

Anthem policy on hold

NFL players push back bosses

By Monica Moorehead

July 30 — The struggle between National Football League players and billionaire owners continues to dominate sports and political headlines on social issues. The NFL Players Association, the union representing the players in a league that is at least 70 percent Black, filed a grievance on July 10 in response to a policy passed on May 23 by 31 of 32 owners.

The owners’ policy stated that players could be fined for kneeling during the playing of the national anthem during the 2018-19 season. Only Jed York, owner of the San Francisco 49ers, abstained from voting.

The bosses’ action is not an unprece-

dentented one. In January 1934, the fascist Nazi government banned its football club from playing against a French team when the club refused to give the Nazi salute before a game.

A July 10 press release from the NFL-PA stated: “Our union filed its non-injury grievance today on behalf of all players challenging the NFL’s recently imposed anthem policy. The union’s claim is that this new policy, imposed by the NFL’s governing body without consultation with the NFLPA, is inconsistent with the collective bargaining agreement and infringes on player rights.” (www.nflpa.com)

Since the grievance was filed, both sides in the dispute, the Players Association and the owners, agreed to put the policy on hold until further negotiations

take place. A July 19 public joint statement read: “No new rules relating to the anthem will be issued or enforced for the next several weeks while these confidential discussions are ongoing.” (CNN.com)

If the bosses’ decision eventually gets enforced, it would give the NFL hierarchy the right to fine any player for taking a knee or expressing any kind of protest during the anthem. It would also give individual owners the option to impose an additional fine on a protesting player. Players’ sole option would be to stay in the locker room until the anthem is finished.

When players were informed of the new policy by owners, many were angered and frustrated by having their freedom of expression stolen from them.

Justin Casey, a three-time Pro-Bowl

defensive end for the Tennessee Titans, stated that he will continue to protest during the anthem, policy or no policy.

Casey told CNN: “I’m going to take a fine this year. Why not? I’m going to protest during the flag.” (July 18)

Where pro football is concerned, standing for the U.S. national anthem first began in 2009. Before that time, players stayed in the locker room during the anthem.

Then, between 2011 and 2014, the Department of Defense gave the National Football League \$6 million for “paid patriotism” during the playing of the anthem — a policy that also extended to baseball, basketball, hockey and soccer games.

Continued on page 5



As Occupy Philadelphia marched for justice against racist Immigration and Customs Enforcement on July 30, solidarity between migrants and others incarcerated in prisons began to emerge. At the Bristol Detention Center in Massachusetts, migrant detainees who started a hunger strike on July 17 were joined by hundreds of other prisoners there. More at FIRE Boston (facebook.com/Boston4Migrants).

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Solidarity with migrant families 3,4,9

Win against ICE 2

EDITORIAL: Housing is a right 10



Decolonize
Puerto Rico! 3, 10, 12

Laundry & domestic workers’ victories 3

Spectrum strikers in limbo 4

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PRISONER UPRISINGS & NATIONAL STRIKE 6-8

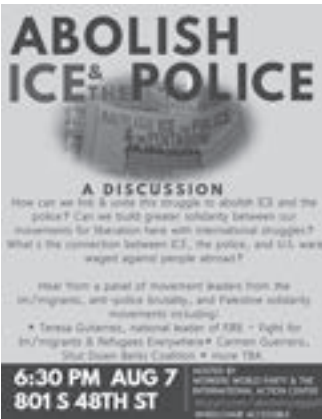
Georgia
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Philadelphia Occupy ICE scores a win

By Betsey Piette

The weeks of protests and occupations outside the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency and Philadelphia City Hall brought about

a key victory as Mayor Jim Kenney announced on July 27 that he would not renew PARS, the city’s data-sharing contract with ICE.

The announcement came one day after demonstrators took over and held a City Hall stairway, blocking access into the building. The contract is set to expire Aug. 31.

Ending the ten-year contract that gave ICE agents access to the police database system was one of three demands put forth by a broad network of im/migrants’ rights activists. Their struggle started July 2, when hundreds of people set up an encampment outside the ICE office in Center City.

Other demands were to abolish ICE and close the Berks County Family Detention Center. Hundreds of undocumented migrants, including children, have been held in the center, some for years, awaiting deportation hearings.

Kenney has maintained that Philadelphia is a “sanctuary city.” He even went to court to stop federal government efforts to deny funding because of that status. Nevertheless, immigrant rights activists and others have challenged the validity of Kenney’s claim because of PARS as well as the city’s stop-and-frisk policies.

The PARS system gave ICE agents access to police records that contained names, addresses and even countries of origin for anyone who had come in contact with law enforcement as a witness or to file a complaint, even when no laws were broken.

ICE used PARS records to target and profile individuals born outside of the U.S., even where there was no reported infraction. PARS enabled ICE to track down people and deport them and to detain people when they appeared for court dates or probation appointments.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Occupy ICE at Philadelphia City Hall.

An investigation by ProPublica and the Philadelphia Inquirer found that under the Trump administration ICE officials in Philadelphia were the most aggressive in the U.S., leading the country in noncriminal arrests. Some 64 percent of im/migrants arrested in Philadelphia in 2017 had no criminal convictions. The studies also raised concerns over Philadelphia ICE’s potentially illegal tactics. (BillyPenn.com, April 13)

Demonstrators set up the encampment outside City Hall on July 6 after police raided and destroyed an encampment of hundreds of activists outside the ICE office.

The City Hall encampment held frequent small street demonstrations and provided opportunities to raise awareness of other struggles, including the fight for disability rights and for the needs of people without homes.

Prison rights activists, including Pam Africa and Michael Africa Jr. from the MOVE organization, spoke to the protesters and gave

information on the MOVE 9 and Mumia Abu-Jamal. On July 25, demonstrators from the City Hall encampment joined a march, when it reached their location, for Puerto Rican independence from U.S. colonialism.

The struggle continues

Kenney informed the protesters on July 27 that they would have 24 hours to shut down the encampment, citing an upcoming “construction project” at that location. A similar excuse was used by city officials in 2011 to shut down Occupy City Hall, part of the Occupy Wall Street movement.

Demonstrators packed up camp July 28 and moved across the street to the Municipal Services Building. They were then near the controversial statue of former Philadelphia mayor and top cop Frank Rizzo, itself a longtime target of anti-police brutality activists calling for its removal. City officials announced months ago that Rizzo’s statue would be taken down, but no action has followed.

Occupy City Hall protesters pledge to remain and to link their demands to abolish ICE and close Berks alongside demands to end stop-and-frisk and to fight for people who are homeless. □



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Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

National Office
147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
PO Box 18123
Atlanta, GA 30316
404.627.0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443.221.3775
baltimore@workers.org

Bay Area
1305 Franklin St. #411
Oakland, CA 94612
510.600.5800
bayarea@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.286.6574
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
335 Richmond Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14222
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
1105 N. Ashland Ave.,
Chicago, IL 60622
312.630.2305
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216.738.0320
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
804 Old Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27701
919.322.9970
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713.503.2633
houston@workers.org

Indiana
Indiana@workers.org

Madison
Madison@workers.org

Los Angeles
5278 W Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323.306.6240

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610.931.2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org

Portland, Ore.
portland@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585.436.6458
rochester@workers.org

Rockford, Ill.
rockford@workers.org

Salt Lake City
801.750.0248
SLC@workers.org

San Antonio, Texas
SanAntonioWWP@workers.org

San Diego
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Virginia
Virginia@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

WORKERS WORLD this week

★ In the U.S.

NFL players push back bosses.....	1
Philadelphia: Occupy ICE scores a win.....	2
Chicago: Disability Pride.....	3
Philly protests U.S. colonization of Puerto Rico.....	3
New York teach-in: ‘Koreans want peace!’.....	3
Domestic workers organize for rights and against ICE...	3
Laundry workers make gains in East Harlem	3
Charter-Spectrum strikers left in limbo	4
Tech workers show growing class consciousness	4
On the picket line	5
Georgia: Prisoners resist psychological torture.....	6
MOVE: Over four decades of resistance	6
San Diego: Race, class and mass incarceration	7
South Carolina: Death by medical neglect	7
Boston meeting defends the incarcerated	7
Class solidarity surges for migrant families	9
Pittsburgh tells Trump and Congress: #UnblockCuba	10

★ Around the world

Vietnam August ‘68: GIs in military prisons rebel.....	8
France: From state repression to state scandal	11

★ Editorial

Housing is a right.....	10
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★ Noticias en Español

Trump, Putin y Helsinki	12
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Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 60, No. 31 • Aug. 2, 2018
Closing date: July 31, 2018
Editor: Deirdre Griswold



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Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly
except the first week of January by WW Publishers,
147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone:
212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$30; institu-
tions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and
edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to
Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY
10011. Back issues and individual articles are available
on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing,
Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A
searchable archive is available on the Web at
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A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription.
Subscription information is at workers.org/email.php.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
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Chicago

Disability Pride



WW PHOTO: JEFF SOREL

Chicago’s Disability Pride Parade on July 21 gathered together over 1,000 people from as far away as North Dakota to celebrate disabled people’s contributions and to bring joy to participants and onlookers. Chicago Workers World Party carried a banner that read, “Support Disabled Liberation: From each according to our ability, to each according to our needs.” The banner featured silhouettes of people using various mobility devices as well as an illustration of a woman doing the ASL sign for “Unity.”

— WW Chicago bureau



On July 25, 1898, U.S. Marines invaded Puerto Rico. The U.S. continues to occupy that nation 120 years later, against all international conventions that prohibit the possession of colonies.

Organized by the Philadelphia Camden Boricua Committee, members and allies of the Puerto Rican community rallied and marched in Center City on July 25 for 120 minutes to demand the end of the colonization of Puerto Rico. Marchers distributed informational fliers about the crimes the U.S. has committed against the Boricua people.

Demonstrators held signs and banners near the historic cracked Liberty Bell, as speakers took turns on a bullhorn to explain why independence for Puerto Rico is justified and necessary.

120 years Philly protests U.S. colonization of Puerto Rico

Participants then marched to Philadelphia City Hall, where Abolish ICE activists have been occupying a section of land for weeks, demanding an end to PARS (Preliminary Arraignment Reporting System), an agreement between the city and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to share a database used to identify “deportable” im/migrants.

At City Hall, immigrant rights activists and homeless people welcomed the marchers for Puerto Rican independence by blocking the busy street curb-to-curb. Together, everyone marched around City Hall during rush hour. In a further display of solidarity, marchers chanted “End PARS! Abolish ICE! End the occupation of Puerto Rico!”

— Report and photo by Joe Piette

New York teach-in: ‘Koreans want peace!’



Seventy people packed the Asian American Writers’ Workshop in Manhattan on July 27 to discuss the struggle for peace in Korea. The majority were members of the Korean diaspora. The teach-in was held on the 65th anniversary of the Korean War armistice and organized by Nodutdol for Korean Community Development.

A three-person panel, Betsy Yoon, Yujin Park and Rose Kim, together with moderator Ryan Wong, talked about the political situation following the summit meeting between Democratic People’s Republic of Korea leader Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump. Public opinion polls show 80 percent of people in U.S.-occupied south Korea view Kim Jong Un favorably.

At least a quarter of the people in the DPRK were killed

during the U.S. war against Korea. U.S. planes dropped 32,000 tons of napalm, burning alive Korean children. The U.S. still refuses to sign a peace treaty with the DPRK.

In the breakout groups following the panel, one Korean-American mentioned that the DPRK, like Cuba, gave refuge to members of the Black Panther Party. In 1950, the renowned scholar and African-American leader W.E.B. Du Bois denounced the Korean War when he ran for the U.S. Senate from New York and got 205,729 votes.

Korean people want peace and reunification. A peace walk will be held in Flushing, Queens, N.Y., on Aug. 12. Korea is One!

— Report and photo by Stephen Millies

Laundry workers make gains in East Harlem



PHOTO: ERIC MCGREGOR

Following a June 28 march and walk-in organized by the Laundry Workers Center at an East Harlem laundromat, the owners tried to argue that the labor of the workers was not legally protected by wage, hour and other laws. The center immediately planned picket lines and organized a call-in by supporters to let the laundromat owners know the community is watching them. The LWC’s attorneys also notified the company that they would file charges if the owners retaliated against the workers.

