



Black jobless rate stays high. 5

CHARLESTON, S.C.

'Days of Grace' hits racism, poverty

PHOTOS: WISCONSIN BAIL OUT THE PEOPLE

By Lamont Lilly
 Charleston, S.C.

Over 800 gathered in the city of Charleston, S.C., on the morning of Sept. 5 for the Days of Grace Mass March and Strategy Conference against racism and for economic justice.

Indeed, activists, organizers and attendees traveled from all over the United States. Guest speaker, Clarence Thomas, of the International Longshore Workers Union Local 10, came all the way from Oakland, Calif. Several of their leading organizers all journeyed together from the West Coast to East Coast, including dock workers all the way from Seattle.

The Southern Workers Assembly proved to be one of the most energetic contingents in the march. National activist DeRay McKesson came from Minneapolis, Minn. Organizers with the Fight for \$15 pressed their way from as far as Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee. The Boston-based Mass Action Against Police Brutality came all the way from Massachusetts. Workers World Party sent a delegation representing Durham, N.C., Virginia, Atlanta, Los Angeles and New York. Such solidarity was an affirmation of our collective sense of urgency.

As old and young, Black and white, women and men stood together, we remembered the fallen nine of Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in strength and solidarity, innocent victims of the racist shooting spree on June 17. We lifted the name of Walter Scott, fatally shot in the back by a cop in North Charleston, in the name of justice, truth and liberation. We honored the countless victims of police terror and continued state violence, nationwide. As nearly a thousand marched through downtown Charleston, our display of unity, resistance and sheer determination could not be ignored. Our will to fight could not help but be heard as tourists and onlookers took note. National media sources kept pace and stayed close.

As you looked over the crowd, there were placards and banners commemorating the work and sacrifices of Denmark Vesey, Robert Smalls and Harriet Tubman — all anti-slavery fighters. Slogans such as “Finish the revolution,” “Stop the war on Black America,” and “Black women matter” were all fan favorites. Along the march, local ministers sang “We Shall Overcome,” while more militant-minded youth chanