imperialism which has utilized Yemen as a major base in its so-called "war on terrorism." Numerous drone attacks and targeted assassinations have been carried out in Yemen. Resistance inside Yemen forced the withdrawal of 100 U.S. Special Forces and State Department personnel earlier in 2015. The Saudi-GCC forces are objectively waging war on behalf of Washington and Wall Street.

Cross-border operations by the Houthis into Saudi Arabia are continuing.

The BBC also reported, "In recent weeks, fighting between Saudi forces and the Houthis has intensified on Yemen's border with Saudi Arabia. On Saturday [June 13], Saudi Arabia claimed to have shot down a Scud missile fired by the Houthis. The attack followed fighting on the border on Friday, in which four Saudi

soldiers and a number of Yemeni rebels died. On the same day, bombs hit the Old City of Yemen's capital, Sanaa, killing five people according to local sources."

The U.N. Economic, Scientific, and Cultural Organization decried recent attacks on designated heritage sites by the Saudi-GCC alliance fighter bombers. Moreover, the entire population of Yemen is being terrorized by those elements backed by Washington.

The Yemen conflict represents the failed foreign policy of successive U.S. administrations aimed at controlling entire regions of the Middle East and North and East Africa for the purpose of exploitation. Nonetheless, the people in Yemen are building new alliances that are effectively challenging imperialist rule.

In other areas throughout the regions, U.S. interventions have resulted in further underdevelopment and instability. From Iraq, Syria, Libya, Sudan and Egypt to the current refugee crisis in the Mediterranean, Pentagon and CIA wars of regime-change have illustrated imperialism's failures in the present period. The only choice the peoples of the regions have is to unite in a program of action aimed at defeating the foreign policy imperatives of Washington and Brussels. □

African Union overshadowed by attacks on Sudan

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

A concerted campaign to disrupt the African Union Summit held June 7-15 in the Republic of South Africa used charges by the International Criminal Court against standing Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, who was recently re-elected by a wide margin in the oil-rich north central African state.

A war against the government of Sudan has been carried out with the full support of imperialism since 2003. The government has rejected accusations that it is guilty of war crimes and genocide in the western Darfur region.

Numerous investigations of the Darfur question have failed to prove genocide against the people of the region. Various imperialist-backed groups have sought to shift public opinion against the African state to no avail. Most anti-imperialist organizations view the situation inside Sudan as a by-product of the legacy of British colonialism and the continuing interference of U.S.-based intelligence and military agencies, along with their allies in Israel and other Western-dominated states.

A so-called nongovernmental organization in South Africa sought to have the

Sudanese head of state arrested, based on highly questionable indictments issued against him several years ago by the ICC, based in the Netherlands, a former colonial and slave-holding state in Europe. Instead, he was allowed by the South African government to return to his home country on June 15.

The Republic of South Africa, led by the African National Congress, assured the Sudanese government that it had no intentions of acknowledging such a court demand for the appearance of an African leader, since that would violate AU protocol. Bashir was in South Africa at the invitation of the AU and President Jacob Zuma.

An article in the Sudan Tribune said that opposition parties had moved the case against Bashir.

Sudan, prior to its partition in 2011, largely at the aegis of U.S. imperialism, was the largest geographic nation-state in Africa. Washington sought to control the oil-producing country's foreign and domestic policy during the 1990s.

Sudan has been under constant criticism and legal persecution over its efforts to secure its sovereignty during an ongoing insurgency in its western Darfur region. Nevertheless, President al-Bashir and his National Congress Party have

been able to maintain state control and stave off persistent destabilization efforts by the U.S. and Israel, which support the rebel movements in Darfur.

AU focus on women, economic development

This meeting of the AU focused on the struggle for gender equality and the necessity of African economic development. An early session was held on the role of women in Africa.

All 54 AU member states have pledged to vigorously promote the participation and empowerment of women in all aspects of society, including government and economic affairs.

A document issued by the AU during the summit states: "The consideration of gender in sectorial development policies of the African Union experienced a breakthrough at the level of continental organization as well as in Member States despite the existence of many challenges that still persist in regards to gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa."

In theory and program, the AU is mandated to work toward at least 50 percent participation of women in political and societal affairs. These efforts are designed to overcome the legacy of slavery and colonialism, where the role of women in Africa

was severely submerged under a system of exploitation and national oppression.

African economic integration and socialism

Some 26 AU states have signed an accord to establish an African Trade Zone, seeking to link the entire continent in a program of economic growth and development.

