BY GLORIA RUBAC
Houst on

Sandra Bland's funeral on July 25 was attended by hundreds of people in Lisle, Ill., a Chicago suburb. In her remarks, Bland’s mother, Geneva Reed-Veal, urged people to continue to demand justice for her daughter on social media.

Since the death of Sandra Bland of Chicago on July 13 in Waller County, Texas, there have been countless actions of people angered, outraged and just sad over her death. The most recent was a July 26 protest outside the home of Texas trooper Brian Encinia, who arrested Bland. This brought out the cops in full force, looking like an occupying army.

Harris County (Houston) Sheriff’s Department’s vehicles filled the whole parking lot adjacent to Encinia’s apartment complex. Texas State Police, the Harris County Sheriff’s Office, the West I-10 Fire Department and several other agencies set up a command post in a nearby parking lot. They came with riot gear and a mass casualty evacuation ambulance. Sheriffs mounted on horses awaited the militant contingent that caravanned into the Houston suburb of Katy where Encinia lives. It was only after the demonstration that activists found out that Encinia had moved three days earlier, supposedly for his own safety.

African-American activists led this march, which concluded with a rally with community activists speaking out. Several student leaders from Texas Southern University, a historically Black university in Houston, demanded answers regarding Bland’s death. Minister Quanell X chaired the rally and challenged the dozens of cops on horses to deal with the many Black men who had gathered. “Your state trooper assaulted a Black woman who was alone and now she is dead. The men of the Black community are saying to this racist white man who mistreated sister Sandra Bland: ‘You (were) going to light her up? Now, let’s see if you light us all up when we come today.’”

Liliana Castrillón, speaking for the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement in Spanish, said: “Some of you police here today may think you are good cops. But there are no good cops if you don’t speak out against the killer cops. You are just as guilty as the one who caused Sandra Bland to be killed. You are just as guilty as those who have pulled the trigger on young Black and Latino men around Texas and the country.”

‘State of emergency’

Members of local and national churches held a news conference outside the Waller County Jail on July 20 to discuss the case. “We picked this location because it is a crime scene,” said the Rev. Jamal Bryant from the People’s Organization for Progress.
The Civil War Lessons for today’s struggle

Below are excerpts from the book “The Klan and the Government: Foes or Allies?” written in 1983 by Sam Marcy, the founder of Workers World Party. The entire book can be read online at workers.org.

In the Civil War in the U.S., the bourgeois democratic revolution was aborted. It did result in ending institutional servitude. It freed the Black people from their legal ties to the slavery. But it failed to carry out the rest of the basic and revolutionary measures which were necessary for formal equality with the white population.

Nevertheless, as a result of the revolutionary prosecution of the war against the Southern slavery, the Southern slavery government was infinitely weakened and in part replaced through federal intervention and military occupation by the central government.

These measures were necessary in order to defend the rights of the Black people and to ensure that the Southern slave-state governments did not violate the new federal legislation which the U.S. government had promulgated.

The Southern state governments were thus under the jurisdiction of the U.S. military and had to obey its orders. Unable to do anything legally to subvert the new status and rights of the Black people, the Southern planters resorted to building a conspiratorial terrorist organization to supplement the Southern state’s legalized governmental departments. We see therefore that the KKK arose as an illegal, extra-governmental secret apparatus, a mass action group, and was sanctioned by the then legalized governmental powers of the South. …

Need for people’s militia

The duty of the federal government in the South under Presidents Lincoln, Johnson, Grant, and Hayes was not merely to juridically proclaim and defend the rights of the Black people but to organize, educate, and organize them, above all on a military basis so that they would be able to properly defend themselves against the rich planters and defend the revolt of the slavery’s political power.

It was not enough to have subdued the slavery militarily. There had to be a counter-force or a parallel force as against the armed forces and repressive organs still wielded by the Southern states, notwithstanding the break up of the old Confederacy.

It’s true that the Confederacy seemed crushed and powerless, insofar as exercising its political sway against the Northern bourgeoisie. But the old planter aristocracy was permitted to rebuild and revile on the basis of retaining all its private property and land as well as what ever financial and commercial assets it still had. Under these circumstances, the economic and state power of the planter aristocracy remained an overwhelming force against the Black people, notwithstanding the gains made — including those in the state legislatures of the South. What the Black population needed to resist the growth of the KKK was an organized militia, trained, armed, and firmly in place to resist. The federal government promised to defend their newly won rights and also to contest the planter’s power to the land — which the former slaves were entitled to no less than the serfs in Europe during the bourgeois revolutions of the 19th century.

Treachery of Northern bourgeoisie

The federal government retreated under pressure from many of the capitalists in the North who felt that they had got what they wanted. … As a result the treasonous bourgeoisie made the federal troops from the South and left the Black people defenseless against the KKK. The Southern aristocracy then launched a large-scale campaign to secretly recruit, organize, and promote the Klan as a mass terror weapon with an extra-legal and extra-state character, in order to destroy the ability of the Black people to utilize their newly won legal rights as proclaimed by the Constitution. The right of self-defense was virtually nullified by the withdrawal of federal troops from the South.

Bourgeois scholars of Reconstruction, especially the more reactionary ones, underestimated the tremendous role played by the Black people in achieving the victory over the planter aristocracy. They did everything to belittle the role of Black people and only rarely is there any mention of what W.E.B. Du Bois in his great book “Black Reconstruction” called the general strike of Black people, that is, the abandonment of service on the plantations and the support it rendered to the Northern army, which was indispensable for the victory over the plantation aristocracy. …

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In the U.S.

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workers.org
Low-wage workers rack up victories

$15 per hour — What’s next?

By Workers World News Bureau

From coast to coast, momentum continues to build behind the struggle of low-wage workers fighting for $15 per hour and a union, an effort which began nearly three years ago. The week of July 20 was marked by several major victories for this movement.

On July 21, Los Angeles County approved a $15 minimum wage to be phased in by 2020. This follows in the footsteps of the city of Los Angeles, which last month passed a $15 minimum wage that will be implemented on the same time line.

In May, New York state Gov. Andrew Cuomo instructed the state’s Department of Labor to convene a wage board to examine wages in the fast food industry. Cuomo’s announcement came just weeks after an April 13 mobilization by low-wage workers, the largest day of action to date in the growing movement. Hundreds of thousands had hit the streets across the U.S. and in several other countries.

The day following the announcement by Los Angeles County, the New York state Wage Board concluded its hearings and issued a proposal to raise wages for fast food workers in the state to $15 per hour. This proposal, which would affect 180,000 workers in the state’s fast food industry, is expected to be enacted by Acting Labor Commissioner Mario Moulino in the coming weeks. The recommendation from the Wage Board would institute a $15 wage in New York City by 2018 and in the rest of the state by 2021.

The victory in New York state is the largest and farthest reaching to date. It follows major cities across the U.S. that have raised their minimum wage to $15 in recent months — including Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Other cities — Washington, St. Louis and others — are currently considering a $15 minimum wage. Still others have recently passed significant increases just short of $15, such as Chicago and Kansas City, Mo.

Where do we go from here?

It goes without saying that these are monumental victories that will have a dramatic impact on the lives of many working people in the U.S. These victories would not have been possible without the bravery of low-wage workers across the country who have relentlessly organized and gone on strike over the last two and a half years. All congratulations are due to them.

When this movement began in 2012, a $15 minimum wage was scoffed at by every politician and bourgeois policy pundit. Now, $15 is the baseline of every discussion on the minimum wage in the U.S.

It is an understatement to say that Cuomo and similar politicians who have passed these wage increases are no friends of working people. All of this shows that it is class struggle and the balance of power between workers and capital that is the motive force of history. We must remember that it is militant action by workers, exemplified in the strikes that low-wage workers have conducted, that made these victories possible, not the actions of politicians.

Notably absent, however, from these $15-minimum-wage increases is any discussion of building a union of low-wage workers. This is still a critical question for the movement in pension benefits, there is a very real possibility that they could be vanquished or that the bosses will find ways to undermine them.

This movement — and particularly these $15 victories — opens space to unleash a much broader, classwide struggle for not just higher wages, but power for workers in this country to take back from the banks and corporations the wealth that is being stolen from our communities every day. Think of how the struggle could reach new heights if the low-wage workers’ movement and the Black Lives Matter movement joined forces in a more substantial way.

Making central the fight against racism and police terror as part of the low-wage workers’ movement is even more critical right now. The prospect of this is terrifying to corporations, banks and the politicians who serve them in every office of government.

It seems too that, unfortunately but not surprisingly, many of the unions are reluctant to see this happen. It remains to be seen how they will summarize these recent developments and progress from here. But it will be up to the workers and the rest of the revolutionary movement in this country to help realize the potential that could be seized in this period.

Verizon workers ready to strike

Workers voted on July 17 to strike, while the Verizon East district of the Communications Workers of America voted by 86 percent to strike during the week of July 20. Speakers at the rally included CWA President Chris Shelton, who blasted management for trying to rob workers of their retirement. He ended a roasting speech with the chant: “Ready to fight and ready to win!” Barbara Bowen of the Professional Staff Congress at City University of New York and Secretary-Treasurer Earl Phillips of Transit Workers Union Local 100 gave solidarity messages and offered their support for a strike.

Caeser Villagran, a Black sister representing Cablevision workers, talked about how CWA and IBEW had stood with them during the three-year battle they eventually won and now Cablevision workers would stand by Verizon workers.

Virtually lives up to the workers’ nickname for Verizon. Listed 15th in this year’s Forbes Fortune 500, the company raked in $29 billion in net income in the last five years and $4 billion in just the last quarter. The five top executives have been rewarded handomely, with a total of $4.4 million in salary and bonuses in 2014. They will never have to worry about their retirement.
Cuban flag flies in Washington

By Cheryl LaBash
Washington, D.C.

In a ceremony attended by some 500 invited guests on July 20, the Cuban flag was raised over the Cuban Embassy in Washington, D.C., for the first time since 1961, when U.S. imperialism broke relations between the two countries. Other supporters successfully fought back right-wing forces who tried to disrupt the event.

Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, foreign affairs minister of Cuba, told those gathered: “The flag that we reverence ... is the same that was hauled down here 54 years ago, which was zealously kept in Florida by a family of liberators and later on by the museum of our eastern city of Las Tunas, as a sort of premonition that this day would certainly come.

“Flying once again in this place is the one-star flag that embodies the generous blood that was shed, the sacrifices made and the struggle waged for more than 100 years by our people for their national independence and full self-determination, facing the most serious challenges and risks.”

“Today we pay homage to all those who died in its defense and renew the commitment of the present generations, fully confident of the newer ones, to serve it and the struggle waged for more than 100 years by our people for their national independence and full self-determination, facing the most serious challenges and risks.”

The 30-person delegation from Cuba presented a rich cross section of Cuba’s social accomplishments and included former diplomats, artists, deputies, scientists, educators, athletes, farmers and religious people. Of special note were scientists Jorge Berlanga, creator of Heberprot P, a treatment for diabetic foot ulcers that can prevent 77 percent of amputations; Ernesto Freire Cazañas, who heads the International Department of the Cuban Workers Central Union; and Yunidis Castillo, Paralympics sprinting champion. Many are members of Cuba’s Council of State.

A strong delegation of Cuban-Americans celebrated the opening of the renewed embassy, including more than 80 from Florida. Members of Congress and staff included representatives of the Congressional Black Caucus. Attorneys mingled with activists who contributed decades to defending Cuba’s right to self-determination and sovereignty. Most recently this activity focused on the successful return to Cuba of its defensive state security agents known as the Cuban 5, who had been imprisoned in the U.S. since 1998.

The flag-raising celebration energized momentum to press forward on ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade, returning Guantánamo to Cuba and ending the funding for U.S. “regime change” programs aimed at Cuba.

LaBash is co-chair of the National Network on Cuba. She attended the flag-raising ceremony.

Workers distressed as infrastructure crumbles

By G. Dunkel
New York

From July 20 to 25, there was only one day when New Jersey Transit’s service to Penn Station in New York City was not disrupted. Tens of thousands of workers were delayed in getting to work and again disrupted. Tens of thousands of workers were delayed in getting to work and again disrupted. Tens of thousands of workers were delayed in getting to work and again disrupted. Tens of thousands of workers were delayed in getting to work and again disrupted.

And of course the workers who use this infrastructure have their standard of living frustrated away as it crumbles. They are suffering from a disguised form of austerity that only becomes visible when tolls or fares go up. NJ Transit is raising its fares by 9 percent starting Oct. 1.

Workers have a need and a right to a safe and effective infrastructure. They don’t need a capitalist political system that shrugs off their needs and tries to shift the costs of infrastructure maintenance onto their shoulders.

‘Locked up, unheard’

The New York Campaign for Alternatives to Isolated Confinement held a strong protest at Union Square on July 21. Led by people who have suffered solitary confinement, they built support for this action. Several victims of this cruel form of punishment explained what they had been through. NYCAC leader Victor Pate spoke of his experience of complete isolation as torture. He explained that even the United Nations has found it to be against international law to keep anyone in isolation for 15 days or more. Meanwhile, over 5,000 of those incarcerated in New York state remain in solitary.

Nationwide, many others are tortured in this way, especially political prisoners.
Activist in Freddie Grey uprising acquitted

By Joe Piette Baltimore

Morgan Malachi, one of hundreds of activists facing charges for having protested the Baltimore police killing of Freddie Grey, won an innocent verdict on July 23 in front of three dozen supporters from the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly and the Philadelphia Coalition for Racial, Economic and Legal Justice.

Malachi was part of the “Philly Is Baltimore” contingent during an April 25 protest in Baltimore against police brutality. She was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and refusing to obey a lawful order. City officials later falsified reports of arrest and interfering with an arrest added to charges of disorderly conduct and failure to obey a lawful order.

All this was for protesting racist police killings, which are all too common not just in Baltimore but also in Philadelphia, New York, Oakland, Ferguson, Cleveland. Marcus’s trial is scheduled to take place in August on allegations that he refused to obey orders to disperse policemen. Malachi says she has been charged with a felony. Marcus’s trial is scheduled to take place in August on allegations that he refused to obey orders to disperse policemen.

Baltimore is not alone. Many arrests have taken place in Philadelphia, too, including that of the Mayfair 19, for protesting the police refusal to release the names of the cops who killed Brandon Tate Brown. Another five were arrested at a peaceful #SayHerName vigil when cops rooted, breaking the wrist of a 62-year-old woman.

Hundreds of arrests have taken place wherever outraged youths have protested the killings of Sandra Bland, Mike Brown, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Rekia Boyd, and many more — over 600 Black and Brown men, women, transgender people and even children killed by cops in 2015 so far. The arrests appear to be part of a campaign of repression being coordinated from the ruling circles of capitalist society against the Black Lives Matter movement.

Right to rebel put on trial

Malachi’s trial was preceded by plea bargains for another young Black protester, Terry Smith, 26. He has a five-year-old child and his partner is expecting another child. He was sentenced to 60 days in prison for his part in the uprising against police terror.

During Malachi’s trial, prosecutor Andrew Beatty relied on the testimony of four SWAT team cops. He also exhibited portions of three videotapes in a failed effort to prove that the young Black woman had refused to obey orders to disperse or was disorderly.

The videos showed Malachi using a bullhorn. Baltimore City Court Judge Flynn M. Owens eventually agreed with Malachi’s attorney, Steve Beatty, that using her First Amendment rights was legal. The judge dropped the disorderly conduct charge.

Beatty further argued that the prosecution’s own tapes from their footrot helicopter revealed that Malachi had been in the intersection facing off against a line of police at 7:40 a.m., but was on the sidewalk when she was arrested at 7:40. The officer on the copter testified that he broadcast: “You must disperse. You cannot block the intersection or you will be subject to arrest,” three times between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Two defense witnesses swore they did not hear the police orders to disperse, perhaps because of the overwhelming noise of chanting, yelling and bullhorns in the chaotic scene.

At the end of the proceedings, while Judge Owens praised the police “for their thankless job,” he had to admit that no testimony proved the order to disperse was broadcast between 7:18 p.m. and 7:40 p.m. so there was reasonable doubt. Therefore, he could not find the defendant guilty.

Outside the courtroom, Beatty told reporters this was a victory “for the right to free expression at a time when courts are trying to limit those rights.”

‘End forced removals of African Americans!’

By Abayomi Azikiwe Editor, Pan-African News Wire Detroit

The corporate media claim that Det- roit is being revitalized. A rally and march at Hart Plaza on the Detroit River and at the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center (City Hall) on July 21 exposed this false narrative.

The city emerged from a contrived finan- cial emergency and forced bankruptcy late in 2014. Billions were stolen from pension- er and residents, who witnessed private interests seize public assets under the guise of saving. Banks have made over 100,000 foreclo- sure proceedings for another young Black woman.

The videos showed Malachi using a bullhorn. Baltimore City Court Judge Flynn M. Owens eventually agreed with Malachi’s attorney, Steve Beatty, that using her First Amendment rights was legal. The judge dropped the disorderly conduct charge.

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During the rally a statement of solidar- ity was delivered by Cecily McClellan, a leader in the Detroit Active and Retirees Association (DAREA). This organization was formed after Judge Steven Rhodes, who presided over the federal bankrupt- cy case, imposed pension and healthcare cuts.

Baltimore have spoken to the concrete point forward. If the city administration is ignoring the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut- offs addressed and encouraged partici- pants to endorse the upcoming People’s Assembly and Speak-Out scheduled for Grand Circus Park downtown on Aug. 29. The Moratorium NOW! Coalition reminded the crowd that African Amer- icans still constitute the overwhelming majority of the population of Detroit and that the people of Ferguson, Mo., and Baltimore have spoken to the concrete conditions prevailing in urban areas, pointing the way forward.

If the city administration is ignoring Continued on page 8

Detroit protest says:
‘End forced removals of African Americans!’

Protestors outside Detroit’s city hall, July 21.

Taxi drivers join in

During the rally a statement of solidar- ity was delivered by Cecily McClellan, a leader in the Detroit Active and Retirees Association (DAREA). This organization was formed after Judge Steven Rhodes, who presided over the federal bankrupt- cy case, imposed pension and healthcare cuts.

DAREA’s leaders were the most vocal opponents of the bankruptcy during the 2013-14 proceedings. At present they have filed an appeal in federal court to overturn the attacks against municipal retirees.

After the demonstrators marched from Hart Plaza to City Hall for another rally, dozens of taxi vehicles began to circle the building, the drivers honking their horns in an act of defiance. Later, rally participants marched around the build- ing, chanting slogans against current city policies under the corporate-imposed administration of Mike Duggan, the first white mayor in 40 years.

Calls for Aug 29 solidarity action

At that demonstration, members of the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shut- offs addressed and encouraged partici- pants to endorse the upcoming People’s Assembly and Speak-Out scheduled for Grand Circus Park downtown on Aug. 29. The Moratorium NOW! Coalition reminded the crowd that African Amer- icans still constitute the overwhelming majority of the population of Detroit and that the people of Ferguson, Mo., and Baltimore have spoken to the concrete conditions prevailing in urban areas, pointing the way forward.

If the city administration is ignoring Continued on page 8
New York march demands

Justice for Sandra Bland, Kindra Chapman

By Teresa Gutierrez

New York

On July 22, the New York City Chapter of the Peoples Power Assemblies held a spirited rally and march in solidarity with Sandra Bland and Kindra Chapman. The PPA demanded justice for these sisters’ deaths. The two Black women had both been found dead by hanging, in Texas and Alabama jail cells respectively.

Despite a heavy police presence, about 1,000 people began to gather around 5 p.m. in Union Square where PPA organizer Terrea Mitchell opened the rally. She welcomed everyone with an emotional explanation of why the PPA had called the protest on short notice.

Mitchell’s rage at yet another Black person killed as a result of detention by police was vivid, as it was for every person who spoke out at the rally. Organizers from several Black Lives Matter groups added their voices, including NYC Shut It Down, trans activists and families of victims of police brutality. PPA organizer Larry Holmes said that “the killing of Sandra Bland is the killing of an activist. She was one of us. This is why we must fight until victory is ours.” The crowd responded militantly to all calls for fundamental change and revolutionary struggle.

After the short rally, thousands of protesters marched through midtown Manhattan, first on the sidewalk and then in the streets. Once the demonstrators reached Penn Station and marched into it, they got a great response from people waiting for trains.

The protesters then went to Grand Central Station — where Black Lives Matter protests take place on a weekly basis — with their demands for justice and solidarity.

During the march some people sat down in a crossing area. The cops arrested 14 people, including one PPA organizer, who was dragged through the street before being arrested and put into a police wagon.

All those arrested were given desk warrants and were released the same night, some after midnight.

The next step in the struggle in cities around the country will be Aug. 8-9, the first anniversary of the murder of Michael Brown and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement. In New York a PPA protest, “One Year Commemoration of the Murder of Michael Brown, the Ferguson Rebellion, & the Black Lives Matter Uprising,” will be held on Aug. 9 at 12 noon at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn.

For more information, visit peoplespowerassemblies.org and Fergusonresponse.tumblr.com.

Claudia Palacios contributed to this report.

At Newark, N.J. protest

Police brutality, racism, inequality targeted

By Monica Moorehead

Newark, N.J.

Several thousand people braved a hot sun and no shade in over 90-degree heat to rally and march in Newark, N.J., on July 23. They were protesting police brutality, racial injustice and economic inequality.

The majority African-American crowd, which also included Latinos/as, Asians and whites, youth and seniors, were supporting a demonstration initiated by the Newark-based People’s Organization for Progress, chaired by Larry Ham. Delegations traveled from as far away as Boston, Philadelphia, Richmond and New York City, as well as other parts of New Jersey.

Newark is the most populated city in New Jersey with the second-highest poverty rate: 30.2 percent, based on a family of four making only $22,000 or less, according to the 2010 U.S. Census.

A main theme of the march and rally was Black Lives Matter, which focused on Black women and men killed by racist terror — such as Sandra Bland and Kindra Chapman, who were recently found dead in jail cells — and others who lost their lives at the hands of police in the Newark area and around the country. Family members, especially mothers of those killed by police, spoke with great emotion at the rally.

A public statement on the “Million People’s March” Facebook page from Hamm explains what motivated the march:

“Police brutality is an ongoing, growing and deadly problem in the United States of America.

“It includes the unwarranted and unjustified killing of unarmed people, the use of excessive force, the violation of peoples’ constitutional rights, racist and discriminatory practices, criminal activity, corruption and misconduct, increased militarization of police forces, and the failure of the criminal justice system to hold police accountable.

“Police brutality is not an isolated problem. It is a historical problem with roots that are deep in the social fabric of this country. It must be seen within the broader context of racial and economic injustice and inequality.

“While the victims of police brutality come from all racial groups in society, the vast majority come from African American, Latino, Native American and other communities of color. They are overwhelmingly poor and working class. Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Abdul Kamal, Kashad Ashford and Rekia Boyd are among the recent victims.

“Police brutality has been and continues to be the cause of social unrest in the country. Throughout contemporary U.S. history incidents of police brutality have sparked explosive episodes of civil rebellion and unrest, with the most recent being that of Ferguson, Missouri.

“The failure of the criminal justice system to hold police officers accountable is causing a crisis in our country as more people discover that police brutality goes unpunished. Police kill unarmed civilians and are not even charged. One grand jury after another fails to indict police officers. The cases of Michael Brown and Eric Garner being the most recent examples. This is perpetuating a growing belief that the criminal justice system is racist and illegitimate.

“For these reasons POP is calling a Million People’s March Against Police Brutality, Racial Injustice, and Economic Inequality. We will march to demand an end to police brutality and justice for all of its victims, police reform, and an end to the problems of racial injustice and economic inequality which lead to police brutality.”

Interview with Nate Hamilton

‘My brother’s killing has opened my eyes’

Nate Hamilton and his family are still fighting for justice for Dontre Hamilton, who was shot 14 times and killed by Milwaukee police officer Christopher Manney on April 30, 2014. The Hamilton family, along with community supporters, then formed the Coalition for Justice, which since May 2014 has organized some of the largest demonstrations for justice and against police terror in Milwaukee’s history.

On Dec. 22, Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm said he wouldn’t pursue any criminal charges against Manney, alleging Manney acted in self-defense. The same day the Milwaukee office of the Department of Justice’s United States Attorney issued a statement stating it would undertake a federal review of the case to determine if — under federal civil rights laws — there is a legal and factual basis for a federal civil rights prosecution. The Hamilton family met with federal officials on Jan. 9, but have not heard from the Justice Department since then.

In response to mass protests, Milwaukee’s Fire and Police Commission in March upheld Manney’s firing by the police chief for violating departmental protocol — not for murder — during his accounting of Hamilton. Manney has appealed this decision in Milwaukee County Court. He still receives a pension.

Besides building the Coalition for Justice and Mothers United for Justice, while they fight for justice for Dontre, members of the Hamilton family have supported numerous progressive causes, Nate Hamilton, Dontre’s brother, recently supported amalgamated Transit Union Local 998’s struggle for a just contract and the protest against Gov. Scott Walker on July 15 in Waukesha when Walker announced he was running for president.

Workers World Contributing Editor Byron G. Pfeiffer interviewed Nate Hamilton July 8 at All People’s Church in Milwaukee after a Coalition for Justice meeting.

Workers World: What is the status of Dontre’s case right now?
Police brutality, racism, inequality targeted
At Newark, N J , protest
affected their lives and their loved
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Bland and countless others.
Justice for Sandra Bland!

Local activists from Operation I Am, an ofshoot of the Hands Up Baltimore movement, held a candlelight vigil for Chapman on July 26. About 100 people attended and heard from Linda Chapman, Kindra Chapman’s grandmother. Linda Chapman and her spouse, who raise two sons and previously held a press conference with BLM and the Nation of Islam to stress they did not believe their daughter’s death was suicide, especially given the Homewood Police Department’s history.

"Jailhouse suicide’: new code for jailhouse lynching?”

Determined and independent reports by local BLM activists have uncovered nu-
cerous discrepancies in the Homewood police account of Chapman’s death and raised many troubling questions: Had the police repeatedly targeted Chapman pre-
ously for harassment? What, when and where were the actual circumstances of her arrest on July 14? Most importantly, what were the police doing with Chapman in custody for appar-
ently “a missing forty-five minutes” be-
tween the arrest and the arrival at the jail? What happened to “missing” minutes? What was Chapman doing during that “missing time”? “Was she beaten? Was she shot?” asked Chapman’s mother.

In 1975, Joann Little, a 21-year-old Af-
rican American, was arrested in Beaumont, N C, for a petty offense similar to that of Kindra Chapman. Little’s struggle with her white jailer was all that saved her from rape, and perhaps death. The police insist “suicide.” But what if "jailhouse suicide" is now the new cov-
er term for "jailhouse lynching"? There is a long history of police co-
operation with Lynchings in the South. Sixty-four percent of early 20th cen-
tral lynching victims were taken to their death from jails. ("Lynching in the New South," by W.F. Brundage) Jacksonville, Florida, where Homewood is located, was the site of 29 Lynchings between 1877 and 1950 — the ninth highest rate of Southern counties. (Equal Justice Initiative)

"The Homewood police continue to re-
analyses and present the data on the site of 29 Lynchings between 1877 and 1950 — the ninth highest rate of Southern counties. (Equal Justice Initiative)
FARC announces unilateral ceasefire

This initiative from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-EP) was announced on July 19 in Havana, Cuba, where peace talks have been taking place between representatives of the armed forces and the government of Colombia.

The FARC-EP communicate to all our peoples, to the international community and to all those who live in the territory of the southern part of Colombia, that from this moment in on the armed forces of the FARC-EP have decided to cease their armed struggle.

The FARC-EP has been operating in Colombia for more than 50 years, and during this time they have fought against the Colombian government and its military forces. The FARC-EP has been criticized by the Colombian government for its involvement in drug trafficking and other criminal activities.

The ceasefire is a significant development in the long-running conflict between the FARC-EP and the Colombian government. The Colombian government has long been seeking a peaceful resolution to the conflict, and the ceasefire is seen as a step in the right direction.

The announcement of the ceasefire is likely to be welcomed by the international community, which has been concerned about the human rights abuses committed by the FARC-EP and the Colombian government during the conflict.

The FARC-EP has been involved in a peace process with the Colombian government since 2012, and the ceasefire is seen as a key step in the process of achieving a lasting peace in Colombia.

The ceasefire is also likely to be welcomed by the Colombian people, who have suffered greatly as a result of the conflict. The ceasefire will provide a much-needed break from the violence and suffering of the past.

The Colombian government has welcomed the announcement of the ceasefire and has pledged to work with the FARC-EP to achieve a lasting peace in Colombia.

However, the ceasefire is not without its challenges. The Colombian government and the FARC-EP will need to work together to ensure that the ceasefire is implemented and that the peace process continues to move forward.

The Colombian government will also need to address the root causes of the conflict, such as poverty and inequality, in order to prevent a recurrence of the conflict in the future.

The ceasefire is a welcome development, but it is only the beginning of the process of achieving a lasting peace in Colombia.

