

Guards indicted at last Texas prisoners win

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

A tremendous victory after a long struggle has been won by activist prisoners at the Ramsey Unit Prison in Brazoria County, Texas, when four prison guards were taken off the unit and indicted on felony charges. (Houston Chronicle, July 11) Prisoner-activists were responsible for exposing, challenging and publicizing the guards' illegal and brutal treatment.

The victory came after prisoners Nanon Williams, Donsha Crump and Neil Giese, all Muslims, were repeatedly thrown into solitary, had phony disciplinary cases filed against them, lost visitation rights, lost telephone privileges, were removed from working on their education and faced gross discrimination.

But these men filed grievances, wrote to the media and contacted state legislators as well as higher state prison officials. They mobilized "outside" support by contacting activists and progressive media.

After months of struggle, four of the prison personnel were fired, indicted by a grand jury in early July and criminally charged.

Events at the Ramsey Unit that led to the criminal charges are typical of everyday actions by guards at the hundred-plus Texas prisons. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice was founded on racism and the convict lease program, when people of color were arbitrarily arrested and "leased" out for no pay to work for plantation, mine and factory owners.

Brutality, trumped-up charges, rapes, denial of medical treatment and anti-Muslim persecution are rampant and real every day of the year in Texas jails.

A year of prisoner organizing

Problems at the Ramsey Unit began for the Muslim prisoners in 2017, almost a year ago, when a new warden, Virgil McMullen, was assigned to the prison after Hurricane Harvey devastated the Houston area in August. Prisoners at Ramsey, only 30 minutes from Houston and close to the Gulf of Mexico, had to be evacuated because of the severity of the storm.

After Warden McMullen read a Workers World eyewitness article about conditions created by the hurricane, he confronted prisoner Williams, who was quoted in the article. Williams had spoken with a WW reporter about the dangerous and treacherous conditions for evacuated prisoners, sleeping on gym floors along with rats, roaches, mosquitoes and snakes. (tinyurl.com/y844jgrt)

Williams, who, along with other Ramsey prisoners, communicates regularly with a Workers World reporter about prison conditions, recounted the warden's threats, including that McMullen told Williams "not to let McMullen's name ever come out of his mouth again."

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One more down

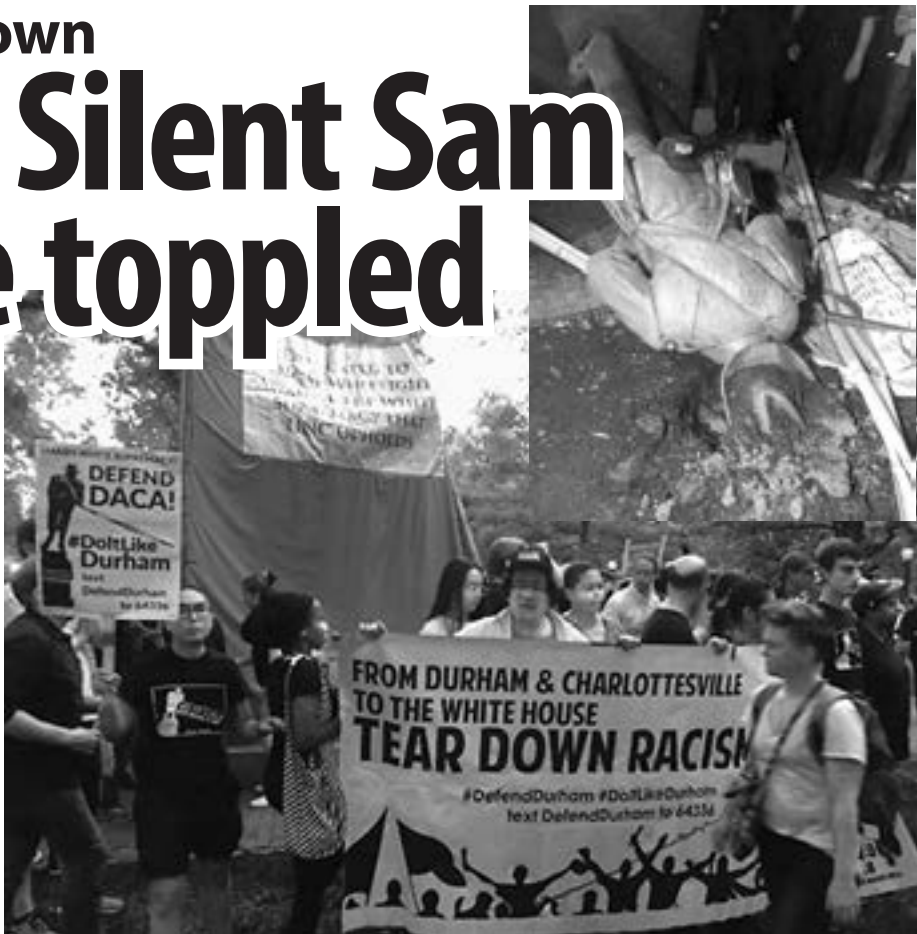
Racist Silent Sam statue toppled

By Zachary Richardson
Chapel Hill, N.C.

Chanting, "I believe that we will win," a coalition of activists, students and faculty toppled Silent Sam, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill's infamous Confederate monument, late Monday, Aug. 20.

Protesters, who earlier in the evening placed banners around Sam's base denouncing white supremacy and the legacy of slavery at UNC, brought the statue down shortly after 9:15 p.m. by pulling on a rope affixed to the statue's neck.

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University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Aug. 20.

WW PHOTO: ZACHARY RICHARDSON

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‘Black August Is Black Love’

By Workers World San Diego bureau

The “Black August Is Black Love” art show, lecture and open mic were held on the evening of Aug. 10 at the Brown Building in San Diego’s City Heights neighborhood. The Brown Building is a community and cultural organizing space set up in cooperation with the Lesbian Wellness Project. For the past year, Rahui Suré Saldivar-Soto, Workers World Party organizer, has coordinated regular art shows along a variety of intersectional themes regarding race, class, gender and sexuality.

The Black August Planning Committee, spearheaded by Workers World Party members, chose the theme “Black August Is Black Love” to define this month of events. As Che Guevara famously noted: “The true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love.” As the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. similarly noted, this “strength to love” is “the kind of spiritual dynamic so desperately needed for survival.”

The keynote speaker was Laila Aziz of Pillars of the Community. Aziz detailed the centrality of Black August’s origins in the California prison system and its sustained international presence. Mychal Odom and Gloria Verdieu of Workers World Party-San Diego also spoke to the capacity crowd.

There are two elements to Black August: Black August Resistance (BAR) and Black August Memorial (BAM). In the former, the long history of Black liberation struggle is honored. In the latter, African/Black/New African elders and martyrs are remembered. Aziz underscored the monthly theme, noting George Jackson’s bisexuality and his love affair with Angela Davis, as well as noting the indispensability of Black queer people and Black women to Black liberation. Aziz’s historical context was pointed and well received.

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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



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

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

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

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San Diego



Adrian Espinal of the Brown Building and Gloria Verdieu of WWP-San Diego.



WW PHOTOS

Odom began by telling the crowd, “All prisoners are political prisoners” and urged them to get involved in local campaigns against police abuse and mass incarceration. Adding historical context, Gloria Verdieu read Mumia Abu-Jamal’s statement on the Haitian revolution.

The remainder of the event showcased the visual art and spoken word of such local cultural workers as the pointilist Dara Njeri, Joi Cole, Kay Marie, Maharani Peace and others.

This event served as the first of many Black August events in San Diego, three of which are directly organized by Workers World-San Diego.

The other WWP-sponsored events will be the art show, “Spirit of Sagon: Anti-Police Brutality in San Diego, Past and Present” on Aug. 18 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at 6443 Imperial Ave., and the official Black August Commemoration forum on Aug. 25 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Malcolm X Library.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

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

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WW pays tribute to the activism of Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin

By Monica Moorehead

When the great Aretha Franklin was alive, what became lost was how her music, and herself as a person, were influenced by the social movements of her times, starting with the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. With her death, her impact on and support for various movements have become more public, adding to her already astounding legacy. The Rev. C.L. Franklin, Aretha's father, was an organizer for the historic 1963 Detroit Walk to Freedom, the largest Civil Rights march in the U.S. until the March on Washington drew 250,000 people a few months later.

An up-and-coming singer, Aretha Franklin signed a contract saying that she would never perform in front of segregated audiences. Civil Rights activist Jesse Jackson Sr. spoke to the Detroit Free Press about Franklin's activism: "When Dr. King was alive, several times she helped us make payroll. On one occasion, we took an eleven-city tour with her, as Aretha Franklin and Harry Belafonte. ... And they put gas in the vans. She did eleven concerts for free and hosted us at her home and did a fundraiser for my campaign. Aretha has always been a very socially conscious artist, an inspiration, not just an entertainer." (Aug. 15)

When the legendary singer, Otis Redding, wrote and first sang "Respect" in 1965, the lyrics mainly focused on personal relations. But when the song became a mega hit for Aretha Franklin in 1967, she gave it a whole new meaning as a political anthem for Civil Rights and then for empowering women. Just a year later, she sang at the funeral of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

When activist Angela Davis was placed on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 10 most-wanted fugitive list — on charges of conspiracy, kidnapping and murder, for an alleged attempt in 1970 to help Jonathan Jackson free his brother, political prisoner George Jackson — Aretha Franklin publicly stated that she would be willing to pay Davis' bond if she were captured.

In a Jet magazine article in August

1970, Franklin stated: "Black people will be free. I've been locked up (for disturbing the peace in Detroit) and I know you got to disturb the peace when you can't get no peace. Jail is hell to be in. I'm going to see her free if there is any justice in our courts, not because I believe in communism, but because she's a Black woman and she wants freedom for Black people. I have the money; I got it from Black people — they've made me financially able to have it — and I want to use it in ways that will help our people."

Angela Davis stated in an Aug. 17 Democracy Now! interview: "When Aretha decided to hold a press conference announcing that she would pay up to \$250,000, which in today's currency would be probably about a million-and-a-half dollars, it was really a high point in the campaign. And I believe that many people who may have been reluctant to associate themselves with me because of my communist affiliations probably joined the campaign as a result of Aretha's statement."

"When I actually became eligible for bail, unfortunately Aretha was out of the country. She was in the Caribbean. And during those days, prior to the emergence of global capitalism, money did not flow so easily across national borders, and therefore, a white farmer from Central California agreed to put up his farm."

By Shelley Ettinger

The beloved, sublime, musical genius Aretha Franklin emerged from, reflected and gave voice to the oppressed Black nation, especially of Detroit, where her father, the Rev. C.L. Franklin, was an important Civil Rights leader. You can hear the freedom cry in so many of her songs, and nowhere more so than in the great anthem "Respect," which was the #1 song on the Billboard charts in the summer of 1967 — the very summer when the Black community of Detroit rose up in a historic re-

"But that was such a moving moment. It was a moment in which the campaign for my freedom achieved a really populist status among people in this country, and probably throughout the world, as well. I will be forever grateful to Aretha, because I think she played such an integral role in the success of the campaign."

Aretha Franklin also supported same-sex marriage. In 2011, she surprised a gay couple at their wedding reception by performing for an hour.

Aretha Franklin was voted by Rolling Stone magazine in 2008 as the greatest singer of all time. To put it bluntly, every singer is measured in terms of coming before or coming after Aretha ever since "Respect" was released.

In one of her most recent interviews, Aretha Franklin stated she wanted most



In the 1960s.

to be remembered for being a good mother toward her children.

But she should especially be remembered for using her once-in-a-lifetime artistry to help fight for social equality for all humanity. To take her moving "Amazing Grace" rendition one step further, she was simply amazing Aretha. Aretha Franklin, ipresente! □



2014

Since the news of Franklin's death, there has been a steady stream of people stopping by her church home, New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit, to honor her. Many have left flowers, balloons, cards and cardboard signs, which community members have organized into a makeshift altar to the great artist and activist. Detroiters all have their favorite Aretha stories to share with each other.

WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT



bellion against racism and police brutality.

I was a white kid in Oak Park, just across the 8 Mile Road line dividing Detroit and its suburbs. I was 10 years old in 1964 when I first found Aretha Franklin's music, 13 at the time of "Respect" and the Black rebellion. Those two related things — the Black uprising and Aretha's defiant, soul-stirring music — played a big part in raising my consciousness, giving rise to my anti-racist solidarity and starting me along the revolutionary road.

She is deeply loved in the LGBTQ community, where, upon news of her

death, there was an outpouring from so many who said her music and her fierce, unapologetic persona sustained them through suffering and oppression.

Aretha Franklin's music has been very important to me personally at many junctures in my life. I included scenes involving her music in my novel that was published a few years ago — because how could I not? She is woven into the story of any character who came of age and came to political awareness during her times.

I mourn and honor her with all my heart. □

An urgent appeal to raise funds for Ramona Africa's health care

Ramona Africa, MOVE's Minister of Communication, a Philadelphia-based organizer with the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, and the only living survivor of the May 13, 1985, fire bombing of a MOVE home in Philadelphia, has been hospitalized as result of health complications from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder).



Her condition is a direct result of the on-going government war waged on the MOVE Family. They have lost 24 members to date, two dying in prison under suspicious circumstances.

Once again, Ramona Africa is battling to survive. She cannot stand or walk without assistance and urgently needs therapy before she will be ready to be re-

leased from the hospital.

Yet on Aug. 16 the hospital informed her that her insurance company would no longer be responsible for paying hospital and therapy bills, and that she will be released unless she can pay herself.

For more information and to help raise funds for Ramona Africa, use the url: gofundme.com/helpsaveramonaafrica.

JOIN US! Fill the Streets and Pack the Courtroom! This court proceeding is a critical legal step towards Mumia Abu-Jamal's freedom. Black Panther Party spokesman, MOVE supporter and revolutionary journalist Mumia is innocent, framed in the murder of a police officer and sentenced to death 36 years ago. Mumia is alive today because of mass protest.

FREE MUMIA NOW!

New evidence proves former DA Ronald Castile, who prosecuted Mumia's appeals, violated due process when, as PA Supreme Court justice, he took part in deciding against Mumia's appeals. By new law Mumia should be granted the right to bring new appeal challenges to his conviction. But DA Larry Krasner told the Court Mumia's legal petition is without merit.

"...the new District Attorney's office, headed by Larry Krasner, is failing to do what justice requires. It is continuing the position of his predecessors, to the satisfaction of the Fraternal Order of Police." —Bret Grote, Esq., Abolitionist Law Center Legal Director.

Almost 40 years in prison, 30 in solitary confinement on death row, have threatened his health. Mumia has never stopped fighting against this racist, class-biased system. He speaks out for all oppressed. Winning Mumia's freedom is part of the struggle for our liberation.



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Unions mobilize to defend immigrants, defeat ICE

By Scott Williams
Philadelphia

Over 2,000 union members and community supporters rallied here on Aug. 15 for “Labor United to Free the Children.” Called as the largest show of union support for im/migrants since Trump’s racist family separation policy began, the event was primarily organized by UNITE HERE, the hospitality workers’ union, which brought nearly 1,000 members from up and down the East Coast to the action.

Major building trades unions, including the International Electrical Workers and International Painters and Allied Trades, also came to affirm working-class solidarity. Hundreds of their members marched alongside sanctuary advocates and immigrant organizations such as Juntos. Unions from public sector workers (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees), education workers (American Federation of Teachers), retail and food workers (Food and Commercial Workers), transportation workers (Teamsters) and other unions were present with large contingents.

Unionists targeted Philadelphia for this major demonstration to protest the city’s notoriously vicious Immigration and Customs Enforcement office. The city’s ICE has arrested more undocumented immigrants without criminal convictions than any other ICE office in the country. Philadelphia ICE has also refused to release 100 percent of asylum seekers once their cases have been resolved. (WHYY, Aug. 15)

An occupation to abolish ICE started in Philadelphia in early July and contin-

ues as of this reporting. The movement’s demands include the abolition of ICE and the closure of the Berks Family Detention Center. Located an hour from Philadelphia, Berks is a major migrant prison in the U.S.

A tsunami of outrage began to gather in April in response to the Trump administration’s “zero tolerance” of immigrants at the U.S. Southern border and the violent separation of children from their parents. In that crackdown, over 2,300 children 12 years old or younger were brutally incarcerated.

But after their jailing, these children represented only 20 percent of the total number of children who were caged in U.S. immigrant youth concentration camps.

In fact, as of June 21, there were approximately 9,500 migrant children locked up in U.S. prisons, in addition to 2,300 or more children jailed after zero tolerance was declared. That’s because the Office of Refugee Resettlement, a division of the Department of Health and Human Services, has been “sheltering” — that is, incarcerating — unaccompanied immigrant children since 2003. These are generally teenage migrants who reach the U.S. border without a parent. (tinyurl.com/yeh4jm6r, NBC, June 21)

At the Aug. 15 solidarity event in Philadelphia, unions and allies pledged to continue fighting for immigrants and their families. “Labor United to Free the Children” — working-class solidarity in the struggle against racism and bigotry — is desperately needed for the thousands of migrant children who remain in U.S. prisons. □



WW PHOTO: SCOTT WILLIAMS

In Philadelphia on Aug. 15 there was union solidarity, both with immigrants and with teachers in Puerto Rico, striking for justice the same day.

Rally for solidarity with striking Puerto Rican teachers

Puerto Rican teachers went on strike Aug. 15 to save the island’s public school system from U.S.-imposed austerity attacks. A rally in support of the strike was held the same day in New York City’s Union Square.

Members of A Call to Action for Puerto Rico shared and translated for rally goers the following concerns raised by the Federación de Maestros de Puerto Rico/Teachers’ Federation of Puerto Rico (FMPR):

A new school year has begun in Puerto Rico, but 1,200 teachers have not been assigned to schools. Other teachers are being assigned extremely far from their homes. For example, a teacher from the island of Vieques, off the eastern coast of the main island, was assigned to teach in Cabo Rojo, which is on the west coast of the main island. There are schools that have teachers assigned, but no students assigned. Yet 2,700 teachers have been told they have a job, but no teaching assignment. Teachers’ tenure is not being respected.

Transportation routes have not been assigned to buses, so students have no way to get to school now that their community schools have been closed. There are schools with no water, bathrooms or food. Yet schools in perfectly good condition are being closed, and students



PHOTO: FEDERACIÓN DE MAESTROS DE PUERTO RICO (FMPR)

are being sent to trailers that cost more than \$1,682,000. In some schools, two classes of students are being placed in one classroom, a violation of fire codes. Special education students are not being assigned to schools that have the appropriate facilities for their needs.

Messages of solidarity are going out to the FMPR from teachers and other workers across the U.S. — Arizona, California, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Tennessee, as well as international solidarity. (tinyurl.com/y9aaqvrq)

— Report by Workers World staff

Faculty Forward scores victory at Iowa university

By Mike Kühlenbeck
Iowa City, Iowa

The members of Faculty Forward Iowa, part of a national organizing campaign by the Service Employees International Union, scored a major victory at the University of Iowa earlier this month when administrators agreed to expand benefits for visiting faculty.

For several months, more than 200 FFI members have been organizing on behalf of non-tenure track (NTT) faculty at the university. As noted in the FFI mission statement, “We believe that through organizing we can build power to stand up for what we are worth, demand inclusion in the academic community, and claim a voice for quality education.” (seiufacultyforward.org)

The University of Iowa Non-Tenure Track Organizing Committee has drawn up a list of 12 demands they are urging administrators to implement. Among these demands is plank #8 on the list — the demand for health insurance coverage.

As affirmed in this plank: “The University of Iowa should provide all non-tenure track faculty with access to health insurance on par with what is offered to their

tenure track colleagues, including access to family plans. We believe health insurance should be a right of all non-tenure track faculty, not a privilege.” Thanks to the ongoing efforts of FFI, this plank has become a reality.

This summer, dozens of NTT faculty have met with administrators to discuss their demands. As a result of these meetings, administrators have granted visiting faculty full benefits. As of this semester, faculty with a one-year academic contract and 50 percent appointment (as legally required) will be entitled to the same benefits as those for tenured and tenure-track faculty and lecturers.

As noted in a FFI public statement: “That means that our visiting faculty colleagues will now have access to health insurance, retirement benefits, and sick leave, as well as subsidized dependent coverage, dental, and life insurance. For some of us this means we’ll finally be able to insure our children, or stop having to rely on Medicaid, or that we can start to feel more secure knowing that we’re building up something to retire on.”

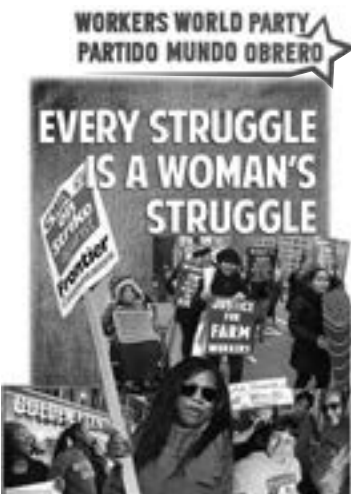
This was a major win for NTT faculty at the university. This is welcome news in the midst of statewide attacks on work-

ers and budget cuts levelled across the Hawkeye State.

UI Visiting Assistant Professor of History Faye Bartram said, “This is a fundamentally important policy change that will make a positive difference in the lives of visiting faculty like me.” (seiu-facultyforward.org, Aug. 9)

But this win is only the beginning, for there is still much more to be gained for UI workers.

According to FFI: “We’ll continue to meet with the administration, organize, and work to win improvements on all of the other issues that are im-



From the pages of Workers World newspaper

Argentina

Despite law's defeat, women fight on for abortion rights

By Kathy Durkin

Women in Argentina may have lost a vote for the right to abortion on Aug. 9, but they are undaunted. They are not intimidated or afraid. They are angry. They are determined. They are optimistic. With renewed energy, they say they will keep on organizing until they win this fundamental right.

The current struggle is for legalization of elective abortions up to the 14th week of pregnancy; 62 percent of the population supports reform. The lower house of the Argentinian Congress had passed such a law on June 14, in response to the mass movement. However, the more conservative Senate narrowly defeated legalization on Aug. 9 with a 38-31 vote; two senators abstained. The majority of “no” votes were cast by men over the age of 50.

The vote left in place an archaic law enacted in 1921, penalizing women who have abortions and doctors who perform them with up to four-year prison sentences. Legal abortions are only allowed where a pregnancy results from rape or if a woman's life is in danger — but these are nearly impossible to obtain, especially by poor, rural and Indigenous women.

Hundreds of thousands of women, especially youth, have been out in the streets demanding legal abortion for many months. There is optimism that women will ultimately be victorious because the women's movement has mushroomed in size and strength, winning activists all over Argentina.

For 16 hours, throughout the Senate debate and vote, tens of thousands of women gathered in bitter cold outside Congress Palace in Buenos Aires.

Protesting the vote's result, women demonstrated there and around the country. Despite their disappointment, women know they were close to winning, that they have momentum on their side and that change is coming.

Even former President Cristina Fernandez, now a senator, who had opposed abortion, was persuaded. She said, “The ones who made me change my mind were the thousands and thousands of young girls who have taken to the streets.” (New York Times, Aug. 9) Anti-abortion President Mauricio Macri said he would sign a reform bill. His health minister, Adolfo Rubinstein, supports reform, citing the disastrous results of “clandestine” (illegal) abortions.

Journalist Soledad Vallejos enthusiastically told the Guardian newspaper Aug. 9, “Things will never be the same because society has been changed by these five months debating this law.” Vallejos belongs to the Ni Una Menos (Not One Less) collective, a leading force in this struggle. Its name has become a slogan. Originally, the name meant not another woman's life lost to gender violence; now

it also demands not another death caused by an unsafe abortion.

Catholic Church: pillar of misogyny

The patriarchal Catholic Church forcefully intervened to block abortion law reform. Pope Francis, whose home country is Argentina, and the bishops instructed right-wing legislators to pressure senators to vote against the bill. Reportedly, Catholic organizations insulted and issued death threats to senators.

Many “no” voters cited religious beliefs. Some gave unscientific or bigoted reasons to oppose abortion. Argentinian writer and pro-choice activist Claudia Pineiro wrote in the Guardian that “to reject the bill ... [senators proclaimed] that they were saving embryos ... and even [outrageously] suggesting that intrafamily rape does not imply violence.” (Aug. 10)

Nora Cortinas, a founder of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, said she would quit the Catholic Church over the Senate vote, and criticized Church officials for intervening in other people's lives and being hypocritical. This women's organization protests the murders of 30,000 leftists and activists killed during the 1976-83 brutal military dictatorship in Argentina.

The mothers and grandmothers also seek to locate adult children who were stolen as babies from women political prisoners and to reunite them with their rightful families. Cortinas emphasized the Church's complicity in these atrocities, saying priests blessed the torturers, while nuns gave the kidnapped babies to military and other right-wing families.

Cortinas explained her position on the abortion struggle: “In a health law like this, religion has nothing to do with it ... and then this Church says we need to save both lives. ... [But] babies, born every day in our country, are forgotten by the Church, living in poverty.” (Telesur, Aug. 11)

Prior to and during the voting, the Catholic Church's reactionary role was unmasked for all to see. After the bill's defeat, thousands of people queued up outside the Congress to renounce the Church at tables staffed by the Argentine Coalition for a Secular State.

Film director Lucrecia Martel explained that today's movement demands women's autonomy, but “for some, their last bastion of power is their power over women, and those people don't want to concede that territory.” (Guardian, Aug. 8)

Yet bold young women are challenging patriarchy and misogyny every day and everywhere.

Two needless deaths since the ‘no’ vote

It is estimated that 450,000 clandestine abortions are performed annually in Argentina, a country of 44 million people — one every 90 seconds. Some 70,000 women are hospitalized yearly because of botched procedures, a leading cause of



PHOTO: LEFT VOICE

Tens of thousands of mostly young women have been in the streets of Argentina for the legalization of abortion.

maternal deaths. The lack of legal abortion is a public health crisis.

The reality is women have abortions. The key issue is whether women can have medically safe procedures or must continue to undergo risky, often dangerous, abortions, sometimes with life-threatening results. Additionally, pregnant women with cancer are routinely denied chemotherapy and other treatment because Catholic doctrine prevails in medical matters. It prioritizes the status of the fetus over a woman's right to essential health care; some women die as a result.

Tragically, two young women have died since the “no” vote, both in hospitals in Buenos Aires province on Aug. 12. Elizabeth, a 24-year-old woman, mother of a toddler, died from septic shock after using parsley stems to try to end a pregnancy. Another young woman died the same day, also from a self-administered abortion.

“Illegality forces the poorest women to resort to use the most desperate practices,” said a doctor in Patina/12, an Argentinian newspaper. (peoplesdispatch.org, Aug. 17)

After those deaths, the National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion and the Network of Health Professionals for the Right to Decide issued a statement blaming all abortion-related deaths on Argentina's “National Executive Power” and the senators who voted against legalization. The organizations asked: “How many more dead pregnant women are needed to understand that abortion should be legal, safe and free? Clandestinity kills!” Ni Una Menos called these deaths “femicide” by the state and said, “[The senators] don't care about the lives of the women.” (Telesur, Aug. 14)

Telesur reported Aug. 9 that the law can be presented again to Congress in March 2019, but by then an estimated 87 more women will have died and 48,000 will have been hospitalized for abortion complications.

Women on the move!

Activists in the Argentinian women's movement hail their forebears, the heroic women organizers against the military dictatorship, as well as the leaders of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo. A rejuvenated

movement protested gender violence in 2015 and then added demands for reproductive rights. Now women workers are calling for equal pay for equal work and an end to workplace gender discrimination.

President Macri's austerity program has propelled the working class into action. His policies would severely impact women; many are among the lowest-paid workers and/or have precarious jobs. Teachers, mostly women, marched for higher pay March 6.

On International Women's Day, March 8, hundreds of thousands of women marched in Buenos Aires for equality, abortion rights and an end to gender violence. They also called for a general strike, linking their struggles with the class struggle. Pro-choice women workers marched with unionists in the militant national strike June 25 against government-imposed cutbacks and layoffs.

The National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion, an umbrella organization comprised of 300 groups, has fought for 13 years. Abortion is now being openly discussed throughout the country, and was debated in Congress for the first time.

The victorious overturning of an abortion ban in May in Ireland buoyed the Argentinian women's movement. In turn, the massive pro-choice mobilizations in Argentina have electrified the women's movement across Latin America where 97 percent of women live in countries where abortion is illegal.

On the night of Argentina's vote, solidarity actions took place in over 10 countries throughout the continent. Social media were abuzz with supportive messages from women worldwide. International solidarity was also expressed at mobilizations in Australia, Belgium, England, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain and elsewhere.

Argentinian women are in militant motion and will not go back. Young women are determined to fight for their rights. After the Senate vote, pro-choice activists tweeted that this campaign is about more than a law: “It is the struggle for full sovereignty over our bodies.” (Telesur, Aug. 9) □

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BLACK AUGUST: 8.21

Victory for prisoners in Texas

Continued from page 1

After this, the harassment of the Muslim prisoners began, with denial of their right to wear kufis (religious Islamic headwear), interference with their services and singling them out for “beard infractions.”

Muslims were given false charges and assigned to work in the fields. A federal court had already ruled in 2014 that Texas prisons were in violation of the rights of Muslim prisoners. Yet when grievances were filed by Muslim prisoners during this year of struggle, all appeals were denied.

In December 2017, Williams and three other Muslims were thrown into solitary confinement, though they were never given a disciplinary case. Williams was put in a cell with no light, no heat, no water and no bedding on a solid steel bunk. He spent over a week shivering on the bunk, with no clothes besides boxer shorts, barely able to write letters in the dark to his family, friends and lawyer. The prisoners filed grievances and were then finally released.

One week later, Warden McMullen came into the craft shop where Williams was working. (Williams is the only Black prisoner to be given craft privileges.) The warden threatened him, telling him to quit filing grievances and to quit mentioning his name on phone calls. Williams replied that he had the right to do both.

Williams was thrown into solitary again and charged the next day with having contraband in his tool box. Williams had receipts for the “contraband” syringes he’d used for years in the craft shop for solder, paint, graphite and oil. He had purchased hundreds of these from approved vendors, with receipts for all.

Nevertheless, he was convicted at a disciplinary hearing despite having these receipts. He lost rank, visitation, phone, recreation, commissary and was kicked out of his graduate school classes and the craft shop.

These false disciplinary charges were broken when prisoners got hold of an email written by Capt. Reginald Gilbert. In it, Gilbert ordered all guards to write

up mandatory two disciplinary cases per day, even specifying which two rules were to be marked as violated.

When this reporter received a copy of that email, it was given to Texas Sen. John Whitmire, who chairs the powerful Texas Senate’s Criminal Justice Committee. Then, in a May 10 Houston Chronicle article, reporter Keri Blakinger exposed the scam of a quota system that required guards to write up prisoners for nonexistent infractions. Whitmire was quoted as saying: “Every time I think I have seen everything, now I see this! We don’t condone a quota for speeding tickets, why would we have quotas for prison disciplinary cases?” (tinyurl.com/yb648gwu)

Prison spokespeople repeated day-after-day that an anonymous prisoner had revealed the email from Capt. Gilbert and that the practice was an isolated incident.

But the release of the email was not anonymous. Williams and Crump, both African Americans, had circulated the email throughout the prison and throughout the “free world,” along with their parents, activists and friends.

Prisoner Giese, who is white and a Muslim, was considered by racist prison guards to be a “traitor to his race,” not only for exercising his religious beliefs, but also for using the grievance system in protest. He was framed up for possessing two screwdrivers, which had been planted in his cell, resulting in Giese receiving the first disciplinary charge he has had in his 20-plus years in prison.

Giese’s mother, Sherry Templin, had written to every Texas prison official, including regional directors and their ombudsman, as well as state legislators and the media, for months and months. Finally, the national news media picked up her activist news campaign. With coverage by the Associated Press and other beyond-the-region media, this incident of framing prisoners was ended.

Call for struggle against incarceration, deportations

While four prison employees are now facing charges, the struggle is not over.

Warden McMullen was not fired, but simply sent to a smaller prison as a warden, and Capt. Gilbert was simply demoted.

Nanon Williams wrote to Workers World: “Even though cases have been expunged from inmates’ records, it won’t change the fact that some prisoners were denied parole during the months that bogus cases were on their records, some were placed in solitary for weeks and months like I was, and some had phone, visitation, education, commissary, recreation and other hard-earned privileges taken away. No one is considering the trauma that may have had some prisoners lose bonds with family, get divorces, suffer from depression that could have led to suicide.

“During this time, Warden McMullen and others attempted to take credit for cleaning up a corrupt administration, when they were part of it. Other things are being ignored, like the murder of Kenneth Johnson that occurred under McMullen’s watch. No one is addressing other bogus cases written or ordered, not only by McMullen and Major Jackson and the lieutenants who enforced these [recent] case quotas. The real trauma and the impact of all these intentional acts will keep on coming.

“Fortunately, under the watchful eye of Workers World and activists on the frontlines, this is now being exposed. Mass incarceration as well as the brutality of separating families, the deportations and the crimes at detention centers, where people profit from the suffering of migrants and refugees, will be exposed as well.”

