



Struggle gains broad support

Native peoples block

toxic oil pipeline

By Kris Hamel

Aug. 23 — The start of construction on the Dakota Access Pipeline, a multi-state, 1,100-mile-long crude oil pipeline to be built under the Missouri, Mississippi and Big Sioux rivers, was temporarily halted on Aug. 18. Led by people from the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires of the Great Sioux Nation) and other Indigenous nations, protesters forced the U.S. government and the pipeline’s corporate owners to stand down after a series of heroic actions blocked access to the construction site near the Standing Rock reservation in North Dakota.

Thousands of people representing about 300 Indigenous nations as well as many non-Native people have gathered in solidarity near Standing Rock, and vow to stay there until the pipeline project is cancelled. They stand ready to peacefully defy any court injunction that would allow the pipeline construction to proceed. They will not back down despite arrests, surveillance, police highway blockades, and limited resources.

On July 26, the Obama administration, via the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, quietly approved the pipeline, and construction plans by Energy Transfer and Enbridge swiftly moved forward. Standing Rock received a “48-hour notice” that digging was to begin under the Missouri River, a source of water, livelihood and a way of life for Native and non-Native peoples in the region.

Months of struggle by Indigenous peoples, farmers, ranchers and environmentalists of many ages and nationalities preceded this important temporary victory. This included “the establishment of the Camp of Sacred Stones in Standing Rock, actions in Iowa, several youth runs for sacred water, including a 2,000 mile trek from North Dakota to Washington D.C., petitions and testifying at hearings with the Army Corps,” outlines Lakota writer Wakinyan Waánataŋ (Matt Remle). (Irrinspire.com, Aug. 19)

‘Historic moment’ unfolding

The struggle to protect the water and defend tribal sovereignty is mobilizing Indigenous people in the U.S. to a degree not seen in decades. Many say that they are protecting the water for the millions of people in the region who rely on the Missouri River for water. They point out that oil pipelines inevitably leak and break and cause immense environmental devastation as a result.

According to the Wall Street Journal, a mouthpiece of the corporate defilers of the Earth, the Dakota Access Pipeline, one of the interrelated Bakken pipelines, has

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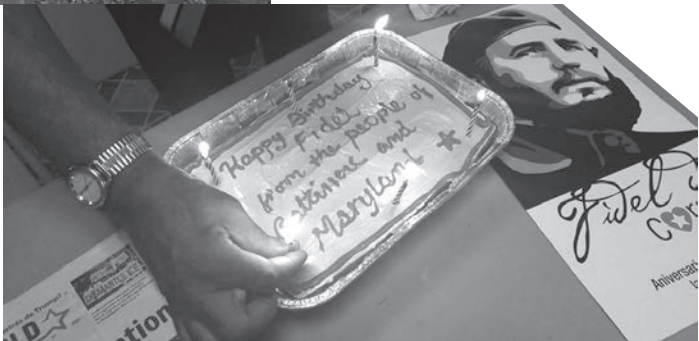
Solidarity vs. racist arson

WW PHOTO: MARGE MALONEY
North Tonawanda residents march against racism on Aug. 5.

Volunteer firefighters come to aid of Black co-worker in No. Tonawanda, N.Y.
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Cuba sí, blockade no!

WW PHOTO: RASIKA RUWANPATHIRANA
Celebrating Fidel’s birthday in Baltimore. Page 9.



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN
A display of Cuban art at Harlem Hospital, left, kicks off the Harlem/Havana Music and Cultural Festival. Along with the Cuban art display, the festival includes a long list of events and is endorsed by local and state politicians, who feel freer to do what their constituents want now that Washington has opened diplomatic relations with Cuba. Yet the damaging blockade of Cuba persists. When will it end?

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Moorehead to PFP convention

‘Solidarity with most oppressed must be central to our movement’

Below is a slightly abridged version of remarks by Workers World Party presidential candidate Monica Moorehead to the nominating convention of California’s Peace and Freedom Party on Aug. 12.

Peace and Freedom has a history of showing solidarity with those for national liberation and for socialism. Your party selected Eldridge Cleaver, minister of information for the Black Panther Party, as your first presidential candidate. That was a tremendous act of solidarity that Peace and Freedom should be proud of.

Why do Marxists run in the elections? We know that elections are not impartial. Elections are not fair. Bourgeois elections will not and have never changed the fundamental conditions of the our class — the workers and oppressed peoples. Marxists, however, use every arena of struggle at their disposal to push forward the revolutionary struggle, including the electoral arena.

Workers World Party has a set of demands to help give a voice to our class, which has been silenced by the bour-

geoisie. But just as important, WWP uses these elections to help provide an orientation to the revolutionary movement based on the present-day social conditions.

I think it bears repeating that we must not allow the movement to get stampeded into supporting Hillary Clinton and the Democrats.

I distinguish “the movement” from the larger working class. The movement to me means the politicized activists who at least on some level understand that the primary purpose of the Democratic Party is to limit the militancy and political independence of the mass movement of workers and oppressed people by ultimately trapping our movements inside the Democratic Party, which means rendering our movements subservient to the political, repressive organizations of capitalism.

Our concern before the elections need not be arguing with the tens of millions of immigrant workers, or African Americans, or other sections of the working class

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Boston salutes Black August

Special to Workers World

The Boston Branch of Workers World Party held “A Dialogue with Monica Moorehead, Workers World Party 2016 Presidential Candidate,” on Aug. 20 to commemorate Black August. This is a month-long salute to the lives of freedom fighters who left a lasting legacy in the name of Black Liberation, radical resistance and mass consciousness. Miya X, a WWP leader in Boston, moderated the discussion.

Black August originated in honor of the fallen warriors who valiantly fought to liberate Black Panther leader George Jackson on Aug. 7, 1970, from the U.S. penal system. Jonathan Jackson, George’s 17-year-old brother, was one of the martyrs. George Jackson, author of “Soledad Brother” and “Blood in My Eye” and a leader of the Black Panther Party, was as-



WW PHOTOS: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM

Left, Miya X. Above, USW 8751 leader Georgia Scott and Monica Moorehead.

sassinated on Aug. 21, 1971, by San Quentin prison guards.

The discussion included the ongoing struggle for Black Liberation today represented by the Black Lives Matter uprising. □

MUNDO OBRERO

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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 57 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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RICHMOND, VA.

Fight for \$15 links racism, low-wage economy

By Joe Piette
Richmond, Va.

Thousands of Black Lives Matter activists and low-wage and migrant workers — representing 64 million U.S. workers taking home less than \$15 an hour — met here in Richmond Aug. 12-13 for the first national convention of Fight for \$15.

Thousands more joined them at the close of the convention to march on this city's Confederate monuments in a protest against racism and poverty wages.

The events were organized in Richmond because it was the capital of the Confederacy. The Fight for \$15 Facebook event page explained the choice of the former heart of the enslaving Southern states, saying Richmond draws “links between the way workers are treated today and the racist history of the United States, and connects the Fight for \$15 with the growing Black Lives Matter and immigrant justice movements, while exposing the connections between the slave economy and low-wage economy today.”

Ashley Cathey, a Sonic fast food worker from Memphis, Tenn., explained that unpaid labor from enslaved Africans, estimated at amounting to \$2 trillion to \$4 trillion, built the U.S. This pattern continues today with the private prison industry's exploitation of unpaid and barely paid labor of prisoners up to \$2 billion yearly.

More than half of Black workers and nearly 60 percent of Latinx workers are paid less than \$15 an hour because of such factors as discrimination in hiring, underfunded schools and an unjust “justice” system. Many people of color hold jobs that are the legacy of slavery, like home care and domestic work, positions that have historically been deliberately denied such basic labor protections as overtime pay or the minimum wage.

Lauralyn Clark, home care worker and SEIU Virginia 512 member, told the convention: “We always did the grunt work for low wages. White babies drank from our breasts, but we couldn't drink from their fountains. White families relied on us to care for their elderly parents, but we couldn't ride the bus with them. We cleaned their schools, but our children couldn't attend. We cooked their food, but we couldn't sit at their table. Well, enough is enough.”

Recognizing that the majority of people forced to work for low wages come from the same Black and Brown population being killed by police, about a hundred convention delegates marched through the hall holding up placards of Freddie Gray, Sandra Bland, Tamir Rice, Rekia Boyd and other victims of police terror. Delegates shouted “Black Lives Matter” and Assata Shakur's widely chanted quote was recited three times by the crowd: “It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.”

New Orleans fast food worker Miranda Yonta said, “For me, the fight for \$15 is not just a fight for higher wages. It's also about making Black lives matter.”

From bus monitors to blueberry pickers

Three thousand strong and from coast to coast, the participants at the Friday evening and Saturday morning convention were at least 80 percent Black and Brown. Women may have been the majority, reflecting the gender and racial reality of workers who performs the tough jobs that are paid less than a living wage.

Workers from 16 different industries spoke in succession, each one adding to the realization that the Fight for \$15

movement includes health care and home care workers, bus monitors and retail store clerks, child care and airport workers, T-Mobile and farm workers, nail shop and fast food workers, auto parts workers and janitors, university adjuncts and migrant blueberry pickers, and more.

Just four years ago, a few dozen fast food workers in New York City went out in the first strike for \$15 an hour and union rights. Today the movement those strikers set in motion has won raises for 20 million people, with 10 million workers on a path to \$15 an hour in New York and California, as well as in Seattle, Washington, D.C., and other cities across the country.

Fight for \$15 has helped change the conversation on economic and racial justice, not only for the 64 million workers being underpaid for their labor, but for all workers. While migrant and Black and Brown workers make up the vast majority of those in the lowest-paid industries, millions of white workers would also benefit from an increase in wages and benefits, just as white sharecroppers and other workers profited from Reconstruction after the end of the Civil War.

Before the Saturday meeting started, hundreds of workers and their family members took buses and vans to a protest where they joined local residents and McDonald's workers in a spirited rally against poverty wages.

The convention ended with approval of a five-point resolution calling for: 1) for a National Day of Action on Sept. 12 at state capitol buildings throughout the U.S.; 2) for presidential and other political candidates to make pay raises a priority for their campaigns; 3) for direct actions and demonstrations at presidential debate locations; 4) for legislation to raise minimum wage standards in cities and states that were once part of the Confederacy; and 5) for the right to join unions without fear of retaliation.

March targets monuments to slavery

Despite 96-degree weather, 10,000 people marched through Richmond after the convention ended. They gathered in Monroe Park and proceeded up Monument Avenue — an infamous street lined with racist monuments memorializing Confederate generals and other white supremacist leaders. The march passed the Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart statue and ended at the monument glorifying slavery-defender, Confederate General-in-Chief Robert E. Lee.

In September 2015, Monument Avenue was the main route for international championship bike races. These were picketed by the Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice and Equality and other groups. Protesters both condemned the monuments to racism and slavery featured prominently in the publicity, and also elevated a long struggle to stop real estate development of Shockhoe Bottom. This is a slave burial ground near downtown Richmond. The African-American community is demanding that they be able to decide how to preserve the land.

North Carolina NAACP and Moral Monday leader the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II addressed the Fight for \$15 crowd at the close of the march. Rev. Barber said, “It took us 400 years to get from 0 to \$7.25. We can't wait another 400 years. Labor without a living wage is nothing but a pseudo form of slavery.”

Organizing the South against wage slavery

The South as a region is home to some of the most reactionary anti-worker legislation in the U.S., rooted in its history of slavery and racism. The region is a bastion



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

First National Convention of Fight for \$15 marches in Richmond, Va.

of so-called right-to-work (for less) and other racist anti-union laws. For instance, in Virginia and North Carolina it is illegal for public workers to collectively bargain.

The South has the lowest level of unionization in the U.S. The restructuring of the capitalist economy taking place on a global scale is more and more finding that the U.S. South is a vital region for extraction of superprofits from workers, particularly Black and Latinx workers.

In many ways, the South is a laboratory for reactionary legislation that is then brought to other parts of the U.S., such as right-to-work laws and attacks on collective bargaining in Wisconsin, Michigan and elsewhere. It is no coincidence that Charlotte, N.C., is now the second-largest banking center in the U.S., behind New York City.

There will be a referendum this November in Virginia on whether or not to put “right to work for less” into the state constitution. More information on the Vote NO Campaign is at ow.ly/Yzwr30gedBG.

