National prison strike enters week two

By Terri Kay

Prisoners across the country are striking in response to an April 15 prison-guard-incited riot at Lee Correctional Institution, a maximum-security prison in Bishopville, S.C. Seven prisoners were killed in what was the deadliest prison riot in 25 years.

A network of self-taught legal scholars called Jailhouse Lawyers Speak issued the call for a national strike, with 10 demands. Among them are “humane living conditions, access to rehabilitation, sentencing reform, voting rights and the end of modern day slavery.” The prisoners have called on outside supporters to amplify their voices.

The 19-day strike was launched on Aug. 21 — the 47th anniversary of the murder of George Jackson, a revolutionary African-American prison organizer and author, who was killed at San Quentin Prison. It will last until Sept. 9 — the 47th anniversary of the Attica Prison Rebellion, the largest prison uprising of the 1970s prison movement. A growing prisoner-led resistance movement has been shaped by national coordination of direct action inside the prisons. Actions inside the walls confirmed by the strike website so far are:

- 200 ICE detainees at Northwest Detention Center, Tacoma, Wash., initiate hunger strike and work stoppage
- David Easley and James Ward are on hunger strike in the Toledo Correctional Institution, Ohio
- 100 prisoners organized a rally, displaying banners “Parole,” “Better Food” and “In Solidarity” in the yard at the Hyde Correctional Institution, N.C.
- Work stoppage of all prisoners in the McCormick Correctional Institution, S.C.
- Palestinian political prisoners gave a statement of solidarity from their prisons in occupied Palestine
- Revolutionary artist Heriberto Sharky Garcia declares a hunger strike at Folsom Prison in Represa, Calif.
- Nonviolent protest at Burnside Jail in Halifax, Calif., publishing their demands in solidarity

Solidarity actions outside the walls this week include:

- Aug. 21 – National Prison Strike Solidarity Demonstration, 1445 E. Grand Ave, Des Moines, Iowa, hosted by Central Iowa DSA
- Aug. 21 – Nat Turner Day Noise Demo, Metropolitan Detention Center, New York City, hosted by RAM & NYC Anarchist Black Cross
- Aug. 21 – National Prison Strike Kickoff Rally, University of Washington, Seattle, hosted by Seattle PWV Black & Pink and Sawari Mi at Durant Park
- Aug. 21 – Awareness March, Plaza de Cesar Chavez, San Jose, Calif., hosted by California Prison Focus

Continued on page 7
The story of Attica, Sept. 9, 1971, is the story of how the prisoners can be the creators of revolutionary — like George Jackson, assassinated two and a half weeks earlier at San Quentin State Prison. Attica had been described as the biggest dispersion of state violence since the crushing of the Native uprising at Wounded Knee — by gun and pole.

The significance of the Attica uprising as a prison rebellion transcends prison. Attica was a high-water mark in the Black Liberation Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. It was almost the Black Liberation Movement’s Paris Commune, of 100 years before, in France in 1871. But the uprising opened up the question of prisoners’ rights and liberation. From then on, the cutoff, isolated demands became a much bigger issue in our movement, as well as the issue of prisoners as workers.

Revolutionaries never forget that our ultimate goal is not merely improving the conditions under which workers work or making sure that the working class can now and then push the powerful around. The ruling class is terrified of what our Party — the Party had a leading role in the struggle at Attica — 28 demands that addressed prisoners’ labor rights.

This is from their statement: “We demand an end to prison labor exploitation. … Prisoners who refuse to work are punished and segregated. This is a class issue.”

Their demands included: prisoners should be considered workers. The work day should be eight hours. Prisoners should have the right to family visitation, the right to get political material in the mail. Particularly noteworthy, in relation to yesterday’s national strike, is that almost one-third of their demands were addressed to prisoners’ rights.

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Ultimately the repression came. Nelson Rockefeller, the oil billionaire then the governor, gave the orders to push the uprising. He had a reputation as an Eastern liberal, but he was actually a ruling-class monster with a liberal, but he was actually a ruling-class monster with a liberal reputation. He was a liberal and a conservative at the same time. He was a liberal for the working class, but he was a conservative for the rich.

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Workers World Party played an important role at Attica. The Party had_single name - an actual reputation among prisoners, through both Youth Against War and Fascism and the Prisoners’ Solidarity Committee, and was known in all state prisons. We did work, ranging from solidarity with political prisoners and legal help, to providing busses to take prisoners’ families for visits to upstate prisons. We were also known for our political program: ‘Prisons are concentration camps for the poor! Tear them down!’ Our reputation was such that the Attica negotiating committee asked that a leading comrade, Tom Soto, be an observer during negotiations with the state. Ultimately the repression came. Nelson Rockefeller, the oil billionaire then the governor, gave the orders to push the uprising. He had a reputation as an Eastern liberal, but he was actually a ruling-class monster with a liberal, but he was actually a ruling-class monster with a liberal reputation. He was a liberal for the working class, but he was a conservative for the rich.

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. Young people, 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. Young people, 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. Young people, 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. Young people, 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. Young people, 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. Young people, 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. Young people, 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. Young people, 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. Young people, 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.

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Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

workers.org/wwp
Trump under fire – the ruling-class dilemma

By Fred Goldstein

Donald Trump has suffered a series of blows from the anti-Trump forces in the ruling class and the legal establishment. This has emboldened progressive and revolutionary forces who rightfully see this reactionary, authoritarian, racist, misogynist Trump go down.

Recent events have humiliated Trump. His campaign manager, Paul Manafort, was sentenced to seven years in prison for tax evasion and bank fraud. His close associate, Rick Gates, has already been sentenced to two years for his role in Manafort’s illegal activities. These convictions have been quickened by Trump’s legal setbacks. The president has spent over a trillion-dollar tax cut that reduces corporate expenses and goes straight to the corporate bottom line. Profits have been shooting up for two quarters. No boss or banker wants to rock that boat.

Second, they are afraid of provoking a right-wing rebellion from Trump’s base. They listen to Trump rallies, which continue on just as they were during the campaign, despite all the revelations about what a low-life racist, misogynist, bigoted crook Trump is. The bourgeoisie is always collaborative, conciliatory or cowardly in the face of the right wing. They can live with his racism, his lying, his tax evasions. They must always remember.

All the indictments, plea bargaining, immunities, exposures, etc., amount to this: The anti-Trump forces in the ruling class are doing a dance with Trump. Right now the ruling class is trying to weaken him primarily with legal and public attacks. This may change under future circumstances, for instance, if the trade war with China gets out of control or if Trump becomes a complete fascist who threatens their capitalist interests. But, ultimately, they hope to remove him through the 2020 election process.