Nanon Williams was arrested and sentenced to death when he was 17. He was taken off death row in 2005 after the Supreme Court ruled that juveniles could not be sentenced to death. Houston Police Crime Lab “experts” testified that Williams’ gun was used to kill a young man. When Williams was finally able to hire a ballistic expert to prove it was not his gun, the cop who gave false testimony said he “must have made a mistake.” Williams is still in jail after 27 years.

If it had not been for the courage and guts of prisoners Williams, Crump and



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Nanon Williams, outside the Harris County, Texas, jail in 1998.

Giese, these recent prison-system abuses in Texas would never have been exposed, nor the prison guards fired, indicted and charged with crimes.

Activists have been organizing this year to commemorate and support Black August — the anniversary of previous prison resistance and uprisings from California to New York, and the current three-week prisoner-initiated National Prison Strike from Aug. 21 to Sept. 9.

The prison support movement emphasizes the crucial need for support for every prisoner in the U.S., every month and every year. Because the real crime is the entire U.S. “justice system” that unjustly incarcerates the poor and the nationally oppressed while the rich literally get away with murder.

Gloria Rubac was an organizer of the Prisoner Solidarity Committee in Texas during the 1970s, communicating with prisoners throughout the state. At the historic Ruiz v. Estelle class-action case in 1978 in Houston, the PSC brought people to protest outside and pack the federal courtroom inside. Through that civil rights challenge, the Texas prison system was eventually declared unconstitutional. Since 1995, Rubac has been a leader of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement and is today a leader of Houston FIRE (Fight for Im/migrants and Refugees Everywhere).

Ohio prison officials punish organizers

By Martha Grevatt

Imam Siddique Abdullah Hasan has been on death row in Ohio since 1993, when he was wrongly convicted of killing a prison guard during the Lucasville Uprising, which took place in April of that year. He is one of five defendants who were at the Lucasville, Ohio, prison during the uprising who could be executed for murders they did not commit.

Several dozen other inmates, including Greg Curry, were given long sentences. Most of the Lucasville defendants are now housed at the Ohio State Penitentiary supermax facility in Youngstown.

Hasan, Curry and others are regularly subjected to intense harassment because of their convictions stemming from the uprising. Hasan has spoken via phone to meetings held this year to mark the 25th anniversary of the rebellion. In April on



Imam Siddique Abdullah Hasan

the anniversary of the uprising surrender, Hasan, Curry, Keith Lamar, Jason Robb and Nameer Mateen had their phone and email access taken away.

Lamar, Robb and Mateen are members of the five who are on death row in connection with Lucasville. The fifth person on death row, George Skatzes, is in a different state prison. It took a mass phone campaign to get their

normal rights as prisoners restored.

On July 27, Hasan was charged with five infractions of prison rules and put in solitary confinement — “the hole.” All the charges were in connection with the national prison work stoppage set to begin Aug. 21. The following day, July 28, Hasan began a hunger strike, which he ended 12

days later due to medical complications.

Normally, alleged infractions at OSP are addressed before the Rules Infraction Board, but Hasan was dragged before the Serious Misconduct Panel for a hearing Aug. 14. He was not allowed to view all the evidence against him. Two prison officials constituted the panel.

Although the charges were based on conversations Hasan had with supporters over the phone, his request to have those supporters called as witnesses was denied.

This writer, who helped organize a solidarity meeting in Detroit which featured a phone-in presentation by Hasan, was among those willing to testify over the phone. Yet “unavailability” was cited, along with “relevancy” and “security concerns,” as reasons to block our testimony.

The charging official was Brian Wittrup, chief of the Bureau of Classification, who claimed that, by supporting a prison work stoppage, Hasan was encouraging prisoners to riot. At one point, he admitted that Hasan never promoted rioting, but opined that things could get

out of control, hence Hasan was guilty.

So Imam Hasan was found guilty of all charges and put in “Extended Restricted Housing” Level 3. His phone and email access was denied for one year, along with kiosk (commissary) privileges. This restriction can be reviewed every 90 days.

According to Greg Curry, who was finally released from the hole, inmates stopped working to protest the treatment of Hasan and the crackdown on his entire cell block after Curry allowed information on Hasan’s unjust treatment to reach the outside. “Of course the cops went to their special inmates to get them to cross the picket line but that was frowned upon,” said Curry. (lucasvilleamnesty.org) Authorities attempted to plant a knife on Curry, but the RIB had to drop the charge due to lack of evidence.

Hasan’s supporters are urged to send him letters of support so authorities will feel the pressure of widespread solidarity. Send mail to Siddique Abdullah Hasan, R130-559, Ohio State Penitentiary, Youngstown, OH 44505 □

9.9 PRISONERS STRIKE!

AUGUST 1968

Black GIs at Fort Hood jailed for protesting ‘riot-control’ duty

By John Catalinotto

Anger radiated through the barracks in 1968 as orders reached the Black troops of the 1st Armored Division that they would be sent to Chicago on riot-control duty at the Democratic National Convention.

GIs spread a message throughout Fort Hood, Texas, on Aug. 23: They would meet on the grassy area at the main intersection of the fort to start an all-night discussion.

More than 100 African-American GIs showed up to plan what to do. It was more than a rap session. It was a protest. To the generals and colonels whose orders must be obeyed, it was mutiny.

Some of the GIs had won medals for bravery. Some had been wounded. After a year of heavy combat in Vietnam, the fed-up Black troops were outraged at being ordered to occupy African-American neighborhoods in Chicago.

The near-uprising at Fort Hood followed rebellions at two military prisons in Vietnam that August 50 years ago. It was another sign that the Pentagon faced a serious problem that rank-and-file servicemen and servicewomen were refusing to cooperate with the war against Vietnam or play a repressive role against Black rebellions within the United States.

The following are excerpts from an article and a letter in the Sept. 18, 1968, issue of *The Bond*, the monthly newspaper of the American Servicemen's Union, reporting on these events. The ASU had been founded nine months earlier to organize GIs to fight imperialist war and racism from within the U.S. military.

Black GIs at Fort Hood Refuse ‘Riot Control’

Fort Hood, Texas — Mass resistance by Black GIs here has shaken the Army. On the night of August 23 nearly a hundred Black GIs massed at a main intersection on the post in protest against being used as a part of so-called “riot control” — actually repression of their own people. (Fort Hood troops were being ordered to Chicago.) They refused to leave the intersection in spite of the pleas of their commanding general.

At dawn, 43 were arrested. The men began gathering at 9 p.m. on Friday, August 23, at 65th and Central to protest the use of federal troops in Chicago and to protest against racism. When news of the mass protest reached the startled ears of General Boles of the first Armored Division, he came out personally at about midnight to plead — not to order but to plead — with the men to disperse. They refused.

Then, fearing the massive support that these protesters had from the rank and file throughout the post, the nervous general said that they could stay there all night without repercussions. He even raised his right hand and swore to this concession with eight other brass hats (eight colonels) as witnesses, but he refused to sign a paper to that effect as suggested by some of the men. The men stayed.

At 5:45 a.m., Lt. Col. Kulo, the post provost marshal, announced: “I want you all to go back to the barracks.” They did not leave.

At 5:58 a.m., Kulo threatened: “I’m asking you to leave now. Otherwise MPs will take you in.”

The bugle sounded. Sixty MPs marched up and took 43 men away for “failure to report” (for reveille) — Article 86. In the stockade while the men were waiting to contact lawyers, they were asked if they wanted chow. Since they wanted to hold all moves until they had arranged to see lawyers, they didn’t go.

MPs were then marched in and the captain told [the Black soldiers] to get up and go to the mess hall. Nobody moved. The demand was for lawyers first. The MPs were then unleashed: punching, hitting the seated men with their nightsticks. Several men were injured and were refused medical help.

Then the Army tried the soft sell: providing cigarettes, food and beds. But the demand was still, no move until legal aid was allowed. A GI who had received a decoration for heroism in Vietnam was suffering from a kidney problem caused by wounds. He was denied medical care. Another member of the group was also denied medical attention at this time.

Eight of the men have been charged



WW PHOTO: ELLEN CATALINOTTO

From left, PFC Ernest Bess, attorney Michael Kennedy, PFC Guy Smith, SP4 Albert Henry, PVT Ernest Frederick, SGT Robert Rucker, and SP4 Tollie Royal. The six GIs faced a general court-martial for the Aug. 23, 1968, gathering. Fort Hood, Texas.

with violation of Article 90 (disobeying a legal order), which calls for a general court-martial [for serious charges with sentences greater than six months]. Thirty-four are facing a special court-martial. One was acquitted.

Legal help was arranged by the American Servicemen's Union. Lawyers for the general courts-martial are being provided by the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee and the Workers Defense League. The 34 special courts-martial defendants are being represented by attorneys from the NAACP Legal Fund.

Statement of a Black GI at Fort Hood

Ironically, 43 men are to stand trial here at Fort Hood, Texas, for refusing riot duty in Chicago and 43 men will probably be tried and convicted. Ironical because it is Fort Hood that should be on trial and not 43 disgruntled Black soldiers.

First, I would like to say that the policy of “Equal Rights and Opportunity” as outlined by the Army Regulations has broken down here at Fort Hood as usual due to human elements. These men as well as I are very much aware of the racial inequity that has existed here and this should be considered a part of what they are protesting.

Take for example “Riot Control Training,” as important as it is, is a big joke because it is itself an addition to the problem. For weeks in class I listened to white first and second lieutenants assail the Negro rioters [in 100 cities following the assass-

sination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.] as filthy mouthed punks and hoodlums who under the leadership of a self-styled Messiah such as a Rap Brown or Leroi Jones had brought this country close to anarchy.

No one seemed to be aware of any real facts or vaguely familiar with the findings by the “President’s Commission on Racial Disorder”? No one made any attempt to explore the possible causal relation between rioting and the understandable hatred that has mounted as a result of social and economic deprivation.

I as well as others was tired of hearing nasty words to describe my brothers, but no nasty words used to describe their situation. I agree my people are raising plenty of hell about being treated so badly, but don’t expect me to go to Chicago with a bunch of white guys who after some of our classes are understandably under the impression that “we must stop the barbarians.” ...

The Houston Chronicle, Tuesday, Sept. 3, made reference to our usage of the clinched fist as a symbol of sympathy for these soldiers who are to be tried. Don’t get me wrong, we are with them all the way but our fists have been up for months. ...

As for going to Chicago — simply out of the question.

By a Black Soldier Co. B, 1st Bn. 41st Inf. 2nd Armored Div. Fort Hood, Texas.

Catalinotto is author of “Turn the Guns Around: Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions,” World View Forum, New York, 2017.

South Carolina prisoners demand ‘End prison slavery’

By Jared Ware
Bishopville, S.C.

Jared Ware: I want to give you an opportunity to talk about change. What changes would you like to see in the prison system? I know some of you are abolitionists, but what can be done for immediate needs in terms of reforms?

D: I’m always thinking about it as a dismantling process. I’ve been trying to push that for a while. We call it a dismantling process. And that gives the opportunity for other people to get in with their reform ideas, because I don’t think we can go from one angle all the way to the other angle, like from zero to a hundred. It’s just not going to happen like that. It is

not going to play out like that.

Nonetheless, some of the things that I feel can actually improve: First and foremost, sentencing. Sentencing reform in the state of South Carolina. It’s not just sentencing reform in the state of South Carolina, it’s actually sentencing reform across the nation. They need to get rid of that Truth-In-Sentencing deal, period.

We need an end of dehumanizing conditions, and that means food improvement. We need open yards again, not just enclosed rec yards; we need these open rec yards again, where prisoners can move. We need prisoners to start being treated like humans. We need more

This is an excerpt from an interview conducted after an April 15 rebellion at Lee Correctional Institution, a South Carolina maximum security prison. Jared Ware spoke with individuals inside Lee, one of whom identified as a member of Jailhouse



Prisoners at Lee Correctional make uniforms for all the inmates in the South Carolina state prison system.

rights to our visits. We need education programs. I’m a big one on education programs, in particular Pell Grants. ... They need to be brought back to the prison systems again.

Not only that, but what the state of South Carolina did as the prison popu-

Lawyers Speak, a group of imprisoned human rights advocates who called for the National Prison Strike, Aug. 21 to Sept. 9.

lation fell — instead of closing down the maximum security prisons, they closed down the work releases. We need work releases opened back up and expanded.

Then we need one last thing: We need pay. We need prisoners to be able to be paid for their labor. If you’re doing general labor, you need to be able to be paid for that labor. ... [That] comes [to] ending prison slavery.

We need to end prison slavery, which I think is a trigger toward abolitionist work. But nonetheless, we need to end prison slavery to bring back a lot of these prisoners getting paid wages. Those are immediate things that can be improved on. □

Revolt of the spymasters

By Fred Goldstein

Bulletin, Aug. 20: Some 100 additional former government officials, including ambassadors, U.S. attorneys and other officials, have asked to have their names added to the protest letter over Trump's suspension of the security clearance of former CIA Director John Brennan.

Donald Trump has provoked a revolt within the department of dirty tricks. The Central Intelligence Agency, which overlaps with the Pentagon officer corps, has issued a protest signed by over 70 former CIA officials denouncing the removal of the security status of former CIA chief John Brennan.

Why would such a rogues' gallery of assassins, torturers and spies suddenly unite on an unprecedented scale and become partisans of the "free speech" of John Brennan? Brennan denounced Trump as dangerous and unfit, and he described Trump as "drunk on power" after the president revoked his security clearance.

The CIA is not an agency unto itself. It is deeply connected to the ruling class and its officialdom. Trump is acting more and more like an authoritarian ruler and making sections of the political and military establishment nervous.

He is using the powers of the presidency to endanger imperialist interests and capitalist commercial interests without deliberation or consultation with the most powerful elements in capitalist society.

The letter defending the "free speech" of former CIA director John Brennan can be seen as a message to Trump concerning his authoritarianism and his flouting of basic capitalist procedures of behavior established by custom and by law.

This letter is also a defense of the agency itself. These 70 plus cutthroats consider themselves defenders of U.S. capitalism around the world. It is perhaps hard work setting up eavesdropping, torture sites, assassinations, kidnapping, etc. In fact, it can involve risks. (Although the higher-ups who order the dirty tricks do not expose themselves to personal risks at all.) These CIA criminals want to be treated with respect by the chief executive of U.S. imperialism, but Trump has demeaned them and the FBI repeatedly.

The movement began with retired Navy Adm. William H. McRaven. He had been commander of the Joint Special Operations Command and oversaw the 2011 raid by Navy SEALs that "took out" Osama bin Laden and had his body dumped into the sea. McRaven is now a chancellor of the University of Texas system.

In an op-ed for the Washington Post, McRaven denounced Trump for "McCarthyite tactics" and, as an act of solidarity with Brennan, asked that his own security clearance be taken away, too.

To show how the CIA was primed for this attack, one of the signers told a Slate reporter on Aug. 17: "[T]he statement was circulated to all living ex-directors and deputy directors at noon on Thursday, with a request to reply by 6 that night." All but four responded.

Who is Brennan?

According to Glenn Greenwald, writing in The Guardian on Jan. 7, 2013, Pres-



Aerial view of CIA headquarters, Langley, Va.

ident Barack Obama had to withdraw Brennan's nomination for CIA director because of his record under the George W. Bush presidency of defending torture, as well as "rendition" (sending prisoners to third countries to be tortured at secret sites), electronic surveillance of civilians, targeted drone strikes in which the "targets" were unknown, etc.

This quarrel amounts to one section of the state defending its right to speak against the president. The CIA, which has overthrown governments, destroyed movements and assassinated leaders is claiming First Amendment "free speech" rights for Brennan.

Trump is screwing up the job of protecting U.S. imperialism

But more important, as defenders of U.S. capitalism, they feel that Trump is screwing up the job. In this, they speak for a large section of the military, the diplomatic corps and the capitalist brain trust.

They fear that Trump is moving in an authoritarian direction — against them!

When Trump abuses the masses of people with his racism, misogyny, anti-immigrant fanaticism and cruelty, there is no mention of the freedom to live, let alone to speak of the victims of racist police murder. They said not a word about the kidnapping of women and children at the border and the wholesale violation of domestic and international asylum laws. Nor did these butchers mention a thing about the civilians killed by U.S.-made drones in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya and U.S. bombs in Yemen.

They said nothing about the rights of Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier to be protected from unjust imprisonment, or the right of the incarcerated masses to be free of sadistic prison guard persecution.

Trump's grand military parade canceled

It is no accident that the same week this CIA protest letter was circulated, Trump's Washington, D.C., grand military parade was cancelled. It had been an authoritarian move, characteristic of dictators. Trump claimed he wanted a parade like the one he saw in Paris during his visit to French President Emmanuel Macron last year.

He forgot that the parade he saw was not for Macron but for Bastille Day, a national holiday which the French ruling

class uses annually to pump up patriotic war sentiments.

The fact that Trump wanted the Pentagon to back a parade aimed at glorifying himself was not greeted kindly among the brass, especially since he is trying to discipline them. Even though Trump has given them hundreds of billions of dollars in weapons and soldiers, they were not buying his extravagant appetite for pomp and ceremony dedicated to celebrating — Trump!

Secretary of Defense James Mattis denied that the price tag for the parade would be \$92 million, but all other government and department estimates were around that figure. Trump tried to place the blame for the cancellation on the majority African-American city. They rebutted his argument, showing that the D.C. part of the cost was miniscule.

So Trump had to suffer a public humiliation at the hands of the brass. They don't want to fan the flames of Trump's authoritarianism at a time when he is wrecking their alliances in NATO and blocking them in their drive against Russia.

Clearly, the capitalist state is deeply divided with differences over what the crisis of imperialism is and how to deal with it.

Trump and Turkish crisis

Looking at the crisis from Trump's point of view, Turkey under President Recep Erdogan is turning into an enemy that has to be subdued. Turkey is holding a U.S. operative under house arrest. He is a pastor under suspicion of participating in the anti-Erdogan coup in 2016 and of being linked to Fethullah Gulen, a Turkish cleric living in the Pocono mountains of Pennsylvania whom Erdogan accuses of engineering the coup.

Regardless of the merits of the case, Trump reduces the issue to one of bringing a small, defiant government in Ankara to its knees, in order to let the world know how allegedly all-powerful Washington is.

Looking at the same crisis from the Pentagon's point of view, Trump has made an enemy of an important NATO ally that is desperately needed in the struggle for the military to regain some of its foothold in the Middle East. To complete the argument, the strategic Incirlik

NATO air base is in Turkey. Trump has jeopardized all this in order to put Turkey "in its place."

Looking at it from the vantage point of Wall Street, Trump has doubled the tariffs on Turkish steel and aluminum, escalating a tariff war when Turkey is in the middle of an economic crisis that is leading to a debt crisis. The Turkish ruling class is in debt to many European countries, especially Spain and Greece. As the value of the Turkish lira falls, its debt to Europe becomes more burdensome. Furthermore, by squeezing Turkey, Trump runs the risk of triggering defaults, both in Turkey and in continental Europe.

Indeed, all sectors of the ruling class are watching Trump's attack on Turkey with great trepidation.

Trump and Saudi-Qatari conflict

Or look at the crisis in the Gulf states, where Saudi Arabia is in a virtual war with Qatar. Saudi Arabia has blockaded Qatar because it is sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood, a political rival to the Saudis in the Middle East.

In this conflict, in spite of mediation efforts by Secretary of Defense Mattis, Trump has come down heavily on the side of the Saudis, especially after they wined and dined him, giving him the royal treatment on his early visit there.

Former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, former CEO of ExxonMobil, intervened last year to stop the Saudis and the United Arab Emirates from carrying out a joint invasion of Qatar. This may have been what led to his firing by Trump. (Al Jazeera, Aug. 1)

Qatar is the site of a strategic U.S. air base, Al Udeid, which is home to the Air Force Central Command and some 10,000 American troops.

Revolt of the spies

On the international scale, the CIA and the Pentagon have significant overlap. A number of Pentagon generals and admirals have been appointed directors of the CIA. In any case, both agencies share the task of securing the U.S. imperialist empire, using different means.

While they are always at war with one another over turf, resources, etc., they are both deeply concerned with how Trump's policies affect them. Trump blames members of the CIA and the FBI for the Mueller investigation. In fact, Trump removed former CIA Director Brennan's security clearance because he was part of the "Russia witch hunt."

Trump's military policy, which seeks to weaken if not to destroy NATO, strikes at the heart of U.S. military strength in Europe, up to and including on the borders of Russia.

Trump is attacking the CIA and FBI as part of a "Russia witch hunt" while also attempting to weaken the U.S. strategic military alliance with NATO. These two policy conflicts alone could bring about a bloc from above to interfere with Trump's poorly thought-out strategic view of how to ensure U.S. imperialist world domination. □



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What is socialism?

Denmark, imperialism and social democracy

By Deirdre Griswold

For several years now, large polling companies have been asking younger people in the United States whether they preferred socialism or capitalism. Of those who expressed an opinion, the majority have replied “socialism.”

This is a welcome sea change from attitudes in the U.S. during the very reactionary period that began with McCarthyism and the Cold War and has continued for decades.

But the word “socialism” can mean different things to different people. In this series, we intend to give some historical perspective to the word “socialism” — where it comes from and how its meaning has evolved with the works of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, V.I. Lenin and other theoretical (and practical!) leaders of the movement for profound, revolutionary social change.

And we’ll look at how “socialism” is often used today in a very different way, a way that promises change without revolution, by adding the word “democratic” to mean progressive reforms legislated under capitalism.

It was long required of bourgeois economists in this country — especially when there existed a bloc of countries in Eastern Europe, led by the Soviet Union, where the means of production belonged to the state, not individual capitalists — that they pooh-pooh the slightest hint of socialism and praise capitalism as the be-all and end-all of social development.

But that doesn’t work now, in the era of Trump rollbacks of all progressive social programs; the stoking of racism, misogyny, bigotry and xenophobia; and the incredible and growing wealth divide between billionaires and an increasingly pauperized working class.

So some of the writers in the big capitalist media are defending — not socialism, even “democratic socialism” is a bit too much for them — but “social democracy.” A case in point is an Aug. 16 column in the New York Times by Paul Krugman,

who often writes for that paper on labor issues and calls himself a “progressive.”