The Southern Workers Assembly is a network of unions and workers' organiza-

tions in the South committed to building rank-and-file, democratic, social movement unionism. The SWA helped to mobilize Southern unions to participate in the Richmond march.

The SWA contingent included workers from United Electrical Workers Local 150, who have been waging their own Fight for \$15 and a Union at the Cummins Rocky Mount Engine Plant in North Carolina. Signs of the SWA marchers had images of Black people who have been killed by police with the words: “Black Lives Matter to Labor.”

The Workers World Party campaign for Monica Moorehead for president and Lamont Lilly for vice president also participated in the march, distributing a statement of solidarity with “Fight for \$15 and a union.” Also distributed was an announcement about the Southern Socialism Conference, Hard Times Are Fighting Times on Sept. 24 in Durham, N.C.

For more information about the conference, which took up some of the most pressing struggles of the day, go to hardtimesconference.org. □

Bus drivers' union protests 'transit racism'

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

Detroit bus drivers, represented by Amalgamated Transit Union Local 26, held a press conference on Aug. 17 to announce the filing of a federal civil rights complaint with the Department of Justice against the Regional Transit Authority.

The RTA, created by state legislation in 2012 but still not in operation, combines the Detroit Department of Transportation and the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transit into one entity serving southeast Michigan. The union charges the regional authority with violating the civil rights of Black Detroiters — the majority of the city's population, who depend on public transit — by diverting \$8 million in federal funding from DDOT to SMART.

Filing the complaint jointly with the union were 842 Detroit transit riders. Local 26 President Fred Westbrook made it clear that the union is not opposed to having one regional transit provider. The issue is the racist treatment of Detroit, which is 85 percent African American and has a 40 percent poverty rate. Suburbanites in Oakland County, with a poverty

rate of just 10 percent, have the option of leaving their cars at home and taking public transit. Poor Detroiters need the buses to get to the suburbs, where the jobs are.

Local 26 also wants pay parity with SMART drivers, who are represented by a different ATU local and make \$4 more an hour than DDOT drivers. To keep DDOT financially solvent, Local 26 members recently took an 8 percent pay cut.

For the RTA to begin operating, voters in a four-county area must approve a property tax increase in November. Initially, two suburban representatives on the RTA board, Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel, blocked the plan from going before the voters. Patterson, Hackel and the two others who voted with them reversed their vote after a new deal gave concessions to the suburbs.

Patterson has a long history of racism, going back to his opposition to school desegregation in Pontiac, Mich., in the 1970s, when he was associated with the Ku Klux Klan.

By uniting with the bus-riding public in the fight against racism, the union is demonstrating real social justice unionism in action. □

Letter carriers fight cuts in mail delivery

By Dave Welsh
Los Angeles

After a five-year struggle, the letter carriers’ union won the fight to maintain six-day and Saturday delivery by the United States Postal Service, the nation’s largest unionized employer. Deliveries have even been expanded to Sunday.

Now the union is facing a serious new threat from the privatizers and union busters: legislation that would eliminate door-to-door delivery of the mail — at the cost of tens of thousands of jobs.

At the 70th biennial convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers, hundreds of union delegates gathered at 7 a.m. on Aug. 19 in front of the Los Angeles Convention Center to denounce this latest attack on the people’s mail service.

A carrier from St. Louis led the crowd in nonstop chanting of “Door-to-door must stay,” interspersed with statements from rank-and-file carriers. National President Fred Rolando said the NALC “will never accept the elimination of door-to-door delivery.”



WW PHOTO: SCOTT SCHEFFER
Workers at NALC convention protest ‘cluster boxes.’

The USPS proposes to replace most door-to-door delivery with “cluster boxes” in centralized locations where people, including the elderly and disabled, would have to walk to get their mail. Canada Post tried to implement this, too, but was stopped in 2015 by a determined local or-

ganizing campaign led by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Community anger was such that the mayor of Montreal famously used a jackhammer to destroy a cluster box.

Co-sponsoring the L.A. rally was the Harvard Boulevard Block Club of South Central Los Angeles, which provided the sound. Club members also brought a realistic-looking mock-up of a cluster box — and an axe, which two letter carriers used to thoroughly demolish it. Two members of the block club, Jefferson de Azevedo and Scott Scheffer, addressed the rally.

“The Black Lives Matter movement is shining a spotlight on racist police killings and on the deep poverty in many communities of color, while anti-union forces are pushing this plan to destroy 80,000 postal jobs,” said Scheffer. “The post office is a source of stable, union jobs for Black, Latinx and other workers. We pledge our solidarity with you, knowing that workers and poor people can’t rely on corporate presidential candidates. Our strength is with workers and their communities.”

The attack on door delivery is part of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2016. Retired letter carrier Jamie Partridge told the rally, “All the Democrats on the [House postal oversight committee] voted to send the bill to the House floor in a unanimous, bipartisan vote. Title II of the bill has a ‘poison pill’ which would eliminate door delivery to all businesses and most residents. These are the same Democrats who sponsored HR 28, to preserve door delivery. So we can’t trust the politicians. They make deals with each other. We have to turn up the heat from the grass-roots, so they won’t sell us out — [we have to] build rallies like this and other actions back home if we want to truly defend door delivery.”

The NALC convention also passed a resolution pledging the union to “declare its solidarity with the aims of the Black Lives Matter movement for racial justice and police accountability and seek to educate its members about our common struggle.”

Welsh, a retired letter carrier, was a delegate to the NALC national convention.

After arson fire Community rebuffs racism

By Kathy Durkin

On the first day of August, a shocking letter was delivered to Kenneth Walker, a factory worker and volunteer firefighter in North Tonawanda, a predominantly white suburb of Buffalo in Western New York state. It demanded that he quit his firefighting job immediately and leave town “or you’ll regret it.” Replete with racial slurs, this vile message threatened the town’s only African-American firefighter.

Two days later, the Walker family home was torched, their two cats killed, their possessions destroyed. Three other apartments were badly damaged. Fortunately, Walker, his spouse, Amanda Walker, their two children and the other residents were not home when the fire blazed.

A white neighbor, Matthew Jurado, confessed to the arson, but not to writing the letter. He was arrested on Aug. 4, charged with second-degree arson, and released on \$50,000 bail. If convicted, Jurado faces a mandatory five-year minimum prison sentence.

This was an additional blow to the Walkers, who had invited Jurado into their home and considered him a friendly neighbor.

Jurado denies having a racist motive, claiming he acted out of anger at being fired from a job at another local fire station. However, his racism was exposed by his targeting the town’s only African-American firefighter. Moreover, his companion, Dorothy Amado, said Jurado posted a Facebook message invoking the Klan to frighten her daughter’s African-American partner. (Buffalo News.com, Aug. 9)

Moreover, Donald Trump’s racist rhetoric against immigrants and other people of color is emboldening bigots to take action against oppressed people.

Community, firefighters support Walkers

Immediately, the community rose to the occasion and flooded the Walkers with gestures of goodwill and donations of funds, furniture and toys. Hundreds of people from near and far have expressed solidarity and offered concrete help, not only to show they care but to show opposition to racism.

Ellie Dorritie, Workers World Party organizer in Buffalo, explained: “The outpouring of community support and firefighter outrage was what pushed the police to investigate the racist letter and connect it to the fire. Social media played a big role in activating town residents. Once people saw the racist letter posted, they wanted to do something about it.” She emphasized the region has a “shameful history of racism, but support for the Walker family has broken through that.”

The Gratwick Hose Volunteer Fire Company posted a sign outside their building saying, “We support Ken Walker,” and held benefits for the family, bringing in thousands of dollars and essential items. Fire company President Bob Brennan, who considers Walker a close friend, initiated the fundraising effort, determined to raise a “positive” out of a “horrible tragedy.”

Firefighters have traveled across the state to attend these benefits, while California fire companies offered free trips there for the family.

Walker commented: “The only word I can say is overwhelming. The support is phenomenal.” Amanda Walker remarked on the sympathetic messages from people across the country: “Such a great positive came out of such a terrible thing. We never expected this outpouring. Everyone has been so amazing.” (Buffalo News.com, Aug. 7)

‘Racism has got to go!’

A community member posted a call to action on Facebook, saying they must “stand up to racism in North Tonawanda” and march on Aug. 5 to “show the bigots we will not stand for hatred and ignorance in our community.”

On that date, the Walkers’ neighbors and friends marched through their town, demonstrating their solidarity and chanting “Hey, hey, ho, ho, racism has got to go!” This protest was organized not by political activists but by residents of this working-class town of 31,000, whose population is 95 percent white and 1.2 percent African-American.

Demonstrator James Walaski-Miller empathized with the Walkers, “It just makes me sick” that “someone could have

enough hate ... to do that to a fellow human being.” Another protester stressed, “There is no room for racism in my Western New York.” (WGRZTV, Aug. 5)

A local firefighter set up an online donation page that raised more than \$150,000 from 4,000 people countrywide. Messages of sympathy and solidarity and denunciations of racism have been posted, too.

The tremendous solidarity has shown that racism will not be tolerated in this town. The Buffalo News concluded, “Far outnumbering the hateful few, fortunately,



The Gratwick Hose Volunteer Fire Company posted a sign outside their building saying, ‘We support Ken Walker.’

nately, are the thousands of people who acted to help the Walkers.” (Aug. 9) The next day, the newspaper quoted Buffalo NAACP President Frank Mesiah: “It sent a message of how to respond to racism in other communities.” □



By Sue Davis

Construction workers demand water, rights

It must have been unbearable in the 100- degree heat when unrepresented iron workers in Nashville, Tenn., dared to go on strike at K&D construction company on July 22 to demand water. The so-called rodbusters’ homemade signs read, in English, “Strike: We won’t work without water,” and in Spanish, “Huelga! No trabajamos si no dan agua!”

But that’s not all. They’re sick of making only \$14 an hour for dangerous work with no benefits, especially when construction is booming in Nashville. On July 29, rodbusters at Gilley Construction, which is building the corporate headquarters for HCA, the world’s largest for-profit health care corporation, went on strike for higher pay, benefits and better working conditions. The workers are supported by Middle Tennessee Jobs with Justice, which notes that Nashville gave HCA \$66 million in tax dollars to “incentivize” the project, but didn’t establish standards of pay, safety or treatment for the workers building the project. (middletnjwj.org, July 25 and Aug. 1)

Minnesota nurses vote to strike — again

On Aug. 18, nurses represented by the Minnesota Nurses Association voted overwhelmingly to call a second unfair labor practice strike against Allina Health at five hospitals in the Twin Cities area. The 4,800 nurses conducted a seven-day ULP strike ending June 25. At the last negotiating session on Aug. 1, Allina announced it wanted to cap its contribution to health care premiums, shifting cost increases to the nurses. Allina ignored the nurses’ requests

Continued on page 10

Milwaukee

Community supports youth uprising against cops

By John Parker
Milwaukee

Solidarity with youth fighting police terror was strong at an informal gathering in Sherman Park here on Aug. 21. The park was the location of a youth uprising in protest of the killing of Sylville Smith, an African-American man, by Milwaukee police on Aug. 13.

The Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement initiated the community picnic to support the courageous youth being vilified by both corporate media and city officials for demonstrating anger against Smith's death. The Milwaukee protesters were met with an aggressive police force, like the police reaction to protests in Baltimore after the police killing of Freddie Gray in 2015 or in Ferguson, Mo., against that of Michael Brown in 2014. As in the those cities, instead of dispersing, youth decided to act in self-defense, allegedly answering police aggression by throwing objects at the cops and setting fire to a BP gas station next to the park.

Homes were also burned. However, Babbette Grunow, who co-hosts a radio program in Milwaukee and lives near the park, voiced on-the-air skepticism about placing responsibility on youth protesters. She noted that one landlord had previously spoken of the benefits of collecting insurance money instead of continuing ownership of the homes.

Those gathered at the community cook-out all agreed that the anger of the youth was justified. Meeting at the park

were activists from Bail Out the People Movement, union members, an NAACP member, youth from the Industrial Workers of the World, as well as neighborhood families. Members of Workers World Party came in support from Durham, N.C.; Rockford, Ill.; and Los Angeles and from Detroit FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together).

People were in agreement that the best way to change the youths' reaction was to get the police to stop killing Black people, and instead of budgeting more money for cops, use money to provide jobs and opportunities for youth.

The event was also a speak-out for the community, as people shared the micro-

phone to denounce injustice they had personally experienced from police. One Black youth, who appeared to be around 11 years old, told this writer, "The police came up to me while I was just sitting in the park and put a gun to my head."