The best case political scenario for the anti-Trump forces in the ruling class is for the Democrats to win the majority in the House of Representatives. This will give them the power to call hearings, bring witnesses, subpoena testimony and documents, and wage a public relations war against Trump, while leaving the question of impeachment open.

At the present time the masses are faced with three practical alternatives to removing Trump: indictments, impeachment or elections. All three are ruling-class solutions in arenas dominated by the corporate and military establishment.

The radical and revolutionary left were definitely growing, even before Trump came to power. But given the present-day relationship of political forces, and given the relative numerical weakness of the revolutionary and radical left, these ruling-class solutions are the only paths to actually removing Trump at the moment.

Ways to fight Trump and Trumpism

However, there are many ways to fight Trump and Trumpism on the ground, such as bringing down racist symbols, fighting to abolish Immigration and Customs Enforcement, putting immigrant detention centers under siege, supporting the present prisoners’ strike, fighting police brutality, defending Native land rights, demanding women’s rights to re-productive justice and LGBTQ rights, fighting against war drive, etc. All of these are righteous struggles that can be directly related to the struggle against Trump. They can and must be waged.

Propaganda and agitation against the Trump reaction are other important avenues to be used, especially as the bourgeois election gets nearer. This is a time when the masses are open to listening to politics. The real left, the revolutionary anti-capitalist left, may not be decisive in the electoral arena, given the current relationship of forces. Some social democrats, however, are running as Democratic Party candidates.

It may be that the role of the left will be best carried out by a campaign of demonstrations and propaganda. In some states, or more likely local contests, revolutionary forces may be able to participate in elections on a revolutionary basis for propaganda purposes as well as for gaining representation.

Propaganda and agitation during the current campaign have to be sensitive as to how they are dealing with the anti-Trump sentiments of the undocu mented who have suffered fascist-like measures on the borders, including the separation of families and deportation of their children. These fascist-like measures are not restricted to the borders, but are carried out by ICE in immigrant communities and at workplaces across the country.

This propaganda must bear in mind the anger in the cities and Black communities all over the country against the police and Trump’s open support for police brutality and Confederate racism.

It must acknowledge that there are close to a million DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipients who have the threat of deportation hanging over their heads. Hundreds of thousands, including Haitians, Hondurans, Salvadorans, Nicaraguans and others whose Temporary Protective Status has been lifted, are awaiting deportation.

Bearing all this in mind, anti-capitalist, anti-socialist propaganda can be fashioned which not only condemns Trump, but also shows that salvation does not lie in the Democratic Party, a party whose leadership is inextricably tied to corporate and military interests.

Socialism gaining popularity

There is much discussion and publicity about the growing popularity of the term “socialism.” Since the campaign of Bernie Sanders in 2016, the term has become respectable, particularly as capitalism decays and brings suffering and gross inequality to the masses. The term “socialist” got a further boost when Andria Ocasio-Cortez, a Puerto Rican ac tivist who is a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, won a primary against an entrenched Demo cratic Party hack, Joe Crowley, who was in line to be named Speaker of the House after Nancy Pelosi. Ocasio-Cortez will represent a district that spans the Bronx and Queens.

While her primary victory has inspired a great deal of enthusiasm among progressives, it has also bred illusions among some that the Democratic Party is a vehicle to bring about fundamental changes. These illusions must be dealt with by Marxist arguments, and should not be contemptuously dismissed. For example, the most progressive president of the 20th century, Franklin Roosevelt, put down the independence movement in Puerto Rico in the Ponce Massacre of 1934. Roosevelt took U.S. imperialism into Latin America, and supported the Nazis but against Japanese imperial ism, and justified the internment of Japanese-Americans.

While Roosevelt is well remembered now for the New Deal, which granted some rights to the impoverished working class, at the time, in preparation for war Roosevelt broke an aircraft strike on the West Coast, made alliances with southern Dixicrats, allowed segregation to move in places, including in the mili tary, etc. And this was the most progres sive Democratic Party president ever! He ran as the “people’s candidate,” did their bidding in the Pacific and later on in Europe. Before entering World War II, he said “Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars” — until U.S. imperialist interests were challenged.

Only struggle will win

How did the working class win concessions from the Roosevelt administration?

The New Deal was not a gift granted from heaven. It was the result of mass struggle and demonstrations of the unemployed in major cities; hunger marches; municipal general strikes in San Francisco, Minneapoolis and Cleveland; anti-war strikes in Akron and Cleveland, culmi nating in the Flint sit-down strike in the fall of 1937. The defeat of the United Auto Workers, the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the mass organization of the industrial working class was the key to that.

This was the force that led to the Works Progress Administration, Social Security, unemployment insurance, the right to strike and to organize unions, and many other gains associated with the New Deal.

The same is true for the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act and other legislative gains, including the Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision and those connecting gay, lesbian and trans rights. Civil Rights were won first in the streets in the bloody South and then by massive rebellions and marches in northern cities.

In the long run, the only struggle that can bring social progress, and only revo lution can bring socialism.
Washington state teachers vote to strike

By Joshua Hanks
Portland, Ore.

Aug. 25 — Teachers throughout southwest Washington state have overwhelmingly approved potential strikes and work stoppages if their demands for better pay and new contracts aren’t met before their scheduled return to work at the end of August.

Beginning Aug. 17, a strike vote by teachers in Ridgefield won by 97.8 percent. Four days later, Washougal and Hockinson voted to strike, followed by a near-unanimous vote in Battle Ground. On Aug. 23, teachers in Evergreen school district, Clark County’s largest, approved a strike. Camas will hold a vote on Aug. 27, while teachers in Vancouver approved a new contract with a 23 percent raise.

On Aug. 20, teachers in Vancouver, Wash., directly across the Columbia River from Portland (not to be confused with Vancouver, Canada), also approved a possible work stoppage. According to Vancouver’s newspaper, the Columbian, “The union and district are at odds over a few items other than teacher pay, such as class sizes, lead and asbestos in the special education program, and a guaranteed voice in the curriculum adoption process.”

As of this writing, teachers have voted to authorize strikes in at least 10 of the state’s 294 school districts. The strike votes come on the heels of a successful large teacher strike in several states protesting the chronic neglect of the public education system — from low pay to overcrowded, dilapidated schools contaminat ed with lead and lacking heat. According to the Aug. 17 Columbian, “The union and district are at odds over a few items other than teacher pay, such as class sizes, case loads and staffing in the special education program, and a guaranteed voice in the curriculum adoption process.”

The Washington state Supreme Court in its 2012 McCleary decision found that the state was failing to provide basic education and ordered it to spend more dollars on schools. Four years later the court found the state still was not in compliance with its decision. Teachers remain frustrated with the same problems of stagnant pay and crumbling schools that led to the court decision in the first place.

