



JULY 26 from Cuba to Miami 9

State of emergency unleashes racists

Police open fire on Ferguson marchers

By Kris Hamel

Aug. 10 — The city of Ferguson, Mo., is under a state of emergency the day after Black youth fought back against the police during a march near the site of Michael Brown's killing.

August 9 was the one-year anniversary of the racist, cold-blooded killing of the African-American teenager by white cop Darren Wilson. Despite the facts, a grand jury found "no cause" to charge Wilson with any crime, and a federal review found that Wilson "acted lawfully" when he shot and killed the unarmed 18-year-old. A rebellion against racism and racist police terror erupted in Ferguson in the aftermath of Brown's killing and spurred solidarity across the U.S.

Commemorative vigils and marches on Aug. 8 and 9 to remember Brown and say "Black lives matter" were set for Ferguson, New York and other cities around the United States.

St. Louis County authorities imposed a state of emergency today after Sunday night's protest in Ferguson, where gunshots erupted during the march and volleys were reportedly exchanged with police. When the gunfire began, cops in riot gear were trying to disperse protesters who were blocking traffic and allegedly smashing storefront windows on a street where part of last year's rebellion took place.

Police and politicians called the protesters and those involved with the shootings "criminals" and said "two groups of agitators" started the gunfire. When cops in an unmarked car came on the scene, the alleged "gunman" purportedly defended himself and shot at police. Tyrone Harris was then critically wounded by plainclothes cops. Police said more than 40 rounds had been fired, but not by whom. (reuters.com, Aug. 10)

Karen Harris said her nephew Tyrone attended the protests because he and Brown were friends. She said Tyrone was not carrying a gun and had not fired at police. He was "running for his life" like everyone else when the gunfire began. (cnn.com, Aug. 10)

As the County Executive announced the state of emergency, a demonstration of hundreds of people was taking place, marching from Christ Church Cathedral to the federal building in downtown St. Louis. Protesters raised a banner, held up by two helium balloons, which read: "Racism Still Lives Here #FIGHTBACK." Cops arrested 56 people outside the U.S. courthouse, according to stltoday.com. (Aug. 10) □



WALLER COUNTY, TEXAS

WE CAN'T BREATHE!

More police killings — more fightback 2, 3, 6, 7

Protest in Waller County, Texas, on Aug. 9, anniversary of the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., and for Sandy Bland, who died on July 13. See page 2.

WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

DEFEND PLANNED PARENTHOOD EDITORIAL 10



WW PHOTO: SUSAN SCHNUR

'Equality Ohio' contingent in Cleveland Pride Parade on Aug. 8. See page 5.

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Activists surround jail where Sandra Bland died

By Gloria Rubac
Waller County, Texas

Activists came by the hundreds to Waller County, Texas, on Aug. 9, the one-year anniversary of the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. They also came for Sandy Bland, who was found dead in her jail cell on July 13, and for all the victims of racist police killings whose lives have been taken so viciously and unfairly.

This action was called by Truth2Power, a new organization whose members stressed they were there for all oppressed people. The activists' anger matched the 105-degree heat, which, despite a heat advisory, didn't deter the elderly or the young.

Black people, Brown people, women, and lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer people have all been victims of police violence. The speakers represented all these communities, and all called for unity against a common oppressor.

The large rally was held in the parking lots at the Waller County Jail. They overflowed with people from Houston, Dallas, Austin, Prairie View and Hempstead, Texas. Older people sat under tents and in chairs brought for them. People came with coolers filled to the top with ice and water. Everyone shared water and umbrellas as they heard not only speakers, but from Sandy Bland herself. Her recorded words were chilling and moving.

An elderly man from Waller County, who was sitting right by the jailhouse door, told this reporter that in 1988 he was charged with 86 felonies for registering students at Prairie View A&M University to vote. That was nine years after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1979 that college students could vote wherever they went to school. But Waller County was so far behind the times that this man was facing 860 years in prison just for helping students exercise their right to register to vote.

Militancy makes cops back off

After the rally ended, the National Black United Front organized the crowd to march. The block the jail compound sits on was totally encircled, much to the sheriffs'



WW PHOTOS: GLORIA RUBAC
Above, a man from Waller County, told this reporter that in 1988 he was charged with 86 felonies for registering students at Prairie View A&M University to vote.

chagrin. Then a group of protesters went in the front door and began chanting in the lobby of the jail.

The jailers had allowed folks to go in and out all afternoon to use the restroom, but the chanting unhinged them. They formed a line and began to push the crowd out the door, causing some people to fall and others to trip over them. Tempers flared, and after a large shoving match, the doors were shut with several protesters locked inside.

When the crowd tried to break down the doors, those being held were released out the back door. They got to see the very cell that Sandy Bland occupied before she died.

A few minutes later, a parade of Texas state troopers rode into town and to the jail with lights flashing. They stopped behind the jail and emerged, putting on flak jackets and getting batons ready. The militancy of the crowd, however, discouraged the cops, and they backed off. There were no arrests and demonstrators returned home promising that the struggle was just beginning.

As the cars and buses were being loaded and troops were leaving, the elderly man who had faced 860 years in prison thanked everyone for coming, saying he hoped to see us again and again until we obtained justice for those having to live in Waller County.

On the bus back to Houston, everyone was pleased they had withstood the heat — from the cops and the weather. □

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WORKERS WORLD PARTY

Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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Choctaw activist dies in police custody

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Rexdale Henry, 53, a Choctaw activist, died on July 14 in unexplained and suspicious circumstances in the Neshoba County Jail in Philadelphia, Miss. He was being held for unpaid traffic fines, a minor misdemeanor charge.

Henry's death came one day after that of Sandra Bland in police custody in Waller County, Texas. Bland, a 28-year-old Black woman, was stopped by police for a trivial traffic violation. Her death sparked national protests.

Henry's death also came six days after that of Jonathan Sanders, a Black man from the nearby town of Stonewall, strangled in a chokehold by a white policeman. (Jackson Free Press, July 13) Henry's death was eight months after that of Michael McDougle, tasered in handcuffs, also dead in the Neshoba County Jail. (JFP, Aug. 5)

A Choctaw Nation leader and medicine man, Henry "called out injustices and would criticize the casinos and other workplaces when he believed Choctaw workers were mistreated," said John Steele, a childhood friend and long-time Civil Rights activist. (JFP, Aug. 5)

Henry had recently been a candidate for the Choctaw Tribal Council from Bogue Chitto. The Choctaw Nation community is near one of Mississippi's more than three dozen gambling casinos.

Philadelphia, Miss., is the town where James Earl Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael "Mickey" Schwerner, three

Civil Rights activists, were kidnapped and killed in 1964 during the "Freedom Summer" voting rights campaign. Members of the Neshoba County Sheriff's Office, the Philadelphia Police Department and the local White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan were later convicted of their murders.

Steele points to the long history of covering up responsibility for deaths of people of color in Philadelphia, and says, "We believe there is an effort to sanitize Philadelphia and rewrite its history for the purpose of increasing business. ... The Mississippi establishment and reactionaries seem to want 'peace' and reconciliation without justice" for all Mississippi Civil Rights martyrs. (justiceinmississippi.org)

Justice for all slain freedom fighters

In the aftermath of the 1964 murders, Steele's family formed the Mississippi Civil Rights Martyrs Annual Memorial Conference and Caravan. The organization works to obtain justice "not only for the murders of Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner, but for all who were murdered in the cause of freedom in Mississippi." (justiceinmississippi.org)

Now Steele, an organizer for the conference, seeks justice in his friend Rexdale Henry's death. Joining him in that effort are Diane Nash, a former leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, as well as Syracuse University law professors Janis McDonald and Paula Johnson of the Cold Case Justice Initiative.

A CCJI statement on Henry's death in police custody states: "At a time when the nation is focused on the terrible circumstances of the brutal death of Sandra Bland, it is critical to expose the many ways in which Black Americans, Native Americans and other minorities are being arrested for minor charges and end up dead in jail cells." (JFP, July 25)

Native Americans make up a little less than 1 percent of the U.S. population, but are nearly 2 percent of those killed by police, says the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice. Compiling data from 1999-2011, they found that during that period "the racial group most likely to be killed by law enforcement [was] Native Americans." (Aug. 25, 2014)

According to U.S. Department of Justice statistics, Native Americans are incarcerated at a rate 38 percent higher than the national average. The Lakota People's Law Project states that Native American men are jailed at four times the rate of white men and Native American women at six times that of white women. (February 2015)

Six Native American people were killed by police in the last half of 2014, including Joy Ann Sherman and Allen Locke, both Lakota of South Dakota; Myles Roughsurface, a Navajo of New Mexico; and Richard Fredrick Tis' Mil



REXDALE HENRY

Estrada, a 17-year-old Hoopa tribal member of California.

Christina Tahhahwah died in an Oklahoma police holding cell. Those jailed with her asserted that she had been "tased for refusing to obey a command to stop singing Comanche hymns." (native-newsonline.net, Dec. 15)

Sara Lee Circle Bear, a Lakota, died on July 6, after being found unconscious in a South Dakota holding cell. Witnesses said she told on-duty police she was in pain and was told to "quit faking."

Simon Moya-Smith, journalist and editor of Indian Country Today Media Network, describes these deaths in police hands as "the lasting intent of early European colonizers, for whom Natives were 'the original target' and seen as little more than a 'nuisance' impeding white 'progress.'" (identities.mic, Feb. 8) □

50th anniversary of Watts Rebellion

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Just five days after the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Watts Rebellion erupted. It lasted several days.

Coming out of the Selma campaign, U.S. Democratic President Lyndon B. Johnson was forced to introduce legislation designed to ensure the right to vote for African Americans.

Nonetheless, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the voting rights legislation the following year were not nearly enough to assuage the African-American people in their quest for full equality and self-determination. Unemployment, poverty, racist violence and substandard education fueled the anger of working-class and poor youth throughout the U.S.

As early as May 11, 1963, in Birmingham, Ala., an often forgotten rebellion occurred in the midst of the largely non-violent struggle to break down legalized segregation. In 1964, a series of violent outbreaks occurred in the Kensington section of Philadelphia, Harlem, N.Y., and several cities in New Jersey.

Malcolm X, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, broke with the Nation of Islam in March 1964 and later formed the Organization of Afro-American Unity, calling for a revolutionary organization urging self-defense against racist violence and international solidarity with the African and Middle Eastern independence movements and progressive governments.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, an independent organization, challenged the seating of racist Democratic Party delegates at the national convention that year in Atlantic City, N.J. Contributing to the loss of faith in

the Democratic Party, they were refused recognition at the convention despite the MFDP's mobilization and organization of tens of thousands of African-American workers, youth and farmers throughout that racist state. Fannie Lou Hamer, vice-chair of the MFDP, delivered an impassioned plea to the credentials committee of the Democratic National Convention documenting the horrors under which the African-American people of Mississippi were living in 1964.

However, the Johnson administration — utilizing Minnesota Sen. Hubert Humphrey, who became Johnson's running mate, and Minnesota Attorney General Walter Mondale — sought to convince the MFDP to accept two seats at-large on the promise that segregated party delegations would not be allowed at the next convention in 1968. The compromise was rejected by the MFDP, yet Johnson went on to win the presidential elections against Barry Goldwater by a landslide that November.

Watts changed course of history

On Aug. 11, 1965, a rebellion in Los Angeles was sparked by police harassment of an African-American motorist and his family. Underlying the rebellion was the continuing national oppression and the failure of civil rights laws to ensure full political and economic rights to the Black masses.

That day a very common incident occurred when Marquette Frye, an African-American youth, was stopped with his brother in the car and later arrested by Lee W. Minikus, a white California Highway Patrol officer. Minikus said that Frye was suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and resisted arrest.

Soon the youths' mother came on the scene and moved in to protect her sons, who were being accosted by the cops.

In a matter of minutes, a crowd of people had gathered at the scene of Frye's arrest at Avalon and 116th streets. The decades-long strained relations between police and the community exploded into a confrontation.

This skirmish soon spread throughout the area in the commercial district of Watts, an extremely impoverished African-American neighborhood in South Central Los Angeles. During the course of the next week, tens of thousands of people took to the streets, overturning and burning automobiles and liberating and destroying supermarkets, liquor stores, retail outlets and pawnshops.

The weeklong rebellion required more than 14,000 California National Guard troops, mobilized across a curfew zone covering 45 miles, to restore stability. It resulted in the loss of 34 lives and more than 1,000 reported injuries.

Four thousand people were arrested before order was restored on Aug. 17. Elected officials and law-enforcement agencies promoted the notion that the unrest was the result of "outside agitators."