Many people spoke about the need to reopen Sherman Park for the youth. After the rebellion, the police enforced a 6 p.m. curfew. They surrounded the park with an orange plastic fence, a constant reminder of yet another resource denied to the Milwaukee community, which already suffers from one of the highest unemployment and incarceration rates in the U.S.

A Black man in his twenties, who is a

volunteer at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee located in Sherman Park, said, "We bought all of these materials, videos and things for the kids that we can't use now because of the curfew. We used to have movie nights and activities for the kids and would make sure that everyone was out of the park by 10 p.m. There were no fights or problems, and it provided something for them to do."

He described how he found out how strict the curfew was: "My daughter had an asthma attack and I needed to get home quick, so I had to walk through the park. A cop told me to walk all the way around, but I refused to listen to that bulls—t and kept on walking." Luckily, he wasn't arrested for trying to save his daughter's life.

Gilbert Johnson, former president of American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Local 82, talked about how ironic it was that Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker said he wanted to improve Milwaukee, but then closed down a rail manufacturing plant providing local jobs and keeping community businesses functioning. After that, Walker went after public sector unions. "The only union that should be abolished is the police union," Johnson said, stressing the need to organize and support the youth to defeat police terror in the community.

Caesar Crayton, a Black gay youth and member of IWW's Milwaukee Chapter, said, "I'm here standing in solidarity with our youth and letting them know that we have a voice and we should not be afraid to use it. We are gonna stand up and fight back when we are under attack. This is our park and we are taking it back!"

In the spirit of those words, the last activity of the picnic was to symbolically reclaim the park by placing placards on those very same orange fences meant to deter the community. The signs stated: "Disarm and Abolish Cops and National Guard," "Resistance Is Justified from Milwaukee to Palestine," "Parks Are for the Youth, Not Cops," and more. The community was continuing its steadfast "No!" to violent police aggression aimed at the Black and Brown youth of Milwaukee.

Parker, a leader of the Los Angeles Branch of WWP, was the Peace & Freedom candidate for senator in California.



Milwaukee community supports youth uprising.

WW PHOTO

The spirit of Jerry Brookshire

By Stephen Millies

On Christmas Eve in 1974, Black teenager Jerry Brookshire was killed by white Milwaukee policeman Raymond Marlow. The cop claimed his gun fired — by accident — as he fell because Brookshire resisted arrest.

Eyewitness Ola Mae Davis said that Marlow deliberately shot Brookshire as the unarmed 16-year-old was climbing a fence. For telling the truth, "Davis had her house firebombed, along with the motel she moved into, and she also received countless threatening phone calls." ("Black Panthers in the Midwest" by Andrew Witt)

That same December two African Americans were killed during a police raid on an apartment building. Cops claimed they were looking for a murder suspect — who wasn't found. As a result, Johnnie Starks was shot to death by police, and Mary Pendleton died of smoke inhalation from a fire ignited by police tear gas canisters.

Two years before, Jacqueline Ford — a 22-year-old Black woman — was shot and killed in her own home by Snead Carroll, a white detective who claimed he had slipped on the stairs. (New York Times, May 28, 1972)

More than 500 people jammed St. Mark A.M.E. Church — Milwaukee's oldest Black congregation — on Jan. 2, 1975, to protest all those atrocities. Even Mayor Henry Maier was there. (Workers World, Jan. 10, 1975)

But no cops were ever jailed for these killings.

Last hired, first fired

Milwaukee was the last big manufac-

turing center that the Great Migration of African Americans from the South to northern cities reached in large numbers. In 1940 the city had just 8,821 Black people, 1.5 percent of Milwaukee's population.

The small size reflected the deliberate racism of Milwaukee's capitalist class. During World War I, only 11 out of the city's 2,000 factories employed any African Americans.

In 1923, three detective squads arrested 39 African Americans for "vagrancy," meaning they were unemployed. Twenty-seven were sentenced to 90 days of slave labor by Judge Michael Bienski, who also said Milwaukee has no use for "their kind." ("Black Milwaukee, the Making of an Industrial Proletariat 1915-1945" by Joe William Trotter Jr.)

Although Milwaukee's ruling class was racist, they needed Black workers, for example, in the city's tanneries. Milwaukee streets were paved by African Americans, who formed Asphalt Workers Local 88.

Communists at the Allis-Chalmers factory in neighboring West Allis organized a committee to free the Black youths in Scottsboro, Ala., who had been sentenced in the 1930s to the electric chair on phony rape charges.

Boycotts led by Assemblyperson Lloyd Barbee shut down the city's segregated schools in 1964 and 1965. When Dr. King was assassinated in 1968, 25,000 people marched through downtown.

In that period Allen-Bradley — whose owner Harry Bradley was a founder of the racist John Birch Society — still refused to hire Black workers. When Father James Groppi led a sit-in there in 1968, less than 1 percent of the plant's 6,000 workers were African American.

Milwaukee's Black community had in-

creased twelvefold by 1970 as local factories, like A.O. Smith, American Motors and Briggs & Stratton hired Black workers.

Today almost nobody works at Allen-Bradley. The Bradley family sold the company to Rockwell Automation in 1985 and used the dough to expand its Bradley Foundation, an \$800 million slush fund for right-wingers.

Long fuse leading to Sherman Park rebellion

Milwaukee continues to be grossly segregated. The City Council voted down fair housing bills introduced by Vel Phillips — the council's first African-American member — until the Black community rebelled in 1967.

The A.O. Smith, Allis-Chalmers and American Motors factories have shut down. Deindustrialization and joblessness went hand-in-hand with mass incarceration. One out of every 25 African Americans in Wisconsin are locked up.

In 1979 ex-cop Thomas Grady finally went to jail for killing 22-year-old Daniel Bell in 1958, whom he stopped for a broken tail light. Grady told his partner Louis Krause that Bell was "just a goddamn n—r kid anyhow." (New York Times, Dec. 21, 1981)

As crack poured into Milwaukee in the 1980s — helping to fund Reagan's dirty war against Nicaragua — the number of murders increased from 44 in 1984 to 163 in 1991.

Ernest Lacy was beaten to death by three members of the Milwaukee Police Department's "tactical squad" in 1981. Derek Williams died in police custody, "gasping for breath and begging for help," in 2011. (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Oct. 27, 2012) No cops were charged.

In 2014 policeman Christopher Manney fatally shot Dontre Hamilton 14 times in Milwaukee's Red Arrow Park. Manney was fired but didn't face any charges.

Police racism and homophobia allowed the notorious Jeffrey Dahmer, who actually ate his victims, to kill 16 people, almost all youth of color. Police officers John Balcerzak and Joseph Gabrish turned 14-year-old Konerak Sinthasomphone back to Dahmer despite the pleas of two women who were trying to help the youth. Later that night the Laotian immigrant was tortured to death and dismembered by Dahmer, who was finally arrested in 1991.

The cops were fired after tapes of their homophobic "jokes" about "reuniting the lovers" were revealed. Judge Robert J. Parins, former president of the Green Bay Packers football team, reinstated the bigots.

Gabrish is now a captain in the Graton, Wis., Police Department. Balcerzak was elected president of the Milwaukee Police Association in 2005 and served until 2009.

Millies was a member of the Milwaukee WWP branch from 1968 to 1978.

Detained women immigrants start hunger strike

By Kathy Durkin

Women immigrants held in the Berks County Family Detention Center in Leesport, Pa., launched a courageous hunger strike on Aug. 8 to protest their confinement and that of their children, whose health and well-being are deteriorating. Calling themselves the “Madres Berks,” they assert, “We are desperate and we will get out dead or alive.” (telesurtv.net, Aug. 12)

These Central American refugees say they have been detained for 270 to 365 days. Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson told the media that the administration is ensuring the average stay is “20 days or less.” When the women got wind of his statement, they decided to publicize their long detentions.

In a letter to Johnson, the women wrote: “On many occasions our children [ages 2 to 16] have thought about suicide because of the confinement and desperation that is caused by being here.” (democracynow.org, Aug. 17) Their children are suffering, many not eating or sleeping.

Olga Byrne of Human Rights First, an immigrants’ advocacy organization, says, “The Obama administration’s detention of families has had severely traumatizing effects on both children and their mothers. Even a few days in detention can be harmful to the health of children.”

These women were not granted asylum at the U.S. border, but, with the American Civil Liberties Union’s assistance, have appealed and filed petitions in federal court requesting new screenings. The



Women immigrants in the Berks Family Detention Center.

government asserts that the women do not have a legal right to challenge their imprisonment or to appeal through the courts as newly arrived immigrants. A federal judge agreed. But an appeal has been filed on the women’s behalf — and it’s a test case for other “noncitizens,” too.

Stop detentions and deportations!

The U.S. government’s policy regarding Central American families fleeing violence and extreme poverty in their homelands is to lock up women with their children, including babies, in “family detention centers.” Instead of providing safe, healthy environments, or allowing these families to live with relatives, the state punitively jails them in isolated facilities, providing little or no legal or social services and violating their civil and

human rights.

The practice of detaining families expanded in 2014 when the government tried to stop immigration, mainly from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala — countries where the U.S. continues to play a large role in fomenting violence and instability. In 2009, former Secretary of State, and current presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton supported a right-wing coup against the democratically elected government of Honduras. The coup ushered in repression and violence on a massive scale, causing many people to flee.

In the summer of 2015, U.S. District Judge Dolly Gee ordered the government to release migrant children and their mothers within 20 days, arguing that their detention violates the Flores Settlement, which established policies regard-

ing custody and housing of immigrant children since 1997.

Around the 20-day period, Texas immigration jails send detainees to Berks, where “the 20-day period doesn’t apply,” says immigration attorney Carol Anne Donohue, president of the Greater Reading [Pa.] Immigration Project. The for-profit detention center is publicly run, but has a contract with Immigration, Customs and Enforcement to maintain a certain occupancy rate. The state cancelled Berks’ license, so it is illegal to detain children there, but that is being allowed anyway.

The Obama administration is holding in custody and deporting record numbers of immigrants; tens of thousands are being held in detention centers where conditions are abysmal. Many are awaiting hearings. This is an enormous humanitarian crisis. Detention Watch Network asserts that “the current family detention program is the largest since the internment of Japanese Americans in the 1940s.”

Major civil liberties and immigrant rights organizations have been protesting the unjust, inhumane practice of family detention through demonstrations and in the courts. Regarding the Berks’ detainees, demonstrators displayed banners calling for the release of these women and children and the detention center’s closure on Aug. 15 in Martha’s Vineyard, Mass., where the Obama family was vacationing. □

U.S. prisons and the struggle against

By Sara Flounders

The headline seemed to herald a new day and was reported by corporate media as breaking news: “Justice Department says it will end use of private prisons.”

On Aug. 18, U.S. Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates sent out a memo instructing federal officials to “not renew contracts with prison operators or to diminish existing contracts” as they come up for renewal over the next five years. She added this was “the first step in the process of reducing — and ultimately ending — our use of privately operated prisons.”

The memo immediately got enormous coverage. It sounded like dramatic prison reform.

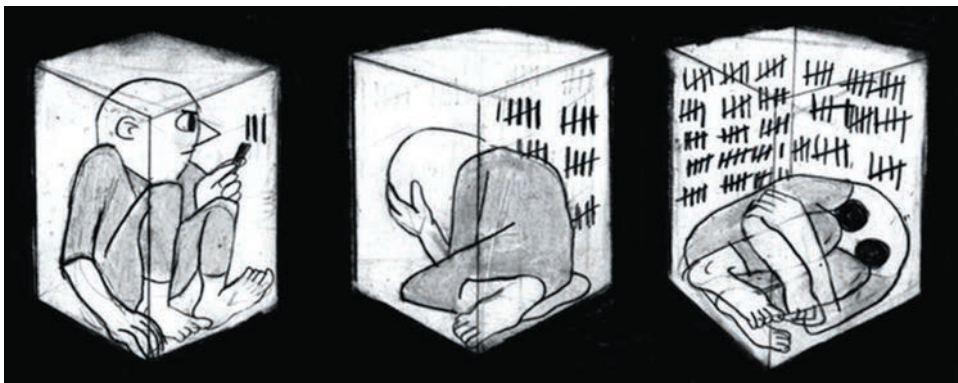
But the new directive will impact only 22,000 federal prisoners — less than 1 percent of the 2.3 million people held in U.S. prisons. It will not significantly reduce the number of prisoners at the national, state or local level.

It does not address the hundreds of ways that public prisons are the source of an endless profit stream for U.S. corporations and banks. It does not touch the notorious hellholes of state-operated Attica, Angola, Soledad, Atmore Holman, Florence, San Quentin or other prison concentration camps.

It will not end slave labor, forced work programs or solitary confinement.

The Department of Justice directive applies only to the Federal Prison Bureau. It does not apply to U.S. Homeland Security or federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement prisoners — the fastest-growing area of the private U.S. prison industry. In 2015 for-profit ICE prisons held 62 percent of all Homeland Security incarcerated immigrants. (americanprogress.org/issues)

As small as this change is in U.S. prison



ARTWORK BY VALLENTINE GALLARDO

End solitary confinement NOW!

policy, it came only because of struggle by prisoners and by grass-roots activists.

Struggle forces prison-policy change

The pressure to maximize profit in private prisons has been exposed in Mother Jones and The Nation, in left publications including Workers World, and in social media campaigns, petitions and protests. These have highlighted the secretive, abusive conditions of prisons for profit run by megabusineses like G4S, CEO Group and Corrections Corporation of America.

In ICE for-profit detention centers, where many of those held are mothers with children, prisoners have gone on hunger strikes and repeated protests against inhuman conditions. Because of mass opposition, both Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton made campaign statements opposing private prisons.

The recent directive will strengthen the struggle to end existing U.S. private prisons, even though only 13 privately run facilities are covered. The directive is also significant because it goes against the drive to privatize for profit every aspect of every institution in the public domain — including schools, hospitals, libraries, social services and parks.

Activists can springboard from the directive and demand the closing of all 7,000 U.S. prisons and jails.

The U.S. jails more people per capita than any country in the world. With less than 5 percent of the world’s population, the U.S. imprisons more than 25 percent of those incarcerated globally. More than two-thirds of state prisoners and 97 percent of federal prisoners are serving time for nonviolent crimes.

The actual count of U.S. prisoners varies widely, depending on what facilities are included. According to Prison Policy initiative: “The American criminal justice system holds more than 2.3 million people in 1,719 state prisons, 102 federal prisons, 2,259 juvenile correctional facilities, 3,283 local jails, and 79 Indian Country jails, as well as in military prisons, immigration detention facilities, civil commitment centers, and prisons in U.S. territories.” (tinyurl.com/hmazugq)

This number more than triples — to 7 million — if the 850,000 people on parole and 3.9 million people on probation are counted. Unpayable bail is the cause of 11 million people a year cycling through local and city jails as they await arraignment and trial.

Prison: a racist system of torture

The racism pervading every aspect of life in capitalist society — from jobs, income and housing to education, health care and opportunity — is most brutally reflected in those caught up in the U.S. prison system. Overwhelmingly, they are people of color. Mass incarceration is both racist to the core and hugely profitable for the banks and corporations.

Nationally, 39 percent of African-American men in their twenties are in prison, on probation or on parole. In major urban areas, an astonishing one-half of Black men have criminal records. The U.S. imprisons more people than South Africa did under apartheid. (“Incarceration Nation” by Linn Washington)

There are now more African-American men in prison, on probation or on parole than were enslaved in 1850, before the Civil War began, according to Michelle Alexander in “The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.”

Increased support is needed for the growing number of prisoners’ rights campaigns to fight this predatory, racist system.

Prison justice campaigns have exposed systematic torture, including solitary confinement. According to solitarywatch.com, more than 80,000 prisoners are held in solitary on a daily basis, including 25,000 prisoners in long-term isolation, stretching into years and decades.

Tens of thousands of prisoners are held in Supermax prisons, Secure Housing Units, Restricted Housing Units, Special Management Units, disciplinary segregation or other isolation cells in prisons and jails around the country. Keeping prisoners in 23-hour lockdown has become routine practice in understaffed prisons. These figures do not include prisoners in

MISSISSIPPI

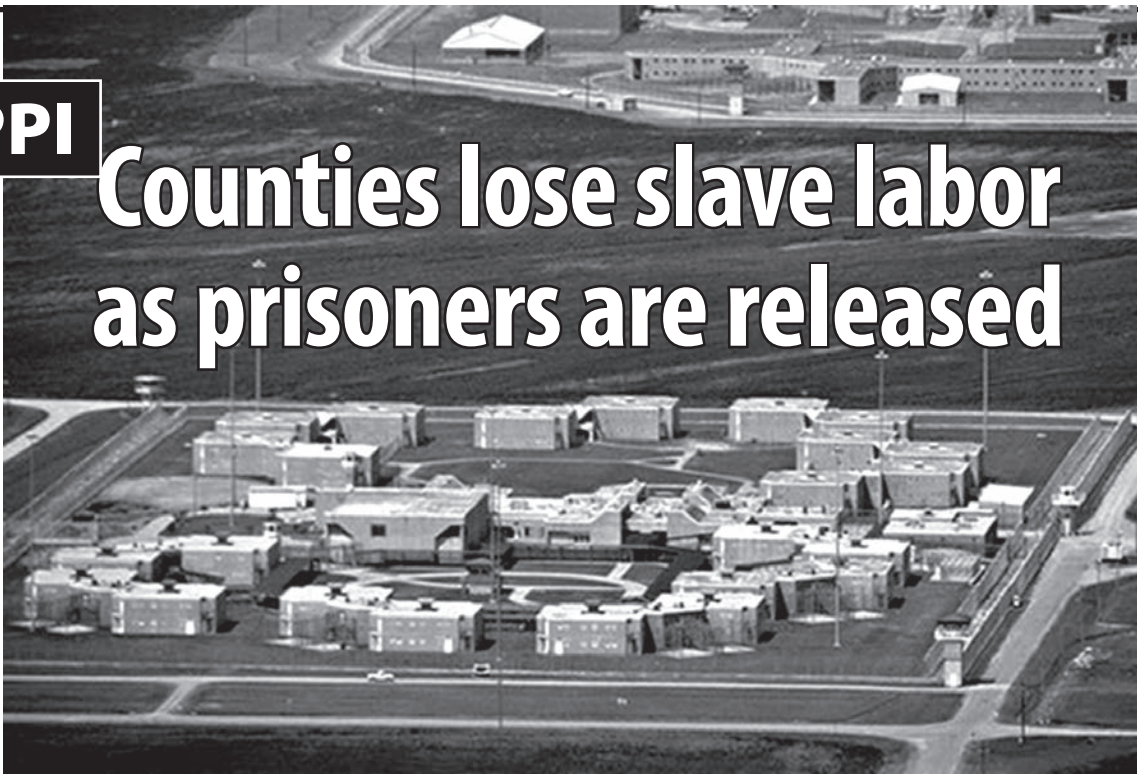
Counties lose slave labor as prisoners are released

By Mattie Starrdust

Mississippi's prison population, long ranked as one of the highest per capita in the U.S. and the world, has undergone a marked decline as state and federal sentencing reforms have kicked in. Between 2014 and 2015 the prison population in Mississippi shrank by almost 3,000 inmates, reducing it to 18,845 as of January 2015.

Such a giant reduction should be cause for celebration among Mississippi residents and officials. However, a series of articles in the Clarion-Ledger newspaper of Jackson, Miss., reveal that municipalities across the state have been thrown into financial crisis as the decline in inmates reveals how much of the state's economy relies on mass incarceration and prison slavery.

The wave of mass incarceration that began in the 1990s, set off mostly by policies enacted by former President Bill Clinton, caused such a huge growth in the prison population that state and federal corrections departments had to scramble to find space to house them. A whopping 544 new prisons were built across the country between 1990 and 2005 to warehouse hundreds of thousands of mostly nonviolent and disproportionately Black and Latinx offenders. That's another new prison built every ten days for 15 years. (Politifact.com, July 31, 2015)



Mississippi Penitentiary – Parchman Farm, known for its role in the repression of the Civil Rights Movement.

In Mississippi, state prisons became so overcrowded that by the late 1990s the state Department of Correction began paying municipalities to hold its inmates. County prisons and jails sprang up throughout the state as shrewd politicians and private contractors saw big profits to be made off legalized human trafficking.

The state government provided the counties \$29.74 per inmate per day for housing costs and guaranteed to keep the county facilities at a minimum of 80 percent capacity. On top of that, county prisons could put the inmates to work. (MemesisLaw.com, April 18) This guaranteed stream of workers can be paid super exploitation wages, if they receive any wages at all, and are prohibited from unionizing or going on strike.

Since at least the late 1990s, prisoners have been forced to work for little or no pay — or be given the “choice” of rotting in a cell. In Mississippi, they perform such services as garbage collection and street cleanup, as well as carpentry, painting, plumbing and welding at municipal buildings and repairing municipal vehicles. “I don't think it necessarily started out this way, but the inmate population has become the backbone of some of these counties that are involved,” said Mississippi Corrections Commissioner Marshall Fisher. (HuffingtonPost.com, April 14)

Now, as Mississippi's incarceration rate falls, state prisons have more space available to hold the prisoners they had been shipping off to county facilities. And as

the state Corrections Department starts taking its inmates back, counties whose local economies grew to be dependent on the prison-industrial boom are searching for ways to fill the void. “We can't go very long before we're deep in the hole,” said Stone County Supervisor Dale Bond. According to Bond, both Stone and George counties have already each lost 80 of their inmates, costing each county \$72,000 per month. (clarion-ledger.com, April 8)

Fisher has offered to allow counties to keep their state inmates, on the condition that they forfeit the per diem payments they had been receiving

from the state. According to Scott County Sheriff Mike Lee, “It was a tough decision, but we decided we couldn't afford to do without the inmate labor.” In other counties, especially where prisons built during the incarceration boom of the 1990s are still being paid for today, layoffs and tax hikes will be enacted to recoup the losses.

Sentencing reforms undoubtedly benefit thousands of victims of the racist U.S. “justice” system, and should be supported on those grounds. But no amount of reform will ever be enough to repair the damage wrought by racist mass incarceration and prison labor super exploitation. Only a total transformation of society into one that values workers and the oppressed over profits can truly right this wrong. □

st slave labor

There are now more African-American men in prison, on probation or on parole than were enslaved in 1850, before the Civil War began.

— Michelle Alexander, “The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.”

juvenile facilities, immigrant detention centers and local jails.

Campaigns have focused on the urgent necessity of providing life-saving medical treatment to prisoners, such as access to hepatitis C and HIV medicines.

The prison-industrial complex

The network linking prison corporations, investment firms, police and their “benevolent societies,” courts and the bail/fine system is called the prison-industrial complex. The name is parallel to “the military-industrial complex” — a term for the interconnected banks, military and oil industries, contractors, corporate lobbyists and professional soldiers that profit from war and repression.

Almost all federal, state, county and city government prisons operate in ways that allow corporations to make big profits, even when the jails are technically still considered “public” institutions. Prison bonds provide a lucrative return for such capitalist investors as Merrill-Lynch, Shearson Lehman, American Express and Allstate. Prisoners are traded from one state to another based on the most profitable payment-per-bed arrangement.

Private or for-profit companies, rather than government agencies, are involved in the building and maintenance of prisons. Food services, surveillance, medical services, prisoner phone service and ankle monitors are all contracted out to major corporations and bring windfall profits. Even probation services and recruiting and training of guards are now contracted out to private-for-profit corporations.

Prison phone companies GTL and Securus Technologies sued and won a decade-long effort to stop limiting the charge for prisoner phone calls to \$.11 a minute. They were determined to keep in place charges for prisoner phone calls of up to \$14 a minute. The staggering phone charges keep prisoners out of touch with their families and their families further drowning in debt. (arstechnica.com/tech-policy)

Guaranteed contract renewals and a high rate of profit ensure that lobbyists will push for an ever-expanding prison system.

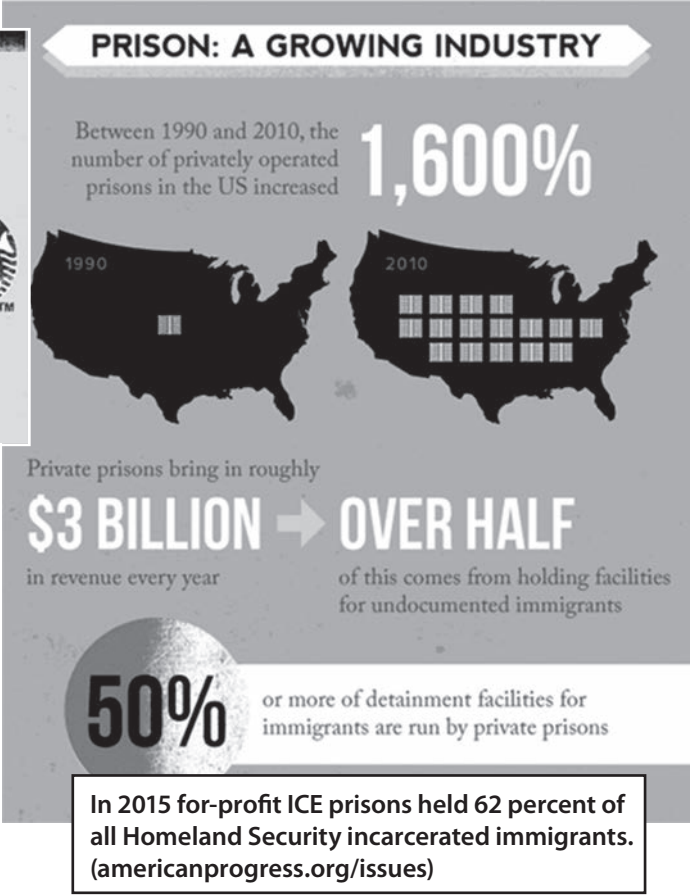
Merging military and prison industries

The Department of Justice memo on closing private prisons makes no mention of another profitable operation inside U.S. prisons — prisoner manufacture of military weapons.

Prisoners earn only 23 cents an hour in U.S. federal prisons to manufacture high-tech electronic components for Patriot Advanced Capability 3 missiles; launchers for TOW (Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire-guided) anti-tank missiles; and other guided missile systems. (“The Pentagon and Slave Labor in U.S. Prisons,” www.globalresearch.ca/, Feb. 4, 2013)

Prisoner labor — with no union protection, overtime pay, vacation days, pensions, benefits, health and safety protection or Social Security withholding

INFOGRAPHIC: ONLINE-PARALEGAL-DEGREE.ORG/PRISON-INDUSTRY/



Texttron's Cobra helicopter; and General Dynamics/Lockheed Martin's F-16. Prisoner labor produces night-vision goggles, body armor, camouflage uniforms, radio and communication devices and lighting systems and components for battleship anti-aircraft guns, along with land mine sweepers and electro-optical equipment for the BAE Systems Bradley Fighting Vehicle's laser rangefinder. Prisoners recycle toxic electronic equipment and overhaul military vehicles. (www.alternet.org)

Giant multinational corporations purchase parts assembled outside the U.S. at some of the lowest labor rates in the world, then resell the finished compo-

nents — weapons as well as other products — to the U.S. government at the highest rates of profit. Major corporations profiting from the slave labor of prisoners include Motorola, Compaq, Honeywell, Microsoft, Revlon, Chevron, TWA, Victoria's Secret and Eddie Bauer.

The U.S. prison system extracts super-profits from the most desperate and isolated part of the population. In capitalist courts, the corporate right to profit almost always trumps human rights.

In fact, the entire prison system operates as a very profitable form of modern day slavery. So it is helpful to remember the words of the great abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass: “Power concedes nothing without a struggle. It never has and it never will.”

The struggle against prisons must raise the demand to abolish this modern form of slavery and tear down the walls. □

Baltimore jury rejects cops’ story

By WW Baltimore Bureau

A Baltimore jury heard the cry for justice from family and community in the case of 24-year-old Aaron Winston. A Black dock worker, Winston was brutalized by police on Feb. 21 at Power Plant Live, a collection of bars, restaurants and other businesses in gentrified downtown Baltimore’s Inner Harbor.

After severely injuring him, the cops charged Winston with multiple counts of assault, resisting, obstruction, disorderly conduct and failure to obey an order. On Aug. 17, the jury found him not guilty of all charges.

Winston’s family, with support from the People’s Power Assembly and Baltimore Southern Christian Leadership Council, has held many press conferences, pickets and leaflet distributions to build public support for the young worker, whose arm had been pulled out of its socket and broken in two places.

The jury decision came just a week after a scathing validation by the Department of Justice of the Black community’s decades-long complaints of racism and brutal repression at the hands of Baltimore cops.

A civil suit for damages, including payment of \$90,000 in medical bills, is planned. □



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK
Aaron Winston’s brother, right, speaks at Trayvon Martin rally on Feb. 26.

Police slay Black man in hail of bullets

By James Raynor
Atlanta

Activists trying to bring to light the police killing of Jamarion Robinson marched on Aug. 19 to CNN’s Atlanta headquarters from Clark Atlanta University. Very few details have appeared in the mainstream media about this horrific shooting, which happened on the afternoon of Aug. 5.

Police and U.S. marshals had been sent to an apartment in East Point in south metropolitan Atlanta to arrest Robinson, allegedly for shooting at both a police offi-

cer and an apartment maintenance worker. The 12 marshals broke in Robinson’s door with a battering ram and then opened fire with automatic weapons, shooting in the apartment over 60 times and hitting Robinson with over 20 bullets. Some of the shots were virtually point-blank.

Police also used a flash-bang grenade to completely subdue him, after which three shots were fired by someone standing over him. The police put out that he was armed and fired back, but no evidence of this was found by post-murder investigators.

Members of Robinson’s family held a press conference on Aug. 14 to begin to bring the details of his killing to the larger community. At the press conference, community members did a walk-through of the apartment, which had been left just as it was at the time of the shooting.

Robinson had been killed at the top of the stairs and his lifeless body dragged down the steps, leaving a bloody trail on the steps and on the floor of the living room. At the top of the stairs, blood spatter on the walls makes a gruesome scene. There is no evidence of any shots fired in

the direction of the invading police. After the shooting, police showed Robinson’s grandmother a picture of the man they were searching for. She says it was someone different, that the police had the wrong man. The police also had knowledge of Robinson’s struggle with bipolar disorder, yet didn’t try to engage him or even wait him out. They went in with guns blazing.

At the rally, people vowed to go back to their communities with the truth about Robinson’s death at the hands of police and to continue to seek justice. □

Justice for Ethel Rosenberg!

By Mike Kuhlenbeck

The Rosenberg Fund for Children is petitioning the White House to exonerate Ethel Rosenberg. Along with her spouse Julius Rosenberg, Ethel was executed on June 19, 1953, after being convicted of trumped-up charges of committing “espionage” for the Soviet Union.

RFC co-founder Robert Meeropol and his brother Michael Meeropol have addressed an open letter to U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch and President Barack Obama, asking for a formal acknowledgement of the miscarriage of justice suffered by their mother, Ethel Rosenberg.

Ethel Greenglass (1915-1953) was born and raised on New York’s Lower East Side. Active in trade unions since working at the National New York Packing and Shipping Co., she married activist Julius Rosenberg (1918-1953). Together they

had two sons, Robert and Michael. The Rosenbergs’ communist politics would lead to their persecution after the House Un-American Activities Committee and Sen. Joseph McCarthy launched a crusade against communism. Red-baiting, along with anti-Semitism and other prejudices, polluted social discourse and led to decades of political witch-hunts.

The FBI charged Ethel Rosenberg and Julius Rosenberg with conspiracy and espionage in August 1950, along with co-defendant Morton Sobell. All were victims of judicial misconduct, a rigged investigation and perjured testimony.

Despite state coercion, Ethel remained loyal to Julius. For this, they were both sentenced to the electric chair. Refused clemency by President Dwight Eisenhower, the Rosenbergs were put to death in New York’s Sing Sing prison, orphaning their sons Robert and Michael, who were only 6 and 10 at the time.

The case that ‘had to be’

“The charges against our mother and the threat of the death penalty were meant to intimidate her and our father into cooperating,” the Rosenberg children write in an RFC statement.

Julius had said of the charges against him: “There had to be a Rosenberg case, because there had to be an intensification of the hysteria in America to make the Korean War [which started that year] acceptable to the American people. There had to be hysteria and a fear sent through America in order to get increased war budgets. And there had to be a dagger thrust in the heart of the left to tell them that you are no longer gonna get five years for a Smith Act prosecution or one year for contempt of court, but we’re gonna kill ya!”

The Rosenberg children were adopted by Abel Meeropol and Anne Meeropol. Abel had written the powerful and

haunting anti-lynching song “Strange Fruit,” made famous by the great blues singer Billie Holiday.

In 1990, Robert Meeropol founded the RFC “to provide for the educational and emotional needs of children whose parents have suffered because of their progressive activities” and who therefore could not “provide fully for their children.”

“Today, we face a similar climate of hatred which targets immigrants, Muslims, LGBTQI individuals and others,” the Meeropols noted in their statement..

The founder of Workers World Party, Sam Marcy, in a 1993 speech referred to the Rosenbergs as “martyrs from the ranks of the workers and the oppressed” and cited their tragic story as one in which the ruling class conducted “a frame-up to carry out a general political attack” on progressives.

For more information, visit rfc.org/ethel.

Native peoples block toxic oil pipeline

Continued from page 1

many big-name oil companies connected with it: “Dakota Access is being built by Energy Transfer Partners LP and its affiliate, Sunoco Logistics Partners LP. Phillips 66, the refiner, owns a 25 percent stake. And Enbridge Energy Partners LP and Marathon Petroleum Corp., bought a stake in the Dakota Access line for \$2 billion earlier this month, leaving the fate of a separate Bakken pipeline they had been planning unclear.” (Aug. 18)

North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple declared a state of emergency Aug. 19, seemingly accusing the protesters of unlawful actions and stating they cause “a significant public safety concern.” Parks

were closed and roadblocks were set up to the Cannon Ball Camp in Standing Rock. This may be a prelude to his eventually calling in the National Guard.

Dave Archambault II, Chairman of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, called the governor’s actions “unfortunate” and decried the fact that the tribe had not been consulted. He said the Tribal Council voted unanimously that the roadblocks should be removed. (lastrealindians.com, Aug. 21)

“What is happening at the Cannon Ball Camp reflects a historic moment for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe,” said Archambault. “For the first time in 100 years we are hosting the reconvening of the Seven Council fires of the Oceti Sakowin.”

A federal judge will soon decide on a temporary restraining order sought by the corporations to stop or limit protesting. In a separate case, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe will appear on Aug. 24 before a Washington, D.C., federal court seeking a stop to construction of the pipeline. Standing Rock has consistently opposed the pipeline in any form.

Statements and resolutions in solidarity with the struggle are requested and



pouring in from across the country and around the world. (See “Supporting the Fight Against the Dakota Access Pipeline” at tinyurl.com/z3y8qkv.) □

FARC-Colombia gov’t talks: Where are they at?

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

After four years of constant and difficult talks in Havana, Cuba, between the revolutionary FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army) insurgency and the Colombian government about ending the decades-long armed conflict there and building a stable and lasting peace, an end is in sight. But this is the most difficult stretch, studded with the most delicate issues that pose dangerous obstacles to this crucial effort for peace and can determine its success or failure.

The process is both extremely complicated and ambitious. Its goal is to end more than a half century of armed conflict caused by the criminal Colombian state, which is itself allied to the powerful — and still more criminal — U.S. imperialism.

Of the six initial agenda points — comprehensive agrarian development; political participation; ending the conflict; solution to the problem of illicit drugs; victims; implementation, verification and authentication — three are decisive: political participation, ending the conflict and implementation of the agreement.

FARC trip to Colombia

In fact, delegations representing different interests traveled to Colombia on Aug. 8 to facilitate — once the final accord is signed — putting into effect the protocols presented last June 23 on the “ceasefire and definitive end of bilateral hostilities and the surrender of weapons” as part of the point: “End the Conflict.”

Those on the visit — 150 people in total — were composed of different delegations: 33 members of the FARC guerrilla forces led by National Secretariat member Carlos Antonio Lozada; plus members of the national government, police, army and the commanders of the fronts in the areas visited, as well as governors and mayors; plus the International Committee of the Red Cross, international observers from the United Nations Mission in Colombia, and delegates from Cuba and Norway (the guarantor countries of the talks).

This and subsequent visits also have a technical nature and aim to identify possible sites to serve as zones where members of the armed insurgency will be located during the complex process of surrendering their weapons. This will be a gradual phaseout during the first 180 days after the signing of the Final Agreement.

The U.N. will be responsible for receiving the weapons. At the same time, a mechanism will be established for monitoring and verification that will ensure that all the agreed-upon conditions are met. The FARC, the government and international institutions will participate in this monitoring process, while the organized communities will observe.

The aforementioned delegations were joined by technical teams of engineers, cartographers and topographers who collected necessary information, with the support of satellite technology, so that the Roundtable of Conversations can make its final recommendation.

Apart from identifying sites, another important aspect of the visit was having discussions with the residents of communities who for so long have been affected by the armed conflict.

Significant achievements

Enrique Santiago, legal adviser to the FARC delegation at the Roundtable of Conversations, has written a good summary of what has been achieved so far in the talks in his article “Three Pitfalls in a Step Toward Peace,” published Aug. 17. (anncol.eu)

“These agreements seek to end existing economic and social inequality between rural and urban areas and guarantee the property rights of small farmers, ending the dispossession of land; eliminating the practice of physical extermination of political opponents; closing definitively the agricultural frontier of the country; protecting the biodiversity of the rainforest and ensuring market availability and prices for legal crops, thus offering alternatives to farmers to survive without having to resort to illegal crops.”

Also, “Clearing remaining explosives from the fields after 50 years of war that

has made Colombia one of the countries most contaminated by explosives; launching an innovative system of restorative justice for peace that will guarantee the rights of victims and hold accountable all those who have been victimizers — this includes not only combatants but also, for the first time, civilians who have instigated, financed or organized the conflict and dirty war; and finding the whereabouts of the more than 50,000 persons recorded as missing from the 1980s until today for reasons related to the internal conflict.”

Apart from the novel inclusion of victims of the conflict in the proposals and final decisions, there is another important contribution: the gender perspective. On Sept. 11, 2014, a subcommittee on gender was set up to be responsible for reviewing and including this approach in all agreements.

This is reflected in the Joint #82 Communique of the FARC and the government: “The contributions of the victims who visited the Conversation Roundtable, 60 percent of whom were women, and of the 18 women’s organizations and LGBTQ community, 10 Colombian experts on sexual violence, international experts and former guerrillas from

around the world were fundamental to enrich the work of this subcommittee.” (Mesadeconversaciones.com.co)

This gender approach revolves around eight axes: “Access and formalization of rural property on an equal footing; guaranteeing economic, social and cultural rights of women and persons with different sexual identity who live in the rural sector; promoting women’s participation as representatives in decision making and conflict resolution; taking steps to prevent and protect women from specific risks; access to truth, justice and guarantees of non-repetition; public recognition, not stigmatization, and expanding political work by women; institutional management to strengthen women’s organizations and LGBTQ movements in order to increase their participation in political and social activities; as well as keeping statistical information with breakdowns by the affected categories.” (farc-ep.co)

This approach is very significant in a region where, unfortunately, sexism and anti-LGBTQ attitudes are deeply rooted. That is why women in the FARC have been in the vanguard of the struggle for the rights of women and the LGBTQ community in Colombia. □

Baltimore WWP salutes Fidel



WW PHOTO: RASIKA RUWANPATHIRANA

The Baltimore branch of Workers World Party celebrated the 90th birthday of Cuba’s historic leader, Fidel Castro, on Aug. 13. An introductory panel featured Fred Mason, president of the Maryland/Washington, D.C., AFL-CIO; Leslie Salgado, from Howard County Friends of Latin America; and Cheryl LaBash, a co-

chair of the National Network on Cuba. In a “fish bowl” discussion, four young organizers described what socialism means to them, followed by questions and comments from others.

Sharon Black, an independent candidate for City Council president, chaired the meeting, and Andre Powell, mayoral candidate — both from Workers World Party and the Baltimore People’s Power Assembly — spoke in solidarity with the Cuban revolution. Independent City Council candidate Nnamdi (Scott) Lumumba, of the Ujima People’s Progress Party, also expressed his solidarity with socialist Cuba.

— Workers World Baltimore Bureau

Cholera in Haiti

U.S. helped cover up UN’s role

By G. Dunkel

The cholera epidemic that officially killed 9,361 people in Haiti and infected 786,530 after it was introduced by the United Nations’ Minustah troops in October 2010 had an even more pernicious effect than the earthquake which ravaged Haiti earlier that year.

This should be kept in mind when reading the U.N. report released this August by Philip Alston, which for the first time admits the U.N. role in introducing cholera into Haiti. (tinyurl.com/zsatdds)

It was pernicious, not just for the number of people killed — although scientists studying the spread of cholera in Haiti have challenged the official figures as too low — but for the assault on human rights and dignity. These have been systematically and consistently violated by the U.N.’s refusal to recognize its legal and moral responsibilities.

The U.N. still refuses to admit what it did in its Minustah camp on the Mèyè (Meille) River near Mirebelais that caused the death of thousands of Haitians and the debilitating illness of hundreds of thousands more.

Minustah is an acronym for the U.N. occupation force in Haiti. Minustah has

been the main military force in Haiti since June 2004, when it took over from a coalition of U.S., French and Canadian imperialist troops that had occupied Haiti two months earlier.

In short, Minustah is a cover for the continued imperialist occupation of Haiti, especially meant to hide the dominant U.S. role. This occupation is aimed at preventing Haiti’s people from taking an independent political direction, as they did when they twice elected Jean Bertrand Aristide as president.

A new book, “Deadly River: Cholera and Cover-Up in Post-Earthquake Haiti,” exposes how the U.N., with the active and essential assistance of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), hid its own responsibility. The author, Ralph R. Frerichs, is a retired epidemiologist from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Frerichs’ book relies on and reports the work of Renaud Piarroux, a French expert on cholera. Piarroux began his on-the-ground investigation of cholera in Haiti shortly after the first case was confirmed on Oct. 22, 2010.

Frerichs documents how the U.N. and the CDC distorted the science and the facts about the origin of the disease and

tried to shift the blame onto dilapidated and deficient sanitation in Haiti. This follows the recipe for one of the oldest tricks in ruling-class propaganda: blame the victims.

The clearest example of the role of the CDC in this cover-up is an Oct. 29, 2010, interview of Eric Mintz by NPR Senior Science Reporter Joe Palca. Mintz is a medical epidemiologist from the CDC who was in Haiti helping the Haitian government with its investigation of the cholera epidemic.

A Haitian caller asked: “And there’s a rumor in the Haitian community that the source of the cholera was from U.N. soldiers, Nepalese U.N. soldiers who were emptying their latrines upriver from where it happened. Is that true?” Mintz responded: “Well, I’ve heard that rumor. It is circulating here in Haiti, and we have no evidence at all to support it.” And then he went on to talk about some scientifically unfounded theories about its spread in Haiti.

Frerichs makes the point that many nongovernmental organizations and international health organizations believed that challenging Minustah’s sanitation would make its role in guaranteeing “security and stability” in Haiti precarious.

The corporate media in the U.S. are only now giving publicity to the recent report by Alston that says the epidemic “would not have broken out but for the actions of the United Nations.” As early as November 2010, the Haitian press was documenting the U.N.’s responsibility and the Haitian people were in the streets protesting.

The U.S.-based media could have put major pressure on the U.N. much earlier. Workers World published an article on Nov. 24, 2010, describing the protests in Haiti and the reports in the Haitian press.

Even after the Alston report, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon still hasn’t formally accepted direct responsibility. U.N. lawyers, who are from the U.S. Department of Justice, were successful in getting the U.S. Court of Appeals to accept the U.N. claim of “sovereign immunity.” This allowed the U.N. to refuse to appear in court when 5,000 Haitian victims of cholera brought a case against the U.N. (New York Times, Aug. 18)

The situation is still extremely fluid, and strong criticism has been raised about the U.N.’s role in Haiti and elsewhere. Despite — or because of — the Minustah occupation, Haiti’s government is still unstable. □

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

Saudis, U.S. out of Yemen!

Workers World’s editorial last Oct. 18 began: “U.S. warplanes bombed and destroyed a hospital operated by Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières/MSF) in Kunduz, Afghanistan, on Oct. 3.” That attack killed 14 MSF personnel, 24 patients and four caretakers, and wounded many others.

This Aug. 15, Saudi Arabian warplanes bombed and destroyed Abs Hospital operated by Doctors Without Borders in Northern Yemen. This attack killed at least 19 people, including one MSF staff member, and wounded 24 others, including patients.

In both cases, as MSF spokespeople made clear, the hospitals had provided their GPS locations to the military forces carrying out the bombings. They provide these locations so warplanes will avoid targeting the hospitals. To target a hospital is a war crime under international law.

This is not the only similarity in the attacks. Both were carried out by U.S.-manufactured and -supplied warplanes. The pilots in both cases were trained by the Pentagon war machine. Both were following instructions from U.S. guidance systems, which the U.S. Air Force makes available to its Saudi ally.

If anyone thinks this is an exaggeration, consider the following statement from the Congressional Search Report, released April 16 to inform a discussion in Congress about U.S. relations with Saudi Arabia: “The United States has provided logistical and intelligence support to the [Saudi] Yemen operation, and U.S.-origin weaponry features prominently in Saudi military operations.”

The truth is the U.S. military supplies the planes and bombs, trains the Saudi pilots and provides the intelligence for the attacks.

MSF statements condemned the Saudi attack this year — just as they condemned the U.S. attack last year — and pulled out their staff members from six hospitals in Northern Yemen.

Saudi Arabia, with full collaboration of U.S. imperialism, has been bombing Yemen since March 2015. This intervention has killed 6,500 people, half of them civilians, and added another 2 million refugees to suffering humanity. In the weeks before the attack on the hospital, Saudi planes bombed two schools, killing 12 children in one of them.

The Saudi monarchy, a U.S. ally since 1933, has supported the most reactionary political faction in Yemen’s war, one that has no-to-little support across the impoverished country located in the southeast corner of the Arabian peninsula.

Just this Aug. 21, some 100,000 people rallied in Sana’a, the capital, in support of the provisional government there made up of a coalition of the Ansar Allah (Houthi) organization and the General People’s Congress party of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Western countries continue to recognize the reactionary grouping headed by Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, who fled Yemen and lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Saudi planes again bombed in Sana’a, this time near the crowd.

The Saudi war on Yemen is thus another criminal and anti-popular adventure for which U.S. imperialism shares the guilt.

U.S., Saudi Arabia, out of Yemen!

□



Minnesota nurses vote to strike — again

Continued from page 4

for training to deal with workplace violence and for improvement in the nurse-to-patient ratio.

This time the negotiating committee is planning an open-ended strike. As an MNA statement noted, Allina’s demands for the three-year contract “have only made the nurses more angry and more resolved to fight for a fair contract.” (mnnurses.org, Aug. 18) Stay tuned.

Communication Workers on the move

On Aug. 3, the Communication Workers bargaining committee for 42,000 AT&T Mobility workers reached a new tentative agreement with improved health care and benefits. The membership had voted down an earlier one. Included are reduced premiums for 20,000 workers hired after 2014 and reduced rates for workers with dependent children and no spouse with health care coverage, for workers in Puerto Rico and for workers who choose a new “Option 2” plan. (cwa-union.org, Aug. 18)

On Aug. 12, 25,000 United flight attendants, members of AFA-CWA, ratified a five-year contract, which union President Sara Nelson said sets a new industry standard. It includes double-digit pay increases, enhances job security provisions, improves health care coverage, protects retirement and increases staffing flexibility.

Some 15,000 workers at AT&T West (California and Nevada) and 2,000 AT&T Internet Services (national) are still in negotiations. Meanwhile,

‘Market Elections’

Getting a grip on how U.S. ‘democracy’ works

By Deirdre Griswold

How can a narcissistic billionaire who is running a racist election campaign claim to speak for disgruntled workers? Why is it that the first woman ever nominated for president by either of the two big capitalist parties is more hawkish on foreign policy than her Republican opponent? What does the current, seemingly bizarre election struggle tell us about where politics is headed in the United States?

History never repeats itself exactly, but knowing what the real issues and the real forces have been in earlier presidential elections can help us see through the illusions, demagoguery and media hype of this one. Fortunately, there’s a great book available that offers such a lesson on U.S. history: “Market Elections — How Democracy Serves the Rich,” by Vince Copeland.