The LWC has a record of making important gains in its fight for the rights of New York City’s laundromat workers, who are mainly

Latinx women immigrants. The center’s quick actions in East Harlem pressured the owners to relent and agree to negotiate “in good faith” with the workers. The company has also begun paying minimum wage and overtime, providing protective gloves and masks, and complying with health and safety laws.

“Due to your support, and the courage of the workers,” said the LWC in a message to supporters, “this is a victory for laundromat workers and the community.” The center plans to monitor company actions and keep supporters informed until a final agreement is reached.

— Report by Mary Owen

Domestic workers organize for rights and against ICE

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

Domestic workers here have won industry-wide standards under basic labor laws for the first time by winning a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights in Seattle. The National Domestic Workers Alliance won the breakthrough law at the Seattle City Council meeting on July 23 after months of campaigning. Then, on July 26, the NDWA called a militant action at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement headquarters here against deportations and the separation of families.

There are 33,000 domestic workers in Seattle. Nannies, cooks, house cleaners and gardeners, who are mostly women and people of color, have for far too long been excluded from basic labor protections. Under the new law, domestic workers will now receive minimum wage protection plus meal and rest breaks. The law also protects the workers from having their basic documents, like passports, taken away.

Funding for enforcement will be increased. The law covers all part-time, full-time, independent contractor and live-in domestic workers in the city, regardless of whether they are technically employed by an agency or a family. (workingwa.org)

The law establishes a Domestic Workers Standards Board, comprised of workers and management representatives, to make regular recommendations for improving the law. The board will oversee enforcement and work to provide protection against discrimination and sexual harassment. The National Domestic Workers Alliance was supported in this victory by Service Employees Local 775 and the labor/community organization Casa Latina.



PHOTO: CASA LATINA

National Domestic Workers Alliance and CASA Latina members demand an end to family detention and “zero tolerance” anti-immigrant policies, July 26.

Following the law’s passage, the Domestic Workers Alliance, along with Casa Latina, called an action against the ICE/Trump war on im/migrant families. July 26 was the 30-day deadline for the federal government to return the 3,000 children who were seized by ICE to their parents. There were protests around the country on this date, but Trump failed to meet the deadline.

In Seattle, at least 25 people with baby strollers blocked the entrance doors to the ICE headquarters for three hours. A hundred other demonstrators supported them. Protesters carried signs reading, “Nannies Say Families Belong Together, Not in Cages!”

Representative of the Domestic Workers Sylvia Gonzalez said, “We are here in front of ICE committing civil disobedience to stop the separation of families and reunite the children with their parents, because the children are very much affected by their separation.” □

Charter-Spectrum strikers left in limbo

By Mary P. Kaessinger

The New York state Public Service Commission rescinded the Charter/Time Warner merger on July 27. It effectively threw Charter, the second largest cable provider in the country, out of the state. The commission’s counsel also filed for additional penalties in New York’s trial-level Supreme Court.

The PSC’s news release read: “Charter, doing business as Spectrum, has — through word and deed — made clear that it has no intention of providing the public benefits” on which the PSC based its approval of the merger on Jan. 8, 2016. The PSC also ordered Charter to pay \$1 million to New York for missing its deadlines. “Charter is not interested in the public good,” the PSC said, just in “lining its pockets.”

Spectrum had agreed to deliver broadband speed of 100 Mbps statewide by the end of 2018 and 300 Mbps by the end of 2019. It also had agreed to build out its networks to underserved homes and businesses in less densely populated areas of the state. Although Spectrum was



WW PHOTO: SUE HARRIS

Striking IBEW Local 3 workers picket Spectrum at 43 W. 23rd St., New York City, July 6, 2017.

only 40-percent compliant, it launched an advertising campaign boasting of its high-speed networks.

Striking cable technicians at Spectrum lit up the Twitter networks when they learned of the rescinded merger. On strike for better working conditions for over 15 months now, the technicians cheered when the PSC voided the merger. They saw this as a decisive blow to

Spectrum management’s arrogance.

“They were out to break the union,” a member of International Electrical Workers (IBEW), Local 3, told this reporter. “We had a working relationship with Time Warner. Spectrum’s first move was to lay off the management employees they considered to be ‘union sympathizers.’”

Spectrum has 60 days to submit “a plan to ensure an orderly transition to a successor provider(s).” No direct mention was made of the 1,800 strikers. However, one of the instances of misconduct cited in the decision was “unsafe practices in the field.”

Prior to this decision, a group of about 50 striking technicians filed a business plan for a workers’ cooperative that would break Spectrum’s monopoly and benefit everyone. The workers had been part of a design and survey team tasked with

bringing cable TV to areas of New York City where there is currently no service.

Troy Walcott, shop steward at Spectrum’s College Point facility and member of the design team, told Labor Press: “We know the system because we built it. The system was already crumbling and the infrastructure needed to be redone. ... We’re saying instead of letting them do it, let’s start rebuilding it ourselves — the people who are going to be building it anyway.” (laborpress.org, July 25)

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio expressed support for workers’ cooperatives at a town hall in Queens: “We are interested in more competition (in the cable TV industry) going forward. ... We would like to hear if there is something we can do with the workers themselves — that’s really an interesting idea.” The City Council allocated \$1.2 million in 2015 for development and cultivation of workers’ cooperatives, followed by \$2.1 million in 2016 and \$2.2 million in 2017. (laborpress.org)

Although Spectrum was clearly dealt a defeat by the PSC, it is unclear at this point how these events will affect the striking workers. □

Tech workers show growing class consciousness

By Sven Ferarri

Workers at Microsoft used an internal question-and-answer session in late July to present CEO Satya Nadella with a petition signed by over 300,000 people. The public petition demanded an end to the tech company’s contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The petition points to Microsoft’s \$19.4 million contract with ICE as part of a broader trend in the tech industry. It notes that Dell, Thomson Reuters, Motorola, Salesforce and Hewlett Packard all have ongoing contracts with ICE and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Microsoft insists that its Azure software, a cloud-based computing program that performs functions ranging from facial recognition to data collection, is not specifically being used to separate families. It’s obvious, however, that the tech giant has been caught in the act. Last January Microsoft bragged on its own blog that its software had become integral to ICE operations.

Broad struggle for immigrant rights

The recent confrontation between Microsoft workers and the company’s CEO is part of the broader struggle for immigrant rights. It involves a growing movement of tech workers as well as an emerging workers’ consciousness across various sectors of the working class.

While the movement for immigrant rights has been ongoing for decades, widely circulated reports of the Trump regime’s brutal policy of family separation have produced mass outrage. This has shown itself in large-scale rallies and marches across the country as well as in ongoing occupations at ICE detention centers, many of which have been met with police violence and repression.

What has become increasingly clear to broad sections of the working class is that politicians have neither the will nor the know-how to solve this crisis.

According to most reports, the U.S. government separated at least 2,500 children from their parents, and now deems 711 children “ineligible” for reunification. Popular disapproval of the government’s



PHOTO: TECH WORKERS COALITION FACEBOOK

tactics may have forced Trump to make concessions and reunite some families, yet the government’s refusal to fully comply with the court order for reunification highlights the monstrous U.S. system.

Tech workers take action

Since bourgeois politicians can’t provide viable solutions to the problems they themselves have made, the people have begun to take matters into their own hands.

Last week’s actions came a little over a month after more than 100 Microsoft workers published an open letter addressed to the CEO, calling for an end to any and all collaboration with ICE. Along with providing a list of grievances and demands, the letter stated:

“As the people who build the technologies that Microsoft profits from, we refuse to be complicit. We are part of a growing movement, comprised of many across the industry who recognize the grave responsibility that those creating powerful technology have to ensure what they build is used for good, and not for harm.”

This welcome development comes in an industry that has been famously devoid of organized labor. Many have written off Microsoft employees as decidedly not working class. But segments of contracted tech workers have been organizing, including tech cafeteria workers through UNITE HERE and janitors and

bus drivers at Dell and Google through Silicon Valley Rising.

Now there are more signs of an emerging workers’ consciousness and bold displays of solidarity. The “growing movement” in the open letter to Microsoft refers to a string of worker-led campaigns inside some of the largest tech companies based in the United States.

In June Amazon workers published an open letter, “Dear Jeff,” to company owner Jeff Bezos, demanding that the company cancel contracts not only with ICE, but with all law enforcement agencies, including the police. The letter went so far as to compare Amazon’s actions to that of IBM, which collaborated with Nazi Germany to develop systems used to carry out genocide in the 1940s.

The Amazon letter follows the success-

ful worker-led campaign within Google against the company’s involvement in Project Maven, which sought to develop artificial intelligence for use in drone warfare. After months of internal unrest, multiple petitions and over a dozen resignations of highly skilled workers, Google’s parent company Alphabet announced in June that it would not be renewing its contract with the Department of Defense.

Worker power in tech sector

Marxist political activists should welcome and support these growing displays of worker power in the technology sector. Even if these actions aren’t representative of the entire workforce of these companies, they indicate a sea change in workers’ political awareness. They also reveal the changing dynamics of who actually constitutes the working class.

The dynamics of class struggle are neither fixed nor immutable. They are relative to workers’ relationship to the means of production. If workers have to sell their labor to capitalists in order to survive, and capitalists in turn need to exploit workers in order to make profits, the workers can also be organized to apply pressure to those capitalists.

Marxists are correct, for example, to celebrate the recent string of teachers’ strikes from West Virginia to Arizona. Remember there was a time when teachers weren’t considered to be workers. The same economy that’s producing conditions that lead teachers to strike is producing conditions for tech workers to stand up against the criminalization of immigrants. □



High Tech, Low Pay
A Marxist Analysis of the Changing Character of the Working Class
By Sam Marcy with an updated introduction by Fred Goldstein author of Low Wage Capitalism.

Class War in West Virginia: Education Workers Strike and Win!



Both available online at workers.org/books

NFL players push back bosses

Continued from page 1

U.S. Senators Jeff Flake and John McCain issued a report in 2015 on the militarization of sports: “These paid tributes included on-field color guard, enlistment and reenlistment ceremonies, performances of the national anthem, full-field flag details, ceremonial first pitches and puck drops. The National Guard paid teams for the ‘opportunity’ to sponsor military appreciation nights and to recognize its birthday.” (thedailyhaze.com, Sept. 25, 2017)

The ongoing impact of Colin Kaepernick

The new NFL policy stems from the heroic protest begun by former 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who took a knee during the anthem throughout the 2016-17 season to protest racist police brutality and social injustice in general. He began his protest in August 2016 during preseason, a few weeks after the fatal shooting of two Black men, Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, by white police officers.

When protests spread to other teams, bigot in chief Donald Trump publicly attacked the players. In September 2017, during a Republican rally in Huntsville, Ala., he called the players “SOBs” and demanded owners fire them for “disrespecting the flag.”

Kaepernick made it clear that his protest was not against the flag or the military, but to help raise awareness of white supremacy that the flag represents, past and present, in the U.S.

While many Black players have faced a barrage of racist epithets and even physical assaults from white fans for taking a knee or simply for playing while Black, the opposite behavior has been displayed toward white racist players. A white Milwaukee Brewers baseball player, Josh Haden, recently admitted he tweeted racist and homophobic messages as a teenager. Yet he was given a standing ovation before a majority-white home crowd in Milwaukee — a thoroughly segregated city where Black youth, including Milwaukee Bucks basketball player Sterling Brown, have been brutalized by the police.

Kaepernick was released from the 49ers at the end of the 2016-17 season and has not played since, even though he led the 49ers to the Super Bowl in 2013. Many socially conscious players like Michael Bennett and Malcolm Jenkins have voiced the opinion that Kaepernick has been “blackballed” by the majority-white owners for taking a public stand against racism. Kaepernick has filed a grievance lawsuit of his own against the owners, charging them with collusion for refusing to allow him to play.

Bosses bully players

The Miami Dolphins issued a July 26 memo stating that any player protest would be grounds for suspension, not just fines.