Nonetheless, a study completed that December by the McCone Commission, appointed by California Gov. Pat Brown, discovered what the African-American community had already known: that the rebellion was the direct outcome of the people's subjection to high unemployment rates, substandard housing and inadequate schools. Despite the commission's findings, municipal and state officials systematically refused to reform police-community relations or create conditions for the social and economic

advancement of African Americans in the Watts area.

According to the website blackpast.org: "In spite of the protest, the Watts Rebellion did not significantly improve the lives of the community's Black population. While the revolt inspired the federal government to implement programs to address unemployment, education, healthcare, and housing under Lyndon B. Johnson's 'War on Poverty,' much of the money allocated for these programs was eventually absorbed by the Vietnam War. Today most of the population of Watts is Latino with many residents from the Central American countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Although the population has changed, many of the issues of poverty, alienation and discrimination still plague the community today."

Legacy of the Watts Rebellion

The Watts Rebellion was the largest of such outbreaks led by African Americans up until that time. It was followed by hundreds of other rebellions between 1965 and 1970 throughout the U.S.

In 1966, "Black Power!" became the rallying cry of millions, stemming from the "March Against Fear" through Mississippi that June. Organizers for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, such as Stokely Carmichael (later known as Kwame Ture), H. Rap Brown (later Jamil Abdullah al-Amin) and Willie Ricks (Mukassa Dada), placed greater emphasis on self-determination, Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism.

Thousands of African Americans were elected to public office and millions entered higher educational institutions and

Continued on page 6

Dream Riders journey for justice

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

A multinational group of young people, Dream Riders Across America, marched and rallied on Aug. 3 in Montgomery, Ala., as part of their journey to fight for immigrant rights and oppose racism. On the state Capitol steps, the Dreamers joined with the Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice and the Alabama NAACP to affirm their dedication to “a unified progressive network of young people, immigrants, and communities of color.” (Dream Riders Across America, Aug. 4)

The Dreamers, most of them now or previously undocumented, are Latino/a, Asian and African American. They come from Thailand, Pakistan, Vietnam, Korea, Mexico, the U.S. and other countries.

Traveling by bus from July 27 to Aug. 7, the Dreamers spoke at cities through-

out the immigrant rights “battleground states” of the U.S. South — from Washington, D.C., and Virginia to North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana and Texas. The ride was sponsored by the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium, the Service Employees Union and affiliated groups.

Alease Wilson, a Dream Rider from Los Angeles, was adamant that racism directed at undocumented immigrants is inextricably linked to the racism aimed at all people of color. She said, “I’m joining the bus tour because I don’t want my brother to be the next Michael Brown.” Brown was the African-American teenager whose killing by Ferguson, Mo., police led to uprisings around the country against racist violence by state and city police. (dreamriders.us/press, July 30)

The Alabama NAACP participation with the Dreamers was part of a national

NAACP Journey for Justice, an 860-mile march from Selma, Ala., to Washington, D.C., to focus attention and mobilize action to fight for “a fair criminal justice system, uncorrupted and unfettered access to the ballot box, sustainable jobs with a living wage, and equitable public education.” (NAACP.org/ajfj)

The Journey for Justice began Aug. 1 on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. The act was won by the African-American Civil Rights Movement through many bloody and sacrificial struggles, such as the brutal assault on marchers in 1965 on the Pettus Bridge.

The Voting Rights Act and access to



PHOTO: DREAM RIDERS ACROSS AMERICA

Protest on the steps of the Alabama Capitol building by Dream Riders, Alabama NAACP and Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice.

the ballot by people of color and low-income and working-class people is now under heavy attack by right-wing forces. The marchers plan to arrive in Washington on Sept. 11 after 40 days and nights of “old-school marching” with town rallies and conversations along the way. □

GOP debate: the squawking of vultures

By Chris Fry

Displaying an orgy of racism, anti-union, anti-lesbian-gay-bi-trans-queer and anti-women bigotry, Fox News presented the first Republican Party “debate” on Aug. 6.

Of course, this was not a real debate at all. All 17 candidates speaking in the two sessions vied with each other to show how they were the most reactionary, the most pro-big business and the most pro-war. Each candidate’s goal was the same — to show potential wealthy donors that he or she could best maintain Wall Street’s grip here and abroad.

On the stage was an authentic voice of Wall Street himself: real estate tycoon Donald Trump. As expected, he continued his obscene tirade against Mexican people, saying that attacks on undocumented workers were “his issue.”

And how did the other candidates respond to Trump’s racist vitriol? Ohio Gov. John Kasich saluted the “merit of Trump,” saying he was “touching a nerve” among the people. And despite their supposedly being opposed to federal “interference,” all the candidates agreed that local governments around the country which have declared themselves “sanctuary cities” for people fleeing U.S. imperialist-spawned terror and oppression in their homelands must be stopped — even that their mayors should be arrested.

Trump openly boasted of giving bribes. He said that most of the other candidates on the stage, as well as Hillary Clinton of the Democrats, had received millions from him in “donations” in return for “favors.”

Did any of the politicians on the stage object, call out Trump for being the criminal that he is and proclaim their own independence from big money? No, of course not. Some even raised their hands to indicate that they had not yet received their expected Trump donation.

One of the Fox announcers, Megyn Kelly, called out Trump’s publicly labeling various women as “dogs,” “fat pigs,” “slobs” and “disgusting animals.” Kelly described how Trump once said to a contestant on his TV show that it would be a “pretty picture to see her on her knees.”

In response, Trump said he “didn’t have time for political correctness.”

It’s not that Wall Street bankers disagree with any of his racist and misogyny-

nistic utterances. They agree with every word. But Trump is vying for the power that lies with the presidency, which would give him a huge financial edge versus his competitors. That they cannot tolerate, so each of their well-paid political hacks on the debate stage questioned Trump’s “loyalty to conservative principles.”

Of course, like Trump, the only principle that these hacks’ corporate backers care about is the principal — plus interest — that they gain from the exploitation and oppression of workers and poor people around the globe, from Detroit to Greece, from Baltimore to Yemen, from Ferguson to Palestine.

Love war, hate women’s rights

Each candidate beat the drums of war. All proclaimed how they would pump up the bloated Pentagon budget. All denounced the agreement with Iran, showing their eagerness for a new military adventure. Each expressed support for the repressive regimes in Egypt and Saudi Arabia and, of course, the Zionist regime in Israel.

Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas announced that any people who decided to join ISIS should automatically lose their U.S. citi-

zenship and had “signed their own death warrant.” He failed to mention anything about a trial.

In response to a question about water-boarding torture, Dr. Ben Carson said that its only problem is that it was exposed. “There is no politically correct war,” he added. Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey chimed in his support for National Security Agency spying and torture as well.

When asked about the growing Black Lives Matter movement, Gov. Scott Walker of Wisconsin said that while more training of cops may be necessary, the most important response is to “support law enforcement.” The word racism was never mentioned during the entire debate.

Women’s reproductive rights came under relentless attack. All the candidates supported banning abortions under any circumstances. All want to defund Planned Parenthood, which provides health care to millions of women, particularly poor women, across the country. Cruz proclaimed that he would have the Justice Department launch a criminal probe of that organization.

Michael Huckabee, a former governor of Kansas, made a point to denounce

granting any rights to transgender service people, since that did not help the military “blow up things and kill people.”

Huckabee, Christie, Jeb Bush, Kasich and Walker all boasted of their cutbacks of social programs as well as their campaigns against unions, particularly public workers’ unions. The EPA and the Education Department are surely headed for the chopping block. Christie proclaimed his intention to cut back Social Security benefits and raise the retirement age.

Clearly all the Republican candidates wanted to show off their austerity stripes to their Wall Street backers.

In this time of continuing high actual unemployment and stagnant wages, all these political hacks are vying to show Wall Street they can carry out the most gruesome program of cutbacks, repression and war. Unlike the Democratic candidates, they don’t try to conceal their loyalty to the super-rich but flaunt it.

The solution for working and poor people lies not in the electoral arena of candidates representing various factions of the ruling class, but rather in the streets — in the struggle to break capitalism’s stranglehold over the vast wealth the workers have created. □

Mumia Abu-Jamal: Trump and politics of resentment

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

When New York billionaire and GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump launched into his anti-immigrant tirade against Mexicans crossing the border, he was using a long-known political technique of plugging into the live wire of American resentment of “the other.”

Today, it’s Latinos, of course; more precisely, those from the southern borders: Mexicans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and the like.

But, since the 19th century, politicians have used these currents of fear to fuel movements against those who came from abroad. In those days, though, the targets of nativists’ ire were the Irish, Russian Jews, Italians and other Europeans.

These forces gave birth to the Ameri-

can Party, a fierce anti-immigrant group that became known popularly as the “Know Nothings.” They formed a third party during the 1850s and ran former U.S. President Millard Fillmore as their unsuccessful candidate.

U.S. historian Richard Hofstadter (1910-1970), in his classic work, “The Paranoid Style in American Politics,” argued that much of the energy of the anti-immigrant forces stemmed from what might be called “status anxiety,” or the intense insecurities of people unsure of their place in U.S. society, but who could point to others — immigrants — who held weaker positions in society.

Furthermore, these anxiety-ridden groups often have mixed feelings of fear and admiration of social elites, and who is more elite than the superrich?

Witness the spectacle of Donald



Mumia’s health crisis continues. Join the fight to FREE MUMIA!

Trump, who, without question, is perhaps the richest man ever to run for president — and is a billionaire populist, no less!

I wouldn’t get too excited about his place in the polls right now. In 2012, the toast of both press and polls was a pizza executive named Herman Cain. We know how that worked out.

But most candidates, especially of the GOP, worship at the throne of the wealthy, for they are the ones they serve.

The thousands and millions who rage at Latino immigrants also worship the rich.

In Donald Trump they have found their voice. And he has found, in the energies of resentment, undeniable fuel for failure. □

All out solidarity with Boston bus drivers!

By Martha Grevatt

The struggle of the fired Boston school bus drivers has now been going on for two years. That is a long time for four union leaders to be out of work. It is a long time for the union, Steelworkers Local 8751, to sustain its militant campaign to get the four rehired.

A campaign like this demands hours and hours of hard work — making signs, running errands, phone banking, sitting in meetings and handing out thousands of leaflets every time there is a rally. And there have been plenty of rallies since the union-busting Veolia company concocted its fabricated story that union President Andre Francois, Vice President Steve Kirschbaum, Financial Secretary Steve Gillis and Grievance Chair Garry Murchison led an illegal wildcat strike and left schoolchildren stranded on Oct. 8, 2013.

Veolia, which was hired by the city of Boston to break this 40-year-old class-conscious union, still refuses to admit the truth: the company subjected the union drivers to an illegal lockout when the workers demanded a meeting over legitimate grievances.

But, 22 months later, the membership of Local 8751 also shows no signs

of backing down. These drivers are 98 percent workers of color — Haitian, Cape Verdean, Latino/a and African-American — and will do whatever it takes to “finish the job” of getting their leaders back to work and wresting a decent contract from one of the worst union busters on the planet.

The drivers’ union has made it to round three with Veolia. Local 8751 won the first round against Veolia when a working-class jury took a mere 10 minutes to find Kirschbaum not guilty of trumped-up felony assault charges that Veolia fabricated against the union’s founder. Round two came when the Team Solidarity slate, led by the fired drivers, routed the cowardly, corrupt, pro-company union leadership. The Team won every single position by margins of three-to-one and higher.

To win round three, Team Solidarity is mapping out a strategy to build for a mass labor/community “Solidarity Day” rally in Boston.

Speaking to a Team Solidarity meeting Aug. 9, Kirschbaum outlined the current state of the struggle in the context of the local’s 40-year history — which began when drivers faced the bricks and rocks of hard-core bigots determined to keep Boston public schools segregated. “Local

8751 has a proud history of fighting for our rights. The exemplary wages, benefits and union rights that we are now defending are the result of major strikes and battles of years past against union-busting companies and their servants in the school department and the city.

“We now face our most serious challenges. We and our rank and file have demonstrated remarkable stamina and determination to win. We have successfully stopped every ambush by the company, BPS, the city and the cops. It is now up to the rank and file, organized under the leadership of Team Solidarity, to finish the job.

“The bus company is by far the worst and greediest of our capitalist bosses. They represent the very essence of the parasitic 1 percenters! We have a backlog of hundreds of grievances and dozens of charges at the National Labor Relations Board regarding their illegal violations of our contract and rights. They have escalated unjust discipline, suspensions and firings. They refused to pay out life insurance to the families of our dearly departed. Since day one they have sought to tear up our contract and take away over 40 years of contract progress. In an unprecedented action they fired four top union leaders and even tried un-

successfully to put me in jail.

“Add to this a school department and city who are hell-bent to cut the most basic education needs and rights of the communities we serve, closing schools and attempting to throw the middle school students off our buses.

“It is time that we teach these union busters the same lesson we have taught bus companies, school superintendents and yes, even mayors, in our past glory days. The lesson is clear and simple. If you try to bust our union, our union will bust you! Most importantly, we must strain every effort to build for the next Solidarity Day!”

Now is the time! Help the drivers win round three! Come to Boston for Solidarity Day!

If you cannot come to Boston, have an anti-Veolia demonstration where you live. Veolia aids Israeli apartheid, helps frackers and nuclear polluters cover up their mess, privatizes and destroys public water and transit services, and more. You will have no trouble finding allies to help the drivers beat Veolia.

Help sustain this heroic union with a solidarity contribution. To help the drivers win round three, visit Team Solidarity on Facebook or go to www.bostonschoolbus5.org. □

UAW must challenge bosses’ profit formula

By Martha Grevatt

Negotiations between the Big Three auto companies and the United Auto Workers have been underway since the last half of July. UAW locals have scheduled strike authorization votes. A “yes” vote does not automatically mean workers will strike. But when a majority authorizes the union to call a strike if deemed necessary, the members are saying they are willing to fight.

Getting strike approval has never been a problem for the UAW. Workers know when they signal their willingness to walk the picket line, the negotiators can use the strike threat as leverage.

The UAW gained additional potential leverage in 2014, when delegates at its quadrennial Constitutional Convention voted for a dues increase to bolster the strike fund.

The pent-up demands of the rank and file to reverse past concessions are being felt as car sales soar above pre-recession levels. General Motors, Ford and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles are raking in obscene profits. In a mere three months, the combined pre-tax profits of the three companies in North America totaled \$6.8 billion — the equivalent of \$27.2 billion per year. (Detroit Free Press, Aug. 7) This is almost twice the \$15.6 billion that Ford, GM and FCA together made in 2014.

The record profits would be even higher if not for the losses from recall costs at FCA and injury settlements at GM, both caused by company cost cutting at the expense of vehicle safety.

Workers gave, bosses rake it in

In 2009, the companies and the White House Auto Task Force colluded to use the bankruptcy process as a club against the union. Workers were told that if they did not agree to contract modifications in the Loan Service Agreement, the U.S. Treasury would not loan Chrysler and GM the funds needed to avoid going out

of business altogether.

The two companies closed more than two dozen plants and warehouses; eliminated annual bonuses, the cost-of-living allowance (COLA), some income protection programs for laid-off workers, and overtime pay after eight hours and on weekends; cut health benefits for retirees, paid break time and holidays; and struck language limiting the use of lower-paid second-tier workers. Workers could now be forced to take a job offer anywhere in the country or lose their jobs. This was on top of concessions in the 2007-2011 agreement that froze wages for four years and introduced two-tier pay for the first time.

That year, the union also agreed not to strike when the agreement expired in 2011 and to submit any unresolved issues for the 2011-2015 contracts to binding arbitration.

In 2011, GM and FCA used the threat of arbitration to coerce workers into accepting the 2009 modifications for another four years. Ford secured similar concessions by offering an attractive bonus package and exploiting workers’ fears that a “no” vote would lead to a long

strike, and that they could be permanently replaced by scabs.

In 2007, labor costs were estimated to be less than 10 percent of the price of a vehicle. The concessions that year were expected to cut those costs to a mere 5 percent.

The 2009 bankruptcy concessions, which the 2011-2015 contracts extended, cut wages and benefits further. The workers’ sacrifices have helped the bosses’ profits — hovering around 10 percent for GM and Ford and 7.5 for FCA — exceed the cost of labor. Put in Marxist terms, workers are subjected to a higher rate of exploitation. Of course, the rate is multiplied tenfold in Asian and Latin American plants, where wages are a fraction of what U.S. workers make.

When the second-quarter earnings were announced in July, right around the start of negotiations, the UAW had an opportune moment to make a bold statement: to declare they were going on the offensive to win back the gains of past struggles and secure for the membership a bigger share of the wealth they produce.

Unfortunately the UAW International leaders have tied their hands with their

flawed strategy of “partnership” with the corporations. News releases hailed the quarterly profit reports: “We are always happy when the company succeeds,” said International Vice President for Chrysler Department Norwood Jewell. (uaw.org)

Early UAW leaders had a better understanding of what profit is. Vice President Wyndham Mortimer, who negotiated the first contract with GM in 1937, put his Marxist definition of profit in a leaflet that made its way down the Flint assembly line: “It is that part of the corporation’s income that is left over after all charges such as wages, salaries, depreciation, overhead, etc., are paid. This loot will amount to a sum equal to all the wages paid [in the first six months of 1936] to the 200,000 employees of the General Motors Corporation.” (Henry Kraus Collections, Box 8, Folder 40, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University)

New rank-and-file leaders are emerging from the shop floor who want to struggle against the profiteers. Many will attend the “Autoworker Speakout” in Detroit on Aug. 23, called by Autoworker Caravan. □

Equality Ohio marches in Cleveland

“Equality Ohio,” organizers for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer rights, had a militant contingent in this year’s Cleveland Pride Parade on Aug. 8. The spirited group of more than 40 people chanted: “Trans folks are under attack! What do we do? Stand up! Fight back!” The chant was repeated to include Black folks, women, Latinos and Latinas, gay marriage and health care. Each call and response was chanted louder than the one before it.

— Story and photo by Susan Schnur



DENVER

DA likely jailed innocent Black man for 28 years

By Viviana Weinstein
Denver

A human tragedy was displayed in a courtroom in Denver on July 30.

Two Black men sat in front of the judge. One was Clarence Moses-El, having served 28 years of a 48-year sentence for a beating and rape. The other man, L.C. Jackson, had been sentenced to prison for 135 years for many similar crimes. He was now admitting to having committed the crime that Moses-El was convicted of. Ever since his conviction in 1987, Moses-El has proclaimed his innocence.

After 26 years in which he had no contact with the other imprisoned man, Jackson sent a letter written on loose-leaf paper to Moses-El in 2012. Facing serious health issues, a painful conscience and a life in jail, Jackson said he wanted to bring “what was done in the dark into the light.” His heart was heavy with guilt and, although he could not be punished for the admission as the statute of limitations had long passed, he asked for Moses-El to send someone to see him.

At the July 30 hearing, Jackson said he “wanted to make things right.” His confession, along with some serological evidence, could form the basis of a decision to grant a new trial for Moses-El.

In the hearing, it was recounted that Jackson had a history of burglaries and was eventually tried and convicted in 2007 for the brutal beating and rapes of a mother and her 9-year-old daughter. He admitted to being on medication for the treatment of bipolar and schizophrenic mental disorders. His consuming of malt liquor in the past made his behavior more violent.

On the witness stand, he had difficulty remembering various statements, but clearly admitted to the circumstances of a 1987 rape and beating, although he stated that the sex was consensual and that the beating took place when he became angered.

In 1987, the adult rape victim told the police that Jackson had attacked her, but a day and a half later she had a dream

and changed her mind, saying she saw Moses-El in that dream. According to the Denver Independent newspaper, Jackson was never questioned further. In an interview, Moses-El stated, “I am in here because of a dream.” (Denver Post, July 22, 2007)

Other facts in this case are disturbing. Critical DNA evidence, the victim’s clothing and bedding in a box marked “do not destroy” were all discarded by the Denver Police Department just before they could be sent to the lab. This evidence, which might have cleared Moses-El long ago, was trashed despite a court order and in violation of the DPD’s own rules on handling evidence.

The Denver Post newspaper, in a series of articles in 2007 (“Trashing The Truth”), stated that the discarding of critical evidence that might have exonerated a convicted person had occurred 141 times in 28 states in the past three decades.

When this fact was brought to a hearing to request a new trial in 2013, the judge denied the request based on a 1988 U.S. Supreme Court ruling (*Arizona v. Youngblood*) that determined that destroying evidence does not constitute “bad faith,” and that unless the defendant can show bad faith on the part of the police, the destruction of evidence is not a denial of due process. (Workers World, Jan. 10, 2014) This means the defendant has the impossible task of showing bad faith on the part of the police.

Dr. Phillip Danielson, an expert witness and forensic biologist, testified at the July 31 hearing that serological evidence from vaginal swabs could determine that the donor of the semen was an O blood type secretor and that there was no evidence of any B blood type secretor. Hence it was “extremely unlikely” for Clarence Moses-El, a B type secretor, to have been the rapist. Jackson is an O type secretor.

Denver District Attorney Mitch Morrissey has been reluctant to open the case. Morrissey’s chief deputy, Bonnie Benedetti, has repeatedly called for delays in the hearings that could possibly grant

Moses-El a new trial.

The Colorado Independent reported, “Benedetti has tried to silence Jackson from testifying today by urging him to lawyer-up and take the Fifth to avoid prosecution, even though he’s already serving more than a life sentence and Benedetti has said in court that the statute of limitations already has tolled.” (July 30)

Moses-El’s counsel (Eric Klein and Gail Johnson) revealed that in interviewing Jackson, Benedetti brought along the police officer who had previously arrested him, who intimidated Jackson and obtained a statement recanting his confession. At the hearing, she claimed that there was “absolutely no new evidence in this case whatsoever.” (Colorado Independent, Aug. 4)

Pushing multiple delays in this case, Morrissey has refused to admit that he likely prosecuted, convicted and jailed an innocent man. Morrissey had worked on this case for nine years and does not want this to lead to a new trial.

With Jackson’s admission, the similarity of this crime to others that Jackson committed, and the time sequences attested to by another witness who was once Jackson’s girlfriend, defense attorney Eric Klein said, “At the end of the day, a jury would have reasonable doubt.” (Colorado Independent, Aug. 4)

The disposal of critical evidence by the police as well as the original conviction based on the flimsy evidence of the victim’s dream identification show this case was poorly prosecuted. If the district attorney’s office wants to not destroy another Black man’s life, it should not stand in the way of a new trial.

Clarence Moses-El has spent almost half his life in prison. He has served 28 years of a 48-year sentence. Denver Judge Kandace Gerdes has to make a decision in the next 63 days, and she has indicated her decision will come most likely sooner. The tragedy of two Black men in the U.S. injustice system could be ended by the decision of one person. □

ATLANTA

Grand jury fails to indict ki

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

For the second time, a Fulton County grand jury failed to indict a Union City cop in the shooting of 19-year-old Ariston Waiters on Aug. 6. Police officer Luther Lewis shot the unarmed Black teenager twice in the back as he lay facedown on the ground on Dec. 14, 2011.

Police had been called to a disturbance at a house party. Waiters, who had not attended the party but was a bystander, attempted to leave the area when police ordered the crowd to disperse.

Gun in hand, 250-pound Lewis pur-

sued the 135-pound youth and ordered him to the ground. Lewis, an Afghanistan war veteran, claims he had his knee on Waiter’s back and was handcuffing him when Waiters reached for his gun. The forensic evidence showed no signs of a struggle, yet Lewis fired two shots at point-blank range.

A May 2012 grand jury believed the officer’s account of the shooting, but Ariston’s mother, Freda Waiters, continued the fight for justice. She hired private investigator T.J. Ward, who discovered numerous discrepancies in Lewis’ version of the shooting. The Atlanta Journal Constitution newspaper and WSB Channel 2 News also

Struggle against racism— build Workers World

For more than 35 years, activists have commemorated “Black August” to honor the many dates in that month in the struggle for Black liberation (see tinyurl.com/WWBlackAugust). August is also a month of milestones in the contemporary fight against racism. Not only does it begin with the first anniversary of Michael Brown’s death on Aug. 9, but it continues with the 50th anniversary of the Watts Rebellion Aug. 11-17. At the end of the month, on Aug. 29, is the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina’s devastation and the government neglect that disproportionately affected New Orleans’ Black community.

In all these events, the police played a pivotal role. The Watts rebellion was triggered by a white cop who tried to arrest a Black motorist in his neighborhood. A crowd gathered, angry about unemployment, poor schools, lack of civil rights and cops in their community, and what soon erupted was a widespread righteous response to racist oppression.

The Black population of New Orleans has never recovered from Katrina’s wrath. The world witnessed white cops killing Black people trying to leave town and herding others at gunpoint off a bridge

and into the Superdome. Statistics show that New Orleans lost 100,000 African Americans, already poor and made homeless by the ferocious storm, compared with 10,000 whites. Income disparity between Black and white residents there has increased 37 percent due to institutionalized racism over the last 10 years.

Of course, the role of the police in the murder of unarmed Michael Brown is a fresh wound. But that, and all the other killings of African Americans at the hands of cops and cop wannabes, has led to the most exciting recent development in the historic struggle for Black liberation — the Black Lives Matter movement.

Workers World has reported over the years on all these dramatic, important struggles against racism. Every issue brings news of the latest atrocity and the fightback response. But Workers World can’t do it without your support.

Please join the Workers World Supporter Program. Write checks to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or donate online at workers.org/donate/.

We are grateful for your help.

50th anniversary of Watts Rebellion

Continued from page 3

employment categories from which they had previously been excluded. Nonetheless, racial capitalism and national oppression remained entrenched.

When the world economic system began a massive restructuring in the mid-to-late 1970s, many of the gains won through the Civil Rights, Black Power and women’s movements were eroded. By the first decade of the 21st century, affirmative action programs were outlawed in various states. The downsizing of education and public systems of governance disproportionately impacted the oppressed communities, since it was in these sectors that the most profound advances had been made.

Out of these rebellions came an emphasis on revolutionary politics, armed struggle and self-determination. It was only after the urban rebellions that any serious movements towards affirmative action, electoral reform and community control were begun.

Significance of Watts in 2015

Today, urban rebellion remains a key element in the struggle of the African-American people against national oppression and economic exploitation. Since 2012, with the vigilante killing of Trayvon Martin and the resultant acquittal of George Zimmerman, a rising con-

sciousness of and intolerance for racism has been rapidly accelerating.

When 18-year-old Michael Brown was gunned down by Darren Wilson on August 9, 2014, a rebellion erupted in Ferguson, Mo., prompting mass demonstrations throughout the U.S. and around the world. Another rebellion in Baltimore this April further illustrated the re-emerging, militant character of the African-American people.

These rebellions and demonstrations must be organized into an independent revolutionary movement. The U.S. capitalist system fundamentally has nothing to offer oppressed youth.

The plight of African Americans and other oppressed nations have not been addressed at all by the administration of President Barack Obama. Nominees for the Democratic and Republican presidential candidacies are conveniently sidestepping the question of the national oppression of people-of-color communities.

Such a political atmosphere provides vast avenues of opportunity for a revolutionary movement to organize these constituencies in opposition to the ruling class. The unrest in Ferguson surrounding the first anniversary of the killing of Michael Brown illustrates that people are ready to fight and only need effective organization to give expression to their social and political aspirations. □

TEXAS

Cops kill unarmed college student

By Kris Hamel

Aug. 10 — The terror and killing spree by cops aimed at Black, Brown, Indigenous and other oppressed people continues unabated throughout the United States. Christian Taylor, a 19-year-old college student and football player in Texas, has become the latest unarmed person of color to be killed by police in 2015.

The young Angelo State University defensive back, an African-American sophomore, was shot and killed in the early morning hours of Aug. 7 in Arlington, Texas, a Dallas suburb. The killer was a white rookie cop, Brad Miller, 49, who was still under supervised field training on his first job as a police officer.

Taylor's death at the hands of a white cop came just two days before the first anniversary of the shooting death of unarmed Michael Brown by cop Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Mo. Wilson was exonerated of wrongdoing, and the ensuing Ferguson rebellion of outraged and oppressed youth inspired others across the U.S. to come out against racism and police terror killings.

Cops responded to calls about 1 a.m. concerning a possible break-in at an Arlington car dealership on Aug. 7 and discovered that a vehicle had been driven through a front window. Store video of the car lot revealed Taylor acting erratically, but the dealership had no video surveillance inside the facility. (ABC News, Aug. 9)

The unarmed youth was shot four times by Miller and was dead at the scene. A Taser was also used on Taylor by Miller's field training officer. The medical examiner ruled later in the day that Taylor's death was a homicide caused by "gunshot wounds to the neck, chest and abdomen." (abcnews.go.com, Aug. 8)

Arlington police spokesperson Paul Rodriguez said in a statement issued later on the day of Taylor's killing, "The Arlington Police Department is saddened by this loss of life and will provide the community a clear and transparent investigation." (wfaa.com, Aug. 7)

Audio leaked to the Huffington Post apparently disproves the cops' lie that a "struggle ensued" with Taylor when they arrived on the scene, which was supposedly what caused Miller to discharge his

firearm four times at Taylor. (huffingtonpost.com, Aug. 8)

The Dallas field office of the FBI has been called in to assist in the investigation of Taylor's killing while Miller has been placed on "administrative leave" until the law enforcement agencies investigate and decide if one of their own acted unlawfully or not.

Police killings pervasive in U.S.

The Washington Post on Aug. 8 revealed results of a review by reporters Sandhya Somashekhar, Wesley Lowery and Keith L. Alexander on the pervasiveness of police killings in the United States.

In a nutshell, the writers state the racist facts of cops' homicidal actions:

"So far this year, 24 unarmed Black men have been shot and killed by police — one every nine days, according to a Washington Post database of fatal police shootings. During a single two-week period in April, three unarmed Black men were shot and killed. All three shootings were either captured on video or, in one case, broadcast live on local TV.

"Those 24 cases constitute a surpris-

ingly small fraction of the 585 people shot and killed by police through Friday evening [Aug. 7]. ... Most of those killed were white or Hispanic, and the vast majority of victims of all races were armed.

"However, Black men accounted for 40 percent of the 60 unarmed deaths, even though they make up just 6 percent of the U.S. population. The Post's analysis shows that Black men were seven times more likely than white men to die by police gunfire while unarmed."

The growing struggle of rank-and-file activists and community members in the Black Lives Matter movement, first sparked by the death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin by a racist cop wannabe in February 2012, and continuing through the Ferguson and Baltimore rebellions and beyond, is what will stop killer cops.

Working-class solidarity with the most oppressed needs to take a front-and-center place of importance with white activists across the U.S. The right of Black and all oppressed people to self-determination and self-defense against racist killers must be supported by all progressive and anti-racist fighters. □

Miller cop, again

launched investigations into the case.

The result was new DNA evidence that refuted Lewis' story. Two Union City police officers broke ranks and offered testimony about a department cover-up involving Chuck Odom, the police chief. Lewis' previous disciplinary write-ups, including his drawing his gun on a Black motorist during a traffic stop, vanished from his file.

The publicity about this and other evidence forced Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard to reopen the case and convene a second grand jury.

Georgia law allows police who face criminal charges not only to sit through the entire grand jury proceeding and hear the testimony, but also to address the jurors at the conclusion of the hearing. These statements, often emotional and contrary to actual evidence, cannot be cross-examined by the prosecutor. Despite the secrecy of grand jury proceedings, it is known that Lewis, who has resigned from the Union City police department, cried during his one-hour-and-45-minute presentation and cited his military service in Afghanistan. Reportedly, jurors were in tears as they left to deliberate.

The grand jury decision does not have to be unanimous. It is not known how the 23 jurors voted, but the result was no indictment.

At a press conference held in front of the Fulton County Courthouse on Aug. 7, Freda Waiters, standing in front of a banner that read "Black Lives Matter," stated: "It's not the end. I'm going to continue to fight for justice for my son."

Her attorney and supporters expressed their intention to pursue federal charges. □

PHILADELPHIA

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

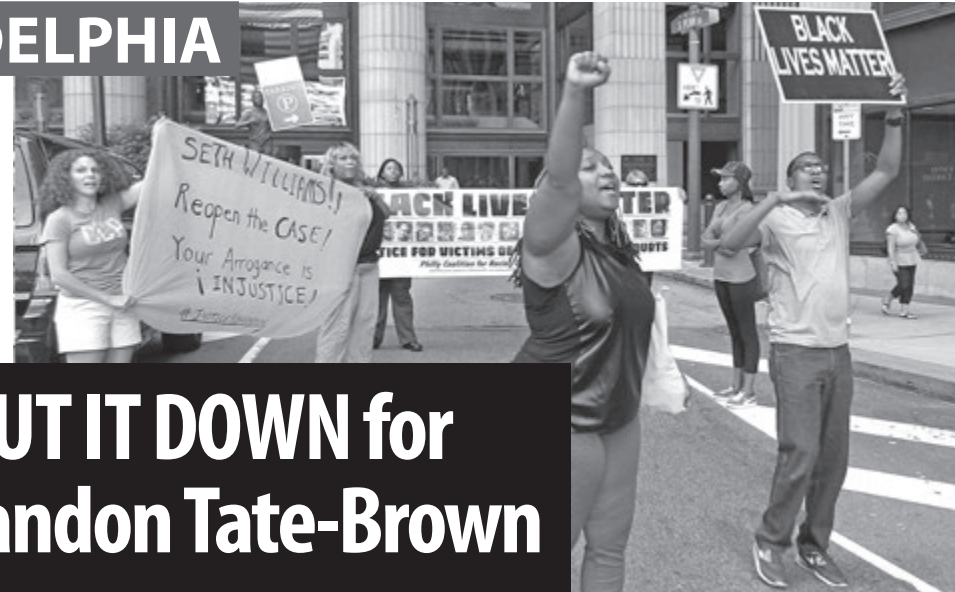
A dozen determined demonstrators brought Center City morning rush-hour traffic to a halt on Aug. 10, when they occupied the busy street outside Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams' office. They demanded that Williams bring murder charges against Philadelphia police officers who murdered 26-year-old Brandon Tate-Brown in December 2014.

Arriving at 7 a.m., Tate-Brown's family and supporters from the Philadelphia Coalition for Racial, Economic and Legal Justice first massed in front of the doors to Williams' office and then blocked access to an inside escalator, chanting "Justice for Brandon Tate-Brown!" and "Black lives matter!"

Outside the building, protesters held banners, including one directed at Williams that read: "Seth Williams, reopen the case; your arrogance is injustice! #justice4Brandon." The protest was led by Tate-Brown's cousin Asa Khalif, a long-time anti-racist community activist. Khalif challenged Williams to "come outside and answer to the public who pay your salary."

When told that they would be arrested for blocking access to the building, the

SHUT IT DOWN for Brandon Tate-Brown



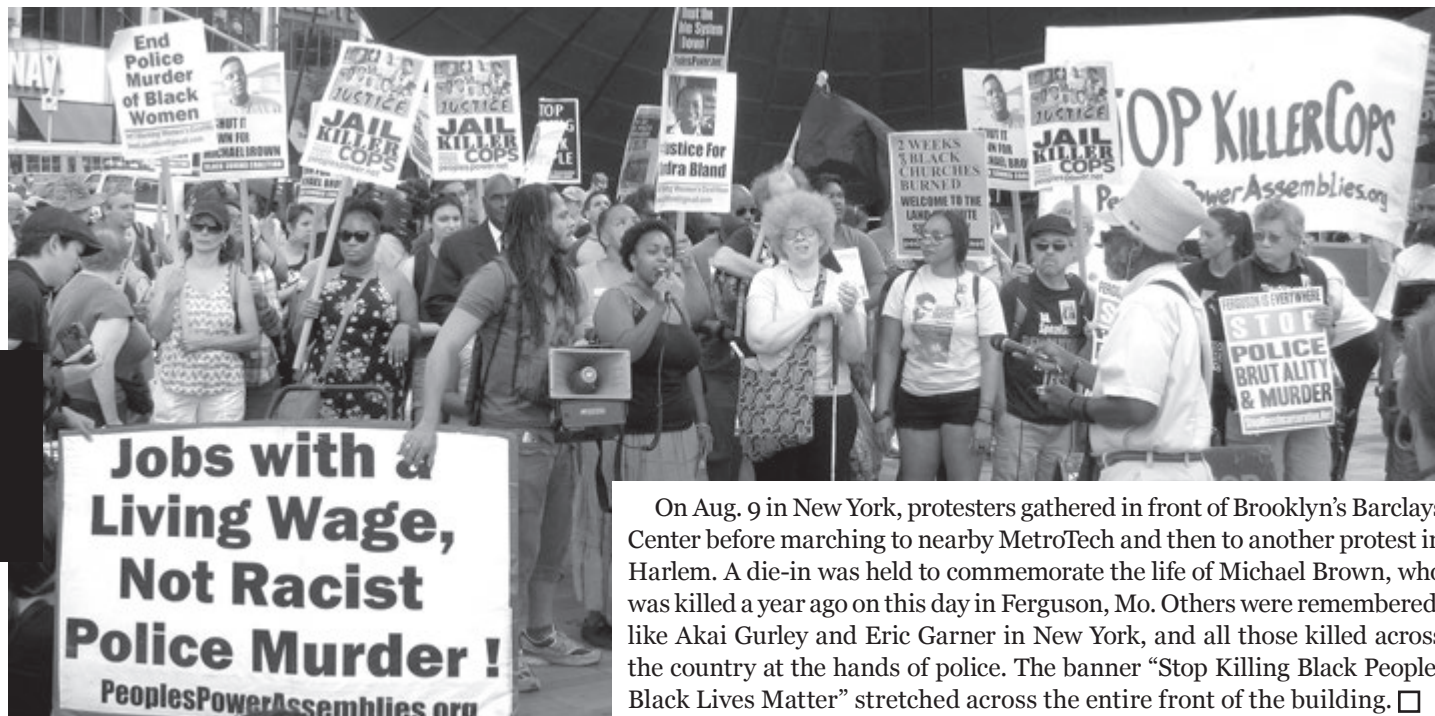
WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

demonstrators took their protest into the street, stopping the cars, trucks and buses that regularly ring City Hall during the morning rush hour. Erica Mines with the REAL Justice Coalition called out to people to "stop business as usual in the face of the growing epidemic of police murder of Black and Brown people, now happening at the rate of more than three per day."

Even after a prolonged struggle pressured the Philadelphia Police Department to release the names of officers responsible for shooting Tate-Brown during a routine traffic stop, both Williams and Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey have refused to file charges against the officers.

Tate-Brown's family and supporters have uncovered video and other evidence proving that the officers lied about the incident and subsequently amended their original statements to fit with what the videos revealed.

The Aug. 10 action coincided with hundreds of other protests scheduled to take place across the U.S. in a 1-year commemoration of the murder of Black youth Michael Brown on Aug. 9, 2014, by a white police officer in Ferguson, Mo. The REAL Justice Coalition has also called for a late afternoon rally at Broad and Erie streets in North Philadelphia. □



On Aug. 9 in New York, protesters gathered in front of Brooklyn's Barclays Center before marching to nearby MetroTech and then to another protest in Harlem. A die-in was held to commemorate the life of Michael Brown, who was killed a year ago on this day in Ferguson, Mo. Others were remembered, like Akai Gurley and Eric Garner in New York, and all those killed across the country at the hands of police. The banner "Stop Killing Black People! Black Lives Matter" stretched across the entire front of the building. □

NEW YORK

SOLIDARITY with Ferguson

— Report and photo by G. Dunkel

Emigration and war

Capitalist media suppress the obvious

By Deirdre Griswold

The reports about tens of thousands of desperate refugees scrambling out of the Middle East and North Africa, trying to reach some place in Europe, are excruciatingly painful. The number who have drowned along the way or died of thirst or hunger is unknown. Others survive these perilous journeys on overloaded boats only to be captured and either interned or turned back at the borders. Photographs show them to be thin, often to the point of emaciation, with few possessions other than the threadbare clothes on their backs.

Most migrants are men searching for work. But there are women, too, and even children and infants. For every person whose story may be told, thousands remain unrecognized and anonymous. They are only statistics in one of the world's most perilous mass migrations.

But what do the capitalist media also leave out?

The “mainstream” media just won't talk about the reason that so many people have no alternative but to leave their homes and strike out into the unknown on such unbelievably difficult and dangerous trips.

That reason is not difficult to figure out. Not at all.

U.S.-NATO wars

These refugees are fleeing their homelands because of the damage done by horrendous wars unleashed by the imperialists, particularly the U.S. and NATO, in their brutal struggle to bring about “regime change” in the area. But it is not just change.

It is destruction — not only of people, their homes, villages and infrastructure — but of the basic social institutions that were built after these nations finally broke free of colonialism. It is the imposition of neocolonialism on peoples who had struggled for decades to achieve national independence and sovereignty.

Take Libya, for example. Italy invaded Libya back in 1911 and soon imposed a brutal colonial administration. Within a year, a resistance movement fighting for independence was formed under the leadership of Omar Mukhtar, who was finally captured and killed by the Italian colonial occupation in 1931.

After the defeat of fascist Italy in World War II, Britain occupied Libya. Where once Italian capitalists had fattened their bank accounts, British and French companies now dominated. The British imperialists imposed a king on the Libyan people, who had never lived under a monarchy before. But King Idris was overthrown in 1969 in a bloodless coup by young officers led by Moammar Gadhafi.

From that point on, the Libyan economy served the people, not foreign exploiters. Thanks to oil and liberation from imperialist domination, the Libyan people quickly enjoyed the highest standard of living in Africa. Many workers from oth-

er parts of Africa moved to Libya for jobs in that period.

But since a NATO war overthrew and killed Gadhafi in 2011, Libya has literally been torn apart by rival capitalist interests. Racism against Black Africans was whipped up. The standard of living plummeted. Today, tens of thousands of desperate Africans embark from Libyan ports trying to get to southern Europe.

Yet, the reports in the capitalist media about the tragic flood of emigrants from Africa and the Middle East avoid even mentioning the wars that laid the basis for it — even when on the same page or in the same television news program other reports tell of the drone strikes, the training and deployment of troops in the area under Western command and so on.

Can this be mere coincidence? That defies credibility. The reporters know the score. But the editors rule — and linking this unfolding tragedy of historic proportions to what their imperialist buddies have done to the region is verboten. □

Torture, show trials common in neocolonial Libya

By Abayomi Azikiwe

Editor, Pan-African News Wire

A video released last week showing the beating and torture of Saadi Gadhafi is not an anomaly in contemporary Libya where the Pentagon and NATO waged a war of regime change in 2011.

Gadhafi, a former football player in Europe, was shown tied up and being struck across the face and head. Sounds of other inmates being tortured could be heard during the violent interrogation process.

Later Gadhafi's feet were placed in a metal grip and the soles were struck repeatedly. Gadhafi was blindfolded during the torture, conducted by several uniformed men.

This stark illustration of life under the neocolonial rebels in Libya is a direct result of the war initiated four years ago in the eastern city of Benghazi.

The situation is aggravated by the lack of any consistent legal, judicial or political system. Various militias, which were armed and funded by the U.S. and NATO, still patrol cities, towns and villages, harassing, robbing, accosting and murdering civilians.

Due to the social and economic impact of the war, Libya is totally incapable of addressing the burgeoning migration crisis. Thousands of African, Middle Eastern and Asian migrants have died this year off the coast of North Africa in the Mediterranean.

Human traffickers lure and load migrants onto rickety vessels in an often tragic quest for asylum in Europe. The currently divided regimes and militias in Libya either lack the capacity to halt this practice or are profiting from this human tragedy.

State of lawlessness, deprivation

Several high-level officials of the ousted Jamahiriya government under Moammar Gadhafi have been sentenced to death by a court system that has no credibility in regard to due process.

A highly questionable Libyan court on July 28 sentenced Moammar Gadhafi's heir apparent and son, Saif al-Islam, and

eight others to death over alleged war crimes. These included killing protesters during the 2011 counterrevolution that was funded and coordinated by the imperialist countries and their allies.

These former officials, including intelligence director Abdullah al-Senussi and prime minister Baghdadi al-Mahmoudi, were sentenced to execution by firing squad.

The legal proceedings were not subject to transparency, so there is no indication what real evidence was presented against the defendants. Thousands of former government officials and supporters have been locked in camps and prisons for the last four years.

The current regime, ostensibly in control of the capital of Tripoli, is backed up by the Libya Dawn militia emanating from Misrata, where some of the most violent and racist rebels were based during the 2011 war. Another regime recognized by the imperialist states is headquartered at a hotel in the eastern city of Tobruk.

Although al-Islam was sentenced by a court in Tripoli, he was not present during the hearing. He is being held by another militia in Zintan.

Even Human Rights Watch has spoken out against the show trials, convictions and sentencings. They said virtually nothing during the imperialist war against Libya in 2011 — when nearly 10,000 bombs were dropped and militias carried out indiscriminate attacks resulting in 50,000 to 100,000 deaths.

Joe Stork, HRW's deputy director for North Africa and the Middle East, told Reuters, “There are serious questions about whether judges and prosecutors can be truly independent where utter lawlessness prevails and certain groups are unashamedly shielded from justice. This trial was held in the midst of an armed conflict and a country divided by war where impunity has become the norm.” (July 28)

The Hague-based International Criminal Court had filed charges against Moammar Gadhafi, al-Islam and al-Senussi as the Libyan people defend-

ed their country against the imperialist onslaught. Later in 2013 the ICC granted the Libyan rebels the right to prosecute the former government officials, despite their utter failure to demonstrate the capacity to conduct such a highly politicized trial.

Libya, once the most prosperous state in Africa, has fallen into economic decline since the war. The enormous oil reserves in the country are now a source of conflict among the various militia groups.

Unemployment and poverty are widespread, while women, migrants and people of Muslim and Christian communities face beatings, bombings and murder. Neighboring states, such as Tunisia and Egypt, have closed border crossings and are engaged in military efforts against the rising presence of the Islamic State and other rebel organizations.

Pro-Gadhafi demonstrations held in Benghazi

Meanwhile, a pro-Gadhafi demonstration was held on Aug. 4 in Benghazi, the birthplace of the 2011 counterrevolution. This protest was broken up immediately, with gunfire scattering the crowd.

The Guardian reported that “such is the despair with the [counter-]revolution, in the past few days small numbers of Libyans have demonstrated in several cities, including Benghazi, holding up pictures of Saif and chanting: ‘Zintan, Zintan, free Saif al-Islam.’” (Aug. 5)

Given the repressive atmosphere inside the country, this is a rare occurrence indeed.

Supporters of the former government have been banned from involvement in political activity. Efforts to rehabilitate the image of the rebel regimes have failed, and even officials of the imperialist states that overthrew Gadhafi have been forced to acknowledge the chaos prevailing since 2011.

U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens and several CIA operatives were killed in an attack on a U.S. compound in Benghazi in September 2012. Although she is currently running for the Democratic Party presidential nomination, then

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who played a pivotal role in the war, has never been seriously questioned about her role in Gadhafi's overthrow and assassination. Questions also linger over the attacks on the compound and what Clinton actually knew about the incident.

More negotiations planned

The United Nations is convening a new round of talks attempting to stabilize the chaotic situation by bringing together the divided rebel groups that were empowered by the U.S. and NATO.

These talks, the latest in a series of failed efforts, were scheduled to begin Aug. 10. Difficulties arose even before the negotiations could begin.

The Latin American Herald Tribune reported, “The United Nations confirmed on [Aug. 10] that negotiations between rival Libyan political factions, which were scheduled to start in Geneva on Monday, have been postponed until Tuesday, according to a U.N. spokesperson in Geneva. In a related development, the U.N. special representative and head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, Bernardino Leon, has not yet arrived in Geneva.”

The Aug. 10 article continues, “Neither of the Libyan political delegations, each from its own autonomous government, has arrived in Geneva, while it is unclear if they are still willing to participate in peace talks. The new round of negotiations was announced last week following a series of consultations conducted by Leon with representatives of the main Libyan factions, while around 30 delegates were expected to participate.”

There can be no resolution to the Libyan quagmire until the people are united under a political program designed to place the country back on a trajectory of national sovereignty and anti-imperialism. The Western imperialist states that destroyed Libya cannot put the country back together. This enormous task can only be carried out by the people of Libya themselves, in solidarity and unity with other progressive forces throughout the region. □

U.S. escalation of war against Syria undermines Iran pact

By Sara Flounders

The author is a co-director of the International Action Center and has been a leading spokesperson for the IAC for over two decades. Twice in the last four years Flounders has traveled to Damascus in solidarity delegations with Syria's resistance to imperialist aggression.

Aug. 10 — International attention is focusing on the coming struggle in the U.S. Congress to pass the Iran nuclear deal at the same time that the U.S. and Turkey have stepped up intervention in Syria. Under those conditions, we need to consider: Will militarist forces attempt to sabotage the agreement with Iran by provoking a wider war against Syria, which has an alliance with Iran?

Powerful forces with multimillion-dollar funding have lined up to place ads in newspapers like the New York Times and lobby Congress to stop the deal. Will these reactionary forces limit their actions to ads and lobbying? Or do they plan other actions?

This is a high-stakes moment. Powerful reactionary forces have been unleashed in Southwest Asia. They have been cultivated, financed and trained directly by the Pentagon in some situations, with a wink and a nod from secret agencies, or by Saudi funding or at Turkish and Jordanian bases.

These forces have a very concrete material interest in war, not in normalizing relations. It is estimated that there are 1,000 different mercenary bands and 100,000 well-funded fighters from 60 countries now operating in Syria. These are the very terrorists the U.S. and its regional allies are attempting to use as a pretext to further escalate the Syrian

conflict.

Is a war provocation likely from U.S. economic interests that have an enormous stake in militarism? Might it come from countries like Israel and Saudi Arabia that are mobilizing against the Iran nuclear deal?

These are the concrete steps that raise the chances for a new and bigger war:

- The Turkish government has given the Pentagon permission to use two major air bases in southeast Turkey, Incirlik and Diyarbakir, to carrying out bombing raids in Syria and Iraq. Six U.S. F-16s and 300 military personnel previously stationed in Aviano Air Base in Italy arrived on Aug. 9 in Incirlik.

- Washington and NATO are supporting the Turkish army's new offensive and setting up a so-called "safe zone" in Syria on the Turkish border. Ostensibly directed at the Islamic State, these moves are really directed at Kurdish organizations fighting the I.S. as well as at the Syrian government. Turkey carried out one bombing raid against the I.S. and 185 sorties against the Workers Party of Kurdistan in Iraq.

- The Pentagon has trained a small number of mercenary Syrian fighters that Washington calls the "New Syria Force" and describes as "moderate" jihadists who are U.S. allies. The goal of the New Syria Force is to overthrow the Damascus government.

- While the ostensible target of the U.S. bombs is the Islamic State, on Aug. 3 the White House announced it has authorized attacks on anyone that shoots at the New Syria Force, including the Syrian Air Force.

- The Syrian government responded that it would oppose any military moves

inside its territory that were not coordinated with Damascus.

An expanded war?

All the pieces are in place for an expanded war. All that it needs is the provocation. While the exact timing of U.S. military actions cannot be predicted, it is nevertheless important for the anti-war movement here to not be taken by surprise.

The U.S. corporate media can always be depended on to provide non-stop inflammatory coverage to justify U.S. war. They have already softened opinion opposing intervention in Syria by presenting the intervention as being against the Islamic State.

The cost of resistance to imperialist domination has been high for Syrians. More than one-third of Syria's 23 million people have been displaced, and more than 250,000 killed in the war.

To the great frustration of U.S. imperialism and NATO, however, and despite many predictions of its collapse, the Bashar al-Assad government has survived more than four years since the attacks on it began.

There are opposing views and tactics among U.S. strategists on how to change this. But all options aim to increase U.S. domination of the entire region. All include destroying Syria as a sovereign state with an independent agenda. The policy of destroying Syria remains, whether by overturning the government or partitioning the nation.

The so-called 'safe zone'

The 70-mile "safe zone" on the Turkish/Syrian border is a rehash of what in the past were proposed as humanitarian

corridors, buffer zones, safe havens or no-fly zones. Claiming it is committed to defend such an area in past wars against Iraq, Libya and Yugoslavia has allowed Washington to carry out non-stop bombing and destroy the existing government. The promise in past wars was that protection through bombing would be a limited engagement. It has never been that.

TASS issued a statement from the Russian Commander of Airborne Troops Colonel-General Vladimir Shamanov on Aug. 4: "The Russian Airborne Troops are ready to assist Syria in countering terrorists, if such a task is set by Russia's leaders." Later, Russian news articles reported that Syria has not asked for Russian troops or any other forces. But the general's statement seems to be a warning.

IAC anti-war meeting

A meeting has been organized at the International Action Center on Aug. 11 to put these dangerous developments regarding Syria in perspective and to distribute that perspective through social media to a wider audience. Speakers include IAC founder Ramsey Clark; Syrian American Forum spokesperson Dr. Ghias Moussa; Lawrence Hamm, of Peoples Organization for Progress; Margaret Kimberly, of Black Agenda Report; Joe Lombardo, of United National Antiwar Coalition. Cynthia McKinney, former U.S. Congressperson and anti-war and anti-racist activist, will speak via video.

The Forum is titled "Syria After the Iran-U.S. Sanctions Agreement; What's Ahead: Diplomacy or Military Escalation?"

Organizers hope that such anti-war alert meetings and mobilizations will be held in other cities. □

From Cuba to Miami:

'What July 26 means to me'

By Francisco Pena-Ariet
Miami

July 26 — Miami is the haven for Cuban exiles — those who ran from the revolution in the 1960s and 1970s, and those who later left because of the economic conditions created by the U.S. blockade imposed on the Cuban people.

It is also where I have called home. I grew up surrounded by the Cuban exile community, raised by them in fact. My grandfather came here from Cuba in 1961 and was later joined by the rest of his family.

My grandfather left because, having seen the Bay of Pigs invasion, he was hesitant to have his children see any more war.

I was raised hearing only bad things about the Revolution. It wasn't until I became 13 that I researched the Cuban Revolution and asked my father hard questions about the state of Cuba pre-revolution.

Cuba needed a revolution, and the policies set forth by Fidel Castro and the 26th of July Movement were good for the Cuban people. It put education within reach of all, not just the wealthy. All Cubans could now go to the doctors and hospitals. Medicine, health, education and freedom were now rights and not privileges!

I left Miami about four years ago to attend school in West Virginia, and even though I feel at home among the natives of West Virginia, home is still home; fam-

ily is still family. I went back this summer to visit my great-aunt, my Tía, who was like a mother to me.

I arrived in Miami on July 25 and drove through the same slums and ghettos that I had left. They looked more decrepit than ever. I was driving on the same broken roads through the same traffic seeing the same abandoned houses, but with different homeless people sleeping outside them.

I turned on the radio to hear the same reggaeton the local stations broadcast that objectifies women and makes them sex toys. I drove through all this to get to my Tía's small one-bedroom apartment right in the middle of the worst part of Little Havana, where crime is high. This does not stop her landlord from charging her \$750 a month for rent; she gets only \$800 a month from Social Security, but this was the cheapest apartment she could find.

Even though she has to borrow money every month to eat and pay her bills, Tía still offered us food and coffee when we arrived.

The next day dawned, and it is the day that is ignored in Miami, the 26th of July. A day that, for me, signifies the beginning of New Cuba and Cuba's real independence.

I drove around Miami to parts like Coconut Grove and Coral Gables, where the exiles built up their presence and which have become centers of Cuban-American wealth. They are well maintained and beautiful, also very expensive — places

Miami, where
the spirit of dictator
Fulgencio Batista
lives on.



where neither my Tía nor I could ever hope to live.

What is my point in all this? It is this: Miami is the Havana and the Cuba of 1958, the Cuba of the dictator Fulgencio Batista. It is a city with corruption not only in politics but in the police and education departments as well.

I started remembering all the scams I heard while growing up committed by the Cuban exiles, most of whom had political ties and ties to "Free Cuba" groups. I remember driving through Little Haiti and Liberty City, areas of color in Miami, and how poor they were, are and have always been. How gentrification is destroying these communities faster than the crack and the gangs that run through the streets.

Only the tourist areas and the areas where the richest and well-known Cubans like Gloria Estefan and Andy Garcia live look affluent. They also claim to be advocates for the Cuban people.

This is precisely what Cuba was like before the triumph of the 26th of July Movement on Jan. 1, 1959. Only the parts for tourists were kept beautiful. Women were treated like prostitutes, and housing was not a guarantee.

The beachside was beautiful and no one spoke about the poverty in Cuba,

much like no one knows, speaks of, nor cares about the poverty in Miami. Those in power were corrupt, and the police force was in the hands of those corrupt politicians who sold their country to the imperialists. Most of Miami is now being bought by Donald Trump and other developers, leaving many homeless. Those of color were segregated into poor areas like Cocoloso, Cayo Hueso and Jesús María.

So on the 26th of July, I was in the Cuba of the past. The Cuba where Batista is still god, where those who are not of the ruling class do not matter. This is the legacy of the exiles that came to Miami. They transported their system, their "Cuba," from the Island to Miami. With it they brought all the corruption with them.

If ever they dare to ask why Cuba needed a revolution, let them look into the mirror and realize that they were the problem and are now the problem in a city I hold dear to my heart and that many call home.

In solidarity with the Cuban people and all those suffering under imperialist, capitalist dictatorship, I say to you: ¡Hasta la victoria siempre! ¡Socialismo o muerte! (Ever onward to victory! Socialism or death!) □

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

Defend Planned Parenthood!

Amidst the ratcheted-up misogyny on display by the ranks of the Republican Party, the right wing has unleashed a full-out attack on Planned Parenthood Federation of America. For almost a century, PPFA has provided all kinds of health services to women across the country, from family planning — including abortions after they became legal in 1973 — to preventative health care. The right wing's newest blitz involves deceptively manipulated video footage that they claim shows a PPFA official discussing how much the organization charges to release fetal tissue for medical research.

Setting aside for now the important issue of fetal tissue for medical research, Marxism 101 tells us that the capitalists — bolstered, in the U.S., by their two-party system — are first and foremost interested in profits, in providing just enough in social services so that underpaid workers will not revolt. The situation is no different in this case. The right wing is now pushing for government defunding of PPFA, even though the organization has repeatedly stated that it does not use government funds for abortions.

This attack amounts to yet another attempt at austerity on the backs of the workers. The capitalists want most of the workers' tax money to finance their foreign wars, repression at home and massive subsidies to private corporations. They want to cut the budget for everything else, even going so far as to vilify an organization that provides essential life-saving services to millions of low-income people who could not afford them otherwise.

Claiming that the issue is abortion

is an attempt to assert the outrageously hypocritical moral high ground that, incredibly, involves denying the right of health care to many. In 2012, Families USA reported that more than 26,000 people died from a lack of health care in 2010 alone. This rich country needs and can afford socialized medicine, covering everyone free of charge.

While Workers World vehemently defends the right for everyone to procure abortions, it is ironic that these same anti-abortion forces — who often also rail, in the most racist, anti-worker terms, against single motherhood, so-called “welfare moms” and children born into poverty — conveniently ignore the fact that, in 2014, 34 percent of PPFA's services went to contraception and only 3 percent toward abortion. The majority of their services — 42 percent — went toward screenings and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, while 9 percent were for cancer screening. (PPFA 2013-14 Annual Report) The Guttmacher Institute reports that some 2.4 million people received contraceptives from the organization in 2010. (theweek.com, Aug. 10)

The right to health care, including abortion and the full range of reproductive rights, is a women's issue as well as a working-class issue. Workers World applauds and defends PPFA and its tenacity through all the years of continuing attacks against it. We continue to fight for reproductive justice and the right for all to build families of their choosing, without the threat of premature death from a lack of health care, police brutality or racist, sexist, anti-lesbian-gay-bi-trans-queer attacks. □

To stop Arctic drilling

Activists form human blockade

By Gene Clancy

On July 29, 13 bold protesters rappelled down from the St. Johns Bridge, which crosses the entrance to the Portland, Ore., harbor. Lashing themselves together to form a human barrier, they remained in their swaying bivouacs for forty hours, supported by 50 kayakers in the water below and supplied by other protesters on the bridge above.

The activists were making a last-ditch effort to stop arctic oil drilling by preventing an icebreaker, the Fennica, from leaving its Portland drydock and joining the giant Shell Oil Company's resumption of drilling in the Chukchi Sea in the Arctic region off the coast of Alaska.

Without the icebreaker, it is impossible to proceed with the drilling.

The protesters were from the Greenpeace U.S.A organization, which denounced Shell Oil and its “absolutely pathological plans to drill for oil in the Arctic this summer.” (democracynow.org)

The activists had some initial success: as the behemoth Fennica approached the swaying bodies, it first slowed, and then turned and returned to port.

Enraged, Shell Oil and its allies quickly turned to state repression. On July 30, a federal judge in Alaska ordered Greenpeace to pay an hourly fine start-

ing at \$2,500 an hour, and increasing by \$2,500 per hour each day until maxing out at \$10,000 an hour for the duration of the protests.

On July 31, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies sprang into action. Among those mobilized were the U.S. Coast Guard; the Oregon Department of Transportation, which closed the St. John's Bridge; the Portland Police Bureau; the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office; the Clark County Sheriff's Office; the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office; and the Oregon State Police. A local judge vowed to force Greenpeace to pay for all the extra expense.

In a SWAT-team type action, police rappelled down with grappling hooks and cut the ropes lashing the protesters together, cleared the kayakers and forced the protesters off the bridge, allowing the icebreaker to barely edge its way through.

Still, a partial victory was claimed: Arctic drilling can only take place in the summertime, which is already half over.

A dangerous, dirty and exploitive business

On the very day that protesters turned back the icebreaker Fennica, Royal Dutch Shell, of which U.S. Shell is a subsidiary, announced that they would lay off 6,500 workers as part of a plan to “manage re-

Cleveland

Protest murder of Palestinian baby



Local activists held an afternoon rally across from the regional U.S. federal building in Cleveland on Aug. 7. Called by the Cleveland chapter of Al-Awda-The Palestine Right to Return Coalition, the protest called attention to the murder of 18-month-old Ali Dawabsha, whose West Bank home was firebombed by Israeli right-wing vigilantes in the middle of the night on July 31. Ali's father, Sa'ad Dawabsheh, died on Aug. 8 from his burns.

Without the huge amount of financial support from the U.S., Israel would not be able to continue the criminal occupation of Palestine.

—Photo and story by Susan Schnur

London Underground workers for Humane work schedules

By G. Dunkel

Boris Johnson, the mayor of London, has decided that the city's subway system, the London Underground, should remain open for the 48 hours from Friday morning to Sunday morning. That would add two overnight shifts to workers' schedules. Transportation for London (TfL), which manages the Underground, claims it needs the right to arbitrarily change workers' schedules to cover the new night work.

The four unions representing the Underground workers have held two 24-hour strikes in the last month to protest the inhuman and anti-social schedule that adds two night shifts a week.