In a state frequently described as liberal or progressive, Washington’s education system and tax structure tilt decidedly against working people and in favor of the wealthiest few. With no state income tax and high, regressive sales taxes that disproportionately affect low-income people, Washington’s tax structure has been ranked as the least fair in the country. (time.com, Jan. 14, 2016)

Billionaires profit, schools languish

Billionaires like Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos, along with their companies Microsoft and Amazon, call the state home. Billionaires profit, schools languish. Seattle shimmers with new single-family homes for the super-rich. Billionaires and upper-income families pour their dollars into new, large homes for the super-rich. Seattle attempted to ameliorate its housing crisis by taxing large companies like Amazon to pay for affordable housing. But the teachers have had enough, and have voted to strike,
Contract fightback at Coca-Cola bottling plant in Alabama

A multifaceted force of 275 drivers, salespeople, merchandisers, clerks, and mechanics walked off the job at Coca-Cola Bottling of Alabama on Aug. 9 in Robertsdale, Ala. Represented by Teamsters Local 991, workers raised handwritten signs protesting the bosses' obscene demands to cut new hires' pay by $6 to $8 an hour and raise insurance costs. They also cited unfair labor practices. Their contract expired on July 15.

“Coca-Cola United insisted on cutting wages and wouldn't listen to us at the bargaining table, we felt we had no choice,” said union steward David Stephens. (al.com, Aug. 9) But even without a new contract, the workers resumed their jobs Aug. 20 because they didn't want to hurt “good relationships with their customers.” As Stephens noted, “We care about the community, but Coca-Cola United doesn't seem to.”

As the largest privately held bottler in North America, with estimated $2.2 billion in yearly sales, Coca-Cola United could well afford to offer a good contract. Jim Gookins, secretary-treasurer of Local 991, noted: “The wealth inequality in America is staggering, and Coca-Cola United is a prime example of how the one percent soils up the rest of us. . . . For a rich corporation to demand cuts to workers' wages is a slap in the face to workers, their families, and our communities.” (teamsters.org, Aug. 20)

Coca-Cola United's treatment of its workers falls flat, but union pushback and solidarity can change the equation.

N.Y.C. construction workers protest sports mogul's lawsuit

New York construction workers took to the streets Aug. 22 to protest against Mi-operated by Steve Ross. The NFL ball's billion-dollar job. The Related company is seeking to complete the second half of the

The predominant council of Greater New York in early March, according to Crain's, “in an effort to development. Ross sued union workers in the Building and Construction Trades

Alliance were joined by several unions protesting outside the Supreme Court

League headquarters on Park Avenue.

The protest accused Ross of condoning "racism, sexism and union busting"

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However, the executive orders were felt months before they were officially

interstate travel on buses. Violence against the Freedom Riders sue later expanded to interstate travel on

an anti-LGBTQ "conversion therapy"; and to defeat a anti-trans anti-busing bill in Massachusetts. 

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He said that referring to the recent anti-union

Story of "capitalist medicine's" unceasing demand

for a ban on anti-discrimination in all public places, including schools, restrooms in every workplace; for a ban on an-

ners, including support for gender-neutral restrooms and bathrooms, and for the upcoming International Tribu-

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Three important phases toward "rerouting"

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only workers. They were many positive references to the suc-

most discovered its mission,

acre "Freedom Riders" by filmmaker Stan

atoned to our labor's cause and show solidarity with unionized NFL players who choose before games to

ploy violence and police murders of Black and Brown people.

Trump illegally gutted federal workers' rights, violated labor contracts

A federal judge ruled Aug. 24 that President Trump violated the U.S. Constitution by removing Stephanie Rosen. He heads a billion-dollar real estate development, Related Companies, which is building the ritzy Hudson Yard develop-


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Atlanta stands in solidarity with prisoners

By Christian Noakes
Atlanta

About 60 people demonstrated in front of the Atlanta City Detention Center on Aug. 23 in solidarity with the nationwide prison strike called for by the National Prisoner Solidarity Committee. They had not been allowed to lock the doors of the jail, though the severe isolation of prison can drive many to feel. Dark figures could be seen in the illuminated windows as the prisoners peered out. Several inmates waved little time erecting barricades in front of the entrance. However, this had no effect on the demonstrators, who directed their attention to the slits of light in the cell doors seen going up the building. According to Kevin Caron, a local organizer for A World Without Police and Georgia Detention Watch, at the rally: “ACDC was built in preparation for the '96 Olympics and has always been used by the city to lock away those the city deems undesirable. This includes poor, mostly Black folks who are homeless, as well as others who violate city ordinances or engage in survival economies like sex work and the use or sale of illegal substances.”

The rally also holds immigrants for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) — an arrangement that generates $878 per person each day for the city’s coffers.

The rally was organized by the Atlanta Prison Strike Solidarity Committee, which includes Women on the Rise, Workers World Party, the Industrial Workers of the World, A World Without Police, Anarchist Black Cross and several community members. Other participating organizations included the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Street Groomers, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, Lumumba Community Inc., the Black Alliance for Peace, and the NBUF, Kofi Taharka, introduced Moore. He explained that the remains he found were of enslaved people or those dead for no pay under slavery. He began to study and explore historical records. Archaeologists exhuming the remains found at Sugar Land have determined that all identified so far were African American and male, except for one, and ranged in age from 14 to 70.

Black activists led by Moore recently met with the Fort Bend School District to discuss the next steps. While the district officials talked a good line, according to Taharka, they would not formally agree to activists’ demands for reparations, for the duration of the strike to spread awareness of the prisoners’ struggle and conviction, Reginald Moore was not. Moore noted: “Yes, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution got rid of slavery, but the exception was for prisoners. These prisoners were forced to work for their labor. Planters had always been able to buy the labor of Black people after the abolition of slavery in 1865. The 13th Amendment [to the U.S. Constitution] got rid of slavery, but the exception was for prisoners. These prisoners were forced to work for their labor.”

By Glorria Rubac
Houston

Almost 100 graves have been uncovered in Sugar Land, Texas, a Houston suburb that was once a sugar plantation that relied on enslaved labor and that was later converted to a Texas prison. The local Fort Bend School District was building a new technology center there this spring when construction workers discovered human remains.

In total, there were several dozen cars caravanned from the inner city to the construction site, activists began drumming. The Brown Berets participated as Blancas Rodriguez Alanis drummed and sang in a celebration of Indigenous lineage. Members of the Black Panther Party Alumni Association carried their Panther banner. Children carried flowers to the perimeter of the fenced-off area. Activists linked as the national chair of the NBUF, Kofo Taharka, introduced Moore. He explained that the remains could be of enslaved people or those previously enslaved who had been incarcerated and forced to labor in the convict-lease system. This was a state-authorized system that “provided labor” to owners after the abolition of slavery in the U.S. in 1865.