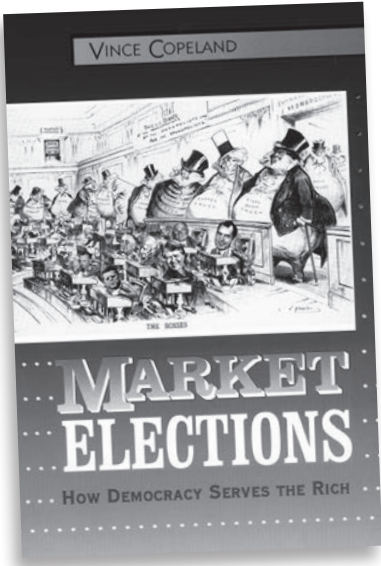
Yes, elections are bought and sold — for increasingly astronomical sums of money that make it virtually impossible for true representatives of the multinational working class, the vast majority of the people, to get elected to national office. But that’s not the whole story.

There’s a long history behind the evolution of the Democratic and Republican parties, and many struggles between them that at one time involved the increasing incompatibility of two different forms of class oppression.

As Copeland, a former steelworker and a founder of Workers World Party, writes: “A long time ago the two parties were arrayed against one another as the contending spearheads of two different classes — not so much an oppressed versus an oppressor class, but two different kinds of oppressors: owners of chattel slaves versus owners of capital, who employ wage slaves. From about 1824 to 1876-77, the Democratic Party by and large represented the slave owners and the Republican Party represented the capitalists.”

In the great Civil War between these two systems, the Republican Party leaders around President Abraham Lincoln finally came around to the position that chattel slavery had to be abolished, a position that the enslaved peoples and the Abolitionist movement had heroically fought for.

“But after the great betrayal of Black freedom in 1877,” when the victorious Union army



was withdrawn from the South, leaving Black people at the mercy of Ku Klux Klan terror, “the two parties could be characterized with minor oscillations as the instruments of two political factions of the same capitalist ruling class.”

Today it is the Republican Party that makes an appeal to racism and xenophobia, while the Democrats are relying on the votes of Black and other oppressed peoples to defeat Donald Trump. But the great betrayal of 1877, in which both parties conspired, has left its terrible legacy. All over this country, regardless of which party holds local office, the oppression of Black and Brown people is so endemic, so hideous, that another national uprising against racism, particularly the brutality of the police and other representatives of the state, is now underway. Oppressed people and their progressive allies are not waiting for the outcome of this election; they are in the streets.

Triumphant Wall Street and growing worker militancy

As Copeland explains, the triumph of big capital in the Civil War enabled the tempestuous growth of industry in the succeeding decades. Each presidential election became a contest between different factions of industrialists allied with different banks.

But they also had to contend with an increasingly militant new industrial working class. “As capital grew, so did its inevitable concomitant, human labor. This labor was paid miserably out of proportion to the big fortunes being made. This was all too obvious in the big cities, where slums festered and mansions were ever more splendid and ornate.”

Sounds like today, doesn’t it?

These unbearable conditions led to great strike waves and demands for an eight-hour day as the working class grew and became organized. A new party, the Populists, was formed in the 1890s to challenge the money-men, and got a million votes out of 12 million cast. At the same time, the money that Wall Street threw behind its preferred candidates began soaring into the millions of dollars. The more international and imperialist the ruling class’s interests became, the more that was at

grievance/unfair labor practice strikes in June by nearly 4,000 members of Locals 9400 and 9510 in California were resolved. Strikes were called when management unilaterally reassigned work on landlines used for 911 emergency calls. They ended when AT&T agreed to meet with locals to discuss work assignments and to return work to union technicians. (June 23) The Internet Services technicians and workers at call centers voted to strike in early August. (Aug. 4)

Silicon Valley service workers demand higher wages, rights

The hidden story in Silicon Valley, where California’s wealthy high-tech industry resides, is that low-wage food service workers are demanding their right to living wages and decent working conditions. On June 30, hundreds of workers, many holding signs in Spanish and chanting “Si, se puede,,” marched outside Intel offices with the support of UNITE HERE Local 2850.

Monica Moreno, a cafeteria worker at Intel, describes in a Guardian video that she and her partner can’t afford to get their own apartment in San Jose where a one-bedroom costs \$2,270 a month. No wonder she was willing to do civil disobedience and get arrested during the protest. (theguardian.com, June 30)

Moreno is a contract worker hired by Eurest, a subsidiary of Compass Group, which is the largest food service group in the world. Eurest, with outlets in 80 countries, raked in \$1.4 billion in the U.S. in 2014 with more than 15,500 workers at mostly Fortune 500 companies. Even though Eurest was involved in a scandal in 2005 involving U.N. troops in African war zones, it continues to have strong ties to the military internationally. Obviously, Eurest makes its millions by super exploiting workers like Moreno. □

stake and the higher the cost of what were clearly “rigged elections.”

To give a flavor of those rebellious times, Copeland quotes from a speech given to a crowd of thousands by a Populist farm woman, Mary E. Lease:

“Wall Street owns the country. It is no longer a government of the people, by the people and for the people, but a government of Wall Street, by Wall Street and for Wall Street. The great common people of this country are slaves, and monopoly is the master.”

How much has been spent by the ruling class since then to demonize as “subversive” this honest assessment of the U.S. government? But an understanding of the true nature of our “democracy” is once again animating mass movements, especially of the young.

There is far too much in “Market Elections” to even summarize the book in this brief review. What Copeland shows is the intersection of electoral politics with the struggles of the workers, the poor farmers, and the oppressed nations, and how that shaped the history of this country. But he leaves plenty of room for exploring the vagaries of the candidates themselves — both appalling and ridiculous.

It’s a welcome antidote to the fawning respect for presidents we are taught in school to know, for example, that even the superrich considered politicians to be “slobs,” in Alice Roosevelt Longworth’s famous assessment of Warren G. Harding, who won the 1920 presidential election. Her patrician family had supported James Cox, whose running mate was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Harding was a creature of the competing Mellons and Rockefellers. Had Harding been a Roosevelt creature, her view of him might have been the same, but unspoken.

“Market Elections” is an invaluable reference for those seeking to understand the complexities of how the ruling class has been able to use the “democratic process” to stay in power for more than two centuries — and how mass movements can break through the two-party straightjacket to bring about real change.

Copeland’s book was first published in 2000 and has not yet been converted into an ebook. The paperback (296 pages) can be ordered from online booksellers or directly from World View Forum at 147 West 24th St., 2nd floor, New York, NY 10011 at a discounted price of \$15, which includes shipping. □

Moorehead to PFP convention

‘Solidarity with most oppressed must be central to our movement’

Continued from page 2

that are specifically targeted by Trump’s racism and fascism, who no doubt are going to vote for the Democrats out of fear of what a Trump victory could mean for their communities and limited rights they may have. Rather, it is the activist base of our mass movements with whom we must engage in a sensitive, understanding and convincing way about the importance of supporting socialist candidates for president and vice president as part of a larger political struggle against being trapped by the capitalist political establishment and their politicians.

Part of this political struggle is winning people to the understanding that independent mass mobilization, and mass action in the streets, like the kind of militant actions that the Black Lives Matter movement has been engaged in, is at this stage of the struggle, not merely as important as electoral politics, but most important.

Regarding solidarity with the most oppressed sectors of our class, both in this country and around the world, Workers World Party believes that while revolutionary socialists have the job of exposing the injustice, the bankruptcy and the impossibility of reforming the capitalist system, and replacing it with socialism, our party also understands that the struggle to unite the workers and the oppressed of the world — a part of the struggle that is essential to any genuine socialist movement, and to wider socialist unity — must also be a struggle to forge solidarity, in both words and deeds, with the most oppressed sectors of our global class.

To understand the impact of capitalist globalization on the working class is to see a contradiction, because it engenders division and competition for fewer and fewer jobs while at the same time laying the basis for even wider unity and wider class consciousness that transcends nations and geography, indeed, a global revolutionary class consciousness.

However, a genuine revolutionary socialist movement cannot move forward

if our answer to the question of uniting the working class is to advise all involved to minimize and marginalize the importance of combating racism, the oppression of immigrant workers and the oppression of women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people “for the sake of unity.”

We must do the opposite of that. Unity and trust within the working class and within our socialist movement can only be accomplished by making the issues of the most oppressed central to our movement. The failure to do this, we believe, was the biggest failure of the Bernie Sanders campaign, when he failed to recognize the centrality of the struggle against racism as embodied by the Black Lives Matter movement. And we can’t forget Trump’s racism when it comes to immigrants and Muslims.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Black Panther Party in the fall of 1966. Some may want to point out the imperfections of the Black Panthers and their leaders. But it is an incredible fact that the Panthers were able to do so much and survive so long in spite of violent and ever-increasing state repression. The Panthers, with minimal support from the organized left back then, evolved into the most ideologically revolutionary expression of the Black Liberation Movement.

As we celebrate that tremendous anniversary this year, let us be sure to remember the most enduring and most painful lesson from that period. We believe that the ability of the FBI’s Cointelpro and all the forces of the racist capitalist state to jail, murder and otherwise disrupt and crush the Panthers reflected the unfortunate reality that the political movement was at best divided over supporting the Panthers against this repression. At worst, it did not do nearly enough to prevent the Panthers from being politically isolated. When liberation movements are isolated, it is far easier for the capitalist state to carry out its dirty work with the aim of weak-

ening the overall revolutionary movement.

Workers World believes that the Black Lives Matter movement represents even more than a continuation of the age-old struggle against racist police terror. Indeed, we believe that the Black Lives Matter uprising, which is international in scope, reflects the awakening of a section of the working class that is being transformed by capitalist globalization and technology. There is an economic and social basis for the increase in police repression and murder in Black and Brown communities; it is the same economic and social basis for mass incarceration.

The global changes in the capitalist system render larger and larger sections of the oppressed working class “expendable” as far as capitalism is concerned. To the extent that capitalism no longer needs their labor, they are subject to murder, prison, in effect, a war that threatens the very survival of Black and Brown people.

When I and [my running mate] Lamont Lilly were able to go to Ferguson, just a few months following the youth rebellion against the police murder of Michael Brown, Black youth told me directly that they wanted to join a union in order to get a decent-paying job to help support their families, not to be targeted by police. As we are meeting here this weekend, the Fight for \$15 activists are having a national convention in Richmond, Va., once home to the Confederacy, about the struggle against racism and the Black Lives Matter movement.

To link the struggle against racism with the struggle against slave wages is significant, since so many low-wage workers are targeted for being who they are — a majority Black and Brown single mothers.

If we are to erect a new, united, revolutionary socialist movement, our first order of business must be to find a way to maximize concrete solidarity with targeted communities. This, and only this, can be the foundation of the dawning of a new revolutionary socialist project. Long live international solidarity! □



and Lamont Lilly for vice president — have marched against the Republicans in Cleveland and the Democratic Party machine in Philadelphia. They have gone coast-to-coast speaking to workers and people of color about **REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM**.

The campaign just sent a delegation to Milwaukee to show solidarity with the rebellion there. Visit our website at workers.org/wwwp/campaign-news/ for weekly updates on our work.



We are a working-class party and our only source of income is from people like you. Help us get out the voice for revolutionary socialism to counter the Clinton war machine and Trump’s racist, anti-people offensives.

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DONATE!

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The Moorehead/Lilly presidential campaign needs your donation now

vote4socialism.org

#Socialists4BlackLives

Contributions are urgently needed, no matter how small or large. Please make a generous donation today at workers.org/wwwp/donate/. Mail checks to Workers World Party 2016 Presidential Campaign Committee, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011.

Paid for by the Workers World Party Presidential Campaign Committee.



**i Libertad
para todos
los presos
políticos!
i Fin mas
encarceration!**



George Jackson

Hacia delante, luego de las Panteras Negras

Este artículo fue publicado en inglés el 10 de agosto por los prisioneros del Colectivo Nuevo Agosto Negro.

**Por Sehu Kessa Saa Tabansi
Desde la prisión SCI Greene,
en Waynesburg-Pensilvania**

¡Poder para el pueblo!

¡Necesitamos el empoderamiento de los prisioneros! Necesitamos participar en el movimiento más amplio que lucha contra el imperialismo estadounidense. Este post en este blog tiene la intención de iniciar una plataforma inaugural para que las/os prisioneros conscientes y politizados discutan las condiciones generales de la prisión en relación directa con el estado actual de las luchas existentes en todo el mundo. Estamos animando a las/os lectores y escritores a pensar en el contexto del internacionalismo y la solidaridad global.