After the new owners’ policy was passed in May, Jerry Jones, the billionaire owner of the Dallas Cowboys, the richest NFL



PHOTO: WHATSTRENDING.COM

Malcolm Jenkins holds a silent “you are not listening” press conference June 6 in response to Trump’s disinviting Eagles to White House.

team, said that he would not allow anyone on his team to even stay in the locker room during the anthem. Jones, who has had multiple sexual misconduct lawsuits filed against him, stated at a press conference: “Our policy is you stand during the anthem, toe on the line.” (USA Today, July 25) It comes as no surprise that Trump praised Jones’ stance on Twitter.

The irony of Jones’ statement is that, except on the Sunday after Trump’s “SOB” rant, not a single player from the Cowboys protested last season. Only time will tell if some of these players decide to rebel against Jones’ scare tactic by taking a knee to wield their power.

Philadelphia Eagles safety Malcolm Jenkins called Jones a “bully,” while expressing solidarity with any Cowboys player who wants to protest.

The Eagles, currently Super Bowl champions, were disinvited by Trump to a White House visit when many of them stated they didn’t want to go there in the first place.

Bosses fear a players’ rebellion

Many sports analysts claim that Trump has instilled fear in the NFL owners and that he is seeking revenge after some owners denied his bid to buy the Buffalo Bills decades ago.

But as sports writer Dave Zirin stated in a recent column: “NFL owners don’t fear Trump. They fear their own players.” (The Nation, June 13)

The bosses live in constant fear of their workers going out on strike or on a work stoppage for higher wages and better working conditions. The NFL owners are bosses who understand that players, as workers, can be a threat, costing them billions of dollars in profits if they withhold their labor power.

What distinguishes these players from the millions of other workers is that they can be seen on TV or live stream, on the sidelines and on the field on a Monday, Thursday, Saturday or Sunday, whenever games are played. Some may make huge salaries, but their work-life is very short, and they are in constant danger of work-related injuries.

The owners already lose sleep about the threat to their profits from increased player injuries, especially head trauma that ends playing years and lives. This and other factors, including Kaepernick being denied the right to play, also threaten a loss in fan base, which in turn affects the bosses’ profits.

But undoubtedly the bosses’ biggest worry is players rebelling for the right to express their political views, especially if those views reflect the communities where Black and Brown youth face police terror and mass incarceration.

Many of the players were lucky enough to escape these intolerable conditions due to their extraordinary talents and skills — and now they are ready to protest. □



1,800 Vermont nurses strike for raises and safe staffing

The 1,800 nurses and 300 health professionals at the University of Vermont Medical Center (UVMC) kicked off a 2-day strike in Burlington on July 12-13. Their union, the Vermont Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals Local 5221, is striking because their low wages directly result in unsafe staffing ratios. The hospital ranks among the lowest for pay in a state that ranks 47th in nurses’ wages. That’s why the strike demands wages competitive with those of other nurses in the region — a 23 percent raise.

Unable to recruit and retain because of these conditions, the hospital relies on traveling nurses for 13-week gigs and forces its own nurses to work down — doing support work like laundry, billing, coding, cleaning rooms and walking patients across the hospital, all of which take time from vital patient care. While UVMC is the second largest employer in the state, it usually has vacancies for between 130 and 180 positions. The workers are also demanding a \$15 minimum wage for all employees.

Throughout negotiations, management has pursued a campaign of bullying and intimidation, leading the union to file 21 unfair labor practice charges. Management has stubbornly rejected union proposals, refusing to negotiate, blocking union staffers from coming on site, tearing down union fliers and failing to seat key decision makers — hospital executives with power— at the bargaining table. The last bargaining session was held on July 24 with no resolution in sight. The hospital pays lavish salaries — nearly \$11 million to 15 administrators, including \$2 million to its CEO. Meanwhile, the hospital has more than 220 days of operating cash on hand.

The union knows that the success of the strike depends on community and labor support. Organizations sending solidarity include nurses from New York and Massachusetts, a number of unions, International Socialist Organization, Democratic Socialists of America, and Vermont Workers Center. The Workers Center proposed an “Alliance in Support of UVMC Nurses” with educational events and pickets. And taking a cue from the #RedforEd solidarity campaign, it launched #RedforMed, calling for pictures to be posted of supporters wearing red on the picket line. (Truth-out.org, July 14)

This recipe of broad community support and outreach to attack chronic understaffing and low wages is a teachable hallmark for all workers. It’s time to put patients above profits!

Nike to raise women’s wages: goal is pay equity

Nike, the global, multibillion-dollar sportswear brand, connected the patriarchal dots after reports of workplace misconduct and discrimination against women surfaced. In a #MeToo moment, at least 11 senior managers were forced out after an investigation exposed widespread harassment and bias against women.

More than 7,000 women workers, about 10 percent of Nike’s 74,000 employees worldwide, will get raises and opportunities for advancement. Nike characterizes its “adjustments” as establishing “a corporate culture ‘in which employees feel included and empowered,’” according to an internal July 23 staff memo quoted by the July 24 New York Times. After apologizing to the workforce for “missing signs of discontent,” Nike CEO Mark Parker pledged to change pay and management training programs to “reflect its goals of equal pay and work force diversity.”

According to the Times, more than 100 large companies such as AT&T, Gap, Mastercard and Target have already announced they plan to review salaries annually and close the gender pay gap.

Gee whiz, what took them so long. The movement for pay equity has been around for decades. But thanks to the #MeToo Movement, some CEOs finally got the memo!

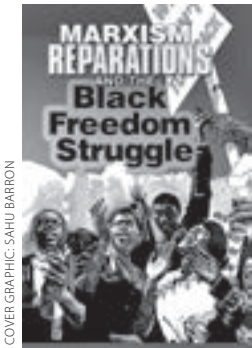
Disneyland theme park workers reach tentative agreement

About 9,500 workers at Disneyland Park, Disney California Adventure Park and Downtown Disney, represented by four labor unions in the Master Services Council, reached a tentative agreement on July 23. (For background, see WW article, May 28.) Disneyland Resort officials have proposed a 36 percent wage increase over a three-year contract for hourly workers at the attractions, stores, main entrance, costuming, bakery/confection, resort transportation and parking, custodial services and onsite distribution center. Under the proposal, the workers would make \$15 an hour by 2020, which would be two years ahead of the state’s minimum wage standard.

The agreement, still to be ratified by the workers, followed months of protests by employees, some of whom complained of earning poverty wages. As Artemis Bell, MSC bargaining committee member, noted: “Disney workers have been hiding in shame for too long, and it took us coming forward and taking a stand to make a real change.” (nbcbayarea.com, July 23) □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper.
Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes:
Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination • Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery • Black Youth: Repression & Resistance • The Struggle for Socialism Is Key • Domestic Workers Demand a Bill of Rights • Black & Brown Unity • Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior • Alabama’s Black Belt • The 1965 Watts Rebellion
Available at major online booksellers.



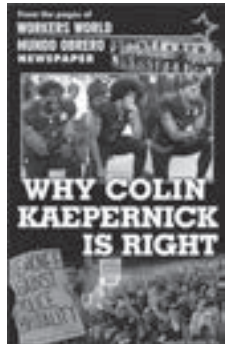
COVER GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

Learn more. Available online at: www.workers.org/books

WHY COLIN KAEPERNICK IS RIGHT

Articles from Workers World/Mundo Obrero

Excerpt: ‘Last October, Colin Kaepernick, the African-American former quarterback for National Football League’s San Francisco 49ers, was asked after a game why he was wearing a Muhammad Ali t-shirt. He said, “To pay homage. [Ali] fought a very similar fight and was trying to do what’s right for the people.”’



SUPPORT THE NATIONWIDE PRISON STRIKE

Prisoners resist psychological torture **GEORGIA**

By Christian Noakes
Atlanta

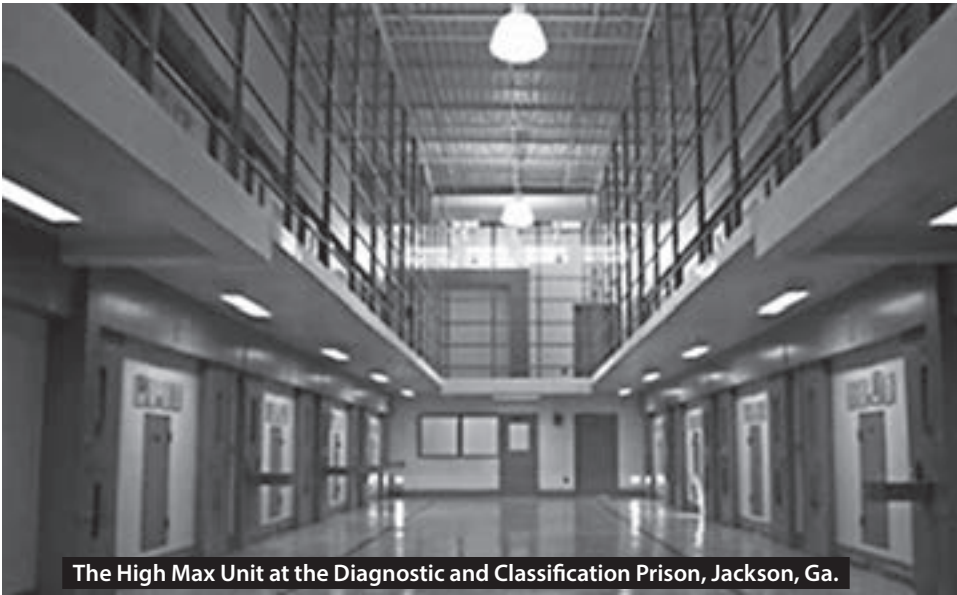
The Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Prison in Jackson, otherwise known as Jackson Prison, is being exposed for subjecting inmates there to extremely dehumanizing conditions.

According to a recent report by psychologist Craig Haney, the conditions of solitary confinement in the E wing, or “special management unit,” are among the worst in the U.S. Haney, hired to investigate by the Southern Center for Human Rights, is a University of California professor specializing in the psychological effects of imprisonment. (Atlanta Journal Constitution, July 20)

In this unit, inmates are cut off from physical and verbal contact. They are also deprived of natural sunlight and air. According to Haney, “The prisoners are in essence hermetically sealed inside their cells for the extended periods in which they are confined there.” (tinyurl.com/y8tejk3m)

Locked up in 7-foot by 13.5-foot cells, prisoners receive a meager five hours of exercise time a week. Haney found that nearly 20 percent of inmates in the unit have been held for six years or more.

Given that 70 of the 180 prisoners currently held in solitary confinement are considered to be mentally ill, the harsh conditions are a blatant form of psychological torture. Little wonder that two



prisoners committed suicide there in 2017.

Haney was hired to assess conditions in the prison’s “special unit” after an inmate filed a federal lawsuit about inhumane treatment while being held in isolation. This was followed by three other inmates filing lawsuits.

All four inmates are requesting that their cases be treated as a class action lawsuit, which could potentially improve conditions for all inmates held in the special unit.

While conditions in Jackson are harsh in the extreme, the aim of breaking human beings with prolonged psychological torture is characteristic of the whole ruthless U.S. prison system.

The practice of solitary confinement illustrates the true nature and function of prisons, which are not geared toward rehabilitation or addressing underlying causes of what is considered criminal behavior. Rather, prisons function to inflict the cruelest treatment on incarcerated people and to break their will under the iron heel of the capitalist state. Whether exploited for slave labor or virtually cut off from the world, prisoners in the U.S. are systematically tortured and dehumanized.

In Georgia, this is happening at an accelerated rate to people who are overwhelmingly poor, working class and Black. Between 1982 and 2002, the Georgia prison population more than tripled from 13,884

to 46,534 people, and is still growing. In 2013, 61.6 percent of Georgia prisoners were Black. (tinyurl.com/y9wymvvn)

The upcoming nationwide prison strike represents the latest front where prisoners are asserting their own humanity.

The strike is set to begin on Aug. 21, the anniversary of George Jackson’s assassination at San Quentin State Prison in California, and extends to Sept. 9, the anniversary of the Attica Prison uprising in New York state.