Moore noted: “Yes, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution got rid of slavery, but the exception was for prisoners. These prisoners were forced to work under a system that was slavery by another name.”

Moore told of working at the Beaumont H. Jester Unit, a Texas prison which was the Harlem Farm in the late 1800s. During the three years he worked there, even before he learned the history, he said he felt the repression dealt out to Black convicts. He began to study and explore historical records. Prison slavery after Civil War

According to the Texas Almanac, after the Civil War ended, the number of Black people in Fort Bend County was double the white population. They were then legally free and, theoretically, could freely sell their labor, which owners had exploit- ed for no pay under slavery. Used to paying nothing, plantation owners needed the labor of Black people to grow their crops and make their money. To re-enslave Black workers, the post-Civil War “Black Codes” were put in place legislatively throughout the states of the former Confederacy. These were designed to restrict the movement and conditions of employment of Black workers and to send any workers who violated these laws to jail to be “leased out” to plantation, mine or mill owners. The owners paid the state, not the workers, for their labor.

Moore explained that Black men were wrongfully imprisoned on trumped-up charges. “More free labor,” he added. Just after the war ended, there were only about 200 prisoners in Texas, but those numbers began to swell. Some of the convicts, 60 percent of whom were Black, were leased to plantation owners in the Sugar Land area so sugar cane could be harvested and boiled down. Archaeologists exhuming the remains found at Sugar Land have determined that all identified so far were African American and male, except for one, and ranged in age from 14 to 70.

Black activists led by Moore recently met with the Fort Bend School District to discuss the next steps. While the district officials talked a good line, according to Taharka, they would not formally agree to activists’ demands for reparations, for building a memorial and for trying to find family members of the deceased. Representatives from the S.H.A.P.E. Community Center, the Nation of Islam and the Black United Front contend that this struggle is far from over.

At Texas construction site

Grim discovery of prison/plantation slavery

Families remember loved ones killed in prison.

By Jimmy Raynor
Bishopville, S.C.

A rally was held Aug. 23 at the gates of Lee Correctional Facility, an infamous prison in Bishopville, S.C., to remember the deaths of seven inmates killed in April in a riot encouraged by prison staff. During the melee, the guards did nothing to stop the violence and, after it was over, did little to render aid to the injured inmates. It had been alleged that the guards provoked the fight and had been seen standing in the yard for the first days. About 50 people, mainly from South Carolina but also from Georgia and North Carolina, attended the rally. It opened with litanies for each of the seven men killed. As each name was read, a cross was placed on the side of the road in front of the prison. After a few minutes of silence for the men killed, relatives took the microphone to express their anger and hurt at what was done to their sons and nephews. Then people from the sponsor- ing organizations spoke, chanted, and read and performed poetry.

The 10 demands of the current prison strike were read and explained as well. Even without this kind of violence, the day-to-day routine violence in many U.S. prisons is dehumanizing. As one speaker noted, it is worse than the way animals are treated in dog pounds. Punishments such as solitary are meted out at the discretion of a guard. The process to appeal a punishment is dehumanizing. As one speaker noted, it is worse than the way animals are treated in dog pounds. Punishments such as solitary are meted out at the discretion of a guard. The process to appeal a punishment is dehumanizing.

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The rally was organized by the Free Southern Community. Among the demands was the creation of a mechanism to appeal a punishment. The rally was organized by the Free Southern Community. Among the demands was the creation of a mechanism to appeal a punishment.
The following statement was released by Palestinians of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine who have been jailed by Zionist colonialism for their role in struggling for the freedom of their people. They are among nearly 6,000 Palestinians currently imprisoned by the Israeli occupation. Their solidarity extends fits of resistance and hands of unity through prison bars to support the U.S. National Prison Strike, beginning Aug. 21.

We write today as imprisoned Palestinians of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, held in Israeli jails for our participation in struggle for the liberation of our land and people from colonialism and occupation. Today, we extend our solidarity to the prisoners in the jails of the United States participating in the national prison strike beginning on Aug. 21, fighting exploitation, racism and capitalism from within the heart of imperialist prisons.

We begin by expressing our mourning for convicted political prisoners imprisoned revolutionary and martyr of the Black Liberation struggle. The strike is beginning on the 47th anniversary of his martyrdom, an event that organized Palestine around the world at the time as an assassination of a true voice of struggle by the U.S. ruling class. As Palestinian prisoners, we also know that George Jackson was an internationalist and that the works of Palestinian poet Samih al-Qasem — addressing imprisonment and resistance — were found in his cell after his assassination. Today, we write to you again for forge that connection of struggle, despite our different circumstances.

The prison strike is a struggle of oppressed and exploited workers, first and foremost, confronting the unmasked brutality of capitalism behind bars. Around the world, prisoners have only protected their human rights and won victories through struggle. We know that you are demanding improved conditions, the right to fight in court for your rights and an end to excessive, lifelong sentences. You are all demanding an end to the new form of slavery found in U.S. prisons, where prison workers are paid pennies to produce goods and perform services for some of the country’s largest corporations.

We also salute your struggle against racism. U.S. settler colonialism and imperialism practices its vicious racism both internally and externally, and the prison system reflects that reality. Black communities, Latino communities, Arab communities are under attack, facing mass incarceration and a system that seeks to imprison and exploit rather than support and nurture youth and elders.

Today, prisoners are some of the most exploited workers in the United States, and the same ruling class that profits from the confiscation of Palestinian land and resources and from the bombing of children in Yemen also profits from the forced labor of prisoners. Your struggle is a workers’ struggle that is part of our global conflict against the vicious exploitation that our peoples face today. This struggle inside the prisons highlights the deep connections between racism and capitalism and how the struggle against them both can never be de-linked.

The boycott campaign that is part of your strike also emphasizes the critical role of boycott in confronting exploitation and oppression. While our circumstances and lives may vary greatly from one another in many ways, we too face economic exploitation through a “canteen” system that seeks to profit from our imprisonment as Palestinians. We know that prison profiteers in the United States also profit from prison canteens, phone calls and other purchases, and we salute your campaign of boycott. This is the same reason why we call on people around the world to join the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement against Israel. We cannot and must not be the consumers of those who profit from our misery and oppression.

As you enter your strike, we salute all of you and your struggle, and we urge all who are not already committed to join in the strike. We extend a special revolutionary salute to the imprisoned struggle of the Black Liberation Movement and other liberation movements, including Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose consistent internationalism and principled struggle is known and resonates around the world. We demand the freedom of these freedom fighters in U.S. jails, from Leonard Peltier to Mutulu Shakur.