Socialism versus ‘social democracy’

Entitled “Something Not Rotten in Denmark,” Krugman praises that country, saying that in recent decades it has been “veering (modestly) to the left where we’ve veered right. And it has done just fine.” He contrasts the large amount of government spending in Denmark to all the fear mongering by U.S. politicians against the “redistribution of wealth” through social programs. He points to things like longer vacations, a national health system, a much larger proportion of workers in unions, lower unemployment and a longer life expectancy to show that life is better for Danish workers than for U.S. workers.

“But is Denmark socialist?” he asks. And he answers himself: “It’s true that Denmark doesn’t at all fit the classic definition of socialism, which involves government ownership of the means of production. It is, instead, social-democratic: a market economy where the downsides of capitalism are mitigated by government action, including a very strong social safety net.”

All very true. Denmark is not socialist. But what Krugman leaves out is the fierce class struggle on a global scale that has led the rulers of this small imperialist country to accede to some of the workers’ demands in order to maintain their privileged class position. They have given a little in order to stay in power and continue to exploit the labor of the workers, both at home and around the world.

Gains of workers’ struggles being undermined

He also leaves out the current workers’ struggles in Denmark to hold on to what they’ve won as they face an onslaught of capitalist reaction that is deepening throughout Europe. Far-right political forces there, just as in the U.S., are seizing on immigration to drive a wedge between native-born and immigrant workers.

The “gig economy” exists in Denmark, too — temporary employment with little security and fewer rights. While large manufacturing and public sector workers are mostly organized, industries like food service and retail establishments are superexploiting im/migrant workers from the “Global South” who have fled the horrible conditions in their home countries created by imperialist wars and neocolonialism.

Many of these immigrants are highly educated. To be eligible to work in Denmark under a points-based Green Card system, made even more difficult over the last two years, applicants likely to be accepted should have a master’s degree or higher and be able to speak Danish, a language used by less than 6 million people worldwide. Despite these stringent requirements to work in Denmark, many highly educated immigrants who do finally get a Green Card end up washing dishes or cleaning bathrooms with few legal protections — like so many immigrants in the U.S.

Most of the left in Denmark — both Danes and migrant workers — are resisting this erosion of their hard-won rights. They have no doubts about Denmark being capitalist, despite its “social-democratic” political establishment. And they understand that dividing the workers on ethnic, religious or citizenship lines is a dangerous tactic of the bosses meant to undermine the gains the workers have won in the class struggle.

Denmark and NATO

Denmark was a founding member of NATO, which was created in 1949 by global imperialism to militarily encircle and push back the USSR and the workers’ states of Eastern Europe and keep Western European countries in the hands of the capitalists. While the “Eastern bloc” countries emerged from World War II having suffered horrible destruction at the hands of the Nazi imperialists, they still offered many things workers didn’t have at that time in more prosperous

Western Europe: free socialized medicine, free education, longer vacations, earlier retirement, guaranteed jobs and more. These were the fruits of a true workers’ revolution in Russia in 1917 and were generally applied also in the East European countries under Soviet occupation after World War II.

The Cold War demonized the Soviet bloc at a time when strong workers’ parties in Western Europe were fighting to win these same benefits. These were the conditions that led the capitalists in some Western European countries to accept social democracy as a “lesser evil” to out-right workers’ revolution.

As long as the capitalist ruling class exists, whether it makes material concessions to the workers or not, it calls the shots. This is especially true in periods of economic crisis — which is deepening all over the globe at present and comes directly from the contradiction of capitalist “overproduction.” During this crisis, the capitalists will try to overturn the gains made by workers in order to enhance their profits in the fierce, dog-eat-dog competition that is a built-in feature of this decaying system.

NATO has morphed into an aggressive armed force used against any regime or movement that challenges U.S.-European imperialist domination worldwide. In this global imperialist war, Denmark has sent troops and/or war planes to Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Estonia and Kyrgyzstan.

Trump complained during his election campaign, and still does, that the Europeans weren’t paying their “fair share” to NATO and demanded they raise their contribution to 2 percent of their gross domestic product. Bloomberg News predicted that would “break Denmark’s welfare state.” (Nov. 20, 2016)

In a capitalist country, even a social democratic one, being a partner of world imperialism has its price. The capitalists calling the shots will make sure this price is paid by the working class, not the bosses. □



supply, winter sports and ski industry. This is in addition to extreme flooding, fires, and the human and animal health problems stemming from ozone and other auto pollutants.

The August public hearing will be followed by another in November to review the final program of action, which must be in place by January 2019, in time for industry planning for 2022 cars.

— Report and photo by Viviana Weinstein

Coloradans demand stronger environmental protection

Over 500 Colorado environmentalists, officials and residents packed the meeting of the state Air Quality Control Commission on Aug. 16. They were demanding that the environmental bar on air pollution be raised and emphatically opposed any federal rollback on fuel economy standards.

Environmentalists present were outraged by the Trump administration’s attack on national auto safety emissions standards ending the gradual toughening of federal standards that had been put

in place over 40 years to reduce tailpipe emissions of “greenhouse gases.” The rollback also threatens to revoke a waiver that allows California to have standards even tougher than the national regulations for controlling vehicle emissions and air pollution.

The Denver meeting was held to hear public opinion on a June 19 executive order by Gov. Hickenlooper that mandated a low-emissions vehicle program to reduce air pollution from cars and light trucks. This proposal — pushing back

against Trump directives — was modelled on California’s 52 strict auto emissions regulations, the toughest in the U.S. The Colorado proposal would affect new cars after Jan. 1, 2022, and be stronger than current Environmental Protection Agency standards, with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent by 2025.

The audience came both to support this new policy and to improve and strengthen it by including ZEVs (zero emission vehicles) in the plan. These are in the California codes, but were not initially to be in the Colorado program. Statements from numerous speakers from across the state made clear that there was overwhelming support for including ZEVs in the Colorado program.

Car emissions, which nationally cause 25 percent of air pollution, add to the environmental problems in Colorado. One major impact cited by speakers was the increasing temperatures that cause loss of from 30 to 60 percent of the snow pack, which then affects Colorado’s water

Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of CUBA

By Leslie Feinberg,
author of ‘Stone Butch Blues’



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

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



Racism’s hollow monument

A year ago on Aug. 14, a group of mainly young people in Durham, N.C., took a simple action to end white supremacy that heartened anyone who saw it. And tens of millions did see it — on social media and on newscasts.

This week, students and their supporters at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill followed the call to “Do It Like Durham,” toppling a “Silent Sam” statue just before the beginning of the fall semester. The tribute to Confederate alumni has stood at the entrance of the campus for 105 years.

In a dramatic event, hundreds of protesters surrounded the massive Silent Sam statue on Aug. 20, covering it with tall banners and dropping smoke bombs as it was being pulled down in the background. Police violently arrested one person during the action. (See accompanying article.)

Many millions of people in the U.S. and more around the world were horrified at the eruption of vile racism manifested a year ago in the torchlight parade of Nazis and other white supremacists in Charlottesville, Va., and the murder of anti-racist Heather Heyer on Aug. 12.

The U.S. president’s bigoted failure to condemn the vicious racists added to the anti-fascist anger and also gave a boost to the worst neo-fascist elements of U.S. society. Could a direct action response push the struggle in the opposite direction from this rightward lunge?

Two days later, a young Black woman looped a rope around the neck of a Confederate statue in Durham. People on the ground tugged on the rope. When the statue hit the ground, to many people’s surprise, it crumpled.

Research showed it was a hollow, cheap “monument,” much like those mass-produced in a Connecticut factory in the early 1900s and sold on the cheap to cities and towns in the South. Their purpose was not to honor fallen soldiers, but to reinforce racist laws aimed at maintaining the oppression of African Americans.

Participants in the Durham demonstration — many of them members of the Durham branch of Workers World Party — were soon arrested and faced heavy charges.

Within days some 100 people came out to say, “I’m against racism. Arrest me, too.” Thousands more throughout the country sent messages of support. It was

obvious that millions who saw the statue tumble got a big lift from this simple, direct action.

In some cities around the South, where Confederate monuments — including more substantial ones — abound, local governments decided to remove, cover or otherwise alter them. The local regimes were worried that the Durham example might be copied by actions that had popular mass support.

Other statues, including those in the North honoring historical figures who did great but genocidal harm, came under strong attack. That included statues honoring Christopher Columbus, who is infamous for his role in oppressing and massacring Indigenous peoples.

As the Durham defendants showed up in court, backing them up was strong popular support for dismantling these racist symbols. This February the prosecution decided it was wiser to drop the charges on the heroes rather than let the struggle be extended and amplified.

These victories in the struggle against racism must be reinforced as the struggle continues. To commemorate the anniversary of the action, Durham activists issued a call for a gathering there on Aug. 25-26: “How to Topple a Statue, How to Tear Down a Wall.”

The call notes that this month is “Black August, which was started by Black freedom fighters inside California prisons to lift up the many Black liberation struggles taking place across the U.S. and the world. Since 1979, Black August has been a time to build unity, solidarity, and commemorate the fighters who have come before us and were taken too soon by the state and its racist vigilantes.”

Durham activists “invite organizers, freedom fighters, and community members from all over to join us in Durham, N.C. ... to Defend Durham, Honor Resistance in Charlottesville and Smash White Supremacy!

“Black people, people of color, im/migrants, and working class people continue to come under intensified attacks. From police killings to raids and deportations, eviction crises and gentrification, to mass incarceration and unemployment, the need for solidarity is more crucial than ever.

“Join us for workshops, political discussions, and actions.”

For more information, see doitlikedurham.org. □

Racist Silent Sam statue toppled

Continued from page 1

A large cheer arose from the crowd at the first sound of metal creaking against concrete, erupting into jubilant shouts as the statue tumbled. Rain began to fall as the monument lay face down on the ground. Some protesters kicked at the figure; others covered it in dirt. One activist placed a “Do It Like Durham” hat atop the fallen statue in tribute to a similar action just over a year ago when a group brought down another Confederate statue in neighboring Durham, N.C.

A large crowd, estimated between 250 and 500, had initially rallied at 7 p.m. across the street in front of Chapel Hill’s Peace and Justice Plaza to support UNC graduate student Maya Little, who in April spilled her own blood on the statue in protest of the university administration’s continuing inaction. She currently faces criminal charges and expulsion by the university’s honor court. “It’s time to tear down Silent Sam,” Little said. “It’s time to tear down UNC’s institutional white supremacy.”

Rather than memorializing the Confederacy, Little suggested UNC should devote resources to honoring the legacy of James Lewis Cates, a Black Chapel Hill resident and civil rights activist who was murdered on campus in 1971 at the age of 22. Cates’ killers, three white men, were acquitted by an all-white jury.

“After Cates was murdered, his friends, the Black community and organizations such as the Black Student Movement — who at the time were being surveilled by COINTELPRO — rallied to demand a Chapel Hill where Black lives matter,” Little said, pointing out Silent Sam as the location of their protest.

While a few curious onlookers and “pro-Confederate” groups milled about the edges, the crowd was overwhelmingly in support of tearing down the monument.