The coming national strike is firmly rooted in the ongoing struggle for prisoners’ rights. In a press release by Jailhouse Lawyers Speak, a group of incarcerated people calling for the strike, their first demand is explicitly for “immediate improvements to the conditions of prisons and prison policies that recognize the humanity of imprisoned men and women.”

Outside support and pressure are absolutely necessary to make sure participating inmates are not subjected to the kind of treatment that is characteristic of places like Jackson Prison’s isolation unit. People on the outside must help expose the darkest corners of a prison-industrial system where inmates are repressed and brutalized with impunity.

Supporters can connect to local prisoner rights organizations through millionsforprisonersmarch@gmail.com. For more information, see “Prisoners call for national strike,” WW, July 26.

MOVE Over four decades of resistance

By Ted Kelly
Philadelphia

Earlier this summer, Philadelphia was in a state of celebration when political prisoner Debbie Africa was released after nearly four decades in prison. In August, prison abolitionists, in Philadelphia and across the world, will observe an anniversary with more solemnity than rejoicing.

August 8, 2018, marks the 40th anniversary of the city’s first major assault on the MOVE family, an episode that ended in the death of one of the family’s infants and in the arrest and imprisonment of nine MOVE family members.

To commemorate this anniversary, a three-part event will be held on Aug. 5. At 10 a.m., there will be a 5k run and walk that starts in Fairmount Park and goes to the original MOVE house in the city’s Powelton Village neighborhood. Then, at 3 p.m., there will be a public forum at Mastery Shoemaker High School on what today’s movements should learn from MOVE’s struggle. Following that forum will be a live concert at 5 p.m. featuring local artists Seraiah Nicole, Mic Africa, Raw Life Crew and more.

Free the MOVE 9!

Michael Africa Sr., one of the MOVE 9, has a new parole hearing this September. Despite the fact that Janet and Janine Africa were also up for parole at the same time as Debbie, she remains the only member of the MOVE 9 to be released. Debbie was imprisoned in 1978 along with her partner Mike Sr., as well as Delbert, Phil, Janet, Janine, Eddie, Merle and Chuck Africa.

All nine were convicted of the murder of a Philadelphia police officer who died from being struck by one of his fellow officers’ bullets in the hail of gunfire the police blasted into the MOVE home. Despite forensic evidence and scores of eyewitnesses indicating the officer was slain by “friendly fire,” all nine of the arrested MOVE members were convicted of firing the single bullet that killed him.

Immediately after the police assault on the MOVE family, the city bulldozed and destroyed the house, annihilating any and all evidence that could have been used to help exonerate the MOVE 9. The demolition also erased all evidence of the police siege on the compound and the massive structural damage done to the house by police water cannons, chemical gas and thousands of rounds of ammunition fired into the home.

Despite all this, even the city had to acknowledge that of the few weapons that were recovered from the MOVE family home, none of them were operable. That is to say, the MOVE 9 had no way of shooting anyone. Yet each of the MOVE 9 were sentenced to 30 to 100 years in prison.

Judge Edwin Malmed, who handed down the bogus convictions, was asked by then reporter Mumia Abu-Jamal how it could be considered a just decision that nine people were convicted of firing a single bullet. Malmed replied that since the nine wanted to be tried as a family, he convicted them as a family.

A history of oppression — and resistance

The Philadelphia police assault on the MOVE family on Aug. 8, 1978, was a clear escalation of violence, brutality and injus-

tice. But the war on the Philadelphia Black Liberation movement had been raging for at least a decade before. The generalissimo who prosecuted that war was Frank Rizzo, the white supremacist police commissioner turned mayor.

A major attack on Black Liberation began in August 1970 when police raided the Philadelphia Black Panther headquarters. Dozens of Panthers were publicly stripped naked on Columbia Avenue before their arrest. In that era of Cointelpro infiltration, intimidation and assassination, the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panthers was just one of many to go underground or be destroyed outright.

The MOVE Organization, led by the visionary John Africa, is what filled the vacuum left by the Panthers in Philadelphia. With an ideology that combined an uncompromising dedication to Black Liberation with an unprecedented commitment to environmental justice and animal rights, MOVE became a revolutionary force to be reckoned with.

In a recent interview in Workers World, Debbie Africa explained: “[My brothers] got involved in MOVE activities, in speaking engagements — at the time they were in full throttle speaking out against injustice. They loved it, taking care of the dogs and going to study sessions that MOVE founder John Africa held, educating people how to avoid violence in their communities and on police brutality — the things that made people’s lives miserable.”

She added: “John Africa’s teachings really lock you into the reality of what’s really going on. The rest is history.”



For years, the city attempted to lock up members of the MOVE Organization. But John, and later Ramona, Africa’s remarkable legal astuteness meant they often escaped serious charges. That changed in 1978, when weeks of siege on the MOVE house culminated in the Aug. 8 assault and the imprisonment of the MOVE 9.

Three years later, Black Panther journalist and MOVE supporter Mumia Abu-Jamal was also framed for the murder of a Philadelphia cop. A key witness to that incident was found dead under mysterious circumstances on May 13, 1985 — the same night that Philadelphia police dropped a bomb on the new MOVE house on Osage Avenue, killing eleven people, including founder John Africa and five children.

In the years since the 1978 assault and the 1985 state murders, the MOVE family has flourished and grown, despite mainstream media accounts to the contrary. Still, the city’s oppression has taken its toll. Mumia Abu-Jamal and six of the MOVE 9 are still in prison after 40 years. Merle and Phil Africa were murdered by the prison system — they died under lock and key.

This fortieth anniversary must mark not just four decades of resistance, but also a new chapter in that struggle.

Free the MOVE 9! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free ‘em all! □

RIKE: AUGUST 21 TO SEPTEMBER 9

Race, class and mass incarceration

SAN DIEGO

By M. Matsemela-Ali Odom
San Diego

Author Curtis Howard, an activist in All of Us or None who is a formerly incarcerated person, brought to public attention the case of the Boundary Park Four and More.

Federal authorities announced indictments on May 25 against 23 men of color in San Diego. Among the defendants, four names stood out to local residents: Julius Davis, James Staton, Anthony Rhodes and Henry Hendrix. These four often frequent the local Dennis Allen Park, known colloquially as Boundary Park.

These men have an average age of 57 years. The minor drug sales and possession that make up the infractions they have been accused of are insignificant compared to the 20 years in prison they could be facing. As Howard originally articulated in his public correspondence, these indictments reflect the conservative response to progressive anti-prison legislation.

These indictments also unearth the limits of contemporary prison reforms, in that they fail to alter the material conditions the formerly incarcerated must live under.

With nearly 130,000 people in prison and another over 80,000 in jails, California, if measured as an independent country, has an inmate population that ranks in the top 10 in the world and rivals those in Mexico, Ukraine and South Africa.

In recent years, progressives in California mobilized support for and passed

Proposition 47 (2014) and Proposition 57 (2016). Both referendums allowed for the reclassification of adult and juvenile sentences. At least 13,000 inmates have been released from California state prisons, and another 25,000 could be paroled.

Yet, formerly incarcerated people like the Boundary Park Four and More have come home to deindustrialized cities that are unprepared, and often unwilling, to meet the needs of aging formerly incarcerated people of color. They are too old for many of the reentry programs and too young for social assistance. Drug sales have become the ultimate act of survival for many by supporting their recreational habits.

Restructured economy endangered youth of color

The fight against mass incarceration is a racial struggle and a class struggle. Recently, Larry Holmes, First Secretary of Workers World Party, has urged reanalysis of class struggle and the position of groups generally disregarded by the mainstream labor movement, such as African-American youth. Now in their 50s and 60s, the Boundary Park Four and More sit on the cusp of Baby Boomers and Generation X (known as the hip hop generation by African-American scholars.) From the 1970s through the 1980s, it was their generation that first experienced the dramatic effects of restructuring of the American economy from the mid-20th-century Keynesian policy to neoliberalism. This included eliminating

industrial jobs that had been unionized.

As radical professor Ruth Wilson Gilmore has shown in her works such as “Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California” (2007), Black and Brown youth were most impacted by this restructuring, and prisons became warehouses for surplus Black and Brown labor.

Some have focused their criticism on the profits gained from the exploitation of prison labor in state-run and for-profit prisons. Yet the case of the Boundary Park Four and More displays how prison labor is merely a bonus. Remembering the centrality of youth to radical movements of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, we can see how the mass incarceration of three generations of Black youth has held back mass mobilization.

Now, federal and state forces seem intent on completely throwing away the first generation impacted by deindustrialization.

Members of the Boundary Park Four and More are among the formerly incarcerated who have been sent home from prison with no concern for their employment, housing, food or health care. Still, California State Democratic Party officials have been rewarded with electoral victories for their support of the grassroots propositions.

On the other side, conservatives such as State Assemblyman Travis Allen and gubernatorial candidate John Cox have blamed these ballot measures that released prisoners for increasing crime in California

and have promised to reverse propositions 47 and 57. They do this despite reports by the Public Policy Institute of California and others proving the contrary.

In 2000, Californians passed Proposition 36 to send people arrested for drug offenses for treatment instead of to prison. Yet, citing his own conviction in 2006, Curtis Howard has noted that state and federal agencies have evaded this reform by charging users as if they were dealers. As they did with Howard in 2006, police agencies entice users into participating in minor sales as middlemen between a dealer and a customer and then charge them as if they were large distributors.

For Howard, the sheer absurdity in charging the Boundary Park Four and More as dealers lies in the fact that none of these men have any recognizable assets: they own no cars or homes and don’t even have bank accounts. They likely have less than \$100 disposable income, suggests Howard.

If the Boundary Park Four and More have any chance at freedom, they need the support of the community. As members of Workers World Party-San Diego, the Committee Against Police Brutality and the Black August Planning Committee organize this August, they will remind people that all prisoners are political prisoners. For this reason, these organizations have called for a protest in solidarity with the Boundary Park Four and More at the federal courthouse in downtown San Diego on Aug. 10. □

South Carolina prisons: Death by medical neglect

By Jared Ware

Jared Ware: I’ve heard some reporting on how high the death numbers are from South Carolina over the past couple years, but I’ve also heard from some prisoners that they believe the death numbers are actually much higher than what’s being reported.

S: Yeah, they are only reporting certain kinds of deaths, not including some deaths that they have caused themselves. Just to give you an example, they have a cell in the

area they call the RHU (Restrictive Housing Unit) that’s supposed to be the area they put people that get in trouble or whatever. And they’ve got a cell that’s called a CI (Crisis Intervention) cell. That’s where they strip you, make you get butt-naked, you got no clothes on, no nothing, and when they do bring you something, they’ll bring you a suicide blanket only.

A guy years ago, he said he was going to kill himself, so they put him in the CI. The guy told one of the lieutenants later on that night he was cool. The lieutenant gave the

This is Part 3 of an interview conducted after an April 15 rebellion at Lee Correctional Institution, a South Carolina maximum security prison. Jared Ware spoke with individuals inside Lee, including one who identified himself as a member of Jailhouse Lawyers Speak, a group of imprisoned human rights advocates who have called for a National Prison Strike from Aug. 21 to Sept. 9.

PART 3

man a sheet, and then they say the man hanged himself. But by policy and by rule, nobody is supposed to have [any] sheets in [any] CI cell, and everybody know that, especially the lieutenant, who’s a supervisor. So that’s their fault. He was a mentally ill patient. That’s on them.

D: Absolutely. I’d like to add to that. One of the reasons why the number is probably higher as well is they’re dealing with medical neglect. We’ve seen incidents where guys fall out, [and] get no medical treat-

ment whatsoever. I consider those direct murders, as well, of the state. When staff are failing to respond or respond and say, “Oh, you’re faking it, you’re not having a heart attack,” and you fall out and die right there. We saw that happen several times as well. So this also would account for why some of the prisoners would say that these numbers definitely would be higher, after they are witnessing some people being allowed to die, the way that they’re being allowed to die. □

BOSTON MEETING defends the incarcerated

By Workers World Boston bureau

Former prisoners, prison abolitionists and supporters gathered in Boston on July 28 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Lucasville Uprising, which took place in 1993 at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility.