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**Note:** This is an automatically generated translation. Please refer to the original source for the most accurate information.
China, rising wages and worker militancy

By Deirdre Griswold

Workers’ wages in the United States have been stagnant since the 1970s in terms of purchasing power. It is common knowledge that it now takes several wage earners in working-class families just to cover the basic expenses. Moreover, low-wage workers are on the move, fighting for a higher minimum wage and union representation.

Wages in many countries in Europe are also in the doldrums. And the worldwide capitalist economic crisis that started in 2008 has devastated the economies of countries caught in strongman totalitarian debt, from Greece to much of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

But there is one bright spot for workers’ wages — although you would hardly know it if you rely on the commercial media for your information. It is China.

Steady wages increase

According to all accounts, factory wages in China increased steadily at a much lower level than wages in advanced capitalist countries, have more than tripled in the last decade. Some say urban blue-collar wages have gone up five times in that period. This is not what is happening in other developing countries. In addition, inflation in China is low — the present annual rate is 1.4 percent, making those fatter paychecks very real.

It is some Western sources from this year:

The Economist, March 4: “Since 2001, hourly manufacturing wages in China have risen by an average of 12 percent a year.”

Imagine if workers here had been getting a 12 percent raise every year for the last two decades! Just like in the Philippines, wage increases in the U.S. have barely kept pace with inflation. But both were unarmed.

By Lydia Bayoneta

Peoples Army! Ka Parago presente!

On July 10, ten thousand Filipinos came to pay their last respects and tribute to two veterans of the Philippine Revolution, now being deified as somber but determined. (July 10) The Almendras Gymnasium in Davao City was filled to capacity when the number of chairs ran out, people stood or sat on the floor. Thousands more were excluding from the ceremony.

Ka Parago’s coffin was draped with the hammer and sickle flag of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The program went on for hours accompanied by impassioned songs, poems and chants honoring Leonceino Pitoa as a dedicated defender of the poor and oppressed.

Along the march to the memorial park, thousands of red flags were carried and participants wore red T-shirts which bore the image of their fallen heroes. Thousands of onlookers gathered to watch as the march wound its way through the city.

Many boldly chanted, “Long live the People’s Army!”

Meanwhile, a group of graffiti artists carried a stenciled face of Ka Parago and the text, “Samu sa NPA” (Join the NPA). They painted it on walls and posts as the march edged its way forward.

The Revolution Trade Union, a part of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, had this to say about Ka Parago’s death:

“Ka Parago is gone, but the revolution fervor which he inspired as a brilliant commander of the New Peoples Army, as a father of the poor and downtrodden, as a hero of the people, has produced Paragos a thousand times over. These Paragos are now waging a people’s war in the countryside and marching forward towards a New Democratic Revolution towards a bright socialist future.”

The Manila Times, July 10

Long live the Filipino struggle for liberation and socialism! Long live the New Peoples Army! Ka Parago present!

against the bosses, many of them foreign corporations, is alive and well in China. Worker actions have grown tremendously. Nothing deserves the label of U.S. government propaganda anymore. It is the same as what is happening in the United States or in Canada’s response to a major strike that was called by the Canadian Auto Workers. But here’s what VOA had to say recently about strikes in China:

China Labor Bulletin’s Executive killed, state took workers’ side (Voice of America, April 9)

To put this in perspective, the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the United States keeps track of large labor disputes that involve more than 1,000 workers. Last year there were 11 such strikes in the United States, with a total of only 34,000 workers involved. There used only 200 such labor disputes in the United States in 2011, when as many as 18,000 workers were involved.

“Nine years ago,” China Labor Bulletin’s Jeffrey Crothall, a researcher with the China Labor Bulletin’s Hong Kong office, said, “the group recorded 609 protests in the fourth quarter of last year — three times more strikes than during the same period in 2013. The figure also indicates a sharp increase from 2011, when there were only 185 documented labor protests during the entire year.”

The majority of protesters are demanding higher wages, back pay and greater benefits and pensions. “We are in China,” Crothall said, “and the labor law which granted all workers the right to a wage, rest periods, no excessive overtime and the right to carry out group negotiations. Rapid economic growth in the years since has lifted millions out of poverty, but as the economy cools wages could stagnate and working conditions deteriorate. And many workers may start challenging the government.”

Authorities in Beijing, hoping to push local authorities to address the situation, last December issued a document to local governments to make improving labor relations an ‘urgent task.’ The directive said officials would work to ensure employees are paid on time and that any labor disputes are resolved. The government was able to stabilize the big gains being made by the working class, it would likely undermine the state’s control upon a killing the state capital. In China, the state has only a relatively small number of workers, shows something else, too. The state in China does not act the way capitalist state apparatuses do. The state in China is a dramatic example of how workers in a capitalist state can be far more aggressive than workers in a state-controlled economy. It is most likely that the capital, the Chinese working class, is far more prepared to make a revolutionary push and that the Chinese government is wrong.

In order to modernize, the CPC has allowed many features of capitalism to exist there, and the capitalists have done despicable things like not paying workers, subjecting them to long hours and unsafe working conditions. The average salary in China now stands at a sharp increase from 2011, when there were only 615 documented labor protests during the entire year.

The government was able to stabilize the big gains being made by the working class, it would likely undermine the state’s control of the workers. The workers are militant, organized and demanding what they know to be their right: a stable life with decent pay and working conditions.

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Capitalism’s war on children

The Black Lives Matter upsurge gained national and international prominence almost a year ago in the aftermath of the police murder of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. The next day, Aug. 10, a heroic rebellion led by Black youth resulted in the taking of a police station by local and state police, with the backing of the U.S. military. The struggle continues to this day. It helps expose the links between political and economic repression, as workers and oppressed peoples worldwide bear the brunt of mass austerity in the form of low wages, unemployment, union busting and slashing of social services — accompanied by mass incarceration and police murder of the most vulnerable.

A big part of this repression is the role that poverty plays, especially among the most vulnerable in society — children including those living in the U.S. This is illustrated by a study released July 14 by the Pew Research Center, which analyzed several years of U.S. Census data.

The study shows that the overall poverty rate for children in the U.S. decreased to 20 percent in 2013 for Latino/a, Asian and white children combined, from 22 percent in 2010. However, for Black children alone, the poverty rate rose to 38.3 percent — close to four times the rate for white children at 10.7 percent. It also states that 30.4 percent of Latino/a children and 10.1 percent of Asian children live in poverty, with growing numbers of Latino/a children living in poverty relative to the increase in the overall Latino/a population.

The overall poverty rate in 2013 was set at $23,530 for a family of four, that is, two adults and two children. The report also mentions the poverty rates for children whose parents are undocumented. Many of these parents are locked away indefinitely with their children in detention centers by Immigration Customs Enforcement working in tandem with local authorities.

There is also no mention at all in this particular study of the poverty rate for Indigenous youth in the U.S., especially those living on reservations. According to Theresa M. Pooley, the chief judge of the Tulalip Tribal Court in Washington state and a member of the Indian Law and Order Commission, at least 25 percent of Indigenous youth live in poverty, an alarming number compared to the general Indigenous population, which numbers officially under 1 million. (Washington Post, March 9, 2014)

Child poverty in the U.S. must be viewed within the context of the global poverty rate for youth. The United Nations reports there are an estimated 1 billion youth whose families live on $2.50 a day or less. According to the U.N. Children’s Fund, at least 22,000 children die each day from starvation, malnutrition, chronic disease, lack of sanitation and other conditions stemming from poverty. Capitalism also robs much of the world’s resources and super-exploits the peoples of oppressed nations through low-wage and slave labor to make profits for a small elite class of the super-rich.

This brutal system is to blame for the genocidal war that has already claimed an untold number of young people’s lives and to claim millions more — especially those of people of color living in both the developing countries and the richer capitalist countries.

It will take a united global class struggle to uproot this oppressive system and replace it with a socialist system to ensure that human needs are met first and foremost, from the cradle to the grave, without the threat of state repression, especially from the police.

Interview with Nate Hamilton

My brother’s killing opened my eyes

Continued from page 7

It cuts down our ability to provide for people in this city. A lot of that money is going to other parts of the country.

But when you look at the union, the union protects. The union strengthens the people, gives them some type of protection. The union protects. The union strengthens the people, gives them some type of protection. The union protects. The union strengthens the people, gives them some type of protection. The union protects. The union strengthens the people, gives them some type of protection. The union protects. The union strengthens the people, gives them some type of protection. The union protects. The union strengthens the people, gives them some type of protection.

As a mayor, congressperson and senator in Vermont — whose population is just over 1 percent African American — Sanders has been involved in creating government programs that aid poor people. He shows up at every grassroots organization meeting in this small state and by fiat has become an independent and sometimes has even called himself a “socialist,” although the latter isn’t visible on his “Meet Bernie Sanders” presidential campaign website.

In the Senate he has introduced legislation to put $1 trillion into rebuilding the nation’s infrastructure, which would create 13 million jobs. With Rep. John Conyers (D-MI), he has also proposed the Employ Young Americans New Act, providing some $85.5 billion to employ 1 million people between the ages of 16 and 24.

In the reactionary cesspool of U.S. capitalist electoral politics, Sanders campaign team places Sanders to the left of the other corporate candidates in the Democratic Party. His campaign has had greater appeal than those of other candidates, in part because of the thousands of contributors, including those of well-funded Hillary Clinton. The very size and energy of these radicals — should they continue — may make them an important political phenomenon.

Basic Sanders is part of the Democratic Party, which is pro-capitalist and pro-banker and supports U.S. military interventions all around the world, from Pakistan to Afghanistan to Syria as Sanders did. Without taking a clear anti-racist stand, it should be hard even for political liberals to consider Sanders a progressive alternative to Clinton.

The important question for real socialists and communists is not so much whether the Democratic candidates will fight for the people’s interests. The real question is whether those tens of thousands of Sanders’ adherents have a social-ist agenda.

Can they be won away from electoral politics to the independent working-class struggles in the streets?

This means fighting for only for a higher minimum wage, for unions and against U.S.-led imperialist wars. It means joining Black Lives Matter’s Black activism in the streets who battle the institutional racism shown by killer cops.
Interview with Maxim Chalenko

‘Donbass needs international solidarity’


The complete interview is posted online at workers.org.

Workers World: Why did you decide to organize an international solidarity forum this spring?

Maxim Chalenko: There were two reasons: First, it was the landmark 70th anniversary of the victory of socialism over fascism [the Soviet defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II]; second, and most important, the left-wing in Donbass is in great need of international support and assistance from allied organizations.

This summer’s anniversary of the People’s Republic along the socialist path has not been simple and unambiguous. Yes, at the initial stage, all the revolutionary movements of the streets and squares were associated with anti-fascism and the desire of the majority of the population to take the socialist path. But the socialistic character of the republics remained only in form but not in essence.

The forum was significant in that it gave a voice to the people of both countries and the world an understanding of the conditions in which we are fighting today. … One of the main objectives was to consolidate the efforts under the left and anti-war organizations of the world on the issue of Donbass.

The forum brought together a large number of left-wing organizations interested in the anti-fascist resistance in the Donbass. Our situation is quite unusual, and we are aware of the contradictions and disputes among leftists around the world in relation to our assessment of events, and most importantly, how communists, internationalists and anti-fascists should operate in these conditions.

Even during the forum, on a par with the wishes for victories in the struggle against fascism in Ukraine, there were questions about the role of the left in the events in Ukraine and Donbass. What stance should we take in a situation where the main question is which side to take in a geopolitical confrontation? The answer is very complex and the opinion of one person or national organization is not enough.

The second key objective of the forum [was] to begin a dialogue about the role of the left in events spurred by the geopolitical confrontation in southeastern Ukraine.

WW: The forum also announced the creation of an international solidarity committee. What will this body do?

MC: We are working for the creation of an international solidarity movement with Donbass, which we hope will be a platform to define a unified ideological position on the situation here and the forms and methods of work for left-wing political organizations.

Among the eight projects of the international solidarity movement, which Chalenko outlined, are setting up a Committee for Solidarity with Donbass in every country in Europe and around the world, publishing analysis of the situation in the Donbass, and organizing solidarity actions.

Attack U.S. imperialism?

Why a former German finance minister just did

By John Catalinotto

Oskar Lafontaine, former German finance minister and political leader of, first, the Social Democratic Party, and most recently the Left Party, shocked the world with his June 23 comment written on Facebook: “Fuck U.S. imperialism.” He was commenting on the visit to Berlin of U.S. Defense Minister Ashton Carter, whose purpose was to enlist Germany in the military escalation directed at Russia.

Lafontaine represents a leftist view. His position, however, with or without the F-word, represents many ordinary people in Germany who want no part of a war with Russia. It also represents a large sector of the German ruling class that follows a foreign policy that harms German business interests, while serving Washington’s geopolitics. As a former cabinet member himself, Lafontaine is well aware of ruling-class opinions.

A Polemic for a Different Approach to World Politics

One such CSU ally, Wilfried Scharnagl, recently wrote a book, “In the Abyss: A Polemic for a Different Approach to World Politics.” In this book, he argues for improved German-Russian relations. He points out that in carrying out this diplo- macy, one has to put oneself in the position of the opponent. …

In a June 23 interview with the German daily newspaper Junge Welt, Scharnagl said, “My perspective is that in 1989 in the time of the Cold War turning after the collapse of the Soviet empire [sic] the West did not make use of the opportunity to build a new and peaceful European order together with Russia, but instead resumed the old habits.”

Scharnagl criticized the German media for analyzing relations with Russia all in “black-and-white,” and not seeing or giving any credit to Vladimir Putin’s point of view. Of course Scharnagl was criticized as being “pro-Putin” by those same media, when it should be obvious he was laying down the risk of a wider war than that going on now in Ukraine, and one that threatens Germany much more than it does the U.S.

Non-leftist Germans speak out against anti-Russian rhetoric

Donbass is a danger of war grows, dissident voices have been raised in Germany. Not just from leftist politicians like Lafontaine, but from rightist and centrist politicians. This includes allies of the late leader of the rightist Christian Social Union in Bavaria, Franz-Josef Strauss, who held cabinet offices and led the CSU for decades until his death in 1988. Strauss was considered the furthest right of mainstream German politicians.

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Scharnagl criticized the German media for analyzing relations with Russia all in “black-and-white,” and not seeing or giving any credit to Vladimir Putin’s point of view. Of course Scharnagl was criticized as being “pro-Putin” by those same media, when it should be obvious he was laying down the risk of a wider war than that going on now in Ukraine, and one that threatens Germany much more than it does the U.S.
El 16 de julio, el presidente Barack Obama hizo una visita a una prisión federal en Renovo-Oklahoma para a su manera, llamar la atención a la criminalidad del sistema de justicia penal de Estados Unidos y sus leyes sesgadas, sobre todo hacia las personas condenadas por delitos no violentos. La visita fue impulsada por su administración.

Es la primera vez que un presidente de EUA ha visitado una cárcel federal. Obama declaró que como joven que fumaba marihuana y experimentó con cocaína, él fácilmente podría encontrarse en la misma situación que cientos de miles de personas como los seis presos con quienes habló en la prisión. HBO en el otoño, sacará al aire la entrevista como parte de un documental de Vínculos. Se espera que el presidente de turno, Barack Obama, conmutará las sentencias de 46 personas condenadas por delitos no violentos, en su mayoría asociadas con el consumo de drogas, o en su vertiente con actividades en las cárcel. De la página de Facebook de la Casa Blanca aparecía una declaración diciendo que los que habían recibido indulto tenían sentencias que iban de 20 a 30 años a prisión perpetua. Hay debates en el Congreso sobre la posibilidad de liberar a personas que comenzaron a estudiar en prisión, una opción que no está permitida en otras cárcel. Sintiendo esto bien es realmente un escándalo nacio nal e incluso internacional de proporciones monstruosas, es sólo un primer paso en este proceso. Como se trata de apuntar a personas de color y a personas pobres. Es importante plantear, ante todo, que EUA tiene la población carcelaria más grande del mundo con 2,2 millones de personas, lo cual marca un aumento de 100 por ciento en los últimos 30 años. Según el Proyecto de Sentencias, la mitad de todas/os los presos federales fueron condenados por drogas, con un aumento del 3 por ciento de los/as prisioneros en las cárcel estatales desde 1980. La mayoría de estos/as presos, federal y estatal, no tenía récord penales anteriores. Estas cifras sí ni siquiera incluyen los miles de inmigrantes, incluyendo mujeres y jóvenes, que están confinadas/as en los centros de detención. Para exponer el racismo institucionalizado de la política de imposición de los denominados delitos, vemos que las dos terceras partes de la población carcelaria son perso nas de color, y uno de cada 10 hombres negros en sus años treinta está en prisión en un día cualquiera. La “guerra contra las drogas”, que se intensificó durante el gobierno de Reagan en la década de los 80, se ha convertido en una guerra genocida contra la gente de color, especialmente en la comunidad afroamericana. Junto a las asesinatos diarios de hombres, mujeres y agentes de la policía, incluyendo los asesinatos de personas trans, y alimentado por una crisis económica sin precedentes donde no hay empleos y los que hay son con salarios bajos, esta guerra genocida es cada vez más devastadora.

Desglosando esto aún más, un análisis de Upshot del 20 de abril señaló que 1,5 millones de hombres negros en EUA han sido detenidos lo que ha planteado que no ya son muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de un hombre de cada seis hombres que ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido ya sea muertes tempranas o encarcelamiento masivo. El estudio revela que más de uno de cada seis hombres que hoy debería estar entre los 25 y 54 años de edad, ha desaparecido: lo cual significa que han sufrido...