Hurricane Harvey disaster

Capitalist crime scene

By Deirdre Griswold

Aug. 29 — The coasts of Texas and Louisiana have become an ongoing crime scene. The crime is against the millions of people living along the Gulf of Mexico as well as their property — and it is a crime against nature itself.

And who are the criminals? Some are the same politicians who, like Donald Trump, jump before the cameras to assure the public that everything possible is being done to protect them, when in fact the forces of government are doing the barest minimum.

Others shy away from publicity — like the multibillionaire oil and gas magnates who have amassed huge fortunes over the decades promoting the very technologies that have warmed the planet and made such disasters inevitable.

They undermined mass transit in order to promote the car culture. Once the drastic effects of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere became known, what did they do? As one science publication wrote in 2015: “Exxon knew about climate change almost 40 years ago — A new investigation shows the oil company understood the science before it became a public issue and spent millions to promote disinformation.” (Scientific American, Oct. 26, 2015)

In plain words, they lied to the people. And the people are those who suffer the consequences, not the very rich who can jet to wherever pleases their luxurious lifestyle.

Texas, oil and Gov. Abbott

The human toll of this continuing tragedy will not be known until the waters subside, if ever. Unprecedented rains keep falling, turning an area the size of South Carolina into a vast, muddy lake. Yet already Texas Gov. Greg Abbott is telling the people that this “is one of the largest disasters America has ever faced” and there will be “a new normal for this entire region.”

And who is Abbott? Just two months ago, he signed a resolution sponsored by the Texas Alliance of Energy Producers that urged the federal government to reverse “some of the harmful regulations that have stunted the growth of our industry.”

The resolution applauds “the more than 20 lawsuits that Texas has filed in conjunction with many other oil and gas producing states against federal over-regulation that prioritizes minor environmental gains over major productive losses.”

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AFL-CIO’s Trumka leaves Trump council—He never should have joined!

By Martha Grevatt

In January, just a few weeks into the new administration, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka committed class treason when he joined Trump’s Manufacturing Advisory Council. He and AFL-CIO deputy staff member Theresa Lee were the token labor representatives on the council, which included CEOs of 3M, Campbell Soup, Johnson & Johnson and other major corporations.

On Aug. 15, Trumka and Lee finally resigned from the council, citing Trump’s comments equally blaming both anti-fascists and white supremacist terrorists for the fatal violence in Charlottesville. “We must resign on behalf of America working people, reject all notions of legitimacy of these bigoted groups,” said Trumka. (cnbc.com)

His departure from the council only came after a number of big-business CEOs had resigned.

By Aug. 17, the president had dissolved the Manufacturing Council, as well as the Strategy and Policy Forum, in the wake of mass desertions by CEOs, including JP-Morgan Chase’s Jamie Dimon, General Electric’s Jeff Immelt and other corporate luminaries. These key representatives of the ruling class, who have always used racism and bigotry to divide the working class, filled their resignation statements with phony platitudes about their commitment to diversity and lack of tolerance for bigotry.

Did they just discover the extreme bigotry of the 45th president of the United States? Were they asleep during the whole election campaign, when Trump whipped up masses of violent white bigots? Was the AFL-CIO’s maneuvering with the U.S. ruling class.

But that break will not come from the top bureaucrats. The collapse of the two economic councils has to be seen in the context of the growing mass movement against white supremacy and bigotry. The CEOs and their labor flunkies were feeling the pressure of this powerful movement when they made the decision to resign.

Trumka’s exit from the Trump council is a move in the right direction, even if pitifully inadequate and long overdue.

What needs to happen is for the AFL-CIO to make a complete break with class collaborationist policies. The AFL-CIO’s relationship with Trump— and that of the Teamsters, Building Trades and others—is the most extreme manifestation of collaboration with the capitalist U.S. ruling class.

But that break will not come from the top bureaucrats. The rank and file must revive labor’s legacy of militancy, class-conscious and anti-racist unionism.

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. WWFP 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 wealthy workers create should be socially owned and 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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Baltimore bus workers and riders protest transit plan

By Basma Gregg

Baltimore

On Aug. 23, a group of 70 protesters marched in solidarity with the Amalgamated Transit Union and the People's Union for Bus Riders, a group initiated by the People's Power Assembly, in Baltimore. They were protesting the recent changes made to the city's public transportation system by Gov. Larry Hogan.

Joining together with local groups and organizations, members of the community marched to the governor's office to make their demands known, and to show that the people of Baltimore do not want the BaltimoreLink system.

When asked about the iniquities brought on by the BaltimoreLink, the president of ATU Local 1300, David McClure, stated: “It’s unfortunate that people are suffering — and he [Hogan] just threw it upon people. People are actively losing their jobs. He’s basically thrown the MTA into bankruptcy.

McClure went on to say: “You have elderly people who have to walk several blocks just to attain a service that used to be right in front of their door. I think it’s unfair.”

One of the majority of the community shares McClure’s views about the negative impact the Link system has had on the people of Baltimore.

Barbara Rock, a resident of Baltimore City, relies on public transportation to transport her from one destination to another. Rock stated: “It’s really hard for us seniors to walk and deal with these buses. We have to catch two or three buses to go where we have to go. It’s not right.”

Another community member, Michelle Fulmore, said that she depends on an bus ride to go to work. She mentioned that police have other means to get them selves into any subway.

The majority of the community shares McClure’s views about the negative impact the Link system has had on the people of Baltimore. Workers World Party, as well as a multitude of other organizations, members of the community still said strongly that the BaltimoreLink system will be brought down.

Stressed to death? Seeking justice for NYC transit worker

Darryl Goodwin

By Tony Murphy and Sara Catalanotto

New York

A Black transit worker in New York City has died from stress-related health conditions after he was falsely arrested while on the job, and after harsh and unjust punishment by the Metropolitan Transit Authority. His death has sparked unity among union members worldwide, community activists and transit justice advocates.