One worker explained: “Some people are just saying, ‘It is what it is, let's get on with it.’ But a lot of people feel, legitimately in my view, this has been forced on us. We've had no say in this. Our whole way of working, our sleeping patterns, our health, and our social lives could be turned upside down by working in a way we didn't choose to.” (vice.com, July 8)

Johnson wants the change made sometime this fall — exactly when, he isn't “fussed about” — in time for the Rugby World Cup series in London from Sept. 18 to Oct. 31.

The second Underground strike was marked by massive lines for buses and

suburban trains, which were still running. A number of British papers reported that trips, which normally took an hour, were taking two hours or more. The London Underground provides 4 million rides a day.

In New York, where the subways have been a 24-hour operation for decades, the overnight shift is handled by workers hired for that time slot. It is not filled by forcing workers to do overtime.

The BBC reported Aug. 9 that the unions are preparing for a third strike. The mayor, refusing to meet with them, is claiming he will not put any more money on the table.

Mick Cash, a union leader, told the Aug. 7 Guardian that TfL's latest offer was “just a rehash of an earlier package and does nothing to tackle the fundamental issue of our members being called into work at the beck and call of management to plug staffing gaps in the mayor's botched Night Tube plans.”

Without a union, the London Underground's workers would have no protection for the quality of their lives or defense for their rights as human beings. Having to respond to management's whims when called to work is part of the reality of many workers who don't have unions — including those in high-tech sectors, like data processing, and in low-paid service jobs. □

turns in prolonged oil price downturn.” (Oil & Gas Financial Journal, July 30) Royal Dutch Shell's second quarter net income dropped 25 percent to \$3.4 billion compared with \$5.1 billion a year ago. Worldwide oil prices have declined over 50 percent so far in 2015.

Royal Dutch Shell is one of the largest oil companies in the world. Among its various enterprises is a 50/50 partnership with Saudi Aramco, run by the Saudi Arabian monarchy.

Shell is one of the biggest investors in Nigerian oil and even has joint ventures with the Russian government for drilling in Siberia.

Offshore oil drilling is dangerous and dirty, as was shown by the massive Horizon Deepwater disaster in 2010, which killed 11 workers and besmeared the whole Gulf Coast of the United States, leading to hundreds of billions of dollars in damages and untold long-term damage to the environment.

How an oil spill might affect an Arctic environment is still unknown, but most likely it would be worse — much worse.

Shell is drilling at a location which is 2,000 miles from the nearest logistical support in case of an emergency. The re-

gion is subject to crushing ice floes, Arctic hurricanes and total darkness for 70 days a year. An oil spill underneath the ice would be an incalculable disaster.

The areas where Shell intends to drill overlap with vital migration routes for whales, walrus and other marine life. Thousands of Indigenous peoples along these routes depend on the Arctic waters for their livelihoods.

Moreover, Shell's initial efforts at exploratory drilling do not inspire confidence. In 2012, a Shell contracted drilling unit called the Kulluk ran aground and had to be towed home. Another driller, the Noble Discoverer, almost ran aground after being chased by an ice floe. Later on, the operators of the Discoverer pleaded guilty to eight felonies for faulty pollution management systems.

Finally, there are longer term risks, like what finding oil in the Chukchi Sea would mean for climate change. A study published in Nature magazine found that “pulling any oil and gas out of the Arctic was inconsistent with anything below a two-degree-Celsius rise in global warming this century, a point that's also known as ‘dangerous’ climate change.” (thestranger.com, April 22) □

After attack on tent city

Moldovans protest rate hikes, right-wing violence

By Greg Butterfield

On July 31, armed police and private security guards carrying semiautomatic weapons attacked Liberty Township, a tent city set up by dozens of protesters in Chişinău, Moldova, outside the home of wealthy oligarch and political kingmaker Vladimir Plahotniuc. The private security forces were especially brutal, and many people were injured. Several activists were arrested.

Protest organizers have called for revoking the licenses of private security firms Argus S and GSS and for the resignation of Interior Minister Oleg Balan, who praised the police action. (Grenada.md, Aug. 4)

The tent city, which included whole families, had been set up July 24 to protest steep price hikes for electricity and natural gas — austerity measures backed by Plahotniuc and the ruling “Alliance for European Integration.” Protests also spread to other towns and villages in the former Soviet republic of 3.5 million people, which is sandwiched between Ukraine and Romania.

On July 18, the National Agency for Energy Regulation (ANRE), a government agency, recommended increasing electricity rates by 37 percent and natural gas rates by 15 percent. Hikes in water and heating oil prices are also planned.

Moldova’s currency has sharply depreciated in recent years, causing hardship for poor and working people, as pro-Western politicians cut off trade with Russia. While most Moldovan oligarchs have their money invested outside the country, agricultural and manufacturing workers dependent on the Russian market were hit especially hard.



PHOTO: GRENADA.MD

Protest organizer Grigory Petrenko dragged away from oligarch’s home by police in Chişinău, Moldova, July 31.

As in neighboring Ukraine, Chişinău’s right-wing government seeks to sell off the country’s resources and impoverish workers and farmers in a bid to join the European Union and the U.S.-led NATO military alliance. Moldovan authorities have also shown a growing willingness to repress any signs of dissent.

During 2014’s parliamentary election campaign, and faced with the possibility of a left-wing, anti-EU majority, the governing right-wing alliance and oligarch-dominated media took a page from their Kiev allies’ playbook, labelling any and all opposition as “Russian agents.”

Two young anti-fascist leaders, Pavel Grygorchuk and Mikhail Amberg, were arrested in November and held for six months as political prisoners, first in jail and then under house arrest. Grygorchuk is editor of the communist website Grenada.md, and both activists are leaders of the Red Bloc Party founded in May.

The witch-hunt continues today. Vlad Filat, chair of the Liberal Democratic Par-



ty, part of the government coalition, took to the airwaves to

condemn the rate-hike protesters as “destabilizing the situation in the country.”

“Early elections — this is the clear goal of the protests. They want to stop our European path,” Filat charged. (Publika.md, Aug. 3)

Website Publika.md, controlled by oligarch Plahotniuc, published a scare-mongering editorial against Liberty Township organizer and Red Bloc Party chairperson Grigory Petrenko on Aug. 5, as well as other articles implying that the protests are “coordinated by external forces” — code words for Russia.

Protests spread nationwide

After a local appeals court ruled July 31 in favor of Plahotniuc’s demand to dismantle the tent city, cops and security guards moved in immediately, violating the rights of protesters who had planned to appeal the case to the country’s Supreme Court.

When activists attempted to regroup outside Plahotniuc’s mansion on Aug. 1,

they were met by a violent right-wing mob, which organizers say included private security forces out of uniform. Such tactics echo the rise of fascist groups in Ukraine. (Omega Media Group, Aug. 1)

Daily protests are being held outside the ANRE headquarters in

Chişinău, where six hundred petitions against the utility rate hikes were gathered in a single day. Among the popular slogans are “Down with the thieves in Parliament” and “Jail Plahotniuc!” (Omega Media Group, July 27)

“We believe the tariff increase is unreasonable,” one protester told Omega. “We have nothing more to pay for gas and electricity. We also want to live like human beings.” Protests have continued since the repression in Chişinău and spread across the country.

In response to the growing protest movement, the government was forced to take a step back on Aug. 5, when a meeting of the Supreme Security Council decided to make “categorical recommendations” for revision of the tariff on natural gas, Grenada reports. Activist Pavel Grygorchuk cautioned that this was meant to soothe public discontent while the regime prepares repression against protest leaders.

“We are not going to stop,” Red Bloc leader Grigory Petrenko said at a news conference. “Our protests will continue. (Grenada.md, Aug. 3) □

Class forces behind U.S. genocide in Hiroshima, Nagasaki

By John Catalinotto

On the 70th anniversary of the mass murders of the civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, on Aug. 6 and Aug. 9 respectively, a discussion in the U.S. corporate media has centered on the following question: Did the bombs force a Japanese surrender and avoid U.S. casualties?

Historic studies have shown this to be the U.S. pretext rather than the reason for using the bombs. Photographs show the horror. Here we want to focus on the following questions: What was the class character of the two principal regimes fighting this war in the Pacific? What were their goals? Why did their confrontation lead to Washington using unspeakable weapons against a civilian population?

Both the U.S. and Japan were imperialist countries. Both had capitalist economies, with wealth concentrated in a small number of ruling-class families in industry and banking. These ruling classes exploited the working classes at home. Japan ruled Korea and parts of China, where its ruling class invested capital, exploited local workers and looted raw materials. The U.S. ruled the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Hawaii, where it did the same.

The two imperialist powers’ competition for control of the Pacific islands and East Asia led to World War II in the Pacific. The goal of each ruling class was

control of the Pacific islands and East Asia. In neither Japan nor the U.S. did the laboring workers and farmers have anything to gain by a victory of “their” rulers.

For U.S. imperialism, the goal was to smash the Japanese state so thoroughly that it would be subservient to Washington in the region. Today, U.S. imperialism still wants hegemony in that region, but this time with a rearmed Japanese ruling class as a junior partner in an alliance against People’s China.

The Chinese and Korean peoples are still trying to get the Japanese rulers to admit to the crimes their military committed on the road to conquest. The current rightist Japanese Premier Shinzō Abe refuses to apologize and instead wants a rearmed and aggressive Japanese military.

Crimes of U.S. imperialism

As communists in the U.S., we focus on the crimes of U.S. imperialism. The ruling class used the vilest chauvinist and racist propaganda against the Japanese people, portraying them as subhumans, to mobilize the population to go to war and kill Japanese. These included internment of Japanese ancestry in U.S. concentration camps and firebombing and atomic bombing Japanese civilians.

The U.S. military learned how incendiary bombs can destroy cities from the British-U.S. attack on Hamburg in July 1943 that killed 43,000 German civilians

and from the one on Dresden in February 1945 that burned or asphyxiated between 30,000 and 90,000 people, mostly refugees.

After the U.S. had captured islands close to the main Japanese islands, the Air Force opened an incendiary bombing campaign that struck 68 Japanese cities, killing hundreds of thousands of people.

The largest and most devastating of these attacks took place on March 7-8, 1945, when hundreds of B-29 bombers dropped 2,000 tons of incendiary bombs on a densely populated residential working-class suburb of Tokyo, burning 130,000 people to death. Washington had plans to continue this slaughter of Japanese civilians during an invasion, set to begin Nov. 1, 1945.

U.S. imperialism’s first atomic bomb was detonated in a test on July 16, 1945. The U.S. ruling class would not hesitate one second to use this weapon against Japanese civilians if it believed this was effective in promoting its property interests and its profits. World Wars I and II showed how ready the ruling classes were to sacrifice their own workers and farmers, let alone those of the “enemy.”

Hiroshima and Nagasaki were two of the few Japanese cities spared in the earlier firebombing campaign. They had no military value. With the war due to end soon in the Pacific — it ended in Europe on May 8 — Washington had a small window to test the two different types of nuclear fission weapons, one made with

enriched uranium and the other with plutonium. In these two untouched cities the U.S. could observe what the weapons did as they killed 200,000 people quickly and another 150,000 slowly.

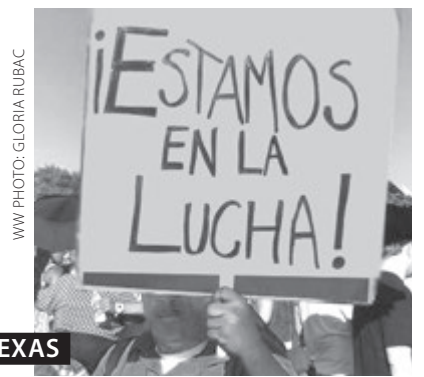
The U.S. military could show the world what it was capable of. It later openly used the threat of nuclear bombs during the wars against Korea and Vietnam.

Soviet Union declared war

The Japanese rulers, who already knew they were defeated, faced what they saw as an even greater threat than the A-bombs. The Soviet Union, a workers’ state, had just declared war. Wherever the Soviet Union occupied, it threatened not only Japanese sovereignty but the property rights of the Japanese ruling class.

Although they hated to surrender to anyone, the Japanese rulers preferred to submit to the capitalist United States than to the socialist-oriented Soviet Union. Under the U.S. occupation of Japan, which lasted until 1950, Gen. Douglas MacArthur repressed the Japanese Communist Party and the trade unions.