Silent Sam represents “a legacy of oppression and slavery that was the foundation not only of this university but the whole region,” said one grad student, calling it “a defiant statue that communicates to students of color that this university is more interested in preserving white supremacy than creating a community of openness.”

Silent Sam was erected in 1913 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy to celebrate the 50th anniversary (in 1911) of the Civil War. About 40 percent of UNC

students during the war fought in the conflict, almost all for the Confederacy.

At the statue’s dedication, local industrialist Julian Carr (namesake of Chapel Hill’s neighboring Carrboro) gave a speech where he defined Sam’s meaning, praising the Confederate soldier and lambasting the Reconstruction era, when “the bottom rail was on top” in the Southern states.

Carr also offered a “personal anecdote,” recounting, “One hundred yards from where we stand, less than ninety days perhaps after my return from Appomattox, I horse-whipped a negro wench until her skirts hung in shreds, because upon the streets of this quiet village she had publicly insulted and maligned a Southern lady.”

As efforts to remove monuments to Confederate soldiers have escalated in recent years, the North Carolina General Assembly has responded defensively, banning any such actions by local or municipal governments. Silent Sam, long a lightning rod for controversy and the site of numerous protests since the Civil Rights Movement, had become increasingly expensive for Chapel Hill and the state. Security for the statue ran up a tab of \$390,000 in 2017 alone.

UNC Chancellor Carol Folt — who had been subject to criticism from several speakers at the Aug. 20 protest — unsurprisingly condemned the action. “The monument has been divisive for years, and its presence has been a source of frustration for many people not only on our campus but throughout the community,” she said in a statement. “However, last night’s actions were unlawful and dangerous, and we are very fortunate that no one was injured. The police are investigating the vandalism and assessing the full extent of the damage.” Gov. Roy Cooper similarly expressed disapproval of “violent destruction of public property.”

Their attitude was not shared by the crowd. “I’m here to be in solidarity,” said one student. “Silent Sam, to me, represents the history of this university that it’s not willing to acknowledge: the Confederacy, oppression and slavery. If we’re going to call ourselves a progressive place we need to have actions that back it up.”

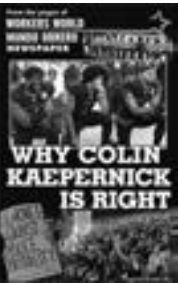
Later, after the crowds had dispersed, university officials dragged the fallen monument to a truck, which was driven to an unknown location. □



MURDER Incorporated: Empire, Genocide, and Manifest Destiny
by Mumia Abu-Jamal and Stephen Vittoria

Abu-Jamal and Vittoria assert that the greatest U.S. export is not “democracy” but murder – and that along the way to killing, the U.S. loots, suppresses and tyrannizes. This book strives to set the record straight, from Columbus’ first steps on Hispaniola through current murderous drone attacks. More than a history book, this is a lively alternative to the idea of “American exceptionalism.”

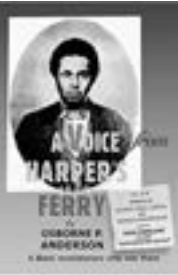
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WHY COLIN KAEPERNICK IS RIGHT
Articles from Workers World/Mundo Obrero

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



A Voice from Harpers Ferry
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The Klan & Government: Foes or Allies?
Examines the special relationship with the state that has allowed the Ku Klux Klan to exist for over a century despite its criminal history of lynchings, murders, and intimidation.



Activists take down a Confederate statue in front of the old Durham, N.C., county courthouse on Aug. 14, 2017.



By Teresa Gutierrez

The children and youth of Honduras will one day look back at this period in history with great lament. U.S. imperialist policy has resulted not only in massive forced migration but also in decades of brutal instability and turmoil in their beloved homeland.

In fact, photojournalist Tomás Ayuso notes that the youth of Honduras have coined a phrase of their limited hope — “the right to grow old” — as death and uncertainty have become the main options for the vast majority of young people. (NPR, Aug. 19)

But these conditions have also borne beloved heroes.

One of those is Margarita Murillo, a revolutionary campesina leader who was

Heroes from Honduras: Margarita Murillo, ¡presente!

assassinated by death squads on Aug. 27, 2014.

Four years after Margarita’s death, her children and the Honduras resistance movement in New York City will commemorate her life on Aug. 25 with film footage, speeches, food and music at the International Action Center.

Under the banner, “We continue to demand Justice! ¡Margarita vive!” the story of this leader will be told by her three children, who now reside in NYC, as well as by others.

A heroic life

Margarita was 54 years old when she was found riddled with bullets. Three men in ski masks, who were connected to right-wing death squads, killed her as she worked the fields in her village El Planon in northern Honduras.

Montserrat, one of Margarita’s daughters, told TeleSur in 2017: “It was the hardest moment of my life. It was the moment that my mom became a martyr of the Honduran resistance.”

Margarita’s children have all applied for political asylum in the U.S. and plan to continue her work. Two of her children have won asylum already.

Her family and the movement describe Margarita’s life as one filled with a yearning

for justice. She became an activist at a young age and understood, based on her own family’s poverty, the need not only for struggle but for full liberation. Margarita recounted in a radio interview that her family had been so poor that sometimes they were forced to eat grass to survive.

Margarita became deeply influenced by the rising tide of revolutionary resistance in Central America. During her life, she traveled to El Salvador and Nicaragua to help the movement in those countries — a true internationalist.

At 13, she joined the National Union of Peasants. At 15, she participated in the March of Hunger, which has become an annual march in Honduras, where the lack of food is constant.

But Margarita did not just yearn for the right to food. She fought to demand that the land be given to those who worked it. She participated in land occupations and survived only because she escaped when many of her comrades were killed.

Margarita experienced repression at a very early age. At 16, she was raped, tortured and beaten. Nothing stopped her yearning for justice, however. As she grew, she became a leading member of the FNRP (National Popular Resistance Front) of Honduras. She helped establish the Federation of Peasant Women and

the National Center of Field Workers, as well as the Sula Valley Forum.

When the progressive presidency of Manuel Zelaya was overturned in 2009 by a U.S. coup, Margarita fought even more. She did not want merely a fair election. She wanted full liberation from the multinational corporations.

Even though her two sons were kidnapped and beaten, Margarita fought on. Samuel, one of those sons, resides in NYC and has won asylum. On May Day in NYC, Samuel and family marched with pictures of Margarita.

Montserrat, despite being held at the border along with her baby daughter in the “hieleras” — the freezing cold detention center — remains optimistic. She, Samuel and daughter Kenia — Margarita’s children — continue to inspire everyone they meet. They fight on just like their mother.

Montserrat says all the time: “My mom was a fighter. She gave up her life for the resistance movement.”

Just like Berta Isabel Cáceres Flores (Lenca) of Honduras, who was also murdered by death squads, Margarita will live on. They live on in the struggles of her children and in all the young people who are fighting until victory for their homeland.

Margarita Murillo, ¡presente! □

ENDORSE *the* PEOPLE’S TRIBUNAL

on U.S. Crimes against

PUERTO RICO

LIST YOUR ORGANIZATION AS AN ENDORSER.

On Oct. 27, 2018, at 9:00 a.m., join Rafael Cancel Miranda and other Puerto Rican and international personalities and organizations at the People’s Tribunal on U.S. Crimes Against Puerto Rico.

The People’s Tribunal will convene at Holyrood Church/Iglesia Santa Cruz in New York City.

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

This crisis is not new or even due primarily to the hurricanes, but is the culmination of the savage colonialist domination and capitalist exploitation that the United States has imposed ever since its 1898 military invasion of Puerto Rico. On Oct. 27, activists and witnesses

from Puerto Rico (including eyewitnesses to U.S. crimes), the Puerto Rican diaspora, the U.S. and the world will meet in New York City to take part in this colonial crimes tribunal.

A people’s investigation. The Tribunal will present a people’s investigation of the role of the U.S. government during its 120-year colonial rule, and particularly since the hurricanes’ devastation put Puerto Rico in the eye of the world’s media. The Tribunal will feature renowned Nicaraguan

legal scholar and attorney, Dr. Augusto Zamora, who will serve as prosecutor, and a distinguished jury of U.S. and international human rights leaders.

This call for action by the Puerto Rico Tribunal Ad Hoc Committee is not made solely for the sake of posterity, but also seeks to strengthen the worldwide struggle for self-determination today. What is happening in Puerto Rico is different only in scale and duration from U.S.-perpetrated destruction elsewhere.

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

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

Please endorse!

Email: TribunalPuertoRico@gmail.com Type “Puerto Rico Tribunal” in the subject line.

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Trump, el Pentágono y el establecimiento

Continúa de página 12

Por supuesto, su programa está en desacuerdo con la política tradicional de la clase dominante de mantener alianzas con el imperialismo europeo, mientras mantiene a estos aliados en subordinación. El establecimiento es en gran medida hostil a la República Popular de China, a Irán y unificado en su oposición a Rusia. Pero incluso sus asesores de derecha intervinieron para salvar de Trump a la alianza OTAN.

Dos falsos programas para revivir el imperialismo

Obviamente, las políticas de Trump son completamente perjudiciales para

las estrategias de larga data del establecimiento capitalista de EUA para la dominación mundial. De hecho, sin embargo, el establecimiento tiene un análisis totalmente erróneo de su propia crisis y no puede resolverlo con su enfoque habitual. Tanto la visión del establecimiento como la visión de Trump sobre la crisis son falsas.

Sólo una comprensión marxista revolucionaria de la crisis corresponde a la realidad objetiva. Y solo ese punto de vista conduce a una resolución de la crisis favorable para las/os trabajadoras y las/os oprimidos.

La crisis del imperialismo y capitalismo estadounidense se debe a la necesidad insaciable y agresiva de Washington

y Wall Street de reconquistar y recolonizar los vastos territorios que perdieron durante el período soviético en el siglo XX. Es un intento fallido.

No pueden convertir al Pacífico en un “lago estadounidense” de nuevo porque China se ha levantado. Pueden causar daños terribles, pero no pueden recolonizar el Medio Oriente o Irán porque las/os oprimidos de la región no lo permitirán. No pueden convertir a América Latina en un “patio trasero” de EUA a pesar de sus aspiraciones de “cambio de régimen”. Su tratamiento brutal de Puerto Rico y de inmigrantes latinas/os revienta sus falsas promesas. Y Cuba socialista todavía se interpone en su camino.

La crisis se deriva de la insaciable sed

de lucro de la clase dominante y la creciente desigualdad resultante y la abrumadora pobreza de las masas en los Estados Unidos. Estas masas son la base social fundamental del imperialismo, una base que se erosiona con cada recorte de impuestos para los ricos, cada ataque a los servicios sociales, cada acto de brutalidad policial racista y encarcelamiento masivo. Los parásitos de la clase dominante están desesperados por chupar hasta el último centavo de ganancias de las masas a medida que su sistema declina.

De modo que ambas visiones de la crisis, la de Trump y la de la clase gobernante capitalista más amplia, son falsas. El capitalismo no tiene solución para su propia crisis sistémica. □



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Trabajadores despedidos de la Huerta Sarbanand marchan para exigir sus derechos laborales en el estado de Washington.