In May, African-American, 27-year-old MTA veteran Darryl Goodwin, a member of Transport Workers Union Local 100, was working at a busy, noisy, bombarded subway station booth, assisting a passenger, when New York Police Department Lt. Richard Khalaf yelled for Goodwin to press the button to unlock the station gate.

When Goodwin didn’t immediately drop what he was doing, the cop approached and escalated his yelling. Next, Goodwin was handcuffed and charged with obstructing governmental justice, assaulting a police officer and resisting arrest. Transit bosses hit him with an immediate unpaid suspension that lasted six weeks.

To bolster the outrageously false charges, the arresting officer filed a bogus story to the media that this worker had refused to assist the police in their pursuit of a shoplifter, omitting the fact that police had already attempted to get themselves into any subway.

Station agents in TWU Local 100 supported Goodwin in court on June 29. Activists with the NYC Workers Defense Committee (WDC) knew it was important to try to stop this attack on a worker, so they organized community activists to help pack the court for the next hearing.

When the presiding judge in a Manhattan courtroom on Aug. 20 called the name of Darryl Goodwin, 60 people stood up. The crowd included relatives of Goodwin and of Guinean immigrant and cab driver Mohammed Bah, fatally shot by the New York Police Department during a reported mental health crisis in 2012. Also standing in solidarity were members of the Universal Zulu Nation, Parents to Improve School Transportation, the People’s Power Assemblies and Workers World Party, as well as a multiracial crowd of transit workers wearing blue uniforms or union shirts.

Those physically present also had moral support from the World Federation of Trade Unions. It’s essential for global workers, whose solidarity statement from its Athens, Greece, office.

Goodwin himself was too ill to attend, foreseeing the tragedy that was to come. The judge, with the office of the Manhattan District Attorney behind him, rejected a motion to dismiss charges. A jury trial was set to begin in six weeks.

Afterwards, TWU Local 100 tweeted a photo of union members and community supporters rallying side-by-side with the caption, “TWU crowd outside the courthouse urging prosecutors to drop charges against [station agent] Darryl Goodwin.”

But by Aug. 16, the union was announcing sadly that Goodwin had passed away. Their statement cites his friend, TWU Vice President for Stations Derrick Echevarria, who said: “We believe this unwarranted arrest had an underlying effect on his demise. Darryl was stressed out and working a lot of overtime to recover the wages he lost.”

The TWU statement also notes that, “in May, arresting officer Lt. Khalaf and his cop cronies made hateful comments on Khalaf’s Facebook page, lashing out at the Black Lives Matter movement.”

NYCVer, DC had created a fundraising campaign to help Goodwin with his legal expenses and missed pay. Those donations, including $100 from a London Tube driver, have now been given to his sibling.

The fund at tinyurl.com/vyetongs ends Aug. 30.

The group also posted an online petition that gathered 50 signers a day at first, and 500 in one day after Goodwin’s death was publicized. Comments from signers included: “I think police have too much power and they enjoy missing it to exploit innocent working people every day. Something has got to give!” and (referring to Goodwin’s employer) “It’s a crime that Transit let the police harass this man to death.”

At the large and loving funeral service on Aug. 21, TWU’s Echevarria repeated: “We are all Darryl Goodwin. Any one of us could have been in that situation.”

Goodwin’s union and family intend to clear him of the charges posthumously.

Readers are urged to share tinyurl.com/oq69k9p and to check the Facebook of the NYC Workers Defense Committee for future acts of solidarity.
Convicted racist Arizona sheriff pardoned

By Paul Teitelbaum
Tucson

Once again Donald Trump has embraced white supremacy and condoned racist police terror. On Aug. 25, he pardoned notori- ously racist Arpaio, who was convicted of criminal contempt this past July for defying a court order to cease his anti-immigrant persecution.

Arpaio, former sheriff of Maricopa Coun- ty, which includes the Phoenix metropol- itan area, from 1993 until 2016. During those twenty-plus years he directed and oversaw a reign of terror targeting the Latinx community, in particular immi- grants. His Tent City prison, where tem- peratures would soar above 125 degrees even in the tents during summer, was a concentra- tion camp where detainees await- ing trial were consistently humiliated, served spoiled food and denied medical attention.

In 2008, a federal judge ruled that the conditions at all of Arpaio’s jails violated the U.S. Constitution. Arpaio’s “immigration sweeps” would target entire neighborhoods and towns with invading cops who would stop, harass and detain residents at will. In 2008, Ar- paio was met with resistance from the en- tire town of Guadalupe, Ariz., and forced to retreat. Guadalupe is a small town in Maricopa County whose population is mostly of the Indigenous Vaquita nation.

In 2009, when Nazis marched in Phoe- nix with the protection of the Phoenix Po- lice Department and the Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office, Arpaio was caught on tape giving information on the anti-Nazi protesters to the Nazi leaders. (tinyurl.com/yd7yhu3h)

An investigation of Arpaio by the U.S. Department of Justice was the result of years of pressure by popular organiza- tions and people in the streets. Massive demonstrations of tens of thousands were repeatedly held in Phoenix, with other rallies occurring at the various jails and detention centers, and at the Wells Fargo building downtown, where Arpaio was given an office.

Trump’s outrageous pardon of this crimi- nal has been denounced by activists and main- stream politicians alike, with some calling Arpaio the Bull Connor of this century, referencing Birmingham, Ala., sher- iff who brutalized Black Civil Rights Movement protesters in the 1960s.

Carlos Garcia, executive, direc- tive director of Puente, a community organization and major force in the anti-Arpaio struggle, stat- ed: “What Donald Trump did was not just pardon Arpaio, but tie himself to the history of white supremacy. ... We will use this anger to take out Donald Trump in the same way we took out Ar- paio.” (tinyurl.com/yd7yhu3h)

Another attack on Indigenous lands

Trump poised to open Bears Ears to corporate plunder

By Erin Mazagar
In another attack on Indigenous rights and the environment, President Donald Trump is expected to announce his de- cision to shrink Bears Ears National Mon- ument. This can qualify as the biggest corruption giveaway of resources to Big Oil since the Teapot Dome scandal during the Warren Harding administration in 1921.

In a landscape dotted with stunning red rock formations, delicate pines, pion- juniper forests and deep canyons sits a place rich in history and culture. Situated in the Four Corners region of San Juan County, Utah, Bears Ears – named for its twin buttes – is a place for connections, healing and illuminating life through Native American traditions and knowledge.

In December 2016, a centuries-long battle for Indigenous sovereignty culmi- nated in the designation of the Hopi tribe, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Pueblo of Zuni and Ute Indian Tribes were able to designate over 1.3 million acres of Bears Ears for protection within a na- tional monument. This was an important moment for the stakeholders involved. It was the first national monument created at the behest of Native people.

Until this point, the U.S. government had a century-long reputation of forcing Native people off of their lands in order to preserve “wilderness.” The coalition stated that it was a moment in history where Native voices were “finally heard and our cultural and spiritual heritage was respected.”

Trump’s theft rivals Teapot Dome

The designation meant that 100,000+ archeological sites would be managed by the Native nations and protected from oil and gas drilling, mining, grave rubbing and vandalism. This victory, however, lasted just nine months.

Trump is expected to announce his de- cision to shrink Bears Ears by up to 88 percent to open the land up for urani- um, oil, gas and potash mining. Several other massive pipelines were “paid for” from Trump’s review for their recreational use, geological uniqueness, biological diversi- ty, and for retaining and honoring rel- iances of human history. Despite Bears Ears meeting that criteria — and in defiance of the millions of public comments subm- itted in favor of the monument — the Trump administration is expected to push forward its corporate agenda.

In December 2015, President Obama transferred supervision of the naval oil-reserve lands from the Navy to the Department of the Interior in 2015, Inte- rior Secretary Albert Fall secretly grant- ed the Mammoth Oil Company exclusive rights to the Teapot Dome reserves in Wyoming on April 7, 1924, in return for a massive bribe. The Bears Ears giveaway to Big Oil is in the same league as this major scandal of the 1920s.

Trump would have the public believe that his recent defense of Confederate monuments means he is concerned with the preservation of history. But, much like white supremacists’ erecting of Con- federate monuments during the 1950s to counter the growing fight for civil rights, the reduction of Bears Ears is Trump’s way of “staking it” to people of color as they strive to exercise their right to self-determination.

Just three months into his presidency, Trump made it a priority to reduce Bears Ears. His appointee, Department of Inte- rior Secretary Ryan Zinke, opened a 60- day comment period on all national mon- uments, but limited comments on Bears Ears to just 15 days.

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A rally was held on the campus of Ohio State University in Columbus on Aug. 27 to show solidarity in the face of fascism and white supremacy. Columbus United Against Hate called the action.

Over one hundred socialists, commu- nists and other cen- tral Ohio activists, including members of Anti-Racist Ac- tion, CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations), Demo- cratic Socialists of America, the Green Party, the International Socialist Organi- zation, Planned Parenthood, Socialist Al- ternative, SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) and Workers World Party, gath- ered in front of the Thompson Library. Representatives of several socialist, en- vironmental and anti-racist organiza- tions, as well as unaffiliated communists, spoke, urging the community to unite against the rising tide of fascism and white supremacy. Following the speech- es, activists marched to the Ohio Union, where a Black Lives Matter banner was unfurled.

—Report and photo by Josh Link
People’s resistance occupies Charlottesville City Council

By Myia X

“We are face to face with History and quite simply we must not be afraid.”

These words were spoken by Comandante Che Guevara in 1964. Now, from Charlottesville, Va., to Durham, N.C., to Boston, the masses are rising to confront, expose and resist the upsurge of the neo-fascists, Ku Klux Klan and the various arms of the state and its apparatus.

Freedom fighters traveled on Aug. 11 and 12 to Charlottesville from across the U.S. to combat white supremacist hate masked in the legal cloak of the First Amendment “right to free speech.” The ensuing violent attacks and murder by white supremacists were seen across the globe and revealed a fact that we in Workers World Party have long known: The Klan, the police and the courts work hand in hand.

In the aftermath of death, trauma and brutality, Mayor Mike Signer and the Charlottesville Council members convened a hearing Aug. 22 to discuss their administration’s response to the racist, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic ultraright on Aug. 11 and 12. However, they quickly found out that it would not be “business as usual” and were faced with the fact that resistance was still in the air.

Over 250 people converged on the statue of former Philadelphia police commissioner and mayor, Frank Rizzo, joining with the growing movement across the country to remove Confederate monuments, male-chauvinist statues and other white supremacist statues. Some in attendance went further and demanded the mayor’s resignation and informed council members they can expect to be removed from office in the next election.

The hateful acts and words broadcast across screens and airwaves on Aug. 11 and 12 evoked memories of earlier Klan murders of African Americans: tortured Emmett Till and his open casket funeral, the four little school girls bombed in Birmingham, and the many days and nights of terror still faced by oppressed peoples in communities living under the shadow of the prison-industrial complex.

In his eulogy for the four school girls, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “We must be concerned not merely about who murdered them, but about the system, the way of life, the philosophy which produced the murders.”

Racism, bigotry and violence are deeply rooted in the founding and continued practices of the U.S., domestically and around the world. This is the system we seek to dismantle and abolish.

We carry forward the clarion call of Malcolm X: “A man’s death is his duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win.” And as we heal, march and struggle: “We must remember to love and support each other.”

New York City rally supports Colin Kaepernick

By Monica Moorehead

Aug. 23 -- A multinationl crowd of at least 2,000 people, mainly African Americans, rallied here in front of the National Football League’s headquarters to express their solidarity with Colin Kaepernick. The support action comes as Kaepernick’s anti-racism protest spreads among NFL players.

At the rally, speakers called for a boycott of NFL games by season ticket holders and TV viewers until Kaepernick is signed by a team. The NAACP has demanded a meeting with the NFL hierarchy, which represents the interests of the billionaire owners, on behalf of Kaepernick. Many held signs saying “I am with Kap.”

Kaepernick, who is Black, sent shock waves throughout the NFL, other sports leagues and U.S. society as a whole, when he knelt during the playing of the national anthem during the 2016 football season. He took a knee to protest police brutality, starting soon after the murders of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, La., and Philando Castile outside St. Paul, Minn.

Since Kaepernick opted out of his contract with the 49ers, no other NFL team has signed him so far. Many of his supporters believe that the all-white and all-billionaire NFL owners are collectively punishing Kaepernick for his heroic stand against racism, which continues to resonate with the public and with fellow football players during the 2017 preseason games.

Kaepernick’s supporters say that this “blackballing” tactic is an attempt to discourage other players from expanding Kaepernick’s protest against racist injustice. If this is the owners’ plan, it clearly isn’t working. Support for this anti-racist protest has now spread beyond just the Black players, especially in reaction to the Aug. 12 white supremacist deadly violence in Charlottesville, Va.

Black NFL players such as Eric Reid, Michael Bennett and Malcolm Jenkins continue to protest against the anthem, with support from white players such as Justin Britt and Chris Long. Just recently, Seth Devalle became the first white player to kneel during the national anthem along with 11 of his African-American Cleveland Browns teammates.

Why Rizzo’s statue must come down

By Scott Williams

On August 21, spurred by white supremacists’ call for an action to defend the statue of former Philadelphia police commissioner and mayor, Frank Rizzo, over 250 people converged on the statue, joining with the growing movement across the country to remove Confederate and other white supremacist statues.

Some who joined REAL Justice had organized a demonstration. Speakers from REAL Justice, Workers World Party and Philly Socialists, as well as Pam Africa of MOVE and the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, exposed Rizzo’s role.

Rizzo remains infamous for his record rooted in the founding and continued Fascism, anti-worker movement, whose goal was to combat white supremacist hate masked in the legal cloak of the First Amendment “right to free speech.” And as the mayor and council members convened a hearing to be removed.

On October 6, 1962, Rizzo was arrested. Then, from the upper decks of the hall, a banner was unfurled with the powerful and glaring message: “Blood On Your Hands.”

The blood, death and injuries are also on the hands of Trump and in the divisive, coded, racist rhetoric that the Trump administration addressed to its base.

An Aug. 21 New York Times article quoted Tracy Saxon, who was part of the people’s occupation: “I’m outraged! I watched my people get beat and murdered. They let Nazis have freedom here.”

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And as we heal, march and struggle: “We must remember to love and support each other.”

By Myia X

New York

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Since Kaepernick opted out of his contract with the 49ers, no other NFL team has signed him so far. Many of his supporters believe that the all-white and all-billionaire NFL owners are collectively punishing Kaepernick for his heroic stand against racism, which continues to resonate with the public and with fellow football players during the 2017 preseason games.

Kaepernick’s supporters say that this “blackballing” tactic is an attempt to discourage other players from expanding Kaepernick’s protest against racist injustice. If this is the owners’ plan, it clearly isn’t working. Support for this anti-racist protest has now spread beyond just the Black players, especially in reaction to the Aug. 12 white supremacist deadly violence in Charlottesville, Va.

Black NFL players such as Eric Reid, Michael Bennett and Malcolm Jenkins continue to protest against the anthem, with support from white players such as Justin Britt and Chris Long. Just recently, Seth Devalle became the first white player to kneel during the national anthem along with 11 of his African-American Cleveland Browns teammates.
By Durham Workers World Party bureau

Aug. 27 — “No Trump! No KKK! No fascist USA!” chanted the militant crowd that gathered on Monday, Aug. 14, just before toppling a Confederate statue in front of the old Durham County Courthouse in Durham, N.C. Next, on Friday, Aug. 18, the people of Durham rose up in a mini-rebellion to stop the Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan from hosting a public rally. In response, cities, counties and institutions across the country have moved to expeditiously remove Confederate statues; many have been displayed for 100 or more years. This was a result of mass struggle. Direct action gets the goods.

Prior to the Durham demonstration, thousands gathered in Charlottesville, Va., on Saturday, Aug. 12, to protest the presence of American Vanguard, a white-supremacist guard member James Fields Jr. intentionally plowed his car into a crowd of protesters, killing Heather Heyer and badly injuring 19 others. The hundreds of activists arrested during the 20 protests at Trump’s Inauguration face charges that carry more jail time than this Nazi who killed Heather Heyer.

The nine people so far arrested in the toppling of Durham’s Confederate monument each face two felonies and three misdemeanors. Meanwhile, fascists who beat a young Black man, Deandre Harris, in a Charlottesville parking lot have yet to face justice. The city of Durham waited 102 years to remove this hated statue, and yet it was reinstalled in the face of protest. In 1886, a year after the last Durham Ku Klux Klan formation, a small mob of Durham citizens bullied its leader, members of their organizations continue to be detained, and the Ku Klux Klan was established. In 1922, more than 100 years after the Ku Klux Klan was formed, the Klan was re-established after the Ku Klux Klan was formed, the Klan was re-established.

This has occurred nearly three years since the rebel- lious rise of Durham Workers World Party bureau, a mini-rebellion to stop the Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan from hosting a public rally. In response, cities, counties and institutions across the country have moved to expeditiously remove Confederate statues; many have been displayed for more than 100 years. This was a result of mass struggle. Direct action gets the goods.

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The Durham branch of Workers World Party respond- ed to direct action after the Ku Klux Klan was formed. In 1922, more than 100 years after the Ku Klux Klan was formed, the Klan was re-established.

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We salute the courage of our comrades, Takiyah Thomp- son, who climbed to the top of the statue as other comrades held the ladder for her. When the rope around the statue fell into the crowd, the people there responded to the fail- ures of politicians to take any meaningful action to remove these monuments to racism. They took matters into their own hands! In a righteous and bold expression of people’s power, the statue was toppled, and history was made. It is crucial that the rest of the right-wing Confederate forces that our movement not just retreat to defensive measures. The far-right is emboldened by Trump and an entire administration that supports and protects white supremacy, and is also determined to keep the rape of the conditions resulting from capitalism at a dead end.

We had to have a hold answer to the white supremacists killing an anti-racist protester. Without this bold action — which has now spawned many more offensive actions — there was a serious risk of white supremacist and paramilitary right-wing organizations continuing to snowball and recruit. We had to stop them in their tracks, and not allow them one inch or one moment to breathe without their feeling the power of the people reclaiming our righteous course of history.

North Carolina’s legacy of genocide and sterilization of women of color: Why the threat of white supremacist violence cannot go unchallenged

As members of the Durham community and residents of North Carolina, we know that the concept and fact of genocide did not end at the Nazi Holocaust of World War II, and is still with us today, as evidenced by the hate crimes recently. Until 2003, North Carolina was the nation- al capital of eugenics practice, which forcibly sterilized working-class women, especially Black women, and added Indigenous and other women of color, and disabled and poor women.

The Klan & Government: Foes or Allies?

If the U.S. is resorting to naked armed force on a world scale, to threatening violence.

First-strikes, is it likely that the peace of the world will prevail?

Read more at http://tinyurl.com/y9t8d8ok

As Nazis, the KKK, and other white supremacist orga- nizations continue broadcasting their racist and anti-Se- mitic poison, and continue to advocate for eugenics and genocide publicly, they enjoy the support and protection of not only the ruling class and the state, but also liberals.

Time and again, liberals and moderates have elevat- ed the abstract concept of “freedom of speech” both to defend the supposed rights of Nazis to organize and to attack those who oppose them. In concrete terms, this values speech over the lives of Black, Brown and other working-class people.

It is more important than ever to crush the symbols that legitimize these murderous institutions.

We must continue our struggle until all symbols of white supremacy have been destroyed. Just as Durham’s Confederate statue easily crumpled and folded in on itself as it crashed to the ground, so can the systems of white supremacy and the capitalism that represents them, when confronted by organized worker power. When we orga- nize and support one another in direct action, the sys- tems set up by the ruling class don’t stand a chance.

Gentrification, colonialism and the people’s right to public space

The placement of this and other Confederate monu- ments in the South was and still is a deliberate and ma- licious show of white supremacist force on the part of the racist ruling class. Durham’s Confederate monument claims public space — close to North Carolina’s “Black Wall Street” — no less than the same ways that out-of-town wealthy white hipsters claim more space downtown for themselves, displacing oppressed nationalities and work- ing класс people.

The city purposefully constructs public benches and then prevents those whose land and homes have been snatched up from sleeping on them. As more expensive breweries, hotels, condo complexes and restaurants claim public
space in downtown Durham, Black people are increasingly pushed out of our spaces and policed. By taking militant direct action to remove the statue, we took a step towards reclaiming public space for people of color and the working class.

On Friday, Aug. 18, when over 1,000 people flooded the streets of Durham to chase the Klan away, police in riot gear did not show up until late afternoon, when they were setting up downtown to get ready for Third Friday Artwalk, a largely white-attended event.

Klan and government go hand in hand

Sam Marcy, founding chairperson of Workers World Party, wrote in an important theoretical book, "The Klan and the State" (the First or ‘Free Speech’ Amendment to the Constitution) to defend and secure the Klan’s rights.

"In reality, however, the capitalist government has covertly encouraged and promoted the Klan over many decades. It is often completely overlooked in current discussions and in the press and media reports that the durability of the Klan rests on solid long-term bonds to the state, and that the two share a common political ideology, for the most part. When the ruling class had the opportunity to wipe out the Klan more than a century ago, it failed to do so. The Northern industrialists and bankers were more interested in reaching a compromise with the ex-slaveowners than with the newly freed slaves.

"The U.S. government capitulated to the Southern planters and ex-slaveowners after the period of Reconstruction conveyed is that the government is forced under the law (the First or ‘Free Speech’ Amendment to the Constitution) to defend and secure the Klan’s rights. By taking militant direct action to remove the statue, we took a step towards reclaiming public space for people of color and the working class.

The violence against Black people which had begun on a minimal scale during Reconstruction began to take form in Oklahoma for the first time in many years found an unexpected response in the form of what we would now call self-defense. (This book can be read online at www.workers.org/marcy/klan/)

"Nothing so much emphasizes the need for an independent citizens’ militia composed of the Black people and poor whites. It also left them politically defenseless and deprived the Black population of economic power by failing to grant the newly emancipated people the land which they had tilled for centuries.

"The violence against Black people which had begun on a minimal scale during Reconstruction began to take form in Oklahoma for the first time in many years found an unexpected response in the form of what we would now call self-defense. (This book can be read online at www.workers.org/marcy/klan/)

Timeline of Durham developments:

August 14: Takayah Thompson and other Freedom Fighters tore down Confederate statue in Durham.

August 15: Following a press conference, Thompson was arrested and charged with two felonies and three misdemeanors. The Durham County Sheriff's office began conducting raids of local organizers’ homes.

August 16: Loan Tran and Dante Strobino were arrested and charged while in court supporting Thompson. Peter Gilbert was arrested at his workplace. White supremacists appeared in the court’s parking decks, startling the crowd.

August 17: “Arrest Me, Too” solidarity event was held in front of the Durham County Courthouse. Nearly 100 people volunteered to turn themselves in, saying, “If they are guilty of fighting white supremacy, I am guilty too.” The sheriff refused to arrest anyone who was not invited. Four people, but took those with warrants: Elena Everett, Raul Jimenez and Zan Caldwell. Later that day, Taylor Cook turned herself in.

August 18: A “#DefendDurham: Pack the Court” event was held in support of the four additional Freedom Fighters who had been arrested and charged.

August 18: Reports of a KKK rally were heard in Durham. A mini uprising of nearly 2,000 people, many of them community members, flooded the streets to #DefendDurham. The courthouse, banks, schools and other businesses closed for the day. A small handful of KKK members rounded into the courthouse. Riot cops showed force and arrested one demonstrator: #DefendDurham formed at a meeting of many left and progressive organizations in unity, vowing to defend and support one another.

Looking Ahead: September 12 — Court date in Durham for all organizers.

We demand:

1. That the Durham County Commissioners, Durham Sheriff’s office and District Attorney’s office drop all the charges and stop investigating anti-racist activists involved with the Aug. 14 action.

2. That the city of Charlotte＿drop all charges against anti-racist protesters from Aug. 12.

3. That North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper expedite the removal of all Confederate displays as an immediately.

4. That the Durham County Commissioners and City Council members attend public forums to allow the community to speak out on their concerns about public Confederate displays.

5. Abolish the police, prisons, ICE and the Pentagon! Tear down all institutions of white supremacy!

Black Lives Matter

Funds are urgently needed! Donate at www.patreon.com/www

Support self-determination and the right of oppressed people to militant direct action and self-defense!

Workers World Party has a proud history of supporting the right of oppressed people, particularly Black people in the South, to defend themselves against the state and white supremacist forces. WWP historically supported the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, along with the Brown Berets and other organizations of the oppressed.

Malloy, a Black militant activist for self-defense, sent letters from prison in 1962, requesting support. In response, WWP formed the Monroe Defense Committee, to build national support for armed Black militants in Monroe, N.C., including Robert F. Williams and Mabel Williams. They were building community self-defense in the tradition of the Deacons for Defense who established chapters in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama in 1964-1965. The Williams had formed armed barricades in their house to defend themselves from racists. They eventually had to flee to Cuba, then later moved to China.

In this period, it is important to note that it was comrade Takayah Thompson — a young, queer, Black woman — who took militant direct action that helped to bring this statue down. As communists, we believe that self-determination must be supported in practice, not just in theory. This means supporting the leadership of women of color, people of color and gender nonconforming people. It includes organizing in their defense when their leadership ignites violent state and vigilante repression. The leadership of the most oppressed is paramount. It is the critical and central component of maximizing solidarity and unity — both in the immediate tasks that our movement faces, and on the long road to building a socialist revolution.

The events of the last few weeks in Charlottesville and Durham underscore what we face in the new political period. There are several lessons that can be drawn here.

The sections of the ruling class which elevated Trump to the presidency have emboldened the most racist, anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, anti-Jewish, misogynist, male-supremacist, murderous scum in this decaying capitalist society. At the same time, the broad progressive movement that defends workers, oppressed Black, Latinx and Native communities, women, LGBTQ people and immigrants, has also grown rapidly — and it has demonstrated a new willingness to wage a militant fightback against these forces.

Organizations of oppressed people, along with the growing Antifa federation, have elevated the issues of self-defense and the need to take bold action to fight the fascists and racists. The Charlottesville police, who allowed Nazis to attack the multination demonstration, like the cops in Greensboro who colluded with Nazis in carrying out the 1979 Greensboro Massacre, proved once again that they and other repressive forces of the state are squarely on the side of the white supremacists and against the people. It is incumbent upon our movement to be united, self-relievable and combative.

The battlefront against these fascist and racist forces in the U.S. is but one front among many others across the globe. U.S. imperialism is waging a bloody war against all those fighting for liberation and self-determination.

In Venezuela, the Bolivarian Revolution, a movement of Black, Indigenous, and other working-class people, is facing heavy attack from far-right and fascist forces that portray political and economic support from the U.S. government.

The threat of war against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has recently escalated. The reason? They dare to defy the U.S. and other global powers, and have developed technology and weapons as a bulwark against the most advanced killing machine this planet has ever known. The peoples of Syria and Palestine and elsewhere around the globe have continued to wage a valiant struggle for self-determination and to get imperialism’s boot off their neck. Victory in any of these and other struggles is a victory for the entire working class.
The struggle is growing for the removal of racist Dr. James Marion Sims’ statue from New York City’s Central Park. Sims, known as the “father of gynecology,” performed medical experiments on enslaved Black Americans without anesthesia, antiseptics or their consent. In his quest for fame, he manipulated the institution of slavery to perform his brutal experimental surgery.

The national movement to get rid of Confederate monuments following recent white supremacist violence in Charlottesville, Va., led local activists to push their new “Sims’ statue down.”

Black Youth Project 101 held a protest Aug. 19 in front of the monument, located at 103rd Street and Fifth Avenue in East Harlem, to demand its removal. Other organizations have demonstrated, too. Boldly, someone spray-painted “racist” on the statue on Aug. 26.

NYC City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, who has been involved in this campaign since 2011, called for the statue to come down at an Aug. 21 press conference, calling Sims’ “despicable acts ... repugnant and reprehensible.”

East Harlem residents have campaigned for years to get this affront to their community taken down. A recent poll of that community showed an overwhelming support number the statue’s removal.

Medical experimentation = torture

Also addressing this issue post-Charlottesville was Steve Benjamin, African-American mayor of Columbia, S.C., who said that offensive statue on their Statehouse grounds “should come down.”

“...[H]eartless racism. He was a sadistic racist whose inventions were...”

Sims performed hundreds of surgeries on enslaved women without anesthesia, antiseptics or their consent.

SF Bay Area drives fascists out, two days running

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Puerto Rican unions fight back against colonization, privatization

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

A colony is used by its masters as they see fit, to satisfy the master’s needs. At a time of capitalist decay, what is the role that the United States has for Puerto Rico? Throughout its history, since the vio-

lent U.S. invasion of the Boricua archi-

pelago in 1898, that role has evolved. In Puerto Rico, the gap is widening between two opposing worlds: the capitalists, represented by the cor-

rupt Puerto Rican colonial government, with U.S. direct interests and the federal government, which has called this body that could be described as a public art commission to determine the statue.

Impelled by the popular movement, the acting Chairwoman, Lisa Donahue from the U.S. firm Altius Partners in 2014 as the main re-

structuring officer and consultant for some operational aspects of the agency. After $45 million in her salary down, increases in people’s electric bills and disastrous operational decisions leading to power outages, Donahue re-

signed in February — after she and her firm were being investigated.

The CBP, which has recently hired Revitalization Coordinator Noel Zamot, announced that seven privatization projects have been presented in a newly created website for developers or inves-

 tors to review. All seven are in the elec-

tricity sector.

If there was any doubt of the FCB’s aim to privatize the infrastructure, the following Aug. 24 quote from El Nuevo Dia, should erase it: “For the Board, the implementation of Title V of PROMESA is of high priority, since the section that, among other things, promotes the pri-

vatization of electric energy on the island, will be contracted out to private companies.

City Philadelphia. This has been an ac-

tive campaign of leafleting, petitioning,

demonstrations and informational events to build awareness of Rizzo’s crimes. Following the confrontation in Char-

lotteville, Va., and the toppling of a statue of Confederate leader Robert E.

Lee, the process is pending the re-

consideration of the Board’s decision effects of the fiscal plan.”

In a study, it was reported that between 2014 to 2016, there was an increase in electricity interruptions. To deal with its debt, PREPA sub-

mitted a plan to the U.S. fiscal control board that would effectively cut the income of workers.org

Mumia -- over 800 pages long – of infor-

mation gathered via wiretaps and other counterintelligence practices.

Police say on government critics became even more common. Rizzo’s po-

lice created a list of 18,000 activists to keep an eye on, most of whom were Black radicals like Mumia. This racial harassment and anti-Mumia sentiment would remain the cause of Mumia’s impris-

onment to this day.

Although not in office in 1985, Mumia can still be seen as guilty of helping to cre-

ate the conditions of the MOVE bombing in May of that year. Philadelphia police dropped a bomb on the MOVE home, kill-

ing 11 members, including five children. Because bourgeois legality doesn’t care about race, capitalism, or cor-

ruption, not his race, led to his downfall from the favor of the ruling 

class. Rizzo’s police were later found guilty of racketeering, brutality, racketeering, bribery, beating illegal landlords and theft of over $400,000 worth of co-

tainers and materials.

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a prominent jour-

nalist and now political prisoner, consis-
tently criticized Rizzo’s racist policies on public radio and in the press. To counter Mumia, Rizzo developed a police file on Mumia.
Galveston, Texas, has tied or broken an all-time record for the warmest winter for the first time on record, confirming the prediction of a warm winter from Houston to Miami. This is a result of water temperatures at the surface of the Gulf of Mexico and near South Florida being experienced around the globe is being caused by warmer temperatures.


Hurricane Harvey disaster: Capitalist crime scene

Continued on page 1

The answer of the Trump administration — and this is not theoretical; it is happening as we speak — is to downplay the worst of the storm. The U.S. economy has way, way overgrown this profit-motivated capitalist system. The ownership and control of the vast means of production by a handful of private corporations that is the mainstay of the capitalist class in this country. And that is the class that potentially has the power to bring down capitalism and replace it with a new social movement — not for reform, but for revolution.

For so many millions, the red-baiting wave that was the mainstream of the capitalist press in the 20th century has more lost its potency. The disaster on the Gulf Coast will accelerate the sea change that is shaping a powerful new social movement — not for reform of the stinking corpse of a system, but for revolution.

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Socialized ownership of the means of production is necessary if we as a society are to have a future. We have the knowledge and the means to plan for an infinitely better world. What we lack is a new generation of workers who understand the corrupt political machinery that has imposed the rule of the very few on the many.

Central to this movement — and this is not theoretical; it is happening as we speak — is the uprising of the most oppressed. Young people especially — so much more has lost its potency. The disaster on the Gulf Coast will accelerate the sea change that is shaping a powerful new social movement — not for reform of the stinking corpse of a system, but for revolution.

"Water temperatures at the surface of the Gulf of Mexico and near South Florida are on fire. They spurred a historically warm winter from Houston to Miami. In the Gulf, the average sea surface temperature never fell below 73 degrees over the winter, reported Eric Berge of Ars Technica. Galveston, Texas, has tied or broken an all-time record for the warmest winter for the first time on record, confirming the prediction of a warm winter from Houston to Miami. This is a result of water temperatures at the surface of the Gulf of Mexico and near South Florida being experienced around the globe is being caused by warmer temperatures.

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BULLETIN: More Durham arrests — Call the sheriff!

By Ben Carroll and LeiLani Dowell
Durham, N.C.

Aug. 29 — Over the past two weeks, 13 anti-racist activists have been arrested and slapped with outrageous felony and misdemeanor charges for their protest of white supremacy in the Durham community. The first charges were in relation to toppling the Confederate statue in front of the Durham courthouse on Aug. 14, and the second charges were for protesting in response to a planned Ku Klux Klan rally on Aug. 18. Most recently, three high-profile activists, issued warrants on Aug. 28, turned themselves in; two others were arrested the day before.

On a hour’s notice, some 40 people came to the Durham jail on Aug. 28 to support those turning themselves in. As the activists were led away to be processed, they chanted, “We see you; we love you.” This morning, the three appeared for their first court appearances and were given court dates of Sept. 12 and Oct. 11.

Members of the Durham community see these arrests as a form of retaliation against the movement at large. Sheriff Mike Andrews recently attempted to prosecute activists with the Inside-Outside Alliance for charges for protesting, Andrews’ attempt failed, and he was exposed for his exaggerated attempts to target demonstrators.

Andrews runs the Durham County Jail. This institution disproportionately cages Black and Brown people. The jail is committed to the preservation and perpetuation of white supremacy.

Under Andrews’ tenure, at least five people — Matthew McCauley, Eugene McDow, Nicky Fennell, Terry Lee and Raphael Bennett — have died in the jail due to the criminal conditions there. Andrews has gone out of his way to cover up these deaths. He has made patently false statements about the jail’s conditions, while frustrating attempts by the community and elected officials to audit the jail’s operations.