The meeting began with a screening of the documentary “Shadow of Lucasville,” followed by speakers and discussion chaired by Belladonna Ashman of the Trans/Nonbinary Caucus of WWP-Boston and Bobby T of United Steelworkers Local 8751, Boston School Bus Drivers. Meeting sponsors included the Jericho Movement, Chuck Turner, USW Local 8751, TOUCH 106.1 Radio/TV and WWP-Boston.

Former Boston City Council member and former prisoner Chuck Turner spoke

about the need for the progressive movement to defend the incarcerated, who are used as a captive source of labor.

Former political prisoner and Jericho Movement member Kazi Toure spoke about his experience in dozens of prisons across the country, highlighting the brutal conditions as a constant in all of them. In his talk and in the following discussion, Toure and audience members highlighted that these prison conditions are being exported to workplaces all across the country and that the U.S. is in many respects nothing more than an open-air prison.

Imam Siddique Abdullah Hasan, one of five men sentenced to death for their purported role in leading the Lucasville Uprising, was scheduled to call in to the meeting. When the call did not come, attendees learned from contacts in Ohio



WW PHOTO: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM

Boston attendees stand next to image of Imam Siddique Abdullah Hasan at a commemoration of the Lucasville Uprising.

that the Imam had been placed in solitary confinement two days before that. The disappointed attendees recognized this as a deliberate action on the part of the prison administration to censor the truth about conditions in the prisons.

Activists subsequently learned that the Imam has been charged with violations related to organizing prison work stoppages.

For updates relating to solidarity ac-

tions for the Imam, visit www.facebook.com/events/257447445036637. Please write letters of support so authorities know that people are mobilizing in his defense.

Siddique Abdullah Hasan
130-559
878 Coitsville-Hubbard Rd.
Youngstown, Ohio 44505
For a Workers World interview with the Imam, see tinyurl.com/y9grqhd7.

Vietnam, August 1968:

GIs in military prisons rebel

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of GI uprisings in two military prisons in Vietnam during the U.S. war there, Workers World presents the following article based on material from Catalinotto's book, "Turn the Guns Around: Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions" (2017).

By John Catalinotto

"The month of August 1968 witnessed two of the largest prison rebellions of the Vietnam War period, both led by Black GIs," wrote GI historian Dave Cortright in his book, "Soldiers in Revolt." These rebellions took place among troops in Vietnam at the Da Nang Marine brig and in the military prison known as Long Binh Jail.

The GIs — that is, the members of the U.S. Armed Forces — called the latter prison LBJ, a not-so-friendly allusion to then U.S. President Lyndon Baines Johnson.

That August, I was one of a handful of people doing volunteer work out of a small office on Fifth Avenue and 21st Street in Manhattan, trying to organize a union in those armed forces. Most of the volunteers had recently finished their stint in the Army and were as strong opponents of U.S. militarism as any Lower East Side anarchist.

Political events in the preceding few months had increased the reach of our four-page monthly union newspaper, The Bond, from a few hundred in January 1968 to about 5,000. Our effort to form the American Servicemen's Union was featured on the cover of the August Esquire magazine, based on an interview with ASU chairperson Andy Stapp.

Earlier in 1968, the Vietnamese uprising called the Tet Offensive had shown much of the U.S. population that the war was probably unwinnable for the U.S. LBJ was forced to announce at the end of March that he would not run for re-election. A few days after that announcement, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, and rebellions broke out in Black neighborhoods in 100 U.S. cities.

These events impelled rapid changes in the consciousness of the troops, especially African-American troops.

The ASU looked for ways to support the prison revolts in Vietnam, despite its lack of funds and forces. GIs in these prisons who were ASU members wrote letters to The Bond and other GI publications about the rebellions, providing eyewitness accounts. Here are excerpts from a Sept. 18, 1968, article in The Bond, based on some of those letters and other articles on the prison revolts:

Jailed men in Vietnam rebel against officers

"The anger of EMs imprisoned in Vietnam by the Brass has exploded. Men fed

up with military oppression have rebelled at both the Marine brig at Danang and at the Army stockade at Long Binh, twelve miles north of Saigon.

"On the night of August 16, [1968,] Marine prisoners at the Danang brig tore the place apart and burned a cellblock. Angry at the humiliating requirement that they call the guards 'sir' and at the poor food, the overcrowding and the long delay before trials, they decided to stand up and fight back. It took a force of MPs firing shotguns to crush the rebellion among the 228 unarmed men. Seven prisoners and an MP were reported wounded. And it still wasn't over.

"Two days later a second rebellion broke out when the officer in charge of the brig, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Gambardella, ordered some of the prisoners moved out. This time MPs had to use tear gas to stop the uprising.

"Chairman of the American Servicemen's Union Andy Stapp immediately called the Pentagon and demanded names of the men involved. Speaking to ASU Chairman Stapp, Lt. Col. Ludvig, director of Marine Public Relations, refused to release any information to the ASU or to the American people.

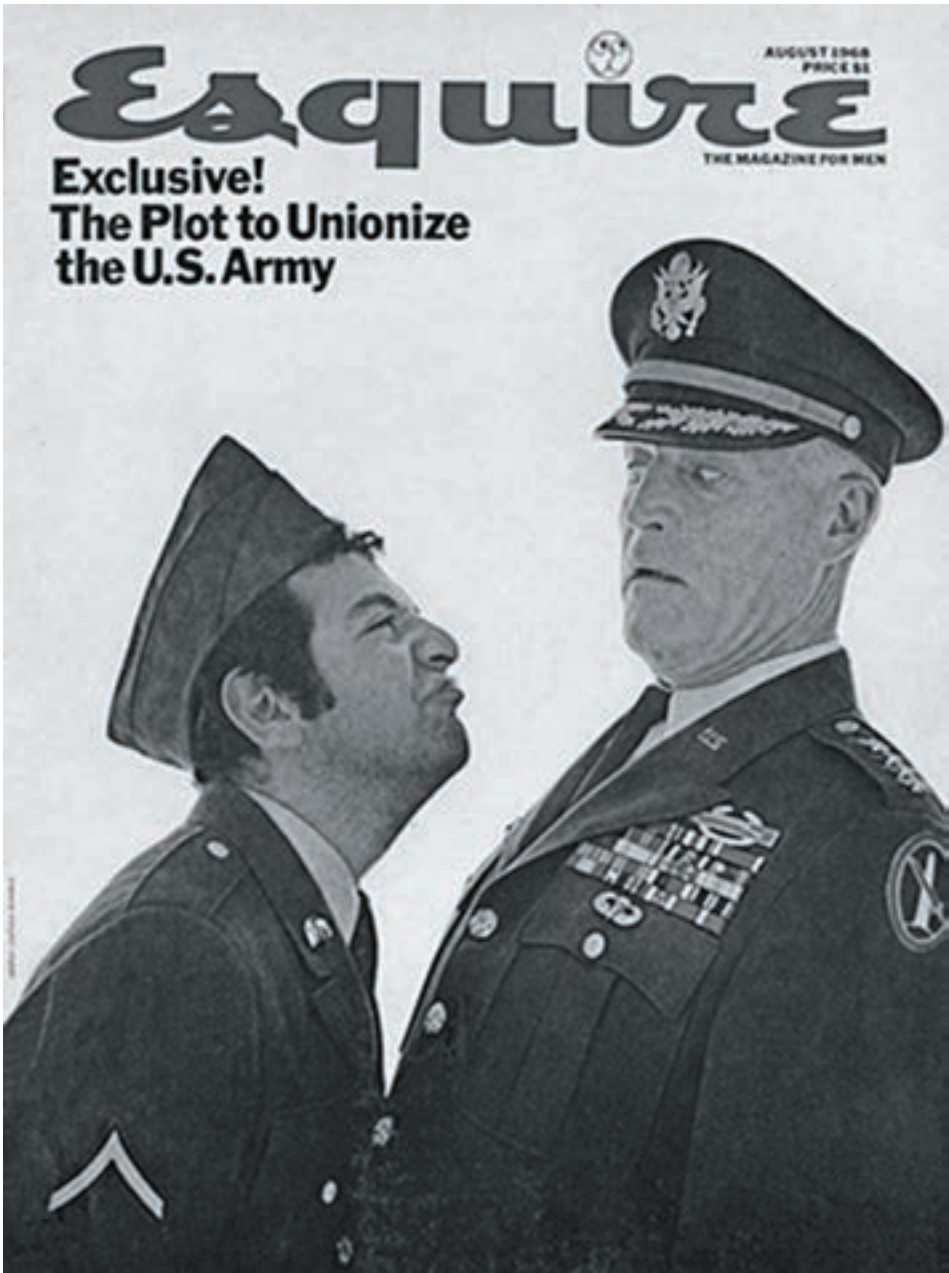
"Stapp said in a press release, 'The Brass does not want brought to light the rotten and abusive conditions that they have foisted upon the enlisted personnel in the Armed Forces.'

"In a statement to the New York Post of August 20, Stapp said, 'We have nineteen union members in Danang and we suspect that at least some of them are involved in the uprising.'

"GI prisoners in Long Binh, the Army's biggest stockade in Vietnam, broke out in rebellion. Long Binh Jail (known to GIs as the 'LBJ') was also overcrowded — there were 719 men where there were supposed to be only 550 — with angry GIs whose grievances were probably much like those of their brothers at Danang.

"Shortly before midnight on Aug. 20, an apparent fight among the prisoners in a barbed-wire enclosed medium security section brought three guards running inside to quell it. They didn't come out. The GIs inside had grabbed them and their keys. When the three guards didn't come out, an outside guard blew his whistle.

"At the same time, a band of prisoners rushed the gate between the medium security section and the recreation and administration area in the main part of the compound. They broke through. They



then proceeded to burn down the building, which contained all their records, and nine other large buildings.

"When the Brass, commanded by Colonel William Brandenburg of Elloree, S.C., sent in MPs armed with M16 assault rifles, bayonets and tear gas grenades, the unarmed GIs inside fought back. They wounded five MPs and put the acting warden of the jail in the hospital. One GI prisoner gave his life in the brief but bitter struggle and 59 were listed as wounded."

A group of prisoners at LBJ sent a collective letter to The Bond after reading the above article. We published the letter in the Oct. 16, 1968, issue. As you can see from the letter, publication in the newspaper and dissemination inside the prison of both articles spread solidarity and strengthened those rebelling.

Report from Long Binh Jail

"Today my man from New York managed to smuggle into the compound your Sept. 18 issue of your dynamite thing, The Bond. Your paper was thoroughly read by most of my fellow prisoners; speaking for those who read it, including myself, we would all like to say thanks for everything you are doing to further the ASU and bring to the attention of GIs all over the world the many injustices, inhumanities perpetrated on servicemen by the U.S. Government Armed Forces judicial system — particularly the Army.

"Cited here are a few case histories of prisoners that I think would be of interest to men in the Armed Forces everywhere.

"Case 1 — An infantryman just out of the field was caught stealing a peanut butter and jelly sandwich from his base-camp mess hall. First offense — sentenced to six months hard labor in LBJ.

"Case 2 — An infantryman after serving ten months of his twelve-month tour was given an order by a second lieutenant for him and the 17 other men in his element to assault a 250-man fortified North Vietnamese Army force, and was severely wounded in his right leg, right arm and kidney while the rest of his element was completely eliminated. After recuperation in Japan his medical record was lost by the U.S. Army and he

was refused further medical therapy and was returned to the Republic of Vietnam without a profile for further combat duty.

"Upon reassignment, this man was charged with missing three formations and the misuse of a government vehicle (a 15-minute trip to the PX). This was a first offense. He is now on a pre-trial confinement in LBJ awaiting a special court-martial.

"Case 3 — (my own case) — I am an infantryman, not by choice but by force of the U.S. Army. My own political and personal beliefs will not allow me to carry a weapon in the field. My company was going to a heavily VC-infested area on a three-day operation. Being that I don't carry a weapon I refused to go.

"My company commander ordered two fellow GIs to hold me while he tried to bind my legs and arms with ropes and to forcefully take me on the operation. Not being a fool and with no other course to take, I went AWOL. After being apprehended I was threatened by the Brass in my unit that I would be killed. I am now in LBJ on pre-trial confinement awaiting a general court-martial for this act, which I know was right.

"We could go on forever with many similar cases but the Brass here at LBJ will not afford us with ample stationery. We feel a great need and desire for this to be published in your next issue of The Bond. If this is possible it would be deeply appreciated by everyone in the Long Binh Stockade both Black and white.

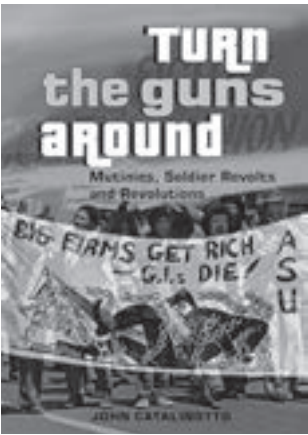
"We would like to do more to further the cause of the ASU but at this time our hands are tied by the Brass in LBJ.

"[Signed] The inmates, Mike Rouch, Tommy McDonnel, R.C. Brown, Brien M. Schulik, Marcy Schuman, Dave Landry, J.A. Epriam."

News reports as late as Sept. 24, a month after the big Long Binh Stockade rebellion, tell of a group of a dozen Black GIs still bravely holding out against the Brass in part of the prison.

Catalinotto's book, "Turn the Guns Around," also includes an account of how, later that August 50 years ago, the rebellion of the Black GIs came home to Fort Hood, Texas.

TURN THE GUNS AROUND Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions



Weaving together GI letters, interviews and first-hand narratives with historical research, the author brings to life GI resistance in the Vietnam War era, shows its relation to capitalist state power and highlights why breaking the military chain of command is an essential step to ending oppression around the globe.

"If schools in the United States really wanted to impart historical truth, Catalinotto's 'Turn The Guns Around' would be required reading. He tells the true story of this epoch. Few participants know more about the massive GI rebellion against the Vietnam War, the anti-war veterans' movement or the history of soldier revolts from the Paris Commune to the Portuguese coup."

— Pvt Larry Holmes GI resister and organizer for the American Servicemen's Union 1972-74.
Available at online booksellers

Class solidarity surges for migrant families

By Kathy Durkin

The Trump administration's racist war on im/migrants continues. They are stopped and arrested at the Texas/Mexico border, as well as throughout the U.S. Hundreds of children are still separated from their parents. But resistance continues in the streets, outside Immigration and Customs Enforcement facilities and in the courts.

Generous assistance to migrant families is flowing from sympathetic organizations and individuals. They understand that their sisters and brothers who are trying to cross U.S. borders are fleeing desperate situations of violence and extreme poverty — and that no one would attempt the dangerous trip to the U.S., risking probable arrest, unless they saw no other solution to their plight.

Border Patrol officers have seized 2,551 children from their parents at the Mexico/Texas border since last summer; this practice escalated in the spring. On April 6, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced a “zero tolerance” policy to stop migrants from crossing the border. Government kidnapping of children intensified after May 7, when Sessions said all migrants and asylum seekers, even those with children, would be criminally prosecuted and families could be separated at the border.

On June 20, the American Civil Liberties Union filed a federal lawsuit in California challenging family separations. Federal Judge Dana Sabraw gave the government until July 26 to reunite all migrant children with their parents.

On July 27, the ACLU refuted the government's claim in court documents that it had met the “court-ordered July 26 deadline to reunite the children it wrongfully separated from their parents. It did no such thing ... hundreds of children were not reunited. Some 463 parents were deported without their children — and the government isn't even trying to reunite them.” (tinyurl.com/yan2vb42)

The government didn't give the ACLU lists of those facing imminent deportation. According to the ACLU, officials assert they will “immediately deport all parents who have final deportation orders once they are reunified ... even though many of those parents may have mistakenly given up their asylum claims.”

Catch 22: deported parents, children in U.S. custody

On July 27, the government said 711 children were “ineligible” for reunification, but immigration officials had already deported over 400 of their parents! Judge Sabraw said the government was “at fault” for deporting parents while their children were in custody and for not having a reunification plan. He ordered the government to provide information by Aug. 1 on all deported parents, those missing in the U.S. or others deemed “ineligible” so they can all be reunited quickly.

The ACLU says the government



Bay Area, Calif.

WW PHOTOS

claimed that 206 parents waived their right to reunification with their children by signing waivers or orally consenting. The majority of them face immediate deportation. Many parents want their children returned, but didn't know they had relinquished their right to be reunited. Reportedly, border agents coerced, pressured, tricked and lied to get parents to sign the waivers. Forms were not available in their native languages; some parents didn't know what they signed.

Parents were also pressured to hastily sign deportation forms and were informed they would see their children faster if they did so — and that this was the only way they would see them. The government says 1,000 reunited families face immediate deportation.

The ACLU vows to get attorneys to find missing parents and provide them with legal help. A plethora of lawsuits are underway on behalf of migrant adults and children.

Efren C. Olivares, director of the Texas Civil Rights Project, said, “The government would like the public to believe it successfully met the July 26 deadline; nothing could be further from the truth.” (New York Times, July 28)

Many parents and children are in “legal limbo.” Some wait for days to be reunited, are sent to the wrong location or are even reunited with the wrong child. The secretive Department of Health and Human Services won't reveal children's locations or conveys inaccurate information.

Now ICE is attempting to coerce newly reunited families to withdraw applications for their children to stay in the U.S., reported Vox on July 29. Where fathers would not relent, ICE agents yelled at them, refused their requests and/or separated them from their children for a second time.

Federal agencies are banning deportees from returning to the U.S. to get their children, and will “vet” parents before sending their children to their homelands.

Shocking abuse of children

Among the worst of the U.S. government's crimes is the mistreatment of children in detention and border processing centers. Lawyers, health care workers and others report inadequate water; inedible, often rotten food; and lack of blankets in cold temperatures. Some children were housed in cages. Some were not bathed. A parent said her returned toddler had



Syracuse, N.Y.

lice. In many facilities, adult caregivers are prohibited from hugging children to comfort them.

There is also sexual abuse. The Nation's website reports that a six-year-old girl, separated from her mother, was sexually abused by an older child at a Southwest Key detention facility in Arizona. Outrageously, this child had to sign a form saying it was her responsibility to stay away from the abuser and “maintain appropriate boundaries.”

Children are suffering from anxiety, depression and feelings of abandonment. Some are acting out their anguish and anger at their parents. Some reunited parents have said their children don't recognize or won't talk to them or let themselves be hugged. Some youngsters will suffer longterm psychological damage and post-traumatic-stress disorder. Emotional pain and distress also plague parents when detained and those dealing with traumatized children after reunification.

Solidarity, resistance and assistance

Ever since the separation of migrant families escalated in the spring, there has been active opposition. A groundswell of resistance arose against the Trump government's inhumane policies. The president had to publicly withdraw the family separation practice June 20 after a global outcry.

Some 600 people, mainly women, were arrested June 28 while occupying the Senate Office Building in Washington. Nationally coordinated protests took place in at least 700 locations June 30 initiated by Families Belong Together.

A Fight for Im/migrants and Refugees Everywhere (FIRE) delegation joined demonstrations in Brownsville and McAllen on the Texas/Mexico border. FIRE and Workers World Party have protested in many cities. Many “Abolish ICE!” pickets and occupations have taken place at the inhumane agency's local facilities. Government officials have been confronted in offices, restaurants and on the street.

Migrant detainees staged a hunger

strike in the Bristol County House of Corrections in Massachusetts and were joined by other prisoners in solidarity. Officials retaliated, but a rally outside supported those incarcerated. Women at the Port Isabel ICE facility in Texas fasted to gain phone calls to their children.

Legal, humanitarian, im/migrant, advocacy and faith-based organizations and compassionate individuals are showing solidarity and helping migrants. Some are traveling to Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador to locate parents who were deported without their children and offer legal assistance.

Sympathetic volunteers — multinational, multigenerational, multigender and working class — are helping countrywide. Women are driving migrant parents hundreds of miles to reunite with their children. Individuals are standing outside detention centers with money, food, bus tickets and legal aid for the released immigrants. Local fundraisers are being held.

Refugees and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (RAICES) in Texas is offering to pay bonds for the release of women immigrant detainees and is uniting families.

The tremendous surge of support for immigrants shows the bond of solidarity between working people of all nationalities. The power of that solidarity exists as a material fact in their shared struggles against the brutal oppression dealt out by capitalism. □



Boston

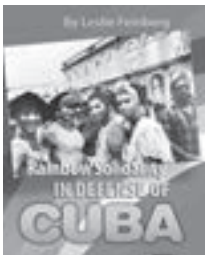


From the pages of Workers World newspaper

Read pamphlets that are compilations of WW articles online at: www.workers.org/books

Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

By Leslie Feinberg, author of 'Stone Butch Blues'



Feinberg's book documents revolutionary Cuba's inspiring trajectory of progress towards liberation of sexualities, genders and sexes.

This ground-breaking book reveals how the Cuban Revolution has grappled with the pre-revolutionary legacy of 450 years of persecution and exploitation of homosexuality. Rainbow Solidarity answers the demonization of the 1959 Cuban Revolution by Washington, Wall Street and Hollywood by demonstrating that the process of solving these problems is the forward motion of the revolution.

A compilation of articles from the Workers World series entitled *Lavender & Red*, online at workers.org. The book is available at major online booksellers



WORKERS WORLD editorial

Housing is a right

Even as the stock market and profits soar, so does the cost of housing in the United States. A transformation has been taking place in major cities — San Francisco, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and New York are but a few examples — as affordable rental housing is either demolished altogether or renovated to provide luxury co-ops and condos for the newly rich and/or the established rich, who are either moving in from the suburbs or enjoy residences in both city and country.

The election of a president whose personal fortune comes from real estate, even as he claims to care about workers' jobs, has only accelerated the process.

Tenant organizations are fighting a tide of wealth that is threatening to suck them under.

And growing wealth exists alongside growing poverty. But not because poor people are "too lazy to work." Just the opposite. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, back in 2009 as many as 44 percent of the homeless had jobs — but the pay was so low they couldn't afford even the cheapest housing. Since then, it's only gotten worse.

That same year, the National Low Income Housing Coalition figured that a minimum-wage worker "would have to work 87 hours each week to afford a two-bedroom apartment at 30 percent of his or her income, which is the federal definition of affordable housing."

Working 87 hours each week! That's more than TWICE the 40-hour week, which once was the standard. Does anyone remember what it was like to work eight hours, sleep eight hours, live a life for eight hours and be able to do things you enjoy on the weekends?

To work 87 hours a week, you'd have to toil 16 hours each weekday, which means sleep five hours, have three hours to travel to and from your jobs and catch some food on the fly, then work those additional seven hours on Saturday — and collapse on Sunday. Unless you're scheduled to work then, which is increasingly likely, especially in low-wage retail and food

service jobs.

It is no wonder that homelessness is growing, alongside obscene wealth at the top.

What happens to those displaced? A survey in 2017 showed that on any given night in this rich country, more than half a million people — 544,000 — were homeless, with nowhere to sleep but under bridges, in back alleys or in crowded homeless shelters.

Many women with children are homeless, some to escape abuse. So are people with physical, mental and emotional disabilities. And because being homeless only exacerbates these conditions, many end up in hospital emergency rooms.

Beginning a century and a half ago, the development of capitalism and the triumph of large-scale manufacture over cottage industries in much of Europe and North America enormously increased the productivity of labor. One worker today can produce a hundred times as much — whether it's textiles or steel or houses — with the new technology. A partially prefabricated, nicely designed four-bedroom house today can be assembled and finished in one month.

That's the upside of capitalist development. The downside of an economic system built on profits and exploited labor is the total degradation of the life of the worker.

Frederick Engels, Karl Marx's closest collaborator, wrote in 1872 about how the bourgeoisie solves the housing question:

"The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely shifted elsewhere! ... As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist, it is folly to hope for an isolated solution of the housing question or of any other social question affecting the fate of the workers.

"The solution lies in the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the appropriation of all the means of life and labor by the working class itself."

Amen, Comrade Freddy. □

Pittsburgh tells Trump and Congress: #UnblockCuba

By Cheryl LaBash
Pittsburgh

The Pittsburgh City Council took action to strongly support the sovereignty of the Cuban people on July 24.

A resolution in the form of a proclamation, sponsored by Council member Anthony Coghill and co-sponsored by the other eight council members, backed a renewed cooperative engagement with Cuba by the U.S., as well as restoration of the full diplomatic staff at the Cuban Embassy in Washington, D.C., and at the U.S. Embassy in Havana. Members of the initiating organization, Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister City Partnership, and other supporters were present.

Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister City Partnership President James Ferlo and Vice President Lisa Valanti spoke briefly, and Valanti read a greeting from the Cuban Embassy. Others present included a representative from U.S. Congressperson Mike Doyle.

Pittsburgh's resolution expresses the will of yet another U.S. community to end the U.S. commercial, financial and economic blockade of Cuba. It also sent a special message of solidarity to Cuba just two days before that country celebrated the 65th anniversary of the July 26, 1953, attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba. That attack began the final stage of Cuba's long struggle for independence and self-determination culminating in victory on Jan. 1, 1959.

Pittsburgh joins eight other U.S. cities taking a similar action: Berkeley, Oakland, Richmond and Sacramento, Calif.; Hartford, Conn; Brookline, Mass.; Minneapolis; and Helena, Mont. Activists plan to introduce additional resolutions in Midwest, Eastern and Southern cities.

The body of the resolution reviewed the history of exchanges and efforts between Pittsburgh and Cuba since 1998, including mayoral visits, trade delegations, memoranda of understandings between



Pittsburgh City Council members joined members of the Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister City Partnership to celebrate passage of a Council resolution supporting Cuba.

Penn State University and the University of Havana, and sporting exchanges. In July 2016, a spectacular youth "Boxing on the Bridge" exhibition was held with participants from Cuba and Pittsburgh competing in the center of Pittsburgh's Roberto Clemente Bridge spanning the Allegheny River.

The Pittsburgh resolution noted that only congressional action can unravel the web of many laws restricting trade and travel with Cuba. It calls for the repeal of the Helms-Burton and Torricelli acts and "urges Congress to pass the strategic pieces of legislation that would completely repeal the blockade and travel ban" — action that would benefit the people of both countries.

For instance, while 2.5 billion pounds of unsold meat and poultry are now warehoused in the U.S. and dairy farmers are going out of business (Wall Street Journal, July 22), the Pittsburgh resolution points out that there are commodities "that Cuba presently purchases from far away countries and wants to purchase from the U.S." These economic pressures are fueling incremental but important amendments to the 2018 Farm Bill and Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 to loosen some of the blockade's financial grip.

A video recorded in the Pittsburgh City Council chambers is viewable on the National Network on Cuba's Facebook page: <http://bit.ly/2AmeGF9>. □

ENDORSE the PEOPLE'S TRIBUNAL on U.S. Crimes against PUERTO RICO



LIST YOUR ORGANIZATION AS AN ENDORSER.

On Oct. 27, 2018, at 9:00 a.m., join Rafael Cancel Miranda and other Puerto Rican and international personalities and organizations at the People's Tribunal on U.S. Crimes Against Puerto Rico. The People's Tribunal will convene at Holyrood Church/Iglesia Santa Cruz in New York City.

The Tribunal needs your support! Since the devastation of hurricanes Irma and Maria in September 2017, the world has heard of Puerto Rico's economic, social and environmental crisis.

This crisis is not new or even due primarily to the hurricanes, but is the culmination of the savage colonialist domination and capitalist exploitation that the United States has imposed ever since its 1898 military invasion of Puerto Rico. On **Oct. 27**, activists and witnesses from Puerto Rico (including eyewitnesses to U.S. crimes), the Puerto Rican diaspora, the U.S. and the world will meet in New York City to take part in this colonial crimes tribunal.

A people's investigation. The Tribunal will present a people's investigation of the role of the U.S. government during its 120-year colonial rule, and particularly since the hurricanes' devastation put Puerto Rico in the eye of the world's media. The Tribunal will feature renowned Nicaraguan legal scholar and attorney, Dr. Augusto Zamora, who will serve as prosecutor, and a distinguished jury of U.S. and international human rights leaders.

This call for action by the Puerto Rico Tribunal Ad Hoc Committee is not made solely for the sake of posterity, but also seeks to strengthen the worldwide struggle for self-determination today. What is happening in

Puerto Rico is different only in scale and duration from U.S.-perpetrated destruction elsewhere.

A people's campaign. Only a people's campaign in solidarity with the Puerto Rican struggle for decolonization, self-determination and justice can begin to end the continued U.S. presence and domination, not only in Puerto Rico but throughout the Caribbean, Latin America and elsewhere.

We hope that your organization will endorse this very important effort and join with us on Oct. 27 in New York City.

Please endorse!

Email: TribunalPuertoRico@gmail.com

Type "Puerto Rico Tribunal" in the subject line.

A complete list of Tribunal conveners is on our website:

PuertoRicoTribunal.org

Like us on Facebook at Puerto Rico Tribunal.

Skype account name: Tribunal Puerto Rico

For more information, contact us at

TribunalPuertoRico@gmail.com.

Donations are needed!

Please send to:

Puerto Rico Tribunal,

P.O. Box 34249, Philadelphia, PA 19101

Online: gofundme.com/tribunalpuertorico

France

From state repression to state scandal

By Rémy Herrera
Paris

July 29 — In recent months, crack-downs on social movements in France have jumped several notches. The state of emergency, replaced in November 2017 by the Anti-Terrorism Act, has played a major role. But it is above all the multiplication of workers’ struggles, in many sectors of society, which underlies the expansion of police and military operations.

Until very recently, visible opposition to President Emmanuel Macron came from the streets, the unions and the mobilized public, much more so than from the politicians and the media. Everything changed on July 18 with the eruption of the “Benalla affair.” Three days were enough to take the French presidential palace from the euphoria of the French soccer team’s victory at the football world cup to a political earthquake of unimaginable magnitude.

The same media that had served as Macron’s war machine to get him elected head of state remind him today that his executive power is limited to that of carrying out the demands of the big capitalists. In Parliament, the shock caused by the “Benalla affair” has managed to unite the traditional right (the Republicans) and what I will call the “new right” (what remains of social democracy) alongside the parliamentary far left (Jean-Luc Mélenchon’s France Insoumise and the Communist Party) and the extreme right (former National Front, now National Rally)

in generalized opposition to Macron. What is this “affair” about? On July 18, videos dating from May 1 began to circulate on the internet showing a man wearing a helmet — who turned out to be the assistant to Macron’s chief of staff, Alexandre Benalla — arresting and beating a young couple after the Workers’ Day demonstration in Paris.

Benalla showed himself to be brutal — the very image of such repressive attacks — but even worse: He wore police insignia, although he is neither a police officer nor a soldier. He is only a bodyguard, blood-thirsty and a fighter, but much appreciated by Macron, who recruited him during his election campaign and then propelled him into his presidential cabinet.

We then learn that Benalla, barely 26 years old and having received only on-the-job security training for the “Socialist” Party, was benefiting from the following privileges: ultrafast promotion, a comfortable salary, carrying weapons obtained by irregular procedures, allocation of an apartment in one of the nicest neighborhoods in Paris.

Some of these favors were clearly outrageous, including the authority to give orders to police and soldiers, the right to wear a law enforcement armband, free access to the National Assembly and “friendly contacts” with police officials who provided him with the surveillance video footage that implicated him. In addition, Macron’s cabinet claims to have immediately punished the perpetrator for

his excessive zeal — without any trace of such a punishment. Indeed, Benalla continued to run with the president, collect his salary and hold onto his privileges.

Campaign slogans promising an “exemplary Republic” gave way to suspicions that a parallel (illegal and “private”) police force obedient to the president had been created. Macron and his government — stunned — remained mute for several days in the face of demands for explanations from all sides.

Ten hours of parliamentary battle were necessary for the opposition to suspend debate on constitutional reform (sought by Macron because it would give him even greater powers than the immense ones he already wields) and to form a commission of inquiry. The minister of the interior told this commission he knew nothing, while a parade of senior officials added that they knew little more.

And for good reason: Everything was happening at the Elysée (presidential palace). It took a week (of chaos) before Macron intervened. He did it his way, provocatively, saying in substance: “I alone am responsible. And whoever would like to try, let them come get me!”

Come get him? But those who know French political institutions know that the Constitution of the Fifth Republic strongly protects the president. What Macron is actually saying is that, as a little puppet of big finance, he will act forcefully to carry out the will of his capitalist masters in defiance of all counterpowers: Parliament,



Alexandre Benalla (wearing a helmet), an “assistant” to President Macron’s chief of staff, intimidates a protester, while two passers-by film the incident.

the media, popular demonstrations. Some nonparliamentary voices are demanding the French equivalent of Macron’s impeachment. Two motions of censure against the government were tabled in the National Assembly. The “Benalla affair,” which still hasn’t run its course, has profoundly — and opportunistically — tarnished Macron’s image at home and abroad. It is paving the way for the workers to resume in September, under better conditions, their struggle for social benefits.

Herrera is a Marxist economist, a researcher at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), who works at the Centre d’Économie de la Sorbonne, Paris. WW staff translated this article.



Trump, Putin y Helsinki

Continua de página 12

gobiernos, demasiado numerosos para enumerarlos aquí. Ha llevado a cabo asesinatos, establecido sitios de tortura y menoscabado las luchas de liberación nacional en todo el mundo. Como Trump la ataca mientras intenta salvar su pellejo por la investigación de Mueller, algunos liberales y progresistas de alguna manera se han confundido y defienden a estas dos organizaciones asesinas.

Trump, el Pentágono, la CIA y el FBI deben ser condenados y combatidos por igual como enemigos del pueblo.

Tratando de socavar a Trump

El liderazgo del Partido Demócrata y muchos progresistas esperan que la campaña de hostigamiento de Rusia socave tanto a la administración Trump como a los republicanos de Trump en el Congreso, y que erosione su base. Además del hostigamiento de Rusia, esperan que la investigación de Mueller sobre la campaña de Trump termine expulsando a Trump.

Ambos caminos son un callejón sin salida para la clase trabajadora y las/os oprimidos.

Esta mentalidad de deshacerse de Trump, sin importar cómo, es muy peligrosa. El hostigamiento de Rusia juega en la campaña de guerra de los militares. Solo drenará los fondos que se deben usar para el gasto social y reducirá la red de seguridad social ya disminuida. Se corre un mayor riesgo de guerra, en la que la clase trabajadora de ambos países sería la principal víctima.

Ayudará al establecimiento del Partido Demócrata en su campaña para mantener su dominio político sobre las amplias masas de fuerzas progresistas, así como para reforzar la ideología chovinista burguesa. Usar la propaganda de guerra para desviar a los seguidores antiinmigrantes

y pro-policía de Trump sólo sustituye un capitalista maligno por otro.

¿Subvirtiendo “nuestra democracia” al interferir en las elecciones?

Una de las narrativas de propaganda más perniciosa de la propaganda anti-rusa es que los rusos interfirieron en “nuestra democracia”.

Antes que nada, no es “nuestra democracia”. Esta es la democracia de la clase capitalista. Los ricos controlan todas las plataformas de publicidad, televisión, periódicos, radio, películas, etc. Los jefes son dueños de todas las principales salas, teatros y estadios. Poseen el papel de los periódicos, las prensas y otras formas de medios impresos. Controlan el contenido ideológico y político de cada uno de los principales órganos de propaganda pública.

Los derechos democráticos que existen para las masas bajo esta democracia capitalista truncada se han ganado a través de la organización y la lucha, a costa de mu-

cha sangre, ya sean derechos sindicales, derechos civiles, derechos de las mujeres o derechos LGBTQ. Nada ha sido dado por la clase gobernante sin una pelea.