We know from our experience that it is through struggle and confrontation that truth can be realized. Your strike is being launched within the heart of U.S. imperialism, the greatest danger faced by our Palestinian people and the people of the world. We know that your victory will also be a victory for Palestine — just as our victories in Palestine will be a victory for all of the struggles against imperialism, racism and oppression in the United States and globally.

With revolutionary greetings,

The Palestinian prisoners of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine inside Israeli jails, and

The Palestinian liberated prisoners of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

Aug. 20 2018

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▪ Domestics Demand a Bill

▪ Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

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Available at major online booksellers.

National prison strike enters first week

The community demands emphasize the brutal and shameful history of convict leasing as a crime against humanity. Members said this “raises serious questions about the moral responsibility of the U.S. government at every level.” The demands note that leasing convicts to companies was a state-sanctioned practice from which both the companies and the state treasury benefited. One of those companies was the Imperial Sugar Company, established in 1843 and to this day still headquartered in Sugar Land. At its height, the company became one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation as Sugar Land’s suburban sprawl plowed over the fallow fields of former sugar plantations.

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Homeless individuals create community in Minneapolis camp

By Cullom James and Harvey Markowitz
Minneapolis

A camp of nearly 200 homeless people has sprung up along the shoulder of state highway 55, where it merges onto East 22nd Street south of downtown Minneapolis. The camp is composed almost entirely of oppressed peoples, many from the Ojibwe and Lakota nations as well as some Black and Latinx residents. These reporters interviewed residents and community volunteers there on Aug. 26.

Police ride through frequently and lately have upped patrols to as many as four a day. According to Native Against Heroin (NAH), many people came to the encampment because the police had changed their tactics from removing the camp to gathering any nearby homeless people into the camp. Their strategy now seems to dovetail with an upcoming city plan to move the camp a few blocks east to a wooded area on Sept. 1.

“Trying to hide the problem,” comment residents. “They’re trying to move the poor out of the city, out of view, while they’re planning all these roads, all these tunnels.”

Becky, a mother of six, homeless since losing her house in August 2017, explained that the encampment arose as a handful of tents on the side of the highway. The county police would sweep through, pick up everyone, confiscate their belongings and push them off somewhere miles down the road. However, at one point, the congregation of tents dwindled “too big [and] too fast” to be swept away quickly.

The increasing population is a mixed bag for residents. The community getting too big to be bullied out of its encampment because the police had changed their tactics from removing the camp to gathering any nearby homeless people into the camp. Their strategy now seems to dovetail with an upcoming city plan to move the camp a few blocks east to a wooded area on Sept. 1.

“The police don’t police anything,” explained Greg, an older Indigenous man. “They’re trying to move the poor out of the city, out of view, while they’re planning all these roads, all these tunnels.”

Several organizations have been giving aid to the community since long before the police started funneling more people into the camp and subjecting them to more pressure.

Several organizations have been providing food, water, ice and harm reduction for the camp’s opioid sufferers. NAH members stress that, while drugs were always present in the camp, drug dealing didn’t become an issue until the police started funneling more people into the camp and subjecting them to more pressure.

“The cops are telling people they have to get to the wall,” said Jackie, an NAH member. “The adjudgment is a road shoulder, with a concrete wall built down it. Police say the encampment can stay as long as there’s enough space for cars to drive by, so residents have to live as “close to the wall” as possible.”

Community members explained that the treatment they experience from cops when they’re alone is completely different from how police treat them when they are in a group. “[The police] can abuse us and say whatever they want, and we don’t get to say anything,” Becky said.

Samuel, another Indigenous resident, homeless for about two years, also explained: “Trans cops are really bad. They can push you, and they have a short fuse. Whatever you’re going through, they don’t want to know.”

With local support, residents create community

Several organizations have been giving aid to the community since long before the police started funneling more people into the camp and subjecting them to more pressure.

“In the early days of the encampment, we had a weekly vigil held at a memorial in front of one MDC entrance. On day 60, earlier in August, the American Indian Movement of Southern California hosted the vigil. Several AIM members spoke in solidarity with the encampment, and several AIM members were involved in organizing and have since participated in. Speakers from other organizations spoke as well: Workers World Party attended in solidarity.

The Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI) also hosted events at the MDC in resistance to Trump’s racist immigration policies. BAJI organized a press conference earlier this month demanding the private prison corporation, GEO Group Inc., be shut down. Trump’s immigration policies target Black immigrants and refugees when the reality is that Black and Brown people are fleeing from U.S.-backed wars and imperialist aggression in Central America.

The Minneapolis Police Department denounced the inhumane policies that rip Black immigrant and refugee families apart at detention centers and through deportations. ICE repression was linked to police violence, ethnic cleansing and war for mass incarceration and racist state violence.

For about the last six weeks. Its initial outreach came straight out of pocket — a common theme among those providing much needed assistance to the camp.

Karylna Nisaa Borer Nelson, who runs KPM with her spouse Jordan Borer Nelson, said, “[The residents] don’t want to be here. If they could get out of this situation today, they would. But the shelters are full, and people need help.” The two post daily livestreams of the camp on their personal Facebook pages.

Samuel offered this commentary on the camp: “This is a community. Over there, Seward [a neighborhood on the east side of highway 55], that’s a community. This is a community.”

Nelson continued, emphasizing that what many don’t know about the people living there is how “a lot of these people come from abusive families. This tent city is like a family for them.” People driving by on Hiawatha Avenue will look on, but they don’t realize that “these people have stories.”

Echoing this sentiment, Becky states: “Some of us feel like we’re the zoo here. Not only do the residents of the camp have stories, they also have determination to improve their lives, as well as first-hand understanding of the systemic forces which put them in this situation.

A restrictive system and attacks on public housing

Federal Section 8 housing vouchers are issued in Minneapolis on a limited scale.

Participants are given vouchers which cover a third of the rent — if they can find an apartment to accept the vouchers from a program for economically brutalized, poor, working-class and marginalized peoples.

Samuel, the father of an eight-year-old daughter, had his housing voucher revoked and was never told why. Even with Minnesota’s Group Residential Housing assistance, he was left with just $800 a month for living expenses after paying the rest of his Supplemental Security Income toward housing fees.

These days Samuel moves in and out of stabilization and crisis centers, which keep people for only so long. He stays on the move to keep warm through harsh Minnesotan winters, to keep his mental health stable and occupied, to find new resources and, perhaps most importantly, to keep away from the police.

“I know I have to yell and scream and bitch to get people’s attention,” Samuel said. “But I’ve been to jail and incarceration is not the answer. … I try to get treatment [at medical facilities], and they say, ‘This is not a place to sleep.’ But I’m not there to sleep. I’m there to get treatment.”