The website of the ANC reads, "The agreement, signed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), seeks to create a common market from Cape to Cairo. It is effectively the continent's largest free trade zone, unlocking blockages that had previously existed hindering the free movement of goods and investment across the continent. This development is in line with our stated objective of catapulting Africa to take her rightful place as a formidable force amongst regions of the world; ensuring that development and growth come from within the continent itself driven by our combined population of 600 million and combined [gross domestic product] of approximately a trillion U.S. dollars."

This AU meeting took place against the backdrop of continuing challenges of economic dependence on imperialism, xenophobic attacks in South Africa and a rising migrant crisis in the Mediterranean.

In order to effectively break the chains of neocolonialism and imperialism, AU member-states must establish their own system of political and economic relations independent of world capitalism, which was built on the profits of slavery and colonialism.

The subordinate position of Africa reflects the failure of postcolonial states to integrate their political economies against capitalism and reconstruct the continent on a socialist basis that would provide the foundation for development in accord with the interests of the majority and not the ruling classes. □

Continued from page 10

Beyond the election

On June 5, just days before the election, a bomb went off in the middle of a mass HDP rally in the mostly Kurdish city of Diyarbakir in the southeast. Two people were killed and many more injured. Nevertheless, the HDP won 80 percent of the vote in Diyarbakir on June 7.

What boosted the mood among Kurds and left forces in Turkey was the recent military victory by armed, mostly Kurdish elements in the town of Kobane in the Kurdish region of northern Syria. These forces, including the PKK fighters, defeated an assault by the reaction-

ary Islamic State, also known as ISIS.

Both the military victory and the bomb in Diyarbakir point out that while elections reflect the sentiment of the masses, they do not in themselves resolve the question of power. In 1980, after a decade of fighting between fascist and revolutionary groups, a military coup seized power in Turkey.

The Turkish police, intelligence services and the massive armed forces, with nearly 700,000 personnel and with close ties to both the U.S. and German armed forces, are still the power behind the electoral façade. □

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¡Alto a la guerra en Ucrania! Washington apoya los bombardeos en la frontera rusa

Por Greg Butterfield

8 de junio - El gobierno de extrema derecha ucraniano, respaldado por Washington, lanzó una nueva ofensiva militar contra las Repúblicas Populares Independientes de Donetsk y Lugansk, en la noche del 2 al 3 de junio.

La Milicia Popular de Donbass respondió rápidamente, primero haciendo que las fuerzas de Kiev se replugaran en pánico y luego atrincherándose en preparación para la dura batalla por el control de Marinka, una ciudad al suroeste de la capital de Donetsk, contra el ejército ucraniano financiado cada vez más por EUA y armado por la OTAN.

“Durante los combates y bombardeos de Marinka y zonas suburbanas de Donetsk ocurridos el 3 de junio, de 15 a 20 civiles murieron y decenas resultaron heridas”, informó en su blog el analista militar Coronel Cassad. “En general, este es el día más sangriento de la guerra desde el final de la batalla de Debaltsevo, cuando el ejército ucraniano sufrió enormes pérdidas tratando de escapar”.

El subjefe del Estado Mayor de las milicias de Donetsk Eduard Basurin afirmó que 20 milicianos murieron y 100 quedaron heridos. Mientras tanto, unos 400 soldados ucranianos murieron, dijo el jefe de Donetsk, Alexander Zakharchenko. Sesenta piezas de armamentos militares ucranianos fueron destruidas, incluyendo cuatro baterías de artillería. (Dan-News.info, 5 de junio)

Aunque inicialmente el ataque se centró cerca de Marinka, la lucha se ha extendido por toda la “línea de contacto” entre Ucrania y las Repúblicas Donbass - la zona neutral establecida por el acuerdo de alto al fuego de Minsk el 2 de febrero.

El último ataque de la junta de Kiev de oligarcas, políticos neoliberales y fascistas se produce después de un mes de constantes violaciones al acuerdo de cese al fuego por el ejército ucraniano, principalmente a través de bombardeos indiscriminados a objetivos civiles - incluyendo la destrucción de la casa de Katya Tuv, de 11 años, en Gorlovka. El 26 de mayo Katya y su padre murieron; su hermano menor resultó herido y su madre Anna quedó gravemente herida, perdiendo un brazo.

Advertencias ignoradas

Fue desde las ciudades cercanas a Marinka que las fuerzas de ocupación de Ucrania lanzaron muchos ataques mortales de artillería dirigidos a las ciudades de Gorlovka, Donetsk, y otras áreas residenciales.

Durante semanas, las milicias antifascistas en Donetsk y Lugansk habían advertido de la rapidez con que se instalaban las fuerzas militares de Kiev en la región, incluyendo armamento pesado expresamente prohibido por el acuerdo de cese al fuego.