Trump, el Pentágono y el establecimiento

Por Fred Goldstein

11 de agosto - La última ronda de sanciones de Estados Unidos contra Rusia ilustra cómo el Pentágono y sus aliados en el gobierno capitalista se están moviendo independientemente del presidente de los EUA para socavar su diplomacia personal cuando entra en conflicto con los objetivos militares.

Por razones que son motivo de mucha especulación, Trump ha intentado realinear la política exterior imperialista de los EUA para incluir un acercamiento con Rusia. Lo ha hecho desde que comenzó su campaña electoral. Este intento de realineamiento se expresó dramáticamente en la cumbre en Helsinki de Trump-Putin en julio.

No se equivoquen, Donald Trump no es partidista de la paz. Es belicoso, beligerante y un belicista impulsivo cuando le conviene. Es un bravucón en las relaciones internacionales, así como un promotor autoritario del racismo, el sexismo y el fanatismo aquí en EUA.

Trump alimenta la máquina de guerra

Trump ha hecho mucho para alimentar la máquina de guerra del Pentágono. Él ha dado aumentos récord de presupuesto a los generales, con el presupuesto militar de 2019 oficialmente superando los \$716 mil millones. Ha autorizado la modernización de armas nucleares. Ha financiado aumentos en aviones de combate, buques y tropas. En resumen, ha hecho todo lo posible para mantener el complejo militar-industrial satisfecho y a bordo con su administración.

“El aumento en el gasto militar es uno de los más grandes en la historia moderna de EUA, brincando un 9,3 por ciento desde 2017 hasta 2019”, según Todd Harrison, director de análisis presupuestario de defensa en el Centro de Estudios Estratégicos e Internacionales, un grupo de expertos”. (Washington Post, 10 de junio)

Esto marca un aumento de \$136 mil millones solo del 2017 al 2019.

Mientras tanto, las masas están perdiendo su cuidado de salud, su cuidado infantil, sus cupones de alimentos y su vivienda mientras sufren de pobreza, desempleo y subempleo. Pero Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon, United Technologies, Northrop Grumman y otros comerciantes de la muerte se están atragantando de ganancias.

El Pentágono todavía domina la política de los EUA

Tal vez Trump pensó que su generosidad con los generales y almirantes mantendría al Pentágono y al alto mando sincronizados con su diplomacia personalizada. Pero no.

En cuanto a suavizar las cosas con Rusia, el Pentágono no lo va a permitir. Los aliados derechistas de los militares en su administración, el consejero de Seguridad Nacional John Bolton y el secretario de Estado Mike Pompeo, han subvertido la diplomacia personal de Trump.

Por ejemplo, Pompeo y el Departamento de Estado recientemente notificaron al Congreso que la administración sospecha que Rusia está detrás del envenenamiento de dos ex espías rusos en Inglaterra

con un agente químico en marzo pasado, ihace seis meses!

Washington afirma que Moscú violó la Ley de Control de Armas Químicas y Biológicas y el Acta de Eliminación de Guerra de 1991. Este es el acta que el imperialismo estadounidense usó contra Siria y la República Popular Democrática de Corea y que ahora usa contra Rusia.

Las sanciones impuestas a Rusia implican cientos de millones de dólares en los denominados productos de “doble uso” que hipotéticamente podrían utilizarse con fines militares. Sanciones más draconianas que niegan el acceso de los bancos rusos a los mercados de EUA si Rusia no prueba que ya no usa armas químicas -una acusación que Moscú niega enérgicamente- se impondrán en 90 días.

Saboteado acuerdo DPRK-Trump

Trump se ha aprovechado de las propuestas diplomáticas de Kim Jong Un, líder de la República Popular Democrática de Corea y del Partido de los Trabajadores de Corea. Kim intentó apaciguar la crisis en la Península Coreana ofreciendo reunirse para discutir la desnuclearización. Trump aceptó la invitación y promovió una reunión cumbre bilateral celebrada en Singapur el 12 de junio.

Trump estaba tratando de alcanzar un estatus “histórico” al poner fin a la crisis. Cuando regresó, habló sobre la finalización de la Guerra de Corea y mencionó un posible tratado de paz para finalmente poner fin a la guerra, iniciada allá por junio de 1950. Los combates finalizaron en agosto de 1953 con un acuerdo de cese al fuego, pero EUA nunca había acordado incluso discutir un tratado de paz formal.

De hecho, Trump canceló los ejercicios de guerra anuales llevados a cabo por los militares de los EUA y Corea del Sur que ejercían presión militar con el objetivo de derrocar a la RPDC.

Sin embargo, desde la cumbre de Singapur, prácticamente toda la clase dominante de los EUA, los medios y las fuerzas armadas han intentado socavar el proceso para poner fin a la Guerra de Corea. Estos llaman a los líderes de la RPDC mentirosos en quienes no se puede confiar. Últimamente han clamado por mayores sanciones porque ya el Norte no se “desnuclearizará”.

EUA se niega a firmar un tratado de paz

Hay una explicación simple de por qué el proceso de desnuclearización no ha comenzado.

Dos prestigiosos periodistas del imperialista New York Times, David Sanger y William Broad, admitieron en un artículo del 10 de agosto que Washington ha incumplido las promesas hechas durante la cumbre de Singapur y en conversaciones posteriores:

“El jueves [9 de agosto], el periódico estatal norcoreano, Rodong Sinmun, calificó la declaración del final de la guerra como “la demanda de nuestro tiempo” y que sería el “primer proceso” en avanzar hacia el cumplimiento del acuerdo del 12 de junio entre el Sr. Trump y el Sr. Kim. Pyongyang también quiere que comiencen las conversaciones para el tratado de paz antes de detallar su arsenal”.

En otras palabras, los halcones reac-

cionarios de la administración Trump y los militares deliberadamente sabotean la condición previa para la desnuclearización que Trump, y tal vez Pompeo, debieron haber aceptado verbalmente, que las conversaciones comiencen primero sobre un tratado de paz para poner fin a los ahora 68 años de la guerra del imperialismo estadounidense antes de que la RPDC haga un inventario de sus armas nucleares. Por lo tanto, la derecha ahora está tratando de revertir la diplomacia de Trump en Corea.

OTAN y Bolton

Otro ejemplo de que los militares van alrededor de Trump ocurrió cuando, antes de la reunión de la OTAN el mes pasado, el asesor de seguridad nacional de Trump, el militarista derechista John Bolton, envió instrucciones a los ministros de defensa imperialistas europeos para que elaboraran una declaración conjunta antes de que Trump llegara a la reunión. Su objetivo era evitar que Trump estallara la reunión con su hostilidad hacia la OTAN.

Un artículo del New York Times del 9 de agosto detallaba cómo Washington trabajó con Bruselas para establecer un acuerdo por el cual Europa se comprometió a proporcionar 30 batallones de tropas, 30 escuadrones de aviones y 30 buques listos para batallar para el 2020. El objetivo de este acuerdo era prepararse para una guerra de la OTAN con Rusia.

Un Comando del Atlántico Norte se iba a establecer en Norfolk, Virginia, para estar listo para tal guerra. El Secretario General de la OTAN, Jens Stoltenberg, reforzó la directiva de Bolton durante una reunión de embajadores el 4 de julio. Para la llegada de Trump a Bruselas, ya todos los acuerdos habían sido acordados. Por lo general, estas ofertas se discuten al final de dichas reuniones.

Convergiendo contra China

El Pentágono está llevando a cabo maniobras de guerra provocadoras contra la República Popular de China. La Marina ha estado enviando buques de guerra a 12 millas de las islas chinas en el Mar del Sur de China, y el 10 de agosto EUA voló un avión espía. Un equipo de CNN estaba a bordo del avión grabando los eventos.

“Durante el vuelo, la tripulación recibió seis advertencias por separado del ejército chino, diciéndoles que estaban dentro del territorio chino. ... ‘Salga de inmediato y manténgase alejado para evitar cualquier malentendido’, dijo una voz. Y cada vez la Marina enviaba el mismo mensaje: “Soy un avión naval inmune soberano de los EUA que realiza actividades militares legales más allá del espacio aéreo nacional de cualquier estado costero”.

Eso significa que a unas 6.000 millas de distancia de los EUA y a menos de 10 millas de China, el Pentágono reclama “inmunidad soberana”.

El punto es que esta provocación ocurre al mismo tiempo en que Trump abrió una guerra comercial con China. En este caso, su política económica agresiva está en sintonía con la política militar del Pentágono, por lo que no hay sabotaje por ninguna facción.

Trump, el marxismo y el estado

Un análisis marxista es necesario para desentrañar las complicadas relaciones políticas dentro de la administración Trump y con el Congreso. Según Marx, el gobierno capitalista es el comité ejecutivo de la clase dominante.

Esa verdad aún se mantiene. Pero ese comité ejecutivo de ninguna manera es políticamente homogéneo o unificado. De hecho, cuanto mayor es la crisis en el imperialismo y el capitalismo, mayores son las divisiones dentro del gobierno y dentro del mismo estado.

La presidencia de Trump en sí es un reflejo de la crisis del capitalismo. A pesar de que perdió el voto popular por 3 millones, todo su ascenso político se basó en la desmoralización política de una sección de las masas y la bancarrota de la dirección corporativa del Partido Demócrata. Después de votar por Obama en 2012, millones de personas huyeron para votar por Trump en 2016. Entre las/os votantes había muchos que habían apoyado la candidatura de Bernie Sanders en las primarias, pero luego cambiaron a Trump.

Ahora se desata una guerra civil dentro del liderazgo del Partido Demócrata sobre cómo superar esta bancarrota. Pero, en cualquier caso, no hay nada que los líderes del Partido Demócrata puedan hacer para eliminar la crisis del capitalismo, que es la raíz del problema.

Trump apeló a la ira después de años de reducción de salarios y socavación de los sindicatos. Al mismo tiempo, atacó los reveses del imperialismo en el exterior, incluido el intento fallido de apoderarse completamente de Ucrania en 2014. Su elección es parte de una ola racista y anti-inmigrante generalizada en todo el mundo capitalista, incluyendo Europa.

Nombramientos de derecha rompieron coalición de Trump

Trump fue un total extraño que triunfó sobre el establecimiento republicano. Al principio, su gobierno era una coalición entre ese establecimiento y la extrema derecha. Con el tiempo, Trump expulsó a las figuras del establecimiento que podían decirle que no: Rex Tillerson, ex CEO de ExxonMobil, que había sido su secretario de estado; Gary Cohn, ex CEO de Goldman Sachs, quien fue su principal asesor económico; y el general H.R. McMaster, su asesor de seguridad nacional.

Los reemplazó con derechistas antisistema: el Consejero de Seguridad Nacional John Bolton, el Secretario de Estado Mike Pompeo y el Asesor Económico Jefe Larry Kudlow.

Trump pensó que ahora era libre de seguir con su programa para revivir las fortunas del imperialismo. Su programa era retirarse del Acuerdo de París sobre el medio ambiente; retirarse de la Alianza Trans-Pacífica; intimidar a la OTAN a someterse; abrir una guerra racista contra las/os trabajadoras inmigrantes; alinearse con las fuerzas antiinmigrantes en Europa; volar el tratado nuclear de Irán; librar una guerra comercial con China y otros países; destruir y renegociar el TLCAN, etc.

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