Siendo este el 50 aniversario de la fundación del Partido Panteras Negras para la Autodefensa (PPNA) en el año 1966, hay que destacar algunos de los acontecimientos del pasado que siguen afectando a las actuales condiciones de reclusión en las cárceles de Estados Unidos.

I. Condiciones en las cárceles de EUA

El co-fundador y presidente del PPNA, Huey P. Newton (RIP), tras su encarcelamiento se encontró dentro de un abismo totalmente a oscuras, bajo privación sensorial completa, carente de higiene, obligado a hacer sus necesidades en un agujero en el piso y constantemente con hambre. Ese infame infierno fue descrito por el revolucionario como la celda “rompe alma”.

El tono nacional de las condiciones de las prisiones de EUA históricamente se ha establecido con las condiciones brutales de la Penitenciaría Eastern State, la reclusión en Pennsylvania, y el destierro a la isla de Alcatraz en California, culminando en los nuevos diseños de represión en Marion-Illinois; Pelican Bay Supermax; y la ADX actual en Colorado.

Reflexionando hace 50 años, las condiciones brutales que los prisioneros de la vieja escuela se enfrentaban no estaban en esos tiempos vinculados a las empresas privadas. Hoy en día, las empresas corporativas, en contratos por ganancias capitalistas, apoyan la tortura. Ha habido un gran salto en las armas tecnológicas de opresión - hombres y mujeres eran golpeados con porras - pero hoy en día reciben descargas de dispositivos Taser o descarga con picanas eléctricas y electrocutadas/os con 50.000 voltios.

Hay una compañía estadounidense llamada ERC, Inc., que comercializa la “silla de la tortura” - el término eufemístico para el público es “silla de cumplimiento” o “silla de control”. La página web oficial ilustra un funcionario de prisiones tranquilo, descansando cómodamente restringido al aparato. No hay pietaje visual del daño permanente a la médula y al cuello con complicaciones de circulación con la que miles de prisioneros quedan, causándoles dolor y sufrimiento.

Las empresas privadas se benefician de la fabricación y venta de instrumentos de tortura. El interés financiero en municiones químicas ha evolucionado desde el gas pimienta hasta los más avanzados agentes paralizantes neurales y cardíacos en aerosol. En el pasado, el abogado del PPN tuvo éxito en detener el uso del “rompe alma”; pero avancemos al presente en Pensilvania, donde no hay abogados del pueblo como en los años 1960 y 1970. En una demanda colectiva -la Pennsylvania Disabilities Rights Network v.

John E. Wetzel, Secretario de Departamento de Correcciones de Pensilvania— los explotadores abogados de los demandantes facturaron por su litigio la cifra de \$700.000. Sin embargo, las quejas originales de tortura con luces encendidas las 24 horas al día, las celdas duras de tortura y los equipos de tortura misteriosamente desaparecieron del acuerdo. Esto apunta a un patrón de larga data de los abogados que secuestran las demandas de prisioneros, que se utiliza constantemente en Pensilvania y más allá durante al menos los últimos treinta años.

Los prisioneros del siglo 21 en las plantaciones estadounidenses están enfrentando corporaciones como la Keefe Food Group, Wexford Medical Sources, Inc., y subsidiarias como Correct Care Solutions, Inc. Aunque ha habido un reciente éxito sobre las tarifas nacionales telefónicas para prisioneros contra la avaricia corporativa de Verizon, T-Netix, Tel-Link Global y otras, por todo el país las empresas privadas siguen conspirando, aprovechando y dando sobornos financieros a los funcionarios del gobierno estatal y local y en las cárceles del condado. Piense en Correccional Corporation of America, Prison Health Services, Inc., Wackenhut (G4S), Aramark Corp. - desde los suministros médicos hasta los servicios de alimentación y seguridad, el negocio con las prisiones está en apogeo. ¡Cada una de las prisiones tiene una plantación o un taller de explotación! El viejo modelo de institución penal encerrando a los prisioneros en mazmorras para que languidezcan aislados de toda la sociedad ha sido reemplazado por un nuevo modelo de líneas de producción con fines de lucro. En algunos estados es simplemente esclavitud - sin salarios - pero otros son más sofisticados con el peonaje a 17 centavos de dólar por hora durante seis horas, y no más de 42 centavos de dólar máximo por hora de mano de obra esclava.

En resumen, ningún prisionero hace 50 años tenía que pagar por las necesidades básicas para su higiene en confinamiento, o estar sujeto a cargos por consulta médica, que se redujera su adjudicación estatal de sobres o su pago de bienestar social en la prisión (una asignación mensual general de \$14 a \$19 para prisioneros que estaban desempleados). Simultáneamente, con la ausencia del subsidio, los prisioneros tienen que hacer frente a las empresas y la comercialización de sus productos de consumo - las tabletas informáticas, iPods, reproductores MP3, paquetes de cable digital vía satélite, televisión de pantalla plana - que se venden a los prisioneros pobres a precios inflados para endeudar a la fuerza a sus familias pobres que les apoyan.

Todo - mano de obra barata y los precios altos en medio de la tortura psicológica y la experimentación médica (programas de eugenesia), ensayo con fármacos genéricos, alimentos contaminados de los llamados países del Tercer Mundo, contratos de fondos de cobertura y subcontratación de mano de obra - hace que esta industria de prisión sea un gigante rentable.

El personal penitenciario deja que las infecciones por el VIH, el virus de la hepatitis C y otras enfermedades contagiosas se propaguen en los prisioneros. Las medidas preventivas y de tratamiento para la diabetes tipo 2, enfermedades del corazón, mala salud en general y la obesidad en la prisión están retenidas. Mezcle eso con una epidemia de enfermedad mental, y luego obligue a los prisioneros a ser comercializados como productos de las empresas que controlan todos los tratamientos, y usted

tiene una fuente de ganancias tan grande que justifica cualquier cantidad de tortura y represión para mantenerlo intacto.

II. Aislamiento solitario

El diseño moderno para el aislamiento solitario se puede remontar al bloqueo de la prisión de Marion en Illinois. El ex-Pantera Negro y luchador del Ejército de Liberación Negra Elder Sundiata Acoli - preso político / prisionero de guerra - se encontró completamente incomunicado de sus seguidores, visitantes y de su correspondencia.

Sin embargo, sus raíces se remontan aún más lejos. El imperialismo EUA adoptó sus llamadas Unidades de Viviendas de Seguridad y Control del Modelo de Stammheim, en la Alemania nazi de la década de 1940. A principios de la década de 1970 los criterios oficiales de la oficina de prisiones de EUA eran: “La afiliación, asociación o pertenencia pasada o actual de un prisionero a una organización que se ha demostrado está implicada en actos de violencia, intentos de interrumpir o derrocar al gobierno de EUA o cuya ideología publicada incluye abogar por violar la ley para ‘liberar’ prisioneros”.

Un método completo y sistemático fue ideado para dividir a los líderes y movimientos de masas a través de detención política, con el pretexto de criminalidad. Una vez contenidos, el estado sometía a los prisioneros en aislamiento bajo lo que se ha definido como la Tabla de Biderman de Coerción Penal.

Un hecho menos conocido debido a los prejuicios imperantes en las prisiones de EUA es que las mujeres también eran segregadas con dureza dentro de la cárcel en unidades de aislamiento en la famosa Lexington en KY. Estas unidades de aislamiento comenzaron subterráneas. ¡Estamos hablando de túneles en el interior de la tierra, una cueva, una tumba! Ahora estas tumbas se utilizan más que nunca, a pesar de los pocos informes selectivos mediáticos sobre los sacrificios valientes que incluyeron la pérdida de vida de prisioneros politizados en California, luchando contra el aislamiento y despertando un espíritu revolucionario en toda la nación.

El Dr. Frankenstein ha transportado sus malas prácticas de Pensilvania a California en la personificación del Dr. Jeffrey A. Beard, Ph.D., un psicólogo clínico con experiencia en los campos de concentración. El Dr. Beard por más de 30 años ha perfeccionado su arte con la creación de las Unidades de Aislamiento a Largo Plazo en Pensilvania, localizadas en el techo de la Penitenciaría Western, (SCI Pittsburgh).

Las condiciones diseñadas para el llamado “peor de lo peor” pasó por obstáculos legales hasta el máximo tribunal de la nación. Como era de esperar, los jueces del Tribunal Supremo confirmaron las nuevas formas de manipulación de la mente en aislamiento - absolutamente nada, privación total de periódicos, revistas, publicaciones de lectura. La ausencia total de información.

El revolucionario de California Abdul Olugbala Shakur escribió un artículo muy esclarecedor, publicado por ABC Chicago Zine Distrito. Se llama “¿Qué es el confinamiento solitario?” (13 de agosto negro, 2014) Elaboró extensa y expertamente sobre estos nuevos diseños y sus efectos en el ambiente de las divisiones altamente raciales, religiosas y étnicas orquestada por los funcionarios del Estado.

La encarnación en Pensilvania de la Penitenciaría Eastern State - basada en el enfoque puritano del régimen de aislamiento para el arrepentimiento de los prisioneros a través, en ese momento, de coacción bíblica - ha reencarnado utilizando cualquier for-

ma que tenga el estado: tortura física, farmacéutica y con aparatos más sofisticados. Mientras que las unidades de segregación a largo plazo en nombre han desaparecido, han renacido en la forma de la RRL (lista de liberación restringida). ¡Es una ironía cruel que los locos científicos nazis alemanes también tenían una lista de este tipo!

Estos prisioneros RRL pueden ahora ser recluidos en cualquier instalación. Las 23 y 1, y mayormente la rutina de 24 horas en la celda, son equivalentes a casas de sudor en la primavera y verano, y a una caja de hielo en los meses de otoño e invierno. Poca atención se ha prestado, mientras que en el pasado la Coalición para Acabar con el Encerramiento en Marion llamó la atención sobre las condiciones de Sundiata Acoli. La presión política internacional de la ex USSR sobre el presidente Ronald Reagan destacó el tratamiento de las mujeres en Lexington-KY. Litigios de prisión dieron como resultado el desmantelamiento de la unidad de segregación de mujeres.

Las circunstancias actuales están fuera de control debido a las ganancias actuales por visitas al médico, facturados a \$10 para prisioneros sin dinero. Para los prisioneros con poco o ningún ingreso, esto significa pagar mucho más en relación con un ciudadano público que tiene tanto ingresos como seguro de salud. Las enfermedades de los prisioneros significan enormes ganancias. Y como otras empresas con fines de lucro venden ropa, calzoncillos largos, ropa térmica y guantes a precios altos (¿ya hacen la conexión con las salidas de aire frío?), salen muchas ganancias por las ventas o por enfermedades, y por lo general, por ambas. Esto se ha fabricado por 50 años, hasta el punto donde las corporaciones patrocinan la esclavitud y la tortura.

Ni siquiera hemos mencionado las ofertas lucrativas del llamado sindicato de guardias estatales. Es común que los funcionarios de prisiones tengan un día de familia y barbacoas dentro de la prisión. No es inusual que el personal tenga salchichas y hamburguesas en sus cuartos de comedor. Estas celebraciones en este barco de esclavos trae a la mente otras celebraciones históricas desvergonzadas. En ambos períodos de nuestra historia, la ley ha jugado un papel en la legalización y legitimación de las costumbres de deshumanización.

Para que nos permita evaluar realmente lo que enfrentamos aquí, hay que ver que hace 25 años los prisioneros no tenían que lidiar con las facturas de teléfono T-Netix extorsionando nuestras familias y amigos; los productos del multimillonario Bob Barker elaborados en México explotando mano de obra barata; el secretario de estado John Kerry (su cónyuge es Teresa Heinz) - bueno, aquí se consume la mantequilla de maní Heinz ahora, no sólo salsa de tomate Heinz. Usted ve, el TLC asegura que se utilice el trabajo peor pagado y se concedan al complejo industrial de prisiones los contratos más grandes con prebendas, y todo es legal. Carcinógenos en los alimentos, químicos en los productos, materiales peligrosos y mercancías defectuosas - no tienen consecuencias. No importa: los prisioneros mueren, los prisioneros compran.

Mientras los prisioneros de hoy se vean a sí mismos como trabajadoras/es y consumidoras/es en un mercado capitalista global, serán condenados a ser peones, impotentes. Mientras los prisioneros se vean como víctimas de los mismos intereses que saquean América del Sur, África, Asia y el Oriente Medio, nuestro aislamiento físico y político continuará. □