Los derechos democráticos en EUA en realidad se están quitando, pero no por Rusia. La supresión de votantes por todos los medios posibles ha reducido los votos de las/os afroamericanos, latinos, nativos, asiáticos y blancos pobres.

Esto se ha logrado mediante la imposición de leyes de identificación de votantes, el cierre de las mesas electorales, la manipulación de los distritos electorales para reducir el peso electoral de las comunidades oprimidas, y simplemente por la purga ilegal de las listas de votantes. La encarcelación masiva de millones de trabajadoras/es negros, latinos y blancos pobres es un atajo para la privación del derecho al voto, y no solo durante su período de encarcelamiento. Muchos estados le quitan el derecho al voto de las/os llamados delincuentes durante largos períodos posteriores.

Y esto sin mencionar el asesinato policial de personas negras, latinas e indígenas que ocurre día tras día en todo el país.

¿Y dónde están los derechos democráticos de millones de migrantes a no ser perseguidas/os por las tropas de asalto de la Patrulla Fronteriza y por agentes de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas que deambulan por el país atacando lugares de trabajo y vecindarios? Matan, abusan, encarcelan y deportan con impunidad.

Los derechos de las mujeres a controlar sus cuerpos son denegados cada vez que se aprueba una nueva ley contra el aborto; cada vez que se cierra una clínica de atención médica para mujeres. Cada vez que un agresor es ignorado por las autoridades, las vidas de las mujeres están en peligro.

Estos son ejemplos reales de interfer-

encia con los derechos democráticos por los que para obtenerlos, tanta gente ha sido encarcelada o ha muerto.

Trump y la democracia

Trump es un fanático autoritario, derechista, racista, misógino y militarista. Está pisoteando las instituciones y los derechos que fueron establecidos para la protección de la sociedad. Las numerosas agencias gubernamentales que se han creado a lo largo de los años para frenar los abusos corporativos están siendo completamente destruidas por Trump.

Estas agencias e instituciones han sido consideradas como un seguro antidisturbios por los patronos. Fueron establecidas para limitar el daño causado por los capitalistas en las jurisdicciones indicadas por su nombre. El soborno corporativo y la corrupción siempre han permitido a los patronos debilitar y eludir diversas regulaciones. Pero Trump lo ha llevado a un nuevo nivel.

Mantiene la lealtad y aquiescencia de las grandes empresas al destruir todas las limitaciones progresistas al saqueo capitalista y reducir los fondos para la regulación, como el recorte impositivo de un billón de dólares, la transformación de las agencias reguladoras en habilitadores permisivos del saqueo del medioambiente, la destrucción de la educación pública, la eliminación de la supervisión gubernamental sobre el transporte público, medicamentos y productos farmacéuticos, el petróleo, la minería, etc.

A pesar del tumulto sobre Trump y Rusia, los derechos de las masas están bajo ataque diariamente. El movimiento debe centrar su atención en combatir estos ataques. El enemigo no es sólo la administración Trump y los capitalistas que lo apoyan, sino el sistema capitalista de saqueo y explotación en general. □



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

LowWageCapitalism.com
Available at all major online booksellers.



PHOTO: ADELANTE WORKERS CENTER

Marcha para santuario, Birmingham, Ala.

Trump, Putin y Helsinki

Por Fred Goldstein

Mientras golpean los tambores de guerra anti rusos, los escribas pagados de la clase dominante se están uniendo detrás del FBI y la CIA. Estos son dos de los mayores enemigos de las/os trabajadoras y oprimidos aquí y en el exterior.

La cumbre de Helsinki representa una nueva fase en el intento del presidente de los Estados Unidos, Donald Trump, de forjar un acercamiento con el presidente Vladimir Putin y Rusia. Esta cumbre, sin embargo, se produce en un momento en que el estado capitalista de EUA se mueve en la dirección opuesta: hacia relaciones inflamatorias con Rusia.

La base del intento de acercamiento es en parte una orientación política común de la derecha. Trump y Putin son ambos autoritarios y chovinistas de gran potencia. Ambos se oponen a la Unión Europea y la OTAN, pero cada uno por sus propios motivos expansionistas. Y ambos promueven fuerzas reaccionarias, racistas y antiinmigrantes en Europa como una herramienta para debilitar al imperialismo europeo.

Las/os revolucionarios y las/os antiimperialistas también se oponen a la UE y a la OTAN. Ellas/os legítimamente quieren ver destruidas estas instituciones imperialistas. Pero la UE y la OTAN deben ser destruidas de manera progresista: por la clase trabajadora y las/os oprimidos.

Si Europa se desintegra por las fuerzas derechistas, antiinmigrantes y antiobreras, podría provocar un conflicto militar nacionalista e interimperialista. Tal desintegración desencadenaría las fuerzas de la conquista y la guerra.

Muchas/os de la izquierda en Bretaña respaldaron por error al Brexit porque se oponían a la UE. Sin embargo, ter-

minaron en una alianza no deseada con figuras racistas y antiinmigrantes como Boris Johnson, Nigel Farage y fuerzas rabiosas antiinmigrantes y chovinistas que quieren “hacer que el imperio vuelva a ser grandioso”.

Por otro lado, sería progresista si la OTAN y la UE fueran socavadas, no por Trump y Putin, sino por una clase trabajadora unida, luchando contra los banqueros y patronos europeos y sus intervenciones militares en África, Medio Oriente y Europa del Este. Sería progresista si prevaleciera la solidaridad de clase en la lucha contra el racismo antiinmigrante.

El Pentágono y las agencias de espionaje necesitan un enemigo

Trump está tratando fuertemente de reorientar la política exterior de Washington. Pero el Pentágono, la CIA, el FBI y el complejo militar industrial están tratando de sabotear estos esfuerzos. Necesitan inflar la sensación de peligro de un “enemigo” para sostener y expandir los preparativos de guerra y mantener las ganancias militares.

La Unión Soviética solía ser el principal enemigo de la Guerra Fría de las clases dominantes en Europa y EUA. En realidad, la Guerra Fría fue una auténtica guerra de clases: una lucha entre dos sistemas sociales antagónicos. La URSS era un país socialista que estaba bajo presión en todo el mundo por parte de las agencias de espionaje capitalistas de Washington, sus cuerpos militares y sus diplomáticos en más de 100 países. Mientras existió la URSS, toda la clase dominante temía por sus propiedades y ganancias. Temían la propagación del socialismo.

Rusia capitalista no plantea tal amenaza.

Ahora, el ejército de EUA está impulsado por el objetivo de reconquistar los territorios que perdió durante el período soviético. De eso se trataba el intento de tomar control en Ucrania. Esto habría movido al Pentágono a la frontera sur de Rusia. Es por eso que Washington movió a la OTAN a los países bálticos en 2004 y estableció un cordón militar en el norte de Estonia, Letonia y Lituania. Y EUA ha convertido a Polonia en una base de avance en Europa Central. Es la estrategia del cerco. Washington también intentó tomar control en Georgia y ahora ha incorporado Montenegro a la OTAN.

El objetivo final del imperialismo estadounidense es restaurar su propio régimen pro-EUA en Moscú.

El papel contradictorio de Rusia

Debido a sus intereses estratégicos, Rusia juega un papel contradictorio en su lucha contra el imperialismo estadounidense.

Putin rechazó en parte el intento del imperialismo estadounidense y europeo de apoderarse de Ucrania. Ha apoyado la resistencia en la región de Donbás y ha protegido su base naval estratégica en Crimea.

También ha apoyado al gobierno sirio en su campaña para detener la toma de control de ese país por parte de EUA. Putin está tratando de proteger al único aliado terrestre y marítimo de Rusia en el Medio Oriente.

Rusia ha ayudado a Cuba con créditos a la exportación, automóviles, locomotoras, petróleo y otras exportaciones sobre una base estrictamente capitalista. Ha perdonado gran parte de la deuda de Cuba de \$3 mil millones, sobrante de la era soviética. Rusia también ha ayudado a Venezuela con la condonación de la deu-

da, lo que le permite a Caracas retener el petróleo que usa para pagar las deudas.

Es perfectamente comprensible que los países oprimidos, bajo sanciones, bloqueo o ataque militar de EUA se alíen con Rusia y reciban ayuda de ella. Y las/os revolucionarios y las/os progresistas deberían apoyar y defender esa ayuda. Pero esto no cambia el carácter de clase del régimen oligárquico contrarrevolucionario en Moscú.

Lacayos publicistas y la tormenta anti rusa

Lacayos publicistas de la clase dominante de todo tipo se han apresurado al megáfono público para cumplir con las órdenes del Pentágono y las agencias de espionaje. Periodistas burgueses, presentadores de noticias, panelistas “expertos”, funcionarios del gobierno anterior y actual, generales y almirantes retirados convertidos en “comentaristas” y “analistas”, grupos de expertos, y hasta presentadores de espectáculos nocturnos, todos han competido para atacar a Trump por ser una herramienta de Putin y Putin por ser un maestro manipulador que “interfirió con nuestra democracia”.

Mientras golpean los tambores de guerra anti rusos, estos escribas pagados de la clase dominante se están uniendo detrás del FBI y la CIA. ¿Y quiénes son éstas? Estas agencias son dos de los mayores enemigos de las/os trabajadoras y oprimidos aquí y en el exterior. El FBI ha infiltrado y fabricado casos a generaciones de comunistas, socialistas, organizaciones de derechos civiles afroamericanas y grupos de liberación. Les ha perseguido en sus trabajos y en sus casas, les ha encarcelado e incluso les ha matado.

Durante décadas, la CIA ha derrocado

Continúa a página 11

Invitación para que su organización endose TRIBUNAL del PUEBLO sobre los Crímenes de EUA contra el PUEBLO de PR



El 27 de octubre de 2018 a las 9:00 am, únase a Rafael Cancel Miranda y otras personalidades y organizaciones puertorriqueñas e internacionales en el Tribunal del Pueblo Sobre Crímenes de los Estados Unidos Contra Puerto Rico, en la Iglesia Holyrood/Iglesia Santa Cruz, Ciudad de Nueva York.

Desde la devastación de los huracanes Irma y María en septiembre de 2017, el mundo se ha enterado de la crisis económica, social y ambiental de Puerto Rico.

Esta crisis no es nueva, ni siquiera se debe principalmente a los huracanes, sino que es la culminación de la salvaje dominación colonialista y la explotación capitalista impuesta por los Estados Unidos de América desde su invasión militar en 1898 a Puerto Rico. El 27 de octubre de 2018, activistas y testigos de Puerto Rico, de la diáspora puertorriqueña, de EUA y del mundo, se reunirán en la ciudad de Nueva York para participar de un tribunal de crímenes de colonialismo.

El tribunal presentará una investigación del pueblo sobre el papel del gobierno de los Estados Unidos durante su dominio colonial por 120 años, y particularmente desde la devastación de los huracanes. A ellas/os se unirán el renombrado jurista y abogado nicaragüense Dr. Augusto Zamora, quien servirá como fiscal, y un distinguido jurado de líderes de derechos humanos estadounidenses e internacionales.

Este llamado a la acción no se realiza únicamente para la posteridad, sino que también busca fortalecer la lucha actual por la autodeterminación a nivel mundial. Lo que está ocurriendo en Puerto Rico es diferente

solamente en escala y duración, a la destrucción perpetrada por los EUA en otros lugares.

Solamente una campaña del pueblo en solidaridad con la lucha puertorriqueña por la descolonización, la autodeterminación y la justicia puede comenzar a ponerle fin a la continua presencia y dominación de los Estados Unidos, no solo en Puerto Rico, sino en el Caribe, en América Latina y en otros países.

Esperamos que su organización pueda respaldar este importante esfuerzo organizativo, y pueda unirse a nosotros el 27 de octubre en la ciudad de Nueva York.

Para respaldar, envíe un correo electrónico a:

TribunalPuertoRico@gmail.com y escriba: “Tribunal de Puerto Rico” en la línea del asunto. La lista completa de convocantes del Tribunal está en nuestro sitio web:

PuertoRicoTribunal.org

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Comuníquese por Skype: Tribunal Puerto Rico

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Tribunal sobre Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 34249, Philadelphia, PA 19101

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