Durante semanas, los líderes políticos de Donbass le decían al mundo que las nuevas provocaciones probablemente coincidirían con una importante reunión de los poderes de la Unión Europea, programados para ayudar a Washington a salirse con la suya continuando la guerra y extendiendo las sanciones en contra de la Federación Rusa.

El asediado pueblo de Donbass, la región minera primordialmente de habla rusa que formaba parte del sureste de Ucrania, salió a las calles a finales de mayo para protestar contra la continuación de crímenes de guerra de Kiev. Reconocieron que los asesinatos en la ciudad de Tuv fueron el comienzo de una nueva fase de la guerra que empezó en abril del 2014 y se ha cobrado oficialmente 6.400 vidas - pero por la mayoría de los estimados, son muchas más.

Los medios corporativos ignoraron todas las advertencias, mientras funcionarios del Departamento de Estado de EUA negaban las continuas violaciones del alto al fuego de Kiev.

En el momento justo, el presidente de Ucrania Peter Poroshenko, se dirigió a la Rada (Parlamento) el 5 de junio, alegando que había más de 9.000 tropas rusas en 14 grupos tácticos en territorio ucraniano.

“Me pregunto cómo las contó”, fue la respuesta cáustica del líder Donetsk Zakharchenko. “El talento del presidente ucraniano es único. Es muy difícil ocultar 9.000 soldados de las Fuerzas Armadas de Rusia, no sólo de la [Organización para la Seguridad y la Cooperación en Europa], sino también de nosotros...”

“Si hubiera habido 9.000 [fuerzas rusas] aquí, yo no estaría explicando lo que sucedió en Krasnogorovka o Marinka. Estuviéramos hablando de [luchar en] Kiev o Jarkov”. (Dan-News.info, 5 de junio)

El G7 se divierte mientras mueren en Donbass

La ocasión para el discurso grandilocuente de Poroshenko fue la adopción de una ley por la Rada que permite “la admisión de fuerzas armadas de otros estados en el territorio de Ucrania” para el “mantenimiento de la paz y la seguridad internacional”.

La junta ha pedido en repetidas ocasiones “fuerzas de pacificación” de la ONU o de la OTAN para ayudar a sofocar la resistencia popular en Donbass.

Anteriormente, la presencia de una fuerza militar internacional requería la adopción de una ley especial iniciada por el presidente estipulando la duración de la presencia. Bajo la nueva ley, no se requiere autorización legal adicional y la duración de la estancia es de carácter indefinido.

La ley también establece que “se permiten portadores potenciales de armas nucleares y otras armas de destrucción masiva... con presencia a corto plazo.” (RT.com, 5 de junio)

El jefe negociador de Lugansk Vladislav Danego, señaló que la ley también tiene la intención de justificar la presencia de tropas extranjeras que “ya operan en Ucrania. Hay unas 20.000, principalmente de Hungría y Polonia”, dijo a la agencia de noticias Interfax, además de mercenarios de EUA y otros países.

El presidente estadounidense Barack Obama declaró en la reunión del Grupo de los siete países imperialistas, la necesidad de “hacer frente a la agresión rusa en Ucrania” - ignorando el hecho de que su gobierno y el Congreso orquestaron el golpe derechista que depuso al gobierno legalmente electo de Ucrania en febrero de 2014, como un paso hacia la expansión del poder militar de la OTAN a la frontera

occidental de Rusia. (Sputnik News, 7 de junio)

He aquí una muestra de lo que estaba sucediendo en Donbass mientras Obama y otros jefes de los G7 - EUA, Canadá, Bretaña, Francia, Italia, Alemania y Japón - se reunían en un hotel de lujo en Baviera-Alemania los días 6-7 de junio para discutir cómo castigar a Rusia.

Las/os habitantes de Telmanovo acudían al funeral de Yanya Nesteru, de 4 años de edad, asesinada por los bombardeos ucranianos el 5 de junio. (Ren.tv) Tanques de Kiev atacaban la aldea de Oktyabrsky, bombardeando un edificio de apartamentos de nueve pisos, donde un residente perdió su pierna. (LifeNews 7 de junio)

Gennady Moska, nombrado “gobernador” de Lugansk por Kiev, dio la orden de suspender el suministro de agua a la República Popular Lugansk, dejando a cientos de miles de personas sin agua. (Anna-News.info, 6 de junio)

“Duros combates están en marcha en todo el frente desde Mariupol a Lugansk”, informó Prensa Nueva Rusia el 7 de junio, mencionando Shyrokyne, Sahanka, Gorlovka, Marinka, Spartak, Pesky, la ciudad de Donetsk, el aeropuerto de Donetsk, Bahmutka y Shchastia.