Where the Soviet Red Army marched in and helped force out the Japanese — in Manchuria, which is part of China, and northern Korea — the people freed themselves from Japanese imperialist rule and seized the property of the landlords and capitalists. That’s what the Japanese rulers feared more than the atomic bombing of their population. □



EDITORIAL

Zimbabue y la muerte de Cecil

Ha tomado la matanza ilegal y cruel el 1º de julio de un querido león llamado Cecil por un estereotípico y arrogante cazador de “trofeos” estadounidense para poner a Zimbabue de nuevo en las noticias. El dentista Walter Palmer de Minnesota pagó 55.000 dólares debajo de la mesa para tentar al león fuera de su refugio en un parque nacional donde él pudiera matarlo con un potente arco de alta tecnología. La magnífica bestia nunca tuvo oportunidad de salvarse. El gobierno de Zimbabue ha exigido la extradición de Palmer para ser juzgado por su comportamiento criminal.

Hay que recordar que Zimbabue se llamaba “Rhodesia” por el explorador y colonialista británico Cecil Rhodes. Fue uno de los últimos países bajo dominio colonial blanco y racista en África, hasta que fue liberado en 1980 por la Unión Nacional Africana de Zimbabue de Robert Mugabe.

El control de los colonos blancos continuó sobre gran parte de la economía, hasta que el gobierno de Zimbabue a partir de 2000, emprendió un programa de reforma agraria en la que las tierras más ricas de cultivo - monopolizadas por sólo 4.000 descendientes de colonos que las habían robado violentamente a principios de los 1900 - fueron entregadas a los veteranos africanos de la guerra de independencia. Brutalmente atacada en los medios de comunicación occidentales de la época que predijeron el colapso de la economía de Zimbabue, la reforma agraria finalmente produjo una gran mejora en la producción agrícola y la vida rural.

Las tomas de tierra fueron demasiado para la “comunidad internacional” - las clases dominantes imperialistas estadounidenses y europeas - que diseñaron una serie de sanciones contra Zimbabue y sus líderes que se suponía iban a derrocar al gobierno.

La buena noticia es que las sanciones no funcionaron. Al principio, la economía fue entorpecida, y los ingenieros de cambio de régimen creyeron que pronto estarían de vuelta controlando el país. Pero algo sucedió en 2008 que puso al país de nuevo en el camino hacia el desarrollo. Justo cuando las economías occidentales estaban cayendo por el precipicio con el colapso financiero de ese año, la economía de Zimbabue comenzó de nuevo a crecer.

Parte de la razón, además de la reforma agraria, es que la República de Zimbabue y China Popular comenzaron una relación más estrecha y negociaron una serie de acuerdos económicos que están mejorando enormemente la infraestructura de este país tan abusado.

Un titular acusador en un periódico imperialista británico hace dos años lo decía todo: “Zimbabue está en auge pero su futuro está en manos chinas -- la disposición de China para hacer negocios con Robert Mugabe es una burla a las sanciones del Occidente”. (The Telegraph, 1º de agosto, 2013)

El año pasado, según el periódico principal de Zimbabue, el país africano y China “firmaron nuevos acuerdos históricos que verán al gigante global emergente de Asia proporcionar apoyo financiero a los muy necesitados facilitadores económicos en sectores críticos que incluyen energía, carreteras, red ferroviaria nacional, telecomunicaciones, agricultura y turismo como parte de la Agenda de Zimbabue para la Transformación Sostenible Socio-Económica”. (The Herald, 26 de agosto 2014)

El artículo destacó que “contrariamente a los informes de los medios de comunicación de que Zimbabue aseguraría la financiación de los proyectos acordados con minerales, el hecho es que no hay activos del subsuelo utilizados para asegurar los compromisos”. El acuerdo fue entre los gobiernos de China y Zimbabue, y fortalecerá las instituciones estatales en ese país africano.

Un despreciable cazador de Minnesota pudo haber tenido éxito en matar a un león muy querido que simbolizaba el orgullo nacional del país, pero el pueblo de Zimbabue está avanzando con orgullo, construyendo una economía y una nación que no va a inclinarse ante los dictados de los bancos y las corporaciones imperialistas.

Aumenta terror policial

Por Abayomi Azikiwe

Un estudio del Departamento de Justicia finalizado a principios de este año y presentado a la prensa se acaba de publicar en formato de libro de bolsillo. Bajo el título de “Informe de Ferguson”, este estudio de 173 páginas muestra claramente la negación sistemática de los derechos civiles fundamentales a las/os afroamericanos en el condado de St. Louis-Missouri.

La rebelión de masas y las manifestaciones de Ferguson colocaron la constante opresión nacional del pueblo afroamericano en su debido lugar: la cuestión principal que expone las contradicciones dentro del sistema capitalista de EUA en el siglo 21.

Utilizando las comunicaciones internas entre la policía y los tribunales, el estudio da unas razones de peso haciendo a las autoridades penalmente responsables por sus planes premeditados para explotar y controlar socialmente a las/os afroamericanos a través de detenciones injustificadas, multas y penas de cárcel excesivas.

En la introducción del informe, Theodore M. Shaw, Distinguido Profesor de Derecho y Director del Centro para los Derechos Civiles de la Universidad de Carolina del Norte - infirió que el Departamento de Justicia realizó el estudio para desentrañar el contexto político y económico de la evolución de las secuelas después del asesinato del joven de 18 años de edad, Michael Brown. A pesar de que el oficial de policía blanco Darren Wilson, quien mató a Brown, no fue acusado penalmente, dado el contexto general, el municipio de la ciudad de Ferguson es culpable por sus políticas ilegales de opresión nacional y racialmente discriminatorias realizadas a través de las interacciones diarias con sus residentes afroamericanos/os.

En relación a los derechos manifestos que la Cuarta Enmienda da a las/os afroamericanos, de protegerlos de registros e incautaciones ilegales, el Informe Ferguson dice: “Al revisar los registros del Departamento de Policía de Ferguson, encontramos numerosos incidentes en los que - basados en la propia descripción del oficial operante - un oficial detuvo a un individuo sin una sospecha razonable de actividad delictiva o arrestó a una persona sin causa probable.

“En ninguno de estos casos el oficial explicó o justificó su conducta. Muchas de las detenciones ilegales que encontramos parecen haber sido impulsadas en parte por el deseo de un oficial para comprobar si el sujeto tenía pendiente una orden municipal de detención. Varios incidentes sugieren que los agentes están más preocupados por la emisión de citaciones y la generación de cargos que con atender las necesidades de la comunidad”.

En parte, las operaciones policiales agresivas contra afroamericanas/os en Ferguson y el condado de St. Louis surgen del deseo de cosechar beneficios económicos a través de multas excesivas que se refuerzan a menudo por un sistema judicial ya sesgado. A pesar de estas observaciones del Departamento de Justicia, no se presentaron cargos penales por violaciones de los derechos civiles. Por lo tanto, la situación seguirá siendo igual hasta que se desarrolle un movimiento revolucionario de masas que pueda desafiar efectivamente al sistema institucionalizado de racismo y opresión nacional.

Este informe fue publicado en la víspera del primer aniversario del brutal asesinato de Michael Brown el 9 de agosto de 2014, que desencadenó manifestaciones masivas y rebeliones en Ferguson y revivió la lucha contra el racismo en EUA. Un pequeño suburbio de poco más de 20.000 personas, principalmente afroamericanas, Ferguson se convirtió en el centro de la lucha para dar reconocimiento al valor y la santidad de la vida del pueblo negro en EUA.

La Casa Blanca se vio obligada - de la boca para afuera - a mencionar los problemas de brutalidad policial y asesinatos arbitrarios a la luz de las protestas que involucraron a millones en todo el país y el mundo.

Editoriales de periódicos, incluso en países aliados de EUA, cuestionaron el compromiso de la clase gobernante estadounidense a decenas de millones de personas que se consideraban “ciudadanos”, pero que fueron tratadas como prisioneros de guerra a través de paradas arbitrarias, palizas, detenciones, lesiones y homicidios. Sin embargo, a pesar de esta presión política internacional, junto a la creciente inconformidad interna, no ha habido prácticamente ningún cambio en el sistema de represión y explotación.

Durante los primeros siete meses de 2015, se ha documentado que más de 500 personas han sido asesinadas por la policía. Muchas más han sido golpeadas, torturadas, arrojadas a cárceles y encariladas a largas condenas de prisión a través de los tribunales.

El movimiento Vidas Negras Importan que surgió en 2013 y se amplió después de que Michael Brown fuera asesinado, es actualmente la expresión más dinámica de la lucha de Liberación Negra en la forma de la lucha contra la violencia policial y otras formas de terror racista.

Fiscales locales y grandes jurados en general se han negado a presentar cargos contra la policía que mata a las/os afroamericanos. Una excepción se produjo en Baltimore con respecto a la muerte de Freddie Grey el 19 de abril, donde se produjo una rebelión que tomó a los intereses económicos y sus políticos gobernantes por sorpresa. Seis policías de Baltimore fueron acusados con una variedad de cargos, incluyendo homicidio involuntario.

La muerte a tiros de Sam Dubose a manos de la policía de la Universidad de Cincinnati el 19 de julio dio lugar a una acusación de un policía. No había razón alguna para que Dubose fuera detenido. Esta parada llevó a su encuentro mortal con un policía blanco.

Sin embargo, la mayoría de los asesinatos de afroamericanos, latinos, indígenas, pobres y discapacitados a menudo quedan impunes. Estos actos flagrantes de terror se justifican por la criminalización de las víctimas a través de los grandes medios de comunicación y voceros policiales.

Juzgando por su limitada reacción, la administración del presidente Barack Obama, junto al Caucus Negro del Congreso, no consideran esta crisis como un asunto central. Los candidatos demócratas y republicanos a la carrera presidencial 2016 no han dado ningún indicio de que hay iniciativas políticas en sus planes para frenar, enjuiciar y encarcelar a la policía y los racistas por los múltiples asesinatos de afroamericanas/os y otras personas.

Al mismo tiempo, EUA mantiene la

población carcelaria más alta per cápita en el mundo, donde las personas oprimidas y pobres constituyen casi todas/os las/os reclusos. Además, los presos políticos como Mumia Abu-Jamal, Sundiata Acoli, Leonard Peltier, Oscar López Rivera, las/os 9 de MOVE y muchas/os más todavía languidecen en mazmorras estadounidenses. A la luchadora por la libertad Assata Shakur, se le sigue negando amnistía y depende del asilo político otorgado por el gobierno revolucionario de Cuba.

En el estado de Michigan, el Rev. Edward Pinkney fue condenado a 30-120 meses de prisión en diciembre por falsos cargos relacionados con una exitosa campaña para la destitución del alcalde de Benton Harbor. El alcalde se percibe como un agente de la Whirlpool Corp., con sede en la región suroeste del estado. Pinkney está apelando su caso con el apoyo de miles a lo largo de Michigan y alrededor de EUA.

Necesario movimiento nacional para luchar contra racismo y capitalismo

Ferguson, Baltimore, Charleston, Carolina del Sur, y otras ciudades tipifican la difícil situación de las/os afroamericanas/os en la sociedad capitalista estadounidense del siglo 21. La reciente muerte de Sandra Bland, Kindra Chapman, Ralkina Jones y otras/os que han muerto mientras estaban detenidas/os, ponen al descubierto la hipocresía de la llamada “agenda de derechos humanos” de la administración Obama y los regímenes anteriores de EUA.

Sin embargo, hasta que no haya una organización revolucionaria de masas que pueda ayudar firmemente la lucha contra el racismo y la opresión de clase en su raíz, no puede haber una esperanza real para las masas afroamericanas y otras comunidades de color en EUA. La violencia contra las/os oprimidos se lleva a cabo en una miríada de formas, incluyendo la privación económica y la destrucción de la educación pública en ciudades y suburbios.

Un movimiento de masas encabezado por fuerzas organizadas y conscientes entre las/os trabajadores y oprimidas/os es el elemento que falta en el resurgimiento actual de la lucha popular. Esa organización podría luchar en el frente nacional e internacional.

La masacre de nueve afroamericanas/os en la Iglesia AME en Charleston-Carolina del Sur el 17 de junio, debe ser contestada con manifestaciones masivas y con consecuencias económicas para la clase capitalista. Tampoco las grandes tasas de desempleo y de pobreza que prevalecen entre las/os jóvenes oprimidos podrían escapar a la atención de los políticos y los intereses de la clase dominante que proporcionan la dirección de sus acciones, si hubiera cientos de miles de jóvenes y trabajadoras/es organizados preparados para enfrentar el sistema. Y tendrían que hacerlo de una manera que no se defina por los límites de los dos principales partidos políticos capitalistas.

El carácter represivo y explotador de EUA y el capitalismo mundial en su fase actual es un reflejo de su debilidad. El sistema está en declive, y un movimiento y una organización revolucionaria bien organizada podrían, con tácticas y estrategias adecuadas, severamente debilitar y derrocar a la clase dominante. Eso establecería las bases para la reconstrucción de EUA y el mundo para satisfacer las necesidades apremiantes de la gente. □