Samuel continued, pointing at the recently installed U.S. Bank Stadium on the skyline: “There’s a huge stadium over there. It’s widely considered among locals as a handout to corporations. [It] in-famously made surrounding community medical centers cease service for multiple days during the Super Bowl.

“Why can’t we stay there?” Samuel exclaimed. “I don’t think they’re even using it right now. If it can’t be there, couldn’t it be the Armory? Or down by Raspberry Island? Or even the state fairgrounds? We can do it ourselves. Build it, live on it, farm it.”

Minneapolis Public Housing Authority has plans to get rid of its public housing facilities and privatize them, converting to a program similar to the federal Section 8 voucher program. Developers could then have a chance to profit from relinquished public property.

People who would be displaced belong to oppressed nationalities. In the problematic voucher system, landlords can legally exclude potential tenants simply because they’re voucher holders without the protection of Fair Housing regulations. In particular, those in the Twin Cities Somali community — many of whom are refugees from U.S. imperialism to begin with — risk being hit with an acute housing crisis.

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Housing shortages and homelessness could become a problem for more people in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area than those couple of hundred in the camp at highway 55 and 22nd Street, who are getting ready to face the bitter winter.

The demands from the encampment resound: No one is illegal on stolen land! Chant the detentions together! Abolish ICE, the police and the Pentagon!
Renaming a street is a struggle against white supremacy

By G. Dunkel

The attempt to change the name of a Brooklyn, N.Y., street sign to honor a hero of the Black murder, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, involved weeks of discussion in a New York City commission; articles in the American News, the Trinidad Express, the Atlantic Black Star, a long article in the New York Times; and a segment on WNYC radio. It also aroused a victim's attack from Sean Hannity's reaction

Fox News show.

For the reason so much discussion and controversy is that Dessalines was a key leader in Haiti's "original sin" — namely, destroying slavery's hold over 500,000 people — two-thirds of whom, when the revolution began in 1791, had been born in Africa. That made the second country in the Western Hemisphere to declare independence from its colonial rulers on 11, 1804.

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McCain: Whose hero?

When a leading political who has spent his life serving the billionaire U.S. ruling class dies, it is normal for the corporate media to eulogize every act of the deceased and turn them into a hero, sometimes a giant.

The eulogies for such a political leader as John McCain reflect the power of the corporate media and the Republican party apparatus to win adoration and respect from the entire population, including hundreds of millions of white, middle-class, oppressed people, for the recently departed.

In the case of Sen. John McCain, there is an additional specific reason he gets so much praise. He is being contrasted to the current president: a fascist, xenophobe, racist, misogynist, bigoted, chauvinist white supremacist and warmonger in the Any comparision, McCain might look better. It's a low bar that most normal human beings could crawl over.

Anywhere a large number of the oppressed and exploited of the world needs a different measure of heroism. A short review of McCain's life shows that his position in opposition to Trump counts for little when weighed against his life's work on behalf of the exploiters and oppressors.

His father and his grandfather were admirals in the U.S. Navy, big contributors to U.S. imperialist domination of the seas. Far from rebelling against his heritage, McCain became a Navy fighter pilot. Early biographies describe him as a reckless flier, almost a caricature of a top gun, who was involved in five crashes.

As a naval officer, he flew 23 bombing missions against North Vietnamese civilian targets from aircraft carriers. Called "Operation Rolling Thunder," it was aimed at destroying the Vietnamese infrastructure. Tens of thousands of civilians were killed, including hundreds of millions of Vietnamese civilians.

McCain's heroism was aimed at destroying the Vietnamese civilians. On Aug. 20, 1967, he was shot down. He suffered injuries when he ejected from his blazing plane. He was held with other similar pilots, all officers, for more than five years. If you compare him, not to Trump, but to what we would consider real U.S. war heroes, you can see how McCain measures up when the bar is set high.

Hugh Thompson was a helicopter pilot who landed his chopper to evacuate a man who was injured. He later regretted, but only because it contributed to his losing the election. It also contributed to the Trumpist takeover of the Republican Party.

If the U.S. ruling class and the bulk of its media want to consider McCain their hero, it exposes what this class is made of. The war against the South Vietnamese wasflagrant but not unprecedented.

With a similar nexus of racial capitalism and settler colonialism, in many ways, the U.S. and South Africa have had identical histories for the last four centuries. During the 17th century, in both places, Dutch and English merchants and racialized workers migrated to establish colonies. Slave plantation systems, mineral extraction and displacement of native populations eventually built their economies.

There was also a shared racialized, masculine mythology of the self-made man. In a similar separation from their parent nations, white settlers in both nations declared themselves the rightful inhabitants of these territories by declaring themselves Afrikaners or Americans.

Regardless of national myths, state power and technological advances blurred the trail for the expansion of both countries into their current dimensions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The steam engine and telecommunications shrunk the distance between vast territories, allowing for the transfer of goods and information. Advances in mineral extraction moved the Indigenous center of gravity in the middle of both nations more lucrative.

The use of the Gatling gun by colonial armies, in the concurrent Zulu Wars and American Civil War, transferred to the hands of not only longtime settlers but recent European migrants.


As a result, whites in South Africa currently own about three-quarters of the agricultural land, down from nearly 90 percent in the 1990s — about 9 to 10 times their national representation. Interestingly, a 2002 study in Rural America magazine found that white Americans owned 97 percent of U.S. farmland.

From the Vietnam War to World War II Black Power in Southern Africa, white racists in the U.S. have made support for white settler regimes paramount. In the 1990s, the Indigenous territories flooded the ranks of Rhodesian and South African militias. Also, myths of white land loss and white genocide have fueled the fears of diminished representation by a new generation of white racist youth, as evinced in their idolizing of Dylann Roof, the white supremacist who murdered nine African Americans in a South Carolina church.

Far from the hyperbolic claims of Trump and his followers, the president’s con- tradiction of post-apartheid South Af- rica has been the overwhelming stigma in white land ownership. For many Black radicals worldwide, this stasis has troubled the legacy of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress. With the rise of Julius Malema and his Economic Freedom Fighters party, a revolutionary fervor not seen since the death of Chris Hani has returned. Blasting Trump as a pathological liar, Malema subsequently warned the U.S. president to “stay out of South African affairs.”

Trump's grandfather, Frederick Trump, made his family fortune “mining” minerals in the Yukon Gold Rush. Trump is clearly aware of the history described above. Yet, considered alongside his re- cent bailout of U.S. agribusiness, Trump has placed his fortunes and political sur- vival on this shared history that binds the white elite in both nations.
Behind the pension crisis in Russia

By Greg Butterfield

According to Labor Minister Maxim Topolin, the government plan would slash the number of people eligible to receive pensions by almost 11 percent — 4.6 million people — by 2024. Officials claim this is not a death sentence for older workers already on the payroll, but rather an opportunity for new, higher paying jobs through professional retraining.