Preparándose para guerra

Los combates continuaron el 8 de junio alrededor de Donetsk, Gorlovka y Mariupol, mientras tanques y artillería bombardearon Shirokino, según Timer.od.ua.

Ese mismo día, el subjefe del Estado Mayor Basurin dijo que Ucrania “sigue llevando artillería pesada a la línea de contacto”, incluyendo sistemas de lanzamiento múltiple de cohetes. “Fortificaciones ya se han construido en la carretera entre Konstantinovka y Dzerzhynsk, que bloquean el tráfico civil”. (Novorossia Hoy)

Además, el presidente ucraniano Peter Poroshenko firmó una ley que autoriza la ley marcial “en caso de agresión armada o amenaza de ataque, amenaza a la independencia de Ucrania o la integridad territorial” — palabras claves que se han utilizado previamente para justificar la guerra contra Donbass. Las disposiciones de la ley incluyen “asentamiento forzado de ciudadanas/os de un país extranjero que amenaza con atacar o realizar agresión contra Ucrania”, una amenaza que ha sido aplicada frecuentemente contra las/os residentes de Donbass. (TASS, 8 de junio)

Tal vez lo más inquietante, sin embargo, fue que Poroshenko firmó una ley el 8 de junio que canceló todos los acuerdos militares con Rusia en relación a Transnistria, una región separatista de Moldavia, vecina al sur de Ucrania, donde están estacionadas 1.200 tropas de paz rusas.

Junto con el nombramiento del ex presidente de Georgia y títere estadounidense Mikhail Saakashvili como gobernador de la región de Odessa y un reportado aumento de las fuerzas militares de Ucrania allí, la anulación de los acuerdos militares señala que hay planes en marcha para provocar a Moscú en un segundo frente para impulsar los planes de Washington para la expansión de la OTAN, la destrucción de Donbass independiente y un cambio de régimen en Rusia. □

Bienvenida, Caitlyn Jenner

Editorial Workers World-Mundo Obrero
9 de junio 2015

Bruce Jenner, el campeón de decatlón y medallista de oro olímpico de 1976, se declaró transgénero frente a una audiencia internacional cuando una entrevista de dos horas con Diane Sawyer se emitió en la cadena ABC el 24 de abril. Un récord de 20 millones de espectadores/es vio la entrevista — en realidad un mini-documental — y oyó de Jenner su verdad: “. . . Yo soy mujer”.

En un especial de dos partes en mayo, Jenner dijo: “Lo único que quiero de esto es ayudar a la gente. No solamente la comunidad trans — es realmente más grande que eso, es mucho más. . . Necesitamos más tolerancia en este mundo hacia nuestras/os conciudadanos [el pueblo]. Todas/os somos seres humanos puestos en esta tierra; tenemos que aprender a vivir juntos”.

Caitlyn Jenner fue presentada el 1 de junio cuando se dio a conocer la portada de julio de la revista Vanity Fair. Millones de personas en EUA y en el mundo aplaudieron la valentía de Jenner, de 65 años, en revelar la lucha de toda su vida y presentarse públicamente como una mujer. En los medios de comunicación social, las personas trans, incluyendo a muchas mujeres de color, estaban eufóricas, acogiendo orgullosamente y celebrando la transición de Jenner.

A pesar de su riqueza y de su ideología política, WW-Mundo Obrero aplaude a Jenner y también afirma su derecho a la autodeterminación. Igualmente, reconocemos que es el movimiento de décadas de duración por los derechos básicos y por la liberación de y por las personas trans que construyeron la plataforma en que ahora Jenner se encuentra como una orgullosa y abiertamente mujer trans.

Luchamos contra la discriminación legalizada, la opresión y la violencia que se enfrentan muchas personas trans, preponderante mujeres trans y personas trans de color. Muchas personas trans enfrentan rechazo familiar, falta de vivienda, pobreza y otros problemas sociales opresivos y degradantes. Es legal en la mayoría de los estados discriminar contra las personas trans en el empleo, la vivienda y en otras áreas. De acuerdo con un informe publicado en enero por la Campaña por los Derechos Humanos y la Coalición de Personas Trans de Color, la violencia y el asesinato de las personas trans es una “crisis nacional”.

Pese a ello, las personas trans viven sus vidas con valentía de la manera que eligen, y se convierten en líderes políticos en luchas de liberación.

WW-Mundo Obrero seguirá apoyando a las/os más oprimidos y seguirá luchando por los derechos civiles y la liberación de todas las personas trans. Aplaudimos la celebración pública de Caitlyn Jenner y todo lo que ella ha hecho para animar, inspirar y levantar el ánimo de las personas trans por todas partes. □