According to the IJA Facebook page, “[h]is jail is trying to isolate our community members even more by reducing their ability to half in the last few years and, now, introducing ‘video’ visitation to take up the slack.”

The IOA has held weekly protests for more than a year. Andrews has also lied about the Durham County Sheriff’s collaboration with U.S. Immigration, Customs and Enforcement.

Anti-racist activists are asking supporters to call Sheriff Andrews’ office at 919-560-0897 to demand that it end the witch hunt on activists protesting white supremacy and drop the charges against those already arrested.

U.S. billionaires sanction Venezuela

By Deirdre Griswold

After some 8 million Venezuelan peo- ple exercised their right to vote for a Constituent Assembly on July 30, the U.S. government responded by declaring the hardest economic sanctions yet against the South American country.

Yes, that’s right — just because the Venezuelan people voted in a way dis- pleasing to the U.S. empire, Washington exercised its “right” to try to starve them into submission.

This from a government that got into of- fice through an election last year that cost $6.8 billion, according to the Center for Re- sponsive Politics. In other words, the price tag to buy the U.S. elections which resulted in Trump becoming president — including all money spent by candidates, political parties and independent interest groups — was $6.8 billion. It ensured that those elected would repay their sponsors many times over by cutting taxes on the wealthy, allowing polluting companies to get away with it, and slashing social services and many other gifts to the super-rich.

It was a different kind of election that just took place in Venezuela. The candi- dates didn’t have big money behind them. The 545 people elected to the Constituent Assembly include 364 chosen on a region- nal basis and 181 whose seats are allocated to represent different social groupings: 79 from workers’ associations, 28 retir- ees, 24 communal council members, 22 students, eight farmers, eight fishers, five with disabilities and five from business.

The members of the Constituent As- sembly are charged with drawing up a new Constitution for the country. U.S. big business is fearful that this will further empower the workers, farmers and youth who have been the mainstay of the Bo- livarian Revolution, begun under Pres- ident Hugo Chávez and continued since his death by President Nicolás Maduro, a former bus driver and union leader.

Rockefeller want ‘their’ oil back

The U.S. sanctions on Venezuela are aimed at its oil industry, the country’s main export. For decades, Venezuela’s oil wealth was a bonanza for the Rockefeller-owned Standard Oil empire. It is telling that today, U.S. foreign policy is in the hands of Rex Tillerson, the former head of ExxonMobil — the direct descendant of Standard, which morphed into Exxon and then Exxon. While most of Venezuela’s oil profits were siphoned off by the Rockefellers, there was enough to enrich a high-living class of Venezuelans loyal to the empire. This is the antithesis of today’s “re- sistance,” which has used ever-more vio- lent tactics to try to pull down the Bolivarian government. It is so named in honor of Simón Bolívar, who fought to liberate Latin America from Spanish colonialism.

But while Venezuela before Chávez was overcrowded, about 80% black, and owned by the richest 2%, it had, despite its oil wealth, a majority of terribly poor people, so impoverished and hungry that the US government had to feed them directly — it was called the Caracazo — the uprising.

It was that uprising that caused Chávez, as a soldier in the Venezuelan Army, to lead an attempted coup against the corrupt government. He was jailed but became so popular that after his re- lease he was elected president.

The U.S. imperialists are using food as a weapon in their efforts to return Ven- ezuela to the neo-colonial status that the majority of its people once endured. While President Trump threatens the Bo- livarian government with military inter- vention, his collaborators, the bourgeois- sie in Venezuela, having earlier tried but failed to shut down the oil industry, are now sabotaging food distribution.

The new U.S. sanctions have cut off Venezuela’s access to funds at a time when the decline in world oil prices has deeply affected the country, which gets 95 percent of its export earnings from oil. President Maduro calls these sanc- tions’ “economic war” against Venezuela and vows they will not succeed. The new Constituent Assembly will have its hands full as it pushes back those who would starve the people into submission.

Workers.org

Aug. 31, 2017

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Una colonia es utilizada por sus amos en beneficio de los intereses de sus amos, ya que la clase dirigente pretende desmantelar completamente las ayudas, entre muchos otros organismos. Agregue también el semillero casi inexistente para probar armas criminales a los Estados Unidos debido a la falta de oportunidades económicas en su hogar. Las/os trabajadores boricuas. Las/os trabajadores públicos no van a soportar apagones, aumentos en las facturas de electricidad y los efectos de la privatización de la energía eléctrica en el país, está particularmente amenazado ahora.

Durante muchos años, la UTIER expuso la necesidad del mantenimiento de la infraestructura eléctrica de la isla, pero la administración nunca ha prestado atención. Según el líder sindical, el plan de la gerencia ha sido dejar que la infraestructura se deteriorara lentamente y fallara, causando interrupciones eléctricas repetidas que hacen que la gente desesperada exija cualquier solución. En un desespero, se informó que entre 2010 y 2017, hubo un 402 por ciento de aumento en las interrupciones de electricidad.

Sindicatos puertorriqueños en marcha

El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

La tesis de este libro es que la crisis económica, que se inició en agosto de 2007, marcó un punto de inflexión en la historia del capitalismo. El autor sostiene que el sistema no se recuperará, no volverá al ciclo capitalista normal de auge y caída. Durante décadas, la clase capitalista ha utilizado la revolución tecnológica digital para aumentar la productividad del trabajo para un ritmo acelerado. Menos trabajadores producen más bienes y servicios en menos tiempo con salarios más bajos. El resultado es una serie de “recuperaciones sin empleo” que hace que las cosas vayan aún peor. Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tesis es que no hay manera de demostrar por qué el capitalismo global ha llegado finalmente a un punto de inflexión.

El continuo estancamiento y el desempleo generalizado provocarán inevitablemente un resurgimiento de la lucha de clases que no se ve en EE.UU. desde la década de 1930; esta vez se dirigirá contra el propio sistema.