This refrain will sound familiar to many workers in the U.S. In fact, Medvedev, Topolin and other proponents of the plan are explicitly looking to the U.S., with its cuts in social programs and increased pressure on workers to delay retirement, despite the steep decline in long-term, well-paying jobs.

Russian workers aren’t fooled. Among the most popular signs at recent protests are pictures of a president — a “patriot” — kick the bucket before you get a pension.”

According to Oleg Bahich of the Russian Confederation of Labor, by 2024 the economy would need to generate between 7 and 7.5 million jobs to accommodate both delayed retirees and young people entering the labor market. “We have figures from the same Ministry of Labor that 300,000 jobs will be created next year,” said Bahich. (SV.pressa, July 19)

Others point out that the destruction of the institutions that supported workers in socialist times means the “reform” would have a massive impact on the whole working class, not just those approaching retirement age. The loss of affordable housing and equity, accessible health care means working families will face the same crises that those in the U.S. with senior parents and grandparents do. Also, with the sharp decline in child-care options for workers, grandparents are increasingly called upon to watch young children while parents work or attend school.

Academics and activists agree that the reason the Putin-Medved regime is pushing the unpopular attack now is an impending deadline in 2022, when retiring workers would first begin drawing on a new Western-style, investment-based pension system introduced after the destruction of socialism.

These instruments have been ruthless- lyfooted for short-term gains by the oligarchs. If people continue to retire at the current rate, by 2024 the government will be unable to hide the shortfall or its caus es. “It was not abstract art that were plundered,” noted Dr. Nikita Khrichevsky, chief researcher at the Institute of Economics of the Russian Academy of Sciences. “They plundered part of people’s salary that was deferred for many years for use in old age.” (SV.pressa, July 19)

“If we are no longer willing to fulfill our obligations to citizens of retirement age — then declare yourselves bankrupt! And we ourselves will take what we need from the stolen property. Give us back the factories and oil industries that were squeezed dry by the oligarchs.” (UCP.su, July 19)

Or, as a woman protestin g in Perv put it: “In China, thieving officials are taken in the streets and shot, and their property is seized. We want that too.” (New York Times, Aug. 8)

The lessons of Chicago, 1968

This is the 50th anniversary of the massive street struggles in 1968 during the Democratic National Convention. We reprint here an article by Fred Goldstein from the Workers World of Sept. 13, 1968.

By Fred Goldstein

The violence openly inflicted on liberals and radicals alike at the Chicago Democratic Convention confirms that the U.S. ruling class is entering a new phase in which their reliance upon deception is to be increasingly abandoned in favor of direct force. The scope of violence against the white population (after centuries against the Black) is part of the preparations for stepped-up attacks on the oppressed people around the globe.

All attempts to place the responsibility on the insignificant hired throng of the bosses, [Chicago] Mayor Richard Daley, are calculated to mask this fundamental shift.

Thousands of U.S. troops, tanks, jeeps, and all the other necessities of combat cannot be shifted around the country at the cost of creating great political unrest (to say nothing of the expense) on the say-so of such a relatively low-ranking political stooge as Daley. Nor can National Guard troops be called upon by a mayor.

For that matter, the Chicago Police Department would never dare to “mar the image” of the entire Democratic Party unless it had received explicit orders from the party hierarchy to crack heads. The White House, the Pentagon, the Democratic National Committee and the entire capitalist establishment were all involved in the Chicago operation.

On Aug. 16 Workers World published Part 1, a report on workers’ protests across Russia to stop a plan that would gradually increase the retirement age when workers may collect pensions from 55 to 63 years for women, and from 60 to 65 for men. Part 2 goes into what caused the crisis and why the people oppose the change.

The rulers who rigged the convention and lined their pockets of the oligarchs at the expense of the working class are those who had never fallen for the imperialist democracy. The bourgeoisie used strong-arm methods to brush the liberals aside and thus demonstrated the fraudulence and the futility of imperialist democracy. If the liberal politicians folded up at the first show of force by the ruling class, the militant youth did not.

While McCarthy crept off to the side of the streets and McGovern stepped into Humphrey’s fold, the fighting youth who really wanted and need to end imperialist wars were spontaneously fighting back against the cadre and militant tactics were being developed simultaneously with the beginnings of change in their ideology. Several hundred police, who tried to attack a Grant Park rally after someone lowered the U.S. flag, were literally driven away by the youth in the crowd. The cops were hit with everything that could be thrown and then surrounded by bar- ricles of benches and immobilized before they withdrew in defeat.

Mobile street demonstrations were carried out, during which obstacles were strewn about to slow down police cars. Youth at Lincoln Park built such sturdy barricades to keep from being driven from the park that police had to saturate the area with tear gas many times in order to drive them out.

Occasional aggressive forays were made by small bands of youth in search of police cars and by rioters in patrol cars. In general, however, the brutality of the police produced spontaneous retaliation wherever possible.

Many so-called leftists frown upon these new tactics as “adventurist” and inadequate to defeat such a heavily armed force as the police. But those who are serious about leading a revolutionary struggle against imperialism must take a carefully constructive attitude towards the initial bursts of revolutionary energy shown by the young people in Chicago.

Opponents of imperialism will try to assist the militants to improve their tactics, not to throw cold water on them.

In general, the Chicago events have shown that the capitalists will always resort to force if popular will stands in the way of their imperialist objectives.

These events have confirmed the Marxist analysis of the state. This resort to violence on the eve of new imperialist crises has pointed out to thousands of young people that revolutionary resist ance to boss rule is the only way to stop wars of aggression.

These are the lessons of Chicago. □
Las mujeres luchan por el derecho al aborto en Argentina

Por Kathy Durkin

Las mujeres en Argentina pueden finalmente luchar por el derecho al aborto al 9 de agosto, pero no se han des- sanimizado. No están intimidadas o asus- tadas. Tienen determinación. Son opti- mistas. Con renovada energía, dicen que seguirán organizando hasta que ganen este derecho fundamental.

La lucha actual es por la legalización de la cesárea, tanto en Bogotá como en la semana 14 del embarazo; El 62 por ciento de la po- blación apoya la reforma. La cámara baja del Congreso argentino había aprobado esa ley el 14 de junio, en respuesta al movimiento de masas. Sin embargo, el Senado, el cual es más conservador, por muy poco derrotó la legalización el 9 de agosto con una votación de 38-31; dos senadores se abstuvieron. La mayoría de los votos con “no” fueron emitidos por hombres mayores de 50 años.

La votación dejó en vigencia una ley arcaica promulgada en 1921, que penaliza a los hombres mayores de 50 años. Los abortos legales solo se per- miten cuando el embarazo es el resultado de una violación o si la vida de una mujer está en peligro, pero es casi imposible de obtener, especialmente por parte de mu- jeres pobres, rurales e indígenas.

Cientos de miles de mujeres, especial- mente jóvenes, han estado en las calles exigiendo el aborto legal durante meses. Este optimismo de que las mujeres finalmente saldrán victoriosas porque el movimiento de mujeres se ha multiplicado en tamaño y fuerza, ganan- do activistas en toda Argentina.

Durante 16 horas, a lo largo del debate y la votación en el Senado, decenas de miles de mujeres se reunieron en un fer- ginal en las afueras del Palacio de Con- greso de Buenos Aires.

Protestando por el resultado del voto, las mujeres se manifestaron allí y en todo el país. A pesar de su decepción, las mu- jeres saben que estaban cerca de ganar, que tienen el suelo de su parte y que el cambio está por venir.

Incluso la ex presidenta Cristina Fernández, ahora senadora, que se opo- sio al aborto, fue persuadida. Ella dijo: “Los que me hicieron cambiar de opinión fueron las miles y miles de jóvenes que salieron a la calle”. (New York Times, 9 de agosto) El presidente antiaborto Mauri- cio Macri dijo que firmaría un proyecto de reforma. Su ministro de salud, Adolfo Ribolíni, apoya la reforma, citando los cientos de miles de abortos “illegales”.

La periodista Soledad Vallejos dijo: “La ilegalidad obliga a las mujeres más pobres a seguir someténdose a cesáreas clandestinas. Otra joven murió el mismo día, dos y/o tienen trabajos precarios. Los do- centes, en su mayoría mujeres, marcharon por un salario más alto el 6 de marzo. En el Diario Internacional de la Mujer, 8 de marzo, cientos de miles de mujeres marcharon en Buenos Aires por la igual- dad, el derecho al aborto y el fin de la vi-olenza de género. También pidió una huelga general, que vincule sus luchas con la lucha de clases. Las trabajadoras a favor de las elecciones marcharon con sindicalistas en la nación huelga niciali- tante del 25 de junio contra los recortes y los despidos impuestos por el gobierno. La Campaña Nacional por el Derecho al Aborto Legal, Seguro y Gratuito, una orga- nización compuesta por 350 grupos, ha luchado durante 3 años . El aborto ahora se disiente abiertamente en todo el país, y se debatió en el Congreso por primera vez.

El vencimiento victorioso de una pro- hibición del aborto en mayo en Irlanda impulsó el movimiento de mujeres argen- tinas. A su vez, las movilizaciones masi- vas a favor de las elecciones en Argenti- na han electrificado el movimiento de mujeres en América Latina, donde el 97 por ciento de las mujeres viven en países donde el aborto es ilegal. En la noche de la votación argentina, se llevaron a cabo acio- nes de solidaridad en más de 10 países.

Las redes sociales se llenaron de men- sajes de apoyo y de mujeres que decidie- ron. La solidaridad internacional también se expresó en movilizaciones en Austra- lia, Bélgica, Inglaterra, Francia, Japón, los Países Bajos, España y en otros lug- gares. Las mujeres argentinas están en movimiento y no retrocederán. Las mujeres jóvenes están decididas a hacer avances en los derechos. Después de la votación en el Senado, los activistas pro-elección tuitearon que esta campaña es “La lucha por la soberanía total sobre nuestros cuerpos.” (Telesur, 9 de agosto)


do en estos cinco meses debatiendo esta ley”. Vallejos pone ejemplo del colectivo Ni Una Menos, una fuerza líder en esta lucha. Su nombre se convertirá en un lema. Orig- nalmente, el nombre significa no la vida de otra mujer perdida por la violen- cia de género; ahora también exige no otra muerte causada por un aborto inseguro.

Iglesia Católica: pilar de la misoginia

La Iglesia católica patriarcal interviene cuando lo hace “forzada”, según apunta la reforma de la ley de aborto. El Papa Francisco, cuyo país de origen es Argentino, y los obispos dieron instrucciones a los legisla- dores de derecho para presionar a los senadores a votar en contra del proyec- to de ley. Según se informa, las organi- zaciones católicas insultaron y amenaza- ron de muerte a los senadores.

Muchos de los “no” votantes citaron creencias religiosas. Algunos dieron ra- zones no científicas o intolerantes para oponerse al aborto. La escritora y activis- ta pro-elección argentina Claudia Piñeiro escribió en The Guardian que “rechazar el proyecto de ley... [los senadores proc- lamaron] que estaban salvando embri- ones... e incluso [escaladamente] su- girieron que la violación familiar no implicaba violencia” (10 de agosto).

Nora Cortinas, fundadora de Madres de Plaza de Mayo, dijo que renunciaria a la Iglesia Católica por el voto del Senado y criticó a los funcionarios de la Iglesia por intervenir en las vidas de otras perso- nas y ser hipócritas. Esta organización de mujeres protesta por los asesinatos de 30.000 izquierdistas y activistas asesina- dos durante la brutal dictadura militar de Argentina entre 1976-83.

Las madres y abuelas también buscan ubicar a los niños adultos que fueron robados a sus familias durante las dictaduras y reunió con sus familias legítimas. Cortinas enfatizó la compi- lidad de la Iglesia en estas atrocidades, diciendo que los sacerdotes bendijeron a los torturadores, mientras que las monjas dieron los bebés secuestrados a madres. (People’s Dispatch, 17 de agosto)

Cortinas explicó su posición sobre la lu- cha contra el aborto: “En una ley de salud como esta, la religión no tiene nada que ver con esto... y luego esta Iglesia dice que debemos salvar ambas vidas. ... Pero los bebés, nacidos todos los días en nuestro país, son olvidados por la Iglesia, que vi- ven en la pobreza” (Telesur, 11 de agosto).

Antes y durante la votación, el papel reaccionario de la Iglesia Católica fue desmembrado para que todos lo vieran. La solidaridad de los trabajadores de los abortos “clandestinos” (ilegales),

La periodista Soledad Vallejos dijo: “La ilegalidad obliga a las mujeres más pobres a seguir someténdose a cesáreas clandestinas. Otra joven murió el mismo día, dos y/o tienen trabajos precarios. Los do- centes, en su mayoría mujeres, marcharon por un salario más alto el 6 de marzo. En el Diario Internacional de la Mujer, 8 de marzo, cientos de miles de mujeres marcharon en Buenos Aires por la igual- dad, el derecho al aborto y el fin de la vi-olenza de género. También pidió una huelga general, que vincule sus luchas con la lucha de clases. Las trabajadoras a favor de las elecciones marcharon con sindicalistas en la nación huelga niciali-