

Low-wage workers lead the way as Immigrants fight for justice

By Deirdre Griswold and Minnie Bruce Pratt

Scapegoating immigrants for the problems facing workers in the U.S. is not an invention of the Trump administration, although this bunch of lying and hypocritical politicians has taken it to a new low.

Beginning with the rise of labor unions in the late 19th century, the silk-suited money men blamed immigrants for creating chaos and bringing in “alien ideas” — like the right to join together and strike for higher wages and better conditions.

Immigrant bashing was then, and remains today, a trump card (no pun intended) in the deck of techniques to divide the working class and thereby enhance the profits of the very, very, very rich.

It was wars and repression in Europe that drove most migration to the U.S. then.

It is wars and repression in countries exploited by Western colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism that make people risk their lives in order to migrate today.

Then, as now, many of those who fought hardest for the interests of the working class were immigrants.

One such person was Mary Harris “Mother” Jones. Born in Cork, Ireland, she devoted most of her life in the U.S. to building the labor movement, helping to organize coal miners for more than 30 years.

Harry Bridges, founder of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in 1937, was born in Australia. His memory is alive today in the majority African-American ILWU Local 10, one of the most militant unions in the country.

Clara Lemlich, born in Czarist-oppressed Ukraine, became a leader of the “Uprising of the 20,000” by women garment workers in New York. Mostly Jewish and Italian immigrants, they organized the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and conducted a general strike against sweatshop conditions for three months over the winter of 1909-10.

There were, of course, many great leaders of the workers’ movement born in the U.S. But the bosses’ fury and racism against the “foreign-born” has been especially fierce. With ruling-class determination they unleash attacks against immigrants, African Americans, In-

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At Frazee Farms in Fabius, N.Y., Rebecca Fuentes and Fernando of the WCCNY, with other supporters and immigrant workers, protest wage theft and workplace abuse at dairy farms, July 27.
 PHOTO: WORKERS' CENTER OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

Charlottesville, Va.

We resist the racists & fight the fascists!



When racists and fascists descend Aug. 12 on Charlottesville, Va., for a “Unite the Right” rally, they will be met with an outpouring of resistance by people of conscience from Virginia, the South and other regions. Workers World Party will be there, along with Black Lives Matter and other anti-racist, anti-cop activists, to give a resounding thumbs-down to ultra-rightists emboldened under Trump to ramp up terror against the oppressed. Shown here is part of the WWP contingent when thousands went to Charlottesville July 8 to protest, denounce and disrupt a Klan recruitment rally and its police protectors. Check for updates at workers.org. □

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Detroiters:

'Save homes, don't destroy them!'

By Mike Shane
Detroit

Despite glowing corporate media reports of Detroit's comeback, families here continue to face tax foreclosures by the thousands. As of June 2017, over 3,400 occupied homes were in foreclosure, while tens of thousands of families were in unsustainable payment plans and subject to loss of their homes when a payment is missed.

An Aug. 1 hearing in the Michigan Court of Appeals was held to determine the appropriate court for a class-action lawsuit challenging the tens of thousands of illegal and racist tax foreclosures in recent years. The lawsuit was initiated in June 2016 by the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan, the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, and others on behalf of several neighborhood associations and residents.

The lawsuit charges that Wayne County, which contains Detroit, violated the federal Fair Housing Act through the disparate impact of foreclosures on people of color in a city where 80 percent of the residents are African American. The lawsuit also charges that the city of Detroit assessed homes at more than 50 percent of their actual market value, the upper limit set in the Michigan Constitution. In fact, some homes are assessed at 10 times the market value!

At a press conference before the hearing, residents expressed support for the lawsuit. The speak-out was organized by the Moratorium NOW! Coalition and supported by the Coalition to Stop Unconstitutional Tax Foreclosures and Detroit Eviction Defense.

Errol Jennings, past president of the historic Russell Woods-Sullivan Area Association, described the magnitude and scope of the massive overassessments of homes in his neighborhood. Yvonne Jones, a retired city worker and lifelong resident of Detroit, decried the tremendous loss of more than 50 percent of African-American wealth in the city as a result of the foreclosure crisis of the past decade. Jones demanded that the foreclosures stop now.

Jerry Cullors, whose family almost lost their home to Bank of America, described the community fightback to stop his family's eviction and demanded that the banks pay for the destruction of the neighborhoods. Jennine Spencer, vice president of the Charlevoix Village Association, emphasized that federal Hardest Hit funds must be



WW PHOTO: ABAYOMI AZIKIWE

Lifelong Detroit resident and retired City worker, Yvonne Jones, speaks out.

used to save homes, not tear them down.

'Stop the destruction!'

The Hardest Hit Fund, created by the notorious bank bailout of 2008 (known as TARP), was set up to assist families impacted by the bank-caused housing crisis that began in 2007. The fund was intended to provide assistance for foreclosure prevention and neighborhood stabilization.

Since 2010, Michigan has received more than \$761 million in HHF money. But instead of providing any significant assistance with mortgage payments or property taxes, in 2014 the Hardest Hit funds were used to pay for tearing down abandoned and blighted foreclosed homes while Detroit was in bankruptcy.

For the cost of tearing down one empty home, approximately three to 10 occupied homes could be saved.

A delegation from the Moratorium NOW! Coalition spoke on July 31 at the monthly meeting of the Detroit Financial Review Commission during public comments. When Detroit exited bankruptcy in December 2014, the FRC was created with the power to overrule decisions by the mayor and City Council that, for example, might negatively impact bond ratings and offend Wall Street.

The speakers, including Moratorium NOW! members, objected to the irresponsible use of HHF monies for destroying instead of saving homes. Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan accused the speakers of spreading misinformation by claiming that rules requiring HHF be used to tear down homes.

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MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Protest vs. anti-woman conference

By Chip Jengel
Sterling Heights, Mich.

The so-called Church Militant held a men-only “Strength and Honor” conference Aug. 5 at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Sterling Heights, Mich. The group could not hide its right-wing agenda from the community.

Detroit Workers World Party and the Michigan People’s Defense Network held a press conference July 28 in Ferndale, Mich., outside CM’s headquarters, to make the hate group’s presence known in the metro Detroit area and to announce a protest against the reactionary, sexist conference.

Church Militant is a radical, theocratic online radio station. Originally called “Real-

Catholic.TV,” they were forced to remove “Catholic” from their name by the Archdiocese of Detroit in 2011. (goo.gl/vyupca)

Church Militant broadcasts daily on web shows primarily promoting Donald Trump, anti-abortion rhetoric, Catholic theocracy, strict traditionalist social ideas, hatred of women and LGBTQ people, anti-Semitism and other dangerous ideas.

Although Church Militant had been planning and promoting their men-only conference for several months, it only managed to attract about 50 attendees. Dozens of protesters, however, gathered on a week’s notice to counter CM’s hate and lies.

Church Militant attempted to pretend that this was a matter of free speech and religious love. But their atrocious ideas



Michigan

‘Church Militant’ hate group picketed in Michigan.

WW PHOTO: CHIP JENDEL

have nothing to do with love. Their supporters sent hate mail and threats of violence to the MPDN when it announced the press conference. The “Three Percenters,” a known neo-Nazi group, threatened that

they would show up to protect the conference, which they never did.

It is important to continue to actively resist these types of hate groups in our local communities. They should not be ignored.

□

North Carolina

Organizers resist grand jury



Supporters show up for J20 protester stalked by state in Greensboro, N.C.

WW PHOTO

By Workers World Durham, N.C. bureau

More than 50 organizers and community members showed up at a rally in front of the Guilford County Courthouse in Greensboro, N.C., on July 31 in solidarity with Katie Yow, a local organizer subpoenaed by a federal grand jury.

Since Jan. 20, organizers and activists have faced scrutiny and intimidation from the state for taking up a banner of resistance at the U.S. presidential inauguration. Mainstream media played out narratives of “violent protestors” and “outside agitators” while, unsurprisingly, ignoring the violence of the police and the ongoing attacks waged on oppressed people by wretched politicians.

At the courthouse, Yow refused to testify and was notified by the assistant U.S. attorney that the government will ask the court to hold her in civil contempt. If charged, Yow could be jailed for up to 18 months.

These grand juries are called under the guise of investigating “organized criminal activity” and are used and held in secrecy to intimidate resistance fighters. Numerous activists and organizers have been targeted by grand juries for their participation in various social movements with the aim of isolating and dividing communities already under siege.

For more information about activities being organized to resist the grand jury and in defense of Katie Yow, visit ncreliststhegrandjury.com/.

□

Communities reject racism, imperialism

By Workers World
West Virginia bureau

Over 250 community members came out on Aug. 3 to protest Donald Trump’s visit to Huntington, W.Va. The protest included organizations such as the Service Employees Union, the local branch of Workers World Party, Students for a Democratic Society, March for Science Huntington, Refuse Fascism, Planned Parenthood, WV Progressive Alliance and WV Citizen Action Group.

The majority of protesters were local workers, students and oppressed peoples. Chants included “No Trump, no KKK, no fascist USA!” and “From Palestine to Mexico, border walls have got to go!” A large banner at the front of the protest stated “Black Lives Matter.”

In his speech, white supremacist Trump focused on attacking and scapegoating the most oppressed sections of



Huntington, W.Va., community rejects Trump’s racism and U.S. imperialism on Aug. 3.

WW PHOTO

workers and nations both inside the United States and globally.

On stolen Haudenosaunee land, Trump bragged about his approval of the Dakota Access and Keystone pipelines that especially endanger Indigenous lives and sovereignty. He openly stoked race hatred against immigrant workers while absurdly claiming that West Virginia’s opiate epidemic was caused by sanctuary cities — despite the fact that West Virginia has no sanctuary cities. Addicts need assistance and meaningful work, not a racialized drug war. Justice demands land restoration and return to Native nations, not environmental destruction from pipelines and coal mining.

While onstage, Trump had the audacity to pretend that the recent uptick in the stock market represents progress for workers instead of what it actually represents — the parasitism of capitalist profiteering. He similarly misled when he cited a rise in coal exports as resulting from his policies. In fact, the price of coal has risen internationally due to China’s reduction of coal production.

There are no borders in the workers’ struggle! Fight imperialism, and fight for reparations and the return of Native lands!

To work with Workers World Party in the tri-state area near West Virginia, reach out to us at twitter.com/HuntingtonWWP or facebook.com/WWPWV.

The MOVE 9: 39 years too many

By Anne Pruden
Brooklyn, N.Y.

The MOVE 9 were honored on Aug. 5 at a Commemoration and Art Exhibit at Brooklyn’s House of the Lord Church. The very talented artist Sophia Dawson offered her paintings to be sold as fundraisers for these framed-up political prisoners.

The MOVE 9 have been incarcerated since Aug. 8, 1978, when police carried out a massive, violent attack on their Philadelphia home. Police shot bullets into the house and sprayed tear gas and 10,000 pounds of water pressure per minute from each of four fire hoses. Forced out of their home, the 9 were beaten and arrested. None was charged with having a weapon, but they were falsely charged, convicted and sentenced to inhumane, long prison terms, allegedly for killing a cop.

Incarcerated for 39 years, the MOVE 9 have consistently been denied parole since 2008. They have been deprived of their basic rights, including to their chosen diet and close access to family members. Two members of the MOVE 9, Phil Africa and Merle Africa, were killed by Pennsylvania’s brutal prison system.

The Philadelphia police are so hostile to MOVE members that on May 13, 1985, they dropped a bomb on the MOVE house, killing 11 people, including five children.

‘We will never give up!’

Organizer Orrie Lumumba chaired the Brooklyn rally and introduced the speakers to the large audience. Mem-



Artist Sophia Dawson stands with her painting of Janet Africa, one of the imprisoned MOVE 9.

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

bers of MOVE, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Free Mumia Coalition and African-American community organizations from Brooklyn and elsewhere were on the program. They denounced racist attacks on the MOVE 9 and the horrific conditions of their imprisonment, and exposed the corruption and unfair practice of reactionary parole boards.

Political prisoners Mumia Abu-Jamal and Janine Africa, one of the MOVE 9, called into the event from prison. They spoke and answered audience members’ questions. Janine Africa told everyone, “We will never give up!” and “Keep the pressure on!”

The MOVE Organization asks supporters to sign a petition to pressure the U.S. Department of Justice into opening an investigation of the unjust imprisonment of the MOVE 9. It is critical that everyone stand up for them as they have stood for us all! See onamove.com and Justice for the MOVE 9 on Facebook.

□

Detroiters

Continued from page 2

David Sole, a city retiree who had just described the devastation on his block where most homes are gone or blighted, pointed out that the rules had been rewritten 14 times since 2010 and that the latest rules were written at the mayor’s request. The rules need to be rewritten one more time — in the people’s favor — and this time include assistance with delinquent water bills! A water shutoff is essentially an eviction.

Moratorium NOW! has launched an emergency campaign to save all occupied homes from the upcoming tax auction and to stop use of HHF for that purpose. For details, visit moratorium-mi.org.

□



CREDIT: ROGELIO V. SOLIS

A UAW supporter outside an employee vehicle entrance at the Nissan vehicle assembly plant in Canton, Miss., Aug. 4.

Company threatened workers Mississippi union organizers at Nissan vow to fight on

By Martha Grevatt

In July, union organizers at the Canton, Miss., Nissan vehicle assembly plant took a historic step toward becoming the first unionized plant of a foreign auto company in the U.S. The United Auto Workers filed a petition asking the National Labor Relations Board to hold an election to determine if workers wanted the UAW to represent them. The election, the first in the 11-year organizing drive, took place on Aug. 3-4.

Late on the night of Aug. 4, organizers learned they had lost the election by a wide margin. Ernest Whitfield, a member of the union's Volunteer Organizing Committee, was a poll watcher and witness to the vote counting. It was "heartbreaking," he told *Workers World*, to see all the ballots marked "no" being counted. With over 3,500 out of 3,700 Nissan workers voting, the final result was 62 percent against union representation.

The vote does not mean, as Nissan would have the public believe, that workers love the company. There is anger on the floor over unsafe conditions, the growing use of lower-paid temporary workers and widespread racism directed at a workforce that is majority African American. "Labor rights are civil rights" was the theme of a solidarity march that drew 5,000 supporters earlier this year and gave a shot in the arm to the organizing drive.

Anti-union intimidation

Understanding the pressure that workers were under, organizers are not throwing in the towel.

Scare tactics were ratcheted up the moment the election petition was filed. Workers were bombarded with anti-union propaganda at every turn — from a PowerPoint presentation shown round-the-clock on televisions in the break areas to anti-UAW commercials on television, radio and the internet. Mandatory daily shift-start meetings featured company videos attacking the union.

The main threat was possible closure of the plant if the UAW came in. Workers were also threatened with losing their vehicles, leased under an employee program that Nissan said it would terminate if the union won, and with cuts in pay and benefits.

Letters were mailed to the homes of "Pathway" workers — Nissan workers who began work in the plant as employees of temporary agencies such as Kelly, Minact Yates, Onin and Excelsia. The letters said those workers could lose their jobs if the union won. Company messages blamed the UAW for General Motors plants closing down and warned workers that having a union would force them to take their problems to a union steward — as if they had a better chance of resolving a grievance by talking to their boss one-on-one!

Nissan management also exploited an unfortunate corruption scandal in the UAW involving a deceased senior official and his widow taking hun-

dreds of thousands of dollars from Fiat Chrysler. News of federal indictments for the illegal bribery scheme was leaked right after UAW supporters working at Nissan filed with the NLRB.

Anti-union intimidation culminated the Tuesday before the election. Nissan rented a big tent, seating 1,000 people, in which every worker on every shift was forced to attend a captive audience meeting. They were addressed by the plant manager and other management higher-ups. All the same threats were reiterated and combined with a feel-good message from former bosses. School buses were used to transport workers from remote areas of the plant to the tent. The company gave out free bottled water with custom "Nissan" labels.

Whitfield, the volunteer union organizer, estimates Nissan spent between \$5 million and \$10 million on its campaign of fear.

Nissan has flouted labor laws repeatedly, leading the NLRB to file an unfair labor practice charge against the company. The UAW filed another seven charges over the illegal intimidation that took place in the weeks leading up to the election. The NLRB could declare the election results invalid and order another election.

"This is the length to which the company went to essentially scare the hell out of everybody to get a no vote," Whitfield explained. "We'll take a moral victory," he added, from the fact that almost 40 percent still backed the union.

Organize the South!

The ongoing organizing campaign at Nissan has ramifications beyond the 6,000 workers inside the Canton plant. There are over two dozen auto "transplants" — U.S. plants of foreign auto companies — in this country, with all but a handful in the southern states. They have deliberately chosen to locate in so-called "right-to-work" states where union strength is lowest; only 6.6 percent of Mississippi workers belong to a union.

The UAW has been unable to organize a single transplant. In 2014 the union lost a representation election at Volkswagen's Chattanooga, Tenn., plant.

There, too, fear and intimidation affected the vote outcome. In that case the right-wing, racist political establishment led the anti-union drive. Sen. Bob Corker raised the specter of a plant closing just days before the election.

Since then the UAW has won an election to represent 160 Volkswagen skilled trades workers, but VW refuses to recognize them as a bargaining unit, while the vast majority of plant workers remain unrepresented.

The UAW's organizing efforts have also been hampered by its own failings. For too long the International leadership has sold concessions — from multi-tier pay schemes to oppressive work schedules to cutting retiree health care — to the

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On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

Nurses' right to organize upheld in Maryland

The latest agent of capital caught trying to kill union organizing is Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Springs, Md. The bosses and management at Holy Cross, the eighth largest employer in the state, were ordered after a National Labor Relations Board trial on May 18-19 to "cease and desist" their wide range of illegal, underhanded attacks on nurses seeking union representation.

The judge ruled that Holy Cross violated the law eight times by breaching registered nurses' protected rights to organize with National Nurses United. In one instance a battalion of hospital managers and security guards was found to have intimidated workers and illegally spied on and photographed union activity. This ruling, says intensive care unit RN Nina Scott, "proves that Holy Cross Hospital management interfered with our right to advocate for patient safety. Now we can move forward to organize without fear and freely talk with nurses."

The hospital has also been forced to rehire a nurse fired in April for patient advocacy and support for NNU — with full back pay and accrued time off. The nurses have earned widespread community support from state and county legislators who affirmed their right to affiliate with NNU "free from interference, harassment or intimidation." (National Nurses United, July 27) Go NNU!

Lipton tea workers ratify first contract

The 240 workers at the only Lipton tea plant in the U.S., in Suffolk, Va., voted overwhelmingly to approve their first union contract on July 24. Negotiated by Food and Commercial Workers Local 400, the contract includes significant improvements in health care coverage and working conditions. Many workers will save more than \$4,000 a year on health care costs with greatly improved coverage.

For the past several years workers were required to work up to 12-hour shifts for as many as 13 days in a row with only one day off in between. Now the contract places strict limits on when management can require workers to do mandatory overtime: only two weekends each month; workers also have four days a year when they can opt out.

"For the last 10 years, we saw so many of our benefits taken away," said Paul Garrison, a 16-year mechanic. "But now that we have a union, we're getting them back again." (uicw400.org, July 25) Organize the South!

Safety violations led to worker's death at W.Va. governor's coal company

The U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration cited Chestnut Land Holdings, a coal company owned by West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice II, for the death of a worker on Feb. 27. Investigators say the company violated federal coal-mine safety standards when it did not ensure that Jason Kenneth Matthews, 43, of Bluefield, Va., used a fall-protection harness and did not provide a place to tie off such a harness. Matthews fell trying to fix a mechanical part used to remove water from coal waste at the preparation plant. MSHA also cited the company for not promptly reporting the death. Fines for the violations have not yet been assessed.

Though Gov. Justice was listed as controller of the company when the death occurred, the governor's son and daughter are now in charge of his coal companies. (Payday Report, July 28)

Postal workers' wildcat in Virginia gets results

Every summer workers forced to labor in intolerable heat walk off the job. That's what postal workers did at the Westhampton Station Post Office in Richmond, Va., when the heat index shot past 100 degrees on July 13. "Some of us felt like we were going to faint," one worker told CBS Channel 6, WTVR. "We took a stand and we left because it's too hot to be able to case up mail and there is no circulation inside the station."

Though the area of the post office where employees sort the mail has no air conditioning, the area where customers are served is air conditioned. "It's like being stuck inside of a microwave, and you can't get out," added the worker. The TV station reported the workers' concerns to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the federal agency charged with overseeing workplace safety, which said it would investigate. A spokesperson for the U.S. Postal Service responded that afternoon: "Portable air condition units are scheduled to be installed in the morning." (wtvr.com, July 14) □

Immigrants and low wage workers fight for justice

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indigenous peoples, Latinx workers and other people of color, attempting to halt the development of working-class solidarity.

Today, in many areas of the country, it is immigrant workers, especially from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, who are on the cutting edge of organizing the most oppressed. They may be confronting small

business owners or farmers over working conditions, but their struggle is always in the context of a U.S. economy dominated by huge agribusiness and other corporations that then outsource many jobs. Big business sets the super-exploitative standards for low wages, harsh working conditions and hostility to unions.

Immigrant workers are breathing new



PHOTO: WORKERS' CENTER OF CNY

Workers' Center rally opposes the "polimigra" at Penn Yan, N.Y., Aug. 2.

life into the struggle to organize and lift up the most exploited. Some examples of their fierce daily fight for both survival and justice are in the following report from central New York state.

Farmworkers fight back

The Workers' Center of Central New York, based in Syracuse, is building resistance to stepped-up attacks on immigrant workers in the region.

The attacks include illegal arrests by police as well as wage theft, illegal paycheck deductions, and verbal and workplace violence by bosses.

A militant rally by the WCCNY on July 27 in the rural village of Fabius put Frazee Farms on notice that years of exploitation and workplace abuses toward immigrant workers must stop. The immediate spur to action was the firing of worker Fernan-

do by the dairy farm owner — for being out sick for two days.

Without access to transportation, Fernando was not able to provide a doctor's note to document his illness. Because bare-bones housing was provided by the farm — for a charge — Fernando was also on the brink of homelessness, when his last paycheck was "held" by the boss. Investigation by WCCNY exposed that the owner had been committing wage theft — "robo de salario" — paying Fernando below minimum wage as well as making illegal deductions from his paycheck for uniforms.

WCCNY organizer Rebecca Fuentes explained that the center briefed Fernando on his rights and worked with him to develop a plan to claim his pay. Fuentes commented: "Fernando's story also brings us to the need for agricultural workers to have places they can go to when they are unjustly and abruptly fired, for speaking up and asserting their rights or because they are sick or injured." (WCCNY Facebook commentary)

Fuentes renewed a call for "sanctuary for all," with a plea that "churches and organizations take action and open their doors now to immigrants fighting this unjust system."

WCCNY held a rally in Penn Yan on Aug. 2, emphasizing the need for a safe place, caused by the constant hounding of immigrants under the Trump administration's vicious attacks. Penn Yan, another small village, is surrounded by dairy farms, vineyards and apple orchards that employ migrant workers.

A small, determined crowd gathered at St. Mark's Church in the town to protest the "polimigra" — the collaboration of local police, New York State Police, Immigration and Customs Enforcement with the Border Patrol to detain and deport immigrants. A state trooper had stopped

a vehicle, ostensibly because the driver was not wearing a seatbelt on June 29 in Penn Yan, and then proceeded to arrest two occupants who were Latinx. He took them to a state police barracks and held them for immigration officers to assume custody. Both passengers are now facing deportation.

The trooper acted in violation of a New York State 2014 executive memorandum that offers some protection to immigrants, forbidding troopers from asking for identification documents from passengers in cars they stop.

In the Facebook announcement for the action, "Solidarity With Families Affected by Polimigra," organizers emphasized: "This incident is just one example of how a single decision made by one law enforcement agent can separate a family, deport a dedicated worker, and send a chilling effect to the entire immigrant community."

Local immigrant worker-organizers have been threatened with deportation. The WCCNY is currently campaigning to keep WCCNY board member Dolores Bustamente with her community. Bustamente has worked in many upstate New York apple orchards and is also on the board of Alianza de Mujeres Campesinas.

In a historic legal challenge, a key member of WCCNY, Crispin Hernández, is the lead plaintiff in a lawsuit to end the exclusion of farmworkers from the protected right to organize in New York state. Supporters packed an Albany courtroom on July 27 to hear opening arguments in the case.

In June, the WCCNY released "Milked: Immigrant Dairy Farmworkers in New York State," containing in-depth interviews with 88 dairy workers who expose their dangerous and degrading workplace and living conditions. Read the full report at milkedny.org. □



WW PHOTO: RASIKA RUWANPATHIRANA

The Los Angeles Che Brigadistas on July 29 (L-R): Nathan Norris, Rasika Ruwanpathirana, Rebecka Jackson, Timothy Bluiitt.

The Los Angeles Branch of Workers World Party held a successful fundraiser on July 2 in support of their four Che Brigadistas who will travel to Cuba in October. The organizers served mojitos and a buffet of home cooked specialties, as a sound track of Cuban music played. There was wonderful live poetry and a conga performance.

Hundreds of people from around the world will assemble in Cuba on Oct. 1-15 for the Footsteps of Che Brigade. This will be an opportunity for new, young activists to learn about Cuba's revolutionary process and share experiences with the Cuban people. They will also participate in the Day of the Heroic Guerrilla on Oct. 8 — the national event honoring Che Guevara on the 50th anniversary of his killing by the CIA in Bolivia.

Go to gofundme.com/che-brigade to support the Brigadistas.

— Report by Nathan Norris

Mississippi union organizers at Nissan vow to fight on

Continued from page 4

membership so that the Big Three auto companies can be "competitive" with the transplants.

The UAW argument has been that concessions are unavoidable as long as the unorganized transplants have lower labor costs. But the flip side is that workers would be more enthusiastic about joining a fighting union that refuses to give up the gains it won through decades of class struggle. This was a factor in the loss at VW.

The courageous struggle for worker and civil rights at Nissan is forging ahead. "Going forward, the idea is for that 40 percent who voted yes to educate others," said Whitfield. "Knowledge is the key to drive out fear; people voted no out of fear because of what they don't know. We are going to stick together. We believe we can actually win over the percentage we need to win an election. We are going to try this thing again."

By building the organizing campaign as a civil rights movement, the Missis-

sippi Alliance for Fairness at Nissan has taken the first steps toward the social unionism that drove the Congress of Industrial Organizations to victory after victory in the 1930s. Labor must be part of an entire social movement and orient itself toward rank-and-file self-organization and power.

The organizing committee can become — and is already to some extent — a pre-majority organization in the plant that fights for all the workers even without having formal collective bargaining power. Other unions, especially the United Electrical Workers, have rich experience with this model. Rank-and-file workers need to establish industrywide networks to share information and strategize collectively. The Southern Workers Assembly is developing cadres of workers all across the region that have organic relationships to community organizations.

A win at Nissan would not only be a gain for U.S. autoworkers but also bring a huge boost to the urgently needed effort to organize the South. □

By Cheryl LaBash

When the 48th Venceremos Brigade contingent arrived at the U.S. border crossing at the Buffalo/Fort Erie Peace Bridge on Aug. 5, they responded to Customs and Border Patrol questions with the usual reply, "On the advice of my attorney, I decline to answer that." The customs agent responded to the first Brigadista, "Oh, it's Venceremos Day. Nobody told us."

Many people challenging the U.S. blockade and travel ban against Cuba have marched across the Peace Bridge into that same Customs building — returning from unlicensed travel with banners flying and chants resounding.

This year, however, the VB had planned to return Aug. 4, flying by way of a Toronto connection to New York's Kennedy International, thus moving the challenge focus to one of the largest and busiest airports in the U.S. They had called supporters of travel freedom to greet the returning contingent at JFK's International Terminal.

Their announcement pointed out: "The Obama administration made travel to Cuba easier, but President Trump has announced restrictions soon will be tightened again. ... This July, for the 48th time, a group of U.S. citizens is challenging these restrictions as a

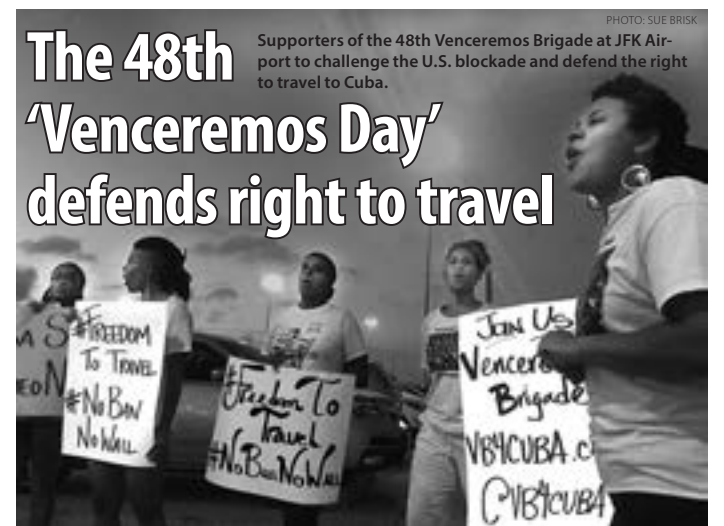


PHOTO: SUE BRISK
Supporters of the 48th Venceremos Brigade at JFK Airport to challenge the U.S. blockade and defend the right to travel to Cuba.

violation of the right to travel freely." (#FreedomToTravel)

On Aug. 4, supporters were waiting for them at JFK with brightly colored signs and an informational leaflet to hand out to travelers at the International Terminal. Along with chants about Cuba, "From Cuba to Sudan, end every travel ban," rang out. Passersby in cars honked approval, and people entering the terminal gave encouraging words. The media came, and the struggle against the U.S. blockade continued.

But the Brigadistas' Toronto to JFK flight was suddenly cancelled. Instead, they had to quickly organize an Aug. 5 return through the Peace Bridge at Buffalo, N.Y.

As they crossed there, they successfully upheld our right to travel and associate with the Cuban people, freely without a license. As Frederick Douglass famously said, "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has and never will." □

SEEDS OF THE FUTURE IN A

James Arthur Baldwin: word warrior

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

He was born in Harlem Hospital, New York, on Aug. 2, 1924; oddly enough, the same year that my mother was born in the South.

His name, at birth, was James Arthur Jones, to a mother blessed with the gift of fertility; and to a father he would never know.

At the tender age of 3, he would be renamed, the gift of a stepfather, with the cognomen "Baldwin," the name that would resound around the literary and Black worlds and continue long after his life was lived.

His stepfather fought to teach him the Bible, and for three difficult years he acquiesced and became a child preacher, winning souls in Harlem until he could bear it no longer.

For he knew, at the tender age of 12, that he would be a writer, even as he won awards for his wordcraft in school. He read (and reread) novels such as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "A Tale of Two Cities," while, he would later write, he rocked a baby in one hand as he cradled a book in the other.

His early school teachers recognized his early facility with words, and encouraged his writing.

He would later write, with keen insight and a savage wit, about all around him: fellow writers, other books, movies, plays; all became grist for his ever-churning mill.

Indeed, he would later eviscerate "Uncle Tom's Cabin," as much for its poor writing as for its bloodless, vapid telling of a tale that demanded courage and vitality to reflect the deep and abiding horrors of the American slave system — and its torturous aftermath.

Word warrior

In an early critical work ("Everybody's Protest Novel") reprinted in "Notes of a Native Son," Baldwin slashes at "Uncle Tom's Cabin," as well as Richard Wright's breakthrough hit, "Native Son."

Damning all such works as unequal to the task, Baldwin writes: "They emerge for what they are; a mirror of our confusion, dishonesty, panic, trapped and immobilized in the sunlit prison of the American dream. ... Finally, the aim of the protest novel thing very closely resembling the zeal of those alabaster missionaries to Africa to cover the nakedness of the natives, to hurry them into the pallid arms of Jesus and thence into slavery." This is writing.

Baldwin published this book review in the spring 1949 edition of Zero magazine, and his simmering style brought him work in The Nation, Commentary, The New York Times Book Review and Harper's. Many of the journals he wrote for are no longer extant.

But that bite, that crackle, that insouciance, would mark his writing, especially

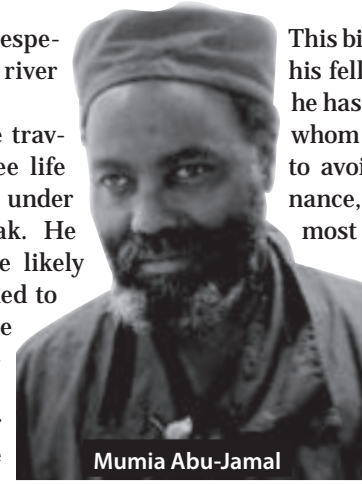
in his novels — and most especially when he brooked the river of race.

As a man of his time, he traveled widely and lived to see life lived in different places, under different suns, so to speak. He met Africans abroad (more likely than not in France), and tried to learn from them many of the things which weren't really available to U.S. Blacks. For they may look alike, or remarkably similar to one another, but how they see

and perceive the world is quite different. For one seeks entry into the White State: the other seeks freedom from the White Invader.

In his essay "Encounter on the Seine," Baldwin notes how Francophone Africans regard the French:

"The French African comes from a region and a way of life which — at least from the American point of view — is exceedingly primitive, and where exploitation takes a more naked form. In Paris, the African Negro's status, conspicuous and subtly inconvenient, is that of a colonial; and he leads here the intangibly precarious life of someone abruptly and recently uprooted. His bitterness is unlike that of his American kinsman in that it is not so treacherously likely to be turned against himself. He has, not so many miles away, a homeland to which his relationship, no less than his responsibility, is overwhelmingly clear. His country must be given — or it must seize — its freedom.



Mumia Abu-Jamal

This bitter ambition is shared by his fellow colonials, with whom he has a common language, and whom he has no wish whatever to avoid; without whose sustenance, indeed, he would be almost altogether lost in Paris."

By contrast, he reasons, U.S. Blacks rush to disaffiliate themselves from other Blacks, making them lonely, isolated and quite lost in such places as Paris. For the U.S.

Black (who was called "Negro" during Baldwin's early days) is so profoundly alienated from the lands, languages and faiths of his fathers — not to mention a keener alienation from the forces in power in the land of his/her birth — that s/he is, in Baldwin's prescient phrase (written several years before Ralph W. Ellison's classic work) an "invisible man," whether in Paris or in Harlem.

Baldwin's brilliant observations and analyses reveal an utterly alienated soul, in truth nowhere at home, able to dwell anywhere but to find safety, solace and true community nowhere. But Baldwin, ever striving to be the exception rather than the rule, returned incessantly to Paris, where he could live, work and play in a way that the U.S. didn't make possible.

Baldwin's gift is this relentless truth telling about Americans, both Black and white, who are locked, for centuries, in a fatal, repellent, loveless and sometimes loving embrace: each a stranger to the oth-



James Baldwin

Poems by Lamont Lilly



'HONOR IN THE GHETTO'

just visiting from north carolina

sirens screeching
ghetto boys
and policemen.
sex workers
cold buildings
and city toll.
city life
sure gets old
after a while.

heading back
down
to where
things sound
familiar.
the crickets.
the klan.
the south.

PART 2

sowing seeds

from the master's
huts
slave quarters
and humble slums
grew strong men.
from the open fields
war kitchens
and vast auction blocks
grew diamond rocks.
from their battered hopes
and buried dreams
grew wildflowers
that refused to bow
bend
or be broken.

Sister amina

(inspired by Gordon Parks and "American Gothic")

she was amazing
stunning, actually.
beautiful like the kind
you don't see very often.

even with that iron
dish towel
and heavy vacuum cleaner.
even with that
broom and dust pan
in her left hand.
black. proud.
working.
serving.
cleaning for ms. jane
cuz she was too dang lazy.



American Gothic. PHOTO: GORDON PARKS

but still
she was amazing
stunning, actually.
beautiful like the kind
you don't see very often.
so beautiful
even the dirt and ms. jane
couldn't hide her.

night of the uprising

(to: Baltimore, Penn and North)

there was free milk and bread
for the homeless.
free nap mats
to replace
their cardboard mattresses.

there was free fruit
fish, beans and rice
so the ghetto can eat good tonight.
fine sofas
and free love seats
for the recently married.
free shoes, free sweaters
and free socks
for all the poor kids on our block.



Baltimore resistance, 2015

after all these years
of being in need
we didn't mind
bleeding for liberation.
it was our duty.
we didn't mind at all.

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Lamont Lilly was the 2016 Workers World Party U.S. vice presidential candidate. In 2015 he was an Indy Week "Citizen Award" winner for his activism and journalism. The selections presented are from his forthcoming book of poetry, "Honor in the Ghetto." Contact the writer at llilly1@eagles.nccu.edu.

er, each knowing that which is unsaid, but thought deeply, of the other.

Truth teller

From his earliest critic days, to his life as a successful novelist, Baldwin tells uncomfortable truths about what America means, and what it does not.

His eye is unerring, for he cites true. His tongue rakes the nation of his birth which, by long centuries' practice, hates and fears him and his kind, the habituation of American hatreds long-lived.

In this hour, in this day of conflict, his insights bear repeating, for although some things have indeed changed, we must scream the naked truth that some things remain the same.

Time, it seems, is a mirage, which passes, to be sure, but which replays itself like a temporal Mobius strip, replaying horrors long thought past, with new, insidious forms.

In his essay "Stranger in the Village," Baldwin foresees the now that we are about to inherit, by observing, "This world is white no longer, and it will never be white again."

Could he foresee the rise of a Trump figure, who seeks, with might and main, to "make America great again" by a mad dash to the 1950s? Perhaps. Perhaps not. Maybe this was a vision beyond his sharp ken.

But I wouldn't bet on it. He was a man who knew and admired both Martin L. King and Malcolm X. He was hurt by Black Panther Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver's dismissal of him for his sexual preference; but Baldwin, being Baldwin, surely reflected on the hurt his reviews cost Richard Wright, in some ways an older friend and a mentor.

In his later years, hepatitis almost laid him low, but it would be cancer of the esophagus that would return him to his ancestors.

His words, his brilliance, his courage remain to nourish new, younger lives, buoyed both by his greatness as by his gayness.

James Arthur Baldwin has become an ancestor; indeed, he has become an immortal. □

First Nation of the Yukon celebrates their culture

By G. Dunkel
Teslin, Yukon, Canada

The Haa Kusteeyi celebration held July 27-30 by the Tlingit First Nation of Teslin, Yukon, Canada, has roots that go back centuries. Summer was the time when the Tlingit people of the interior could gather, feast, dance, sing and meet old friends and family.

Elders of the Interior Tlingit met in 2005 and decided this tradition must be revived as a response to many decades of attacks on their culture, language — and their very existence as a nation. Since then, they have held Haa Kusteeyi every two years to avoid impinging on the celebration the coastal Tlingit have held since 1982 in Juneau, the capital of Alaska.

The first day of the Haa Kusteeyi celebration, at the Teslin Tlingit Heritage Center, emphasized the importance of using Lingit, the language of the Tlingit. There were treasure hunts, canoe rides, hand games, moose calling and soap-berry making, along with workshops. July 27 ended with a feast of moose stew and bannock, followed by a concert with Digawolf, a band rooted in the Tlicho First Nation of the Northwest Territories.

The July 28 welcoming ceremony on the shores of Teslin Lake re-enacted the historic start of Haa Kusteeyi. Afterwards, the barbecue crew began roasting moose for the evening feast. Then women and men in their beautiful garments explained how these were made and who did the work.

The day's main event was the Grand Entry Parade. A few hundred Tlingit dressed in traditional regalia marched into the main hall, chanting and dancing. After that, it was time for welcoming speeches.

Elder Pearl Keenan, speaking both in English and Lingit, began with an invoca-



PHOTO: HAA KUSTEEYI 2017

The Tlingit Nation at Haa Kusteeyi, July 27-30.

tion, mentioning the Tlingit delegations from Sitka and Juneau in Alaska and from Atlin, Carcross and Whitehorse in the Yukon. She stressed that the purpose of the celebration was to "become strong with our culture and nation."

Clan chiefs and Tlingit politicians, including Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott of Alaska, also gave welcoming remarks. Yukon Minister of Tourism and Culture Jeanie Dendys, a member of the Thaltan First Nation, said, "We're living the vision of our elders."

Events on July 29 included canoe rides and races. That night people feasted on salmon donated by the Tlingit community of Taku River, over the mountains to the west of Teslin. Some of the salmon were filleted in a competition and smoked in a traditional smoke house on the community center grounds. Workshops, music and other entertainment were free for all.

The Tlingit First Nation of the Yukon sought to develop and deepen the culture of their nation and show it to a broad

North American community. And that they did. (tinyurl.com/y7xe2olr)

It's important to take note of this history: The Tlingit people lived in the Pacific Northwest for thousands of years. European colonialists and then U.S. invaders searching for riches militarily displaced many Indigenous people from their ancestral lands. The U.S. established formal occupation through the 1867 Treaty of Purchase of Alaska. U.S. economic and political domination followed and then statehood.

The Inland Tlingit in the Yukon were descendants of people who moved there from Alaska's coast, joining other First Nation peoples. European and U.S. incursions sought furs and gold there. Hudson's Bay Company set up the first colonialist government and then Canada took over. In 1995, after 20 years of negotiations with the Canadian and Yukon governments, the Teslin Tlingit Council Final and Self-Government agreements were enacted. □

Eastern North Carolina:

Culture eroded by capitalism

By Erin Mezgar

Eastern North Carolina residents are fighting to save their ancestral lands and waterways from corporate contamination. Generations of poor Black and Brown residents have lived and worked the coastal plain of North Carolina, but capitalism's insatiable hunger for profit threatens to devour, not only working-class communities, but the foundation of life itself.

A unique history of labor and culture

Eastern North Carolina's coastal plain is a place made up of barrier islands, brackish wetlands, rich arable soil, longleaf pines and sandhills. Its estuaries, including the Neuse and Cape Fear rivers, act as veins that connect communities by way of a common heritage. Prior to the arrival of white settlers, for over 12,000 years Indigenous people, including Algonquian, Iroquoian and Siouan groups, used the soil and all that the waters produced to sustain themselves — making use of plants, nuts, game and fish, as well as farming corn, potatoes, beans and tobacco.

European settlers' occupation of the land decimated Native populations through disease and forced removal, and today just

62,403 Native people remain in the region.

Under the settler system of slave labor, Africans brought with them their own traditions of sustenance in an ecosystem unfamiliar to Europeans. During the U.S. Civil War, the Union Army could not have navigated the region's rugged wetlands without the help of expert Black water guides.

Leading up to and during Reconstruction, a complex history of Black maritime work began to unfold. Black fishers, pilots, ferry pilots and sailors commanded the waterways. Free Black residents — the largest population in the existing U.S. — were responsible for Wilmington's economic rise as a seaport during the 19th century. Descendants of enslaved Africans, the Gullah-Geechee, used their knowledge of the coastal plain to farm their own land and build a cultural community and language that stretched from Cape Fear, N.C., to Jacksonville, Fla.

Three centuries after white settlers arrived, the land looked very different from what Indigenous people had transformed it into. Half of the state's wetlands were drained for agriculture and other human use. Roads, bridges, canals, sewage sys-

tems, dams and deforestation had permanently altered the landscape. Eastern North Carolina's economy had begun to shrink as the seat of power moved from Wilmington to Raleigh, creating a distinct working-class cultural divide that stands to this day.

Now, the area is mostly rural, but anchored by cities like Fayetteville, Jacksonville, Greenville and Wilmington. A quarter of the residents live in poverty — and the majority are people of color. Agriculture is a top industry in a region boasting cheap land and labor, and migrant Latinx workers are filling the demand for farmworkers.

Ninety percent of that workforce is undocumented, still denied the most basic labor rights and minimum wage. In recent years, at least nine farmworkers have died from heatstroke, and countless others are subjected to racism, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement intimidation, long work hours and numerous hazards to their health.

Corporate profits take priority

North Carolina's declining tobacco



PHOTO: WATERKEEPERS ALLIANCE

Poisonous swine waste from corporate farms in North Carolina.

industry has been replaced by a growing meat industry experiencing rapid consolidation over the past 30 years. In 1985, the top four pork producers made up 32 percent of the market. By 2007, their share had increased to 69 percent. The state is now the second top producer of pork and the third leading producer of poultry in the U.S.

In just 20 years, meat farming went from several family farms to thousands of concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOs. Duplin County's 60,000 residents, living at the center of the fight against industrial agriculture, are sharing their land with 18.5 million confined animals.

With millions of animals come tons of waste — more waste than an ecosystem can take. The region's shallow waters, frequent precipitation and extreme weather

Continued on page 10



'The people united will never be defeated!'

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Chanting "The people united will never be defeated," a huge crowd accompanied the 545 delegates elected to Venezuela's new National Constituent Assembly as they made their way to the Legislative Palace in Caracas on Aug. 4.

They carried pictures of Venezuela's two great liberators, Simón Bolívar and Hugo Chávez, which they put back in the Assembly hall. The right-wing opposition, MUD, had removed them when they took office in January 2016. As the delegates entered the building, they chanted "Volvió, volvió, volvió" ("Returned, returned, returned").

It was the same slogan the masses had shouted when they brought Chávez back from having been kidnapped, after the failure of a right-wing coup on April 13, 2002.

Their destination was the Elliptical Room, which from now on will be the headquarters for the NCA, which cancels out the previous National Assembly. That body had had an opposition majority and had been in contempt of the Constitution since its very beginning, when it illegally swore in several assemblymen who had not been validated by a popular vote.

The NCA assumed its duties by electing the main leadership body that will help guide its work and will last for two years. By unanimity, Delcy Rodríguez, the previously combative exterior minister, was elected president. Aristóbulo Istúriz and Isaías Rodríguez became first and second vice president, in that order. Fidel Vasquez was elected as secretary and Carolis Pérez as sub-secretary.

This NCA has a large representation of youth; in fact, 60 percent of its members are age 35 or younger. The size of the assembly is also noteworthy. While the NCA elected in 1999 had 135 delegates, this one has 545, representing the great diversity of the population.

Goals of National Constituent Assembly

It is important to remember that in this recent unprecedented election, more than 8 million Venezuelans voted, risking their lives in the middle of a counter-revolutionary war. The nine main goals of this NCA are:

1. Achievement of peace;
2. Establishment of a new economic model;
3. Secure the social programs;
4. Broaden the justice system to eradicate impunity and corruption;
5. Secure and recognize the new forms of participatory democracy and their communal organizations;
6. Defense of the nation;
7. Recognize the multicultural character of the nation;
8. Secure the right to access technology, work, etc., for young generations; and
9. Preservation of the environment of the country and the planet.

It is also important to highlight that not all the 8 million voters were poor and Chavistas. In fact, many were from the middle class courted by the opposition. They voted to implement the NCA because they did not want any more murderous street barricades and killings.

This NCA now has the people's mandate to solve the critical situation in their country, addressing above all the war by the counterrevolutionary opposition, which has been expressed in violent fascist and terroristic actions in the streets



Members of Venezuela's new Constituent Assembly at their inauguration and its new President Delcy Rodríguez.

as well as in a dire economic war through enormous increased prices of basic products and other anti-people maneuvers.

While the NCA will engage the people throughout the nation in discussions on these topics, it can also take immediate action on crucial and urgent situations affecting the people and the country. In Venezuela, the power resides in the people, who can change and reform the current Constitution of 1999 in order to secure their country's stability and a better future.

NCA replaces attorney general

Immediate action was taken on the first NCA's working session on Aug. 5, when it removed Attorney General Luisa Ortega Díaz from her post and replaced her with Tarek William Saab, who until then had been the head of the Citizen Power. This is an entity to which belong the public advocate, the attorney general (Public Ministry) and the general comptroller, who work to guarantee citizens' rights and ethical conduct in government.

Ortega Díaz was removed after the Venezuelan Supreme Court of Justice initiated an investigation of alleged serious offenses during her mandate. Even more important, for several months she had shielded those on the right from prosecution for their terrorist actions.

The Public Ministry is the independent body in charge of establishing the criteria for political or criminal prosecution within the state and is under the jurisdiction of the Citizen Power. But it failed to find cause for judicial action against the violent counterrevolutionaries, and Ortega Díaz publicly sided with it by denouncing — without any real base — the Venezuelan government. She accused it of acting outside the constitutional framework while she ignored the terrorist actions of the right wing.

To further the investigation of violent acts, a Truth Commission was set up on the second day of the NCA sessions on Aug. 6.

The days following the July 30 elections have been the most peaceful since April. The counterrevolutionaries have received the message given by the voters, and demoralization has spread to their base. The right has lost its capacity to call people into the streets. Even the opposition media can't hide the poor attendance to their calls — less than a dozen people could be seen in pictures of several of their rallies.

However, by no means is the Bolivarian Revolution out of danger. The victory

of the Bolivarian people has meant greater external interference. The hostile media campaign of disinformation against the revolution and the pressure headed by the imperialist United States has pushed 15 countries into declaring that they will not recognize the NCA, among them Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Argentina and Brazil.

Even the Vatican, which has been vocal in some human rights issues in Latin America, has demanded that the NCA be suspended. Organizations like the European Union, Organization of American States, the Carter Center and Mercosur also joined this bandwagon. Mercosur held an emergency meeting to suspend Venezuela from membership, charging it with the "rupture of the democratic order" — the accusation made by all those opposed to the NCA. It is interesting that the countries making that charge are themselves prime examples of human rights violators who carry out undemocratic processes and policies against their peoples.

Mercenary attack quickly defeated

At dawn on Aug. 6, a mercenary group dressed in uniforms of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces attacked Fort Paramacay in Valencia, Carabobo State, near Caracas. It was immediately repulsed by the real army, which issued a public statement telling the Venezuelan people and the world that the Bolivarian military is at the loyal service of the revolution. The head of this paramilitary

group was a low-ranking ex-officer who had been expelled from the BNAF because of treason and was living in Miami, Fla. The rest were paid civilians.

This is by no means accidental. It is a well-known fact that the U.S. hosts many Latin American counterrevolutionaries, as the history of Cuba amply can attest. Was this Carabobo action directed by the U.S. State Department? It would be no surprise. In fact, the State Department released a statement on Aug. 3 condemning the NCA. Its head, former ExxonMobil executive Rex Tillerson, said: "We are evaluating all our policy options (as) to what we can do to create a change of conditions, where either Maduro decides he does not have a future and wants to leave on his own accord, or we can return the government processes back to the constitution." (state.gov)

The U.S. also funds the opposition through several channels. It is clear that U.S. dollars are funding violence against the people of Venezuela in the name of "democracy."

Now more than ever, the international progressive movement needs to strongly and urgently defend the Bolivarian Revolution, regardless of whether they are in complete agreement or not with President Nicolás Maduro. It is not about defending one person, but defending a peoples' revolutionary process that, if defeated, would be replaced by the most vicious regime of fascist and terroristic forces. The examples are many, but just one is enough: Chile under Pinochet. □



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MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead.

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes

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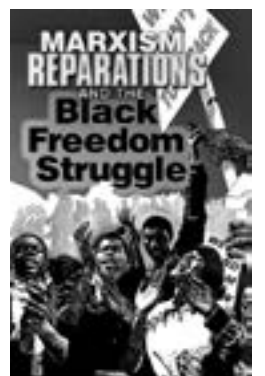
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Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion John Parker

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GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

A tale of two votes and what democracy looks like

By John Steffin

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro called on May 1 for a National Constituent Assembly to resolve the crisis in the country. Everyone was invited to participate and develop a comprehensive solution. But on July 31, the day of the election, some refused to participate.

Can you guess who?

It was the opposition forces that have been leading protests and riots in the streets of Caracas for the last several months.

Why wouldn't this opposition, which calls for "more democracy," participate in such an election? Since April 4, they had been in the streets demanding early presidential elections. By participating in the National Constituent Assembly, however, they could have helped rewrite the highest political document in the country, to which every elected president is beholden.

The opposition claims it represents the majority of Venezuela. So this seemed like a prime opportunity for them to achieve their demands on a much grander scale than they had envisioned. It is a legal process — provided for in Articles 347 and 348 of the Venezuelan Constitution — and a highly democratic opportunity. Voters in the U.S., by contrast, are given no such opportunity to rewrite the basic laws of the country.

In truth, the reason the opposition refused to participate is because they do not represent the majority, and more importantly, because the class the opposition represents really hates democracy.

National Constituent Assembly election vs. opposition plebiscite

Days before the National Constituent Assembly election, the opposition hosted its own plebiscite, offering Venezuelans a chance to show they rejected the assembly. The opposition claimed that 7,186,170 people voted on July 16. This is compared to the 8 million people who voted for the National Constituent Assembly. However, to understand these numbers, a closer examination is needed.

Let's first look at the plebiscite process, which the U.S. media — known for spreading lies about weapons of mass destruction and endorsing U.S. regime-change efforts across the globe — unanimously praised as an example of democracy in action.

First off, not all the votes in the plebiscite were cast in Venezuela. Polls were opened across the world. Of the total vote, 693,789 were cast in this way. That means only 6,494,381 were cast in Venezuela, which is less than half the eligible voting population and less than the 7.7 million votes the opposition had won in the 2015 vote for the National Assembly.

In other words, the opposition doesn't represent the majority and they are losing support. But even these numbers should be viewed with great suspicion, because there is actually no way to verify them.

A register of eligible voters for the plebiscite was never created, and as an investigative report showed, people could easily vote multiple times — and did. Voters were asked to produce an ID card, but this ID was not checked against a list. The voter then filled out the ballot in front of the people running the booth, and the vote was slipped into a ballot box. This is far from standard practices of a secret ballot. At the end of the day, some opposition forces even burned the ballot boxes, making a recount impossible. (<https://goo.gl/soV4ZQ>)

Now compare this to the National Constituent Assembly electoral process. A delegation of union leaders from the U.S. was invited to observe the voting, including Estela Vazquez, executive vice president of the 1199SEIU Health Care Workers Union East, the country's largest health care union; John Patafio, vice president of the Transport Workers Union; and Judy Gonzalez, a registered nurse and president of the New York State Nurses Association.

In interviews with Telesur, the three observers painted a very different picture than that given by the U.S. corporate media.

First, a list of eligible voters had been

compiled. Those voting were verified by an ID card and by fingerprint. They then cast their votes electronically and were asked to confirm once finished. If desired, a voter could have their vote printed out to confirm that their ballot had been properly cast.

As Vasquez said, "It was a more advanced system than anything I have seen in New York."

The 8 million votes cast this way, however, do not tell the whole story.

Across Venezuela, blockades were created by the opposition to prevent people from voting. This didn't stop everyone. Some traveled miles out of their way to reach another voting station or, in one heroic case, crossed a river to circumvent a highway blockade. But that emphasizes the fact that not everyone who wanted to vote could do so easily.

Another deterrent was the threat of violence. At a dry run of the election held days earlier, armed gangs of bikers had attacked polling stations, killing one person and injuring three others. On the day of the election, 200 centers were attacked, killing 10 people. (tinyurl.com/ydc63mng)

Ruling class hates democracy

It's clear which of these processes is democratic and which is a real sham. Nevertheless, the U.S. capitalist media continue to praise the "plebiscite" as a sign of Maduro's illegitimacy, while also attacking the National Constituent Assembly election as unfair and the assembly itself as the end of democracy.

Not once does the corporate media go over how the National Constituent Assembly actually works. If they did, their readers would probably start questioning what all the noise is about.

The National Constituent Assembly was not convened so the president could impose his "authoritarian" will. Far from it. The results of the assembly's decision-making process are a collective effort determined by 545 elected members. Some 364 of them are elected according to region; 173 others are elected accord-

ing to sector, which includes workers, farmers, people with disabilities, students, pensioners, the business sector and the communes; and eight are from Indigenous communities.

On the day of the election, the U.S. observers noted the participation of large numbers of women and youth. Before the election, the LGBTQ movement in Venezuela had already created its proposal for the assembly. And in the largely Black region of Barlovento, as well as on the national level, Afro-Venezuelan youth participated en masse in pro-government demonstrations for days leading up to the vote.

These groups make up the majority of the Venezuelan people, and they are poised to gain the most from the National Constituent Assembly. A spokesperson for the opposition coalition, MUD, even criticized the provision that half the delegates come from these grass-roots movements and marginalized groups.

How can someone who is against that provision claim to represent democracy?

In a place like Venezuela, which even Jimmy Carter has acknowledged as having the best election process in the world, the U.S. government's old playbook of justifying its sanctions and military ventures to "spread democracy" doesn't work. Now that the right wing has failed to mobilize widespread support, the concern is that it will turn to more openly violent means of imposing its will.

Already this is happening.

On Aug. 6, a dozen men in uniform attacked a military base near the city of Valencia. They claimed they were fighting to restore constitutional order. The attack was successfully stopped by the Venezuelan military, but it only showed the desperation of the opposition.

The Bolivarian Revolution, however, is alive and well. Despite all the frenzy, the government is in control of the situation, as all three U.S. observers discovered after stepping off the plane. The streets were not filled with blood, but with people celebrating the opportunity to deepen the gains of their revolution. □



U.S. imperialism: Militarism and superexploitation in Africa

By Abayomi Azikiwe

This article is excerpted from a paper presented at the 2017 Left Forum panel hosted by the United National Antiwar Coalition, on which the author serves as an administrative committee member. It is reprinted from Pambazuka News.

Africa policies [of the U.S.] have consistently remained destabilizing and predatory over the decades, despite the well-choreographed pretenses. It is this imperialism that has impeded the capacity of African nations to direct their future.

With the ascendancy of President Donald Trump to the White House, a strong focus has been placed on his role as a promoter of racism and national oppression domestically, along with warmongering abroad.

We observe keenly the escalation of tension in the Korean peninsula with the placement of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile system. The

president's posture in relationship to the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea threatened the full resumption of an unresolved war just several weeks ago.

There have been increasing aerial attacks against purported al-Qaida targets in Yemen while the people in this Middle Eastern state, the least developed in the region, are suffering immensely from the Pentagon-coordinated war involving Saudi Arabian and Gulf Cooperation Council bombings, which have continued on a daily basis since March 2015, killing an estimated 12,000 people and prompting the widespread outbreak of cholera, impacting over 60,000.

The deployment of the Massive Ordnance Air Blast in Afghanistan represented a new level of warfare in that Central Asian country, which has been the focus of U.S. policy since at least 1979, when Islamist forces were unleashed against the Soviet-backed socialist government then in power. Since 2001, the Pentagon

and NATO have laid waste to the country further, with thousands of foreign troops continuing to occupy the area.

Somalia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Libya and beyond

Although the Trump administration's foreign policy towards Africa has gained far less attention by the Western media, it has continued already existing hostilities on the African continent. Somalia was singled out when Trump ordered the escalation of Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency personnel being stationed in this Horn of Africa state. A U.S. Navy Seal was killed by al-Shabab guerrilla units several weeks ago while embedded in the U.S. and European Union-backed Somali National Army.

Although the administration claimed it was doing away with the supposed restrictions on military actions in Somalia imposed by former President Barack Obama, the interventions by the U.S. in Somalia go back as far as the late 1970s.

When Jimmy Carter was in the Oval Office, the U.S. encouraged an invasion by the government of then-President Mohamed Siad Barre against the Ogaden region of Ethiopia. The waning days of the George H.W. Bush tenure were marked by the invasion of 12,000 Marines into Somalia in the failed "Operation Restore Hope" beginning in December 1992, a plan inherited by Bill Clinton, which ended in disaster when the people rose up against the occupation.

Since 2006, the U.S., then under President George W. Bush, has encouraged and sponsored intervention into Somali national affairs. First by seeking to empower warlords to subvert the efforts of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) and, after 2009, by recruiting elements of the UIC into the interim federal regime, Washington sought to guide political events in the oil-rich state.

Several neighboring states have been drawn into the African Union Mission to

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WORKERS WORLD editorials

Black women's work and reparations

July 31, 2017, was Black Women's Equal Pay Day — the day this year that the average total wages a Black woman was paid since Jan. 1, 2016, finally equalled the average wage white men were paid in 2016.

Seven extra months! That's 19 months a Black woman had to work, on average, to earn the same wages a white man did in 12 months.

Those months are not an abstract quantity. Those are the arduous days and nights of someone like Priscilla Smith, who is a home care worker in North Carolina. Starting in mid-afternoon, on duty until midnight, Smith does difficult work, both physically and socially, assisting up to 20 people a day. She is paid \$12 an hour, with no paid sick leave or vacation, and then comes home to care for her own four children.

Smith, a leader with We Dream in Black, a program of the National Domestic Workers Alliance, says: "The majority of people who do this kind of work are African-American or Latino women. The world needs to wake up and understand that Black workers need to be acknowledged, respected, and honored for their work." (rewire.news, July 31) An even more severe wage gap exists for Indigenous women and for documented Latinas, who earn 54 cents for every dollar a white man makes.

There are 24 million Black women in the U.S., and 60 percent of them are part of the workforce. But they have high unemployment, imperiled job security, a lack of benefits and advancement opportunities, and are the fastest growing U.S. prison population. Black women work more hours than white women on average, and half of Black women workers are mothers. (Economic Policy Institute, July 28)

Famed and wealthy tennis star Serena Williams, speaking on pay discrimination against Black women workers, said: "If I [had] never picked up a tennis racket, I would be one of them. That is never lost on me. The cycles of poverty, discrimination, and sexism are much, much harder to break than the record for Grand Slam titles." (fortune.com, July 31)

Those cycles are rooted in the exploitation of Black women during their enslavement in the U.S. They were not paid for excruciating, forced labor in field or house. Under severest duress, they gave birth to children who were sold into similar bondage. Both kinds of labor by Black



PHOTO: NATIONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS ALLIANCE

The staff of We Dream in Black, a program of National Domestic Workers Alliance, July 25.

women yielded heartbreak, physical torment and death for them — and untold fortunes for Southern planters and the allied Northern banks, insurance companies and businesses.

Black women's unpaid labor — along with that of African-American people in general — was the foundation of modern U.S. capitalism.

But Black women have been fighting back against exploitation from their first days on this continent. In addition to rebellious resistance and self-liberation during enslavement, Black women started to do labor organizing in the South as soon as they were emancipated.

In 1866, Black women laundry workers presented demands to the mayor of Jackson, Miss., for a higher standard wage so that anyone belonging to the "class of washerwomen" could "live comfortably if possible from the fruits of our labor."

In 1881 in Atlanta, 20 women and a few men formed the Washing Society to demand similar wage increases for their work. They quickly grew to 3,000 primarily African-American women, with a few white women workers also involved. On July 19, they called a militant strike, ultimately successful, and described by historian Tera W. Hunter as "the largest and most impressive among Black Atlantans of late 19th century." ("To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War")

The reward for centuries of fighting spirit and organizing by Black women should be more than equal pay. That would only bring their wages equal in the present year.

But for those centuries of exploitation and the profits made thereby, there should be reparations! Reparations for enslavement and forced labor, for the terrible damage inflicted by racism.

More than just equal pay — we demand reparations for Black women's unpaid work! □

Korea won't be intimidated

The U.N. Security Council voted unanimously on Aug. 5 to impose stiff economic sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea because it refuses to give up its development of a nuclear deterrent.

The Security Council is run by five permanent members with veto powers: the U.S., France, Britain, Russia and China. Ten more countries participate in the Security Council, but only for two years and without a veto.

The five permanent members of the Security Council **are also the world's most heavily armed nuclear powers.**

The U.S. started the nuclear arms race, and is the only country to have ever used these fearsome weapons, incinerating more than 200,000 Japanese civilians at the end of World War II. Even though the Cold War is long over, the U.S. military still keeps nearly 7,000 operational warheads.

What terrible hypocrisy that these nuclear powers should accuse the DPRK of being "irrational" and "aggressive" for seeking its own nuclear deterrent! And how shameful that China and Russia, both countries that had to defy the U.S. to develop their own nuclear defense, would join in with the imperialists on this vote!

From 1950 to 1953 the U.S. tried to annihilate the DPRK. It carried out the most concentrated bombing of any country in the world. And while the bombs were conventional, the threat of using nuclear weapons was made many times during the Korean war, most notably by Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

Yet the Korean people fought on with incredible valor. Finally the U.S. was forced to give up its attempt to conquer north Korea and annihilate the country's leadership. The U.S. signed an armistice agreement in 1953, but has never normalized relations with the DPRK. On the contrary, the Pentagon has maintained a large presence in south Korea and kept nuclear weapons stationed there until mass protests by the people in the south forced their removal.

This is what the corporate media in the U.S. conveniently forget to mention when they accuse the leaders of the DPRK of acting irrationally by bolstering their defenses. Did they ever talk that way about MacArthur, President Harry Truman or any of the other imperialist leaders who have employed horrendous military methods? And it wasn't for defense, but to impose U.S. imperialist domination over much of the world.

The Trump administration and the Pentagon generals — who keep appearing in more and more White House jobs — may have thought this U.N. Security Council resolution would intimidate the DPRK.

Far from it.

Here are some quotes from a statement issued by the government of the DPRK in reaction to the Security Council vote:

"The UN 'sanctions resolution' ... constitutes a flagrant infringement upon [the DPRK's] sovereignty and an open challenge to it.

"The DPRK's access to the strongest nuclear force is a fair and legitimate measure for self-defense to protect the country's sovereignty and the nation's right to existence from the high-handed and arbitrary acts of the U.S. ... It is trying to drive the situation of the Korean peninsula to the brink of nuclear war, running amok to conduct missile drill against the DPRK and deploying massive strategic equipment to the peninsula.

"It was against this backdrop that the U.S. manipulated UNSC to rig up the 'sanctions resolution' more heinous than ever, placing a total ban even on normal trade activities and economic exchange, thereby disclosing before the whole world its evil intentions to obliterate the ideology and system of the DPRK and exterminate its people. ...

"The DPRK has already gained everything it needed ... through an arduous struggle under the harshest sanctions regime ... adopted at the instigation of the U.S. during the last several decades. It is only a forlorn hope to consider any chance that the DPRK would be shaken an inch or change its stance by the sanctions of this new kind imposed upon by the hostile forces. ...

"Terming [the DPRK's defensive measures] a 'threat to international peace and security' is a gangster-like logic indicating that the rest of the world should either become U.S. colonies or fall victim to its aggression. ...

"As long as the U.S. hostile policy and nuclear threat continue, the DPRK ... will never replace its self-defense nuclear deterrence on the negotiation table or flinch an inch from the road chosen by itself, the road of bolstering up the state nuclear force. ...

"The U.S. once waged a tragic war that plunged this land into a sea of blood and fire, and has been leaving no stone unturned to obliterate the DPRK's ideology and system century after century. ...

"If the U.S. fails to act with discretion, persisting in its reckless attempts to stifle the DPRK, we will not waver or hesitate to use any form of ultimate means.

"The DPRK will hold fast to the line of simultaneously developing the two fronts, the lasting banner of defending peace, and continue to march straight forward to the end of the road chosen by itself without the slightest deviation."

Stop the war threats!
U.S. hands off Korea!

Eastern North Carolina: Culture eroded by capitalism

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make it especially susceptible to contamination from CAFOs. The only solution that the industry has come up with is to dump bodily fluids filled with pathogens, antibiotics and harmful nutrients into human-made lagoons.

When the lagoons become full, the contents are liquefied and sprayed onto nearby land, including residents' homes. Waste capable of filling some 15,000 Olympic pools is sprayed each year, causing hypertension, nausea, asthma, anxiety, stress and disruption to residents' daily lives. They report they cannot even leave their homes or open their windows

due to the stench that hangs in the air.

When the residents do speak out, they are met with threats, intimidation, job loss, violence and racism. The state's Black residents are 1.54 times more likely to live within three miles of a CAFO than white residents, while Latinx residents are 1.39 times and Native residents are 2.18 times more likely. This leads to the conclusion that these acts by the meat industry are nothing less than environmental racism.

Residents have been in a decades-long battle to save their lands from CAFOs, but the meat industry refuses to pay for existing technology that would convert meth-

ane from waste into sustainable energy. Only 10 of the 6,500 farms in the state are voluntarily using the technology.

Numerous solutions to the contamination have been proposed, but all are deemed too expensive for the U.S. meat industry generating \$864.2 billion annually. In March, industry-bankrolled politicians passed a bill (HB 467) by override capping the amount of damages residents can seek when the value of their homes and land decrease due to their proximity to a CAFO or forestry operation.

Meat production is responsible for more water pollution than all other industries combined, and its contributions

to climate change are numerous. The longterm effects of meat farming on the region's ecosystem will disproportionately affect poor people in North Carolina. The wetlands where some live are eroding at the rate of 800 acres per year and, along with that, the culture that connects them.

Many residents remember 1999's Hurricane Floyd and the images of thousands of pig carcasses floating in the flood waters of the coastal plains. Nearly 20 years later, not much has changed. Last September, hog farm flooding caused by Hurricane Matthew brought a stark reminder to state residents that corporate profits continue to take priority over human life. □

Capitalism's hired killers: Blackwater decision reversed

By Chris Fry

In a split decision on Aug. 4, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals ordered a new trial for a Blackwater mercenary convicted of murder for his part in the massacre of 14 civilians at Nisour Square in Baghdad, Iraq, in 2007, along with the wounding of 17 more. The court also ordered new reduced sentences for three other Blackwater mercenaries convicted of manslaughter from that same attack.

There were between 20,000 and 30,000 "security contractors" hired by the U.S. during the height of the Iraqi occupation. The Baghdad massacre was one of the worst, but by no means the only attack on the Iraqi people carried out by these hired guns. By 2007, Blackwater held a billion dollars' worth of contracts with the U.S. government, most of them no bid.

The U.S.-installed Iraqi government, though dependent on Washington, still demanded a trial of these Blackwater murderers in Iraq. Washington rebuffed its Iraqi clients and insisted on a trial in the U.S.

In 2009, a federal judge threw out the charges that the U.S. had brought against these killers. This aroused tremendous international pressure. In 2011, an appeals court reversed that ruling and reinstated the charges.

When the trial was finally held in 2014, some 30 Iraqis had to make the long journey to Washington to testify.

The Iraqis' testimony was heart wrenching: "Mohammed Hafedh Abdulrazzaq Kinani broke down last week as he talked about his 9-year-old son, Ali, who was shot in the head while riding in the back seat of the family car. Mr. Kinani sobbed so un-

controllably that Judge Royce C. Lamberth sent the jury out of the room."

Sarhan Deab Abdul Moniem was a traffic officer that day. "A convoy of Blackwater Worldwide trucks pulled into his traffic circle in Baghdad and started shooting. 'There was a lady. She was screaming and weeping about her son and asking for help,' Mr. Moniem said. He showed jurors how she had cradled her dead son's head on her shoulder. 'I asked her to open up the door so I could help her. But she was paying attention only to her son.'" (Quotes from New York Times, June 25, 2014)

The outcry over Blackwater's atrocities forced the company to change its name twice, but not its mode of operations. Along with other mercenary corporations, it continues to have the support of the U.S. government.

U.S. to use more mercenaries?

The overturning of these convictions comes at a critical juncture as the Trump regime is battling its own generals over the U.S. military failure in Afghanistan. It enables Trump to press a strategy of bringing in highly paid private armies of mercenaries to train Afghan police and soldiers and, most importantly, to guard metal and rare earth mines that the president wants to open for U.S. companies' exploitation.

At a July 19 meeting with U.S. generals, Trump berated them for "not winning" the war in Afghanistan, asserted that the U.S. head general should be fired and asked about the U.S. "getting a piece" of Afghanistan's mineral wealth. (abc-news.com, Aug. 2)

Erik Prince, the founder of Blackwater and a huge donor to the Trump campaign, wrote an article in May for the Wall Street Journal arguing for the president to install a "viceroy" in Afghanistan, backed up by legions of mercenaries overseen by the CIA. Prince even extolled the East India Company, infamous for its

suces against the ZANU-PF ruling party and various political officials, including President Mugabe.

Both Britain and the U.S. attempted to persuade South Africa, while former President Thabo Mbeki was in office, to impose a blockade on Zimbabwe. Britain also drew up plans for an evacuation of its settler population, who held British passports. These suggestions failed and through the assistance of successive African National Congress governments, the support of the regional Southern African Development Community and the People's Republic of China, Zimbabwe has been able to remain afloat.

U.S. imperialism through Africom

This, of course, was not the case in the oil-rich North African nation of Libya, which under the Jamahiriya system headed by Col. Muammar Gaddafi had attained the highest standard of living anywhere on the continent. It was the Democratic administration of



PHOTO: CODEPINK WOMEN FOR PEACE /CC/VIA FLICKR

A demonstration during the 2014 trial of four Blackwater mercenaries, convicted then of murder and manslaughter in the 2007 massacre of Iraqi civilians.

corruption, violence and plunder of India in the British colonial period. (washing-tonpost.com, July 27)

While Prince's sister, Betsy DeVos, who is Trump's secretary of education, presses for privatizing schools, Prince is for privatizing troops for U.S. imperialism, with huge profits from government contracts. "[The] private sector, Prince argues, can operate 'cheaper and better than the military' in Afghanistan." Called the "Laos option," Prince's strategic proposals are reportedly heavily favored by Trump's advisers Steve Bannon and Jared Kushner. (nytimes.com, July 10)

Of course, behind all the blather about "spreading freedom and democracy" and "humanitarian wars," the main goal of the Pentagon has always been to enable Wall Street to extract huge profits from every corner of the globe. The military-industrial complex has for many decades amassed huge fortunes from taxpayer-funded contracts. Nations and communities from Afghanistan to Iraq, from Nicaragua to Vietnam, from Syria to Yemen have endured wave after wave of terrible attacks from Washington's war machine, whether directly or through proxy war.

But by reducing the righteous punishment for these Blackwater hired killers and calling for a huge increase in their usage, Boss Trump and the ruling class he serves are signaling that they are ready to adapt even more vicious methods to try to reverse their losing fortunes in these conflicts — even at the cost of revealing the true aims of U.S. imperialism. □

WORKERS WORLD
MUNDO OBRERO

Amenazas y sanciones EUA

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acción industrial alemana acusó a EUA de apuntar a mejorar sus exportaciones de gas líquido a Europa a través de sanciones.

EUA amenaza a Corea

Las nuevas y duras sanciones a la RPDC en el norte tienen por objeto sabotear cualquier disminución de las tensiones dentro de la península coreana.

A mediados de julio, el recién elegido gobierno surcoreano del presidente Moon Jae In propuso conversaciones militares con la RPDC en su primera apertura formal al norte. La propuesta era discutir maneras de evitar actos militares hostiles cerca de la fuertemente militarizada frontera DMZ. Moon propuso que las actividades militares hostiles en la frontera terminaran el 27 de julio, aniversario del acuerdo de armisticio en 1953 que puso fin a la Guerra de Corea.

El Ministerio de Defensa de Corea del sur propuso conversaciones con el norte el 21 de julio en Tongilgak para detener todas las actividades que alimentan la tensión en la línea de demarcación militar.

La respuesta de EUA fue anunciar que está preparando nuevas sanciones para los bancos y firmas chinas que hacen negocios con la RPDC. La Fuerza Aérea de EUA voló bombarderos B-1B sobre la Península Coreana, acompañados por aviones japoneses y surcoreanos como provocación el 30 de julio.

El 24 de julio, el Wall Street Journal informó sobre los preparativos de China en caso de una guerra estadounidense contra la RPDC. China también realizó operaciones militares conjuntas con Rusia en el Mar Báltico.

Las amenazas contra los antiguos aliados estadounidenses, así como la escalada de las amenazas en todos los países apuntados, desde Venezuela hasta Irán, Siria, RPDC y cada vez más hacia Rusia y China, reflejan una creciente desesperación en los círculos gobernantes estadounidenses.

Mientras que la posición global de las corporaciones y los bancos EUA se reduce, la influencia de los generales sobre la casa blanca y la máquina militar crece. Esto es un peligro para toda la humanidad. □



TURN THE GUNS AROUND

Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions
by John Catalinotto

Available at online booksellers

U.S. imperialism: Militarism and superexploitation in Africa

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Somalia (AMISOM), which now has approximately 22,000 troops from Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Burundi and Uganda. Police officers from Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria are also a part of the mission.

In 1998, Britain, the former colonial power, along with the U.S., the EU and others, began imposing sanctions on the government of the southern African nation of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), led by President Robert Mugabe. In 2000, when Zimbabwe passed legislation granting the right of the African people to radically redistribute land to the people, the sanctions and other forms of hostile propaganda deepened.

During the period of 1998-2000, the administration of President Bill Clinton was in power. The same sanctions continued through the entire two terms of the Bush White House. When Obama took office in January 2009, his regime continued and intensified the punitive mea-

Obama, with Hillary Clinton as secretary of state, which coordinated a war of regime-change and genocide that destroyed Libya as a viable state. Gaddafi was driven from the capital of Tripoli in August 2011 and later captured and brutally murdered by imperialist agents on Oct. 20 of the same year.

Today, Libya is a major source of instability and human trafficking internationally. Thousands have died off the coast of Libya in the Mediterranean Sea in attempts to flee the chaos and impoverishment there and throughout other regions of Africa and the Middle East. Now there are at least three identifiable regimes in Libya, which often engage in deadly military struggles for political and economic authority. The country has gone from being Africa's most prosperous to dire poverty and balkanization. Numerous attempts by counterrevolutionary elements backed up by the White House, EU member-states and the United Nations to form a viable government have failed.

The situation in Libya is a direct result of the foreign policy of Barack Obama towards the African continent. Since the launching of the U.S. Africa Command (Africom) in 2008 under Bush, the presence of U.S. military forces on the continent has increased substantially. Obama announced just two years prior to leaving office that his administration would deploy in excess of 3,500 Special Forces and military trainers across 36 nations. A military base in the Horn of Africa state of Djibouti has been expanded and houses thousands of U.S. troops at Camp Lemonnier.

Imperialism in Africa today is at a critical stage, impeding the capacity of nation-states to direct their own futures. Despite Africa's vast mineral and agricultural wealth and its labor power, a renewed debt crisis compounded by Pentagon, CIA and State Department interference is reversing the gains made in previous years.

Abayomi Azikiwe is the editor of Pan-African News Wire.



Venezuela

Amenazas y sanciones EUA crecen con aislamiento

Por Sara Flounders

Una nueva ronda de sanciones estadounidenses más fuertes y económicamente perjudiciales contra Rusia, Irán y Corea Popular se ha encontrado con la ira, incluso de los aliados tradicionales de Estados Unidos. Las denuncias exponen tanto el creciente aislamiento como la creciente amenaza militar del imperialismo norteamericano. La burda exhibición de poder por la Casa Blanca, el Congreso y el Pentágono está aumentando las tensiones a escala internacional.

La Cámara de Representantes de EUA el 25 de julio, en un voto casi unánime - 419 a 3 - confirmó lo bipartidistas que son tanto los políticos republicanos como los demócratas cuando se trata de una agresión estadounidense. El proyecto de ley fue similar al aprobado el 17 de junio por el Senado, en el que republicanos y demócratas unieron fuerzas para aprobar, por 98 a 2, un proyecto de sanciones que castiga a las empresas que hacen negocios con Irán y Rusia a través de una serie de sanciones financieras.

Ambos proyectos de ley requerirían una revisión del Congreso de cualquier intento de aliviar o poner fin a las restricciones impuestas. Esto se considera una posibilidad extremadamente improbable.

Inmediatamente, editoriales del Washington Post y del New York Times elogiaron los votos de las sanciones, lo que confirmó la postura agresiva de las principales fuerzas dentro de la clase dominante.

Más dinero para Pentágono

La misma Cámara, incluidos los republicanos y la mayoría de los demócratas, votaron 344-81 para aprobar el mayor proyecto de ley de asignaciones militares en la historia EUA o mundial.

La Ley de Autorización de Defensa Nacional asignaría \$696 mil millones para gastos de "defensa" en el año fiscal 2018. Eso excede incluso la propuesta de \$603 mil millones de Trump, que se ha descrito como un "aumento histórico en el gasto de defensa."

Sin embargo, esta monstruosa asignación de fondos pasó silenciosamente por el Congreso casi sin reportarse, mientras que la atención de los medios se centraba en la oposición del Partido Demócrata para preservar las escasas provisiones de la Ley del Cuidado de Salud a Bajo Precio.

Este presupuesto militar excede considerablemente los límites para "defensa" en el Congreso. Desde el 2011, el gasto había sido limitado a \$549 mil millones. El tope, sin embargo, era violado regularmente con presupuestos suplementarios.

Todos/os los políticos saben que, incluso sin que los designados de Trump causen estragos en los programas sociales, ambientales y de infraestructura, esta última apropiación militar requiere cortes mortales en todos los demás programas gubernamentales para poder equilibrar el presupuesto.

El aumento de las opciones militares, las amenazas de guerra y un presupuesto militar exageradamente inflado quedaron claros cuando Trump nombró al

ex general de cuatro estrellas de la Marina Corp Gen. John Kelly, para servir como Jefe de Gabinete de la Casa Blanca. El General Kelly había sido nombrado anteriormente por Trump a la poderosa posición de Secretario de Seguridad Nacional. Antes de eso, encabezó el Comando Sur de EUA, encargado de operaciones militares en 32 países del Caribe, América Central y América del Sur.

El general Kelly será el primer general en ocupar el puesto de jefe de gabinete de la Casa Blanca desde que Alexander Haig asumiera el control en el último tramo de la odiada administración de Nixon.

Los medios corporativos volvieron a ser unánimes en sus elogios. El New York Times elogió a Kelly como un "faro de disciplina."

Las sanciones son una forma de guerra

Las sanciones económicas son una opción de guerra violenta de países poderosos contra rivales que son económicamente más débiles. Tales sanciones buscan crear escasez, inflación, hambre, desempleo, dislocación económica y cierres en industrias vitales al restringir súbitamente créditos, préstamos y comercio.

Las sanciones ponen al descubierto las relaciones reales bajo el capitalismo. La competencia capitalista tiene como objetivo cerrar las industrias competidoras y expulsar a sus rivales.

Es una ilusión que el capitalismo crea prosperidad o participación democrática. Históricamente, el capitalismo se ha expandido a través de la guerra, el robo, violaciones y pillajes. La creación de escaseces artificiales y la producción de sabotaje son también acciones de rutina.

Estados Unidos ha utilizado el hambre y la enfermedad contra las naciones originarias desde su fundación. Pero con la dominación global de EUA desde la Segunda Guerra Mundial, los imperialistas aquí han tratado de involucrar a otras fuerzas imperialistas.

Durante décadas se realizaron esfuerzos concertados para estrangular a la URSS con restricciones comerciales. Después del colapso de la URSS, el imperialismo estadounidense conspiró con la Unión Europea y las monarquías de los Estados del Golfo para estrangular económicamente a Irak, Irán, Libia y Siria. Esa coordinación significaba que las sanciones se imponían a través de la ONU, obligando a todas las naciones a cumplir o enfrentarse al aislamiento económico.

Rivalidad económica aumenta

La Unión Europea es un colaborador de EUA en el saqueo de los países en desarrollo y ex-colonizados. Pero también es un rival económico en un mundo de reducidos mercados y superávit de mercancía. La posición económica global del imperialismo estadounidense está cayendo. Como un importante exportador de petróleo, gran parte basado en el fraccionamiento destructivo al ambiente, debe encontrar grandes mercados.

La crisis capitalista es el tema esencial detrás de las acusaciones del "hacking" ruso, del programa de energía nuclear de Irán y de los esfuerzos de la RPDC para

defenderse contra las amenazas nucleares de EUA.

Un tercio del gas natural de la UE proviene de Rusia. Las naciones de Europa central y oriental dependen del suministro de energía de Rusia.

Este nuevo conjunto de sanciones impuestas por EUA causará estragos en las compañías energéticas europeas y en los bancos que contrataron para financiar los complejos planes de construcción para canalizar gas y petróleo de Rusia.

Las sanciones pasadas fueron cuidadosamente calibradas entre EUA y sus aliados europeos para mantener todos a bordo y preservar una respuesta unida contra un país objetivo. Esos días ya han pasado.

El nuevo proyecto de ley permitiría a EUA sancionar a cualquier empresa involucrada en el mantenimiento o desarrollo de los ductos de exportación de energía de Rusia. Eso podría paralizar la construcción de Nord Stream 2, un colosal ducto de gas natural planeado para bombear gas ruso a Alemania bajo el mar Báltico. El proyecto es propiedad del gigante energético ruso Gazprom y es financiado por inversores europeos. Afectaría a otros grandes proyectos de gas natural de los países bálticos.

Las nuevas sanciones se dirigen a cualquier empresa que contribuya al desarrollo, mantenimiento o modernización de los ductos rusos de exportación de energía. Añaden castigos contra los sectores energético, financiero, ferroviario, naviero, metalúrgico y minero de Rusia y de la UE.

Las sanciones también podrían socavar las asociaciones entre empresas de la UE y de Rusia para desarrollar proyectos de energía en costas de Egipto. Y podrían impedir que empresas italianas y rusas trabajen juntas en el llamado Corredor del Gas del Sur, que pasaría por Turquía a los estados sureños de la UE.

Sanciones de Irán violan acuerdo P5 + 1

Muchos países europeos tienen actualmente ventas de maquinaria y transporte y grandes proyectos con Irán. La exportación de petróleo crudo desde Irán a países europeos ahora supera los niveles previos a las sanciones.

Según el ministro iraní del petróleo Bijan Zanganeh: "El ritmo de crecimiento de la producción y exportación de petróleo crudo de Irán ha sorprendido a los observadores internacionales que no creían que Irán podría aumentar su producción en un millón de barriles por día en tres a cuatro meses después de la eliminación de las sanciones". (Iran-daily.com, 3 de abril)

Abbas Araqchi, viceministro iraní de Asuntos Jurídicos e Internacionales, dijo que el esfuerzo "hostil" con nuevas sanciones equivalía a una ruptura del acuerdo nuclear P5 + 1 de 2015 entre Irán y las seis potencias mundiales - EUA, Bretaña, Francia, Rusia, China y Alemania.

Los abrumadores votos de sanciones bipartidistas en el Senado y la Cámara son una señal a los aliados de EUA que las compañías estadounidenses de petróleo y gas están decididas a obstruir otros proveedores para poder comercializar los suministros estadounidenses. La

confrontación económica y militar para respaldar esto está aumentando.

Ese mismo 25 de julio, cuando el voto de las sanciones ocurrió, un buque de la marina EUA lanzó tiros de advertencia a un buque iraní en el Golfo Pérsico. Funcionarios estadounidenses dijeron que fue el primer incidente desde que el presidente Trump asumió el cargo en enero.

Respuesta de UE

El voto del congreso trajo denuncias de parte de los aliados de EUA, como Alemania, Austria, Francia y Corea del Sur, junto con los países que son objetivos de las sanciones.

Un comunicado filtrado de la UE informó que el presidente de la Comisión Europea, Jean-Claude Juncker, dijo que la UE "debería estar lista para actuar dentro de días" del pasaje del proyecto de ley y que las sanciones "podrían afectar a un número potencialmente grande de empresas europeas con legítimos negocios bajo las medidas de la UE con entidades rusas". Un alto funcionario de la UE dijo que los comisionados europeos estaban unidos en sus opiniones. (Financial Times, 27 de julio)

La UE podría imponer una prohibición absoluta de hacer negocios con ciertas compañías de EUA. "Si nuestras preocupaciones no se tienen suficientemente en cuenta, estamos dispuestos a actuar adecuadamente en cuestión de días. 'América Primero' no puede significar que los intereses europeos sean últimos", dijo Juncker.

De repente, estas potencias imperialistas europeas, cómplices en las pasadas guerras de sanciones estadounidenses, citan la ilegalidad de las sanciones en el derecho internacional. La UE apoyó las sanciones en Irak desde 1990 hasta la invasión y ocupación de EUA en 2003. Desde ese año, han apoyado duras sanciones contra Siria que continúan hoy.

En una declaración conjunta, el Canciller austriaco Christian Kern y el Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores de Alemania, Sigmar Gabriel, dijeron: "No podemos aceptar la amenaza de sanciones ilegales y extraterritoriales contra las compañías europeas," añadiendo que las multas a las empresas europeas que participan en el proyecto Nord Stream 2 "introducen una completamente nueva dimensión muy negativa en las relaciones europeo-americanas." (US News, 15 de junio)

El mismo artículo informó que varios países europeos, en una medida sin precedentes, emitieron una declaración conjunta invocando la soberanía: "El suministro energético de Europa es una cuestión para Europa y no para los Estados Unidos de América."

Francia ha planteado dudas sobre la legitimidad de las nuevas sanciones EUA contra Irán y Rusia, diciendo que no se ajustan al derecho internacional debido a su alcance extraterritorial. (Presstv.com, 26 de julio)

Reuters del 27 de julio tenía dos artículos: En uno, el presidente ruso Vladimir Putin describió el proyecto de ley como un intento de salvaguardar los intereses geopolíticos de EUA a expensas de sus aliados. En el otro, una influyente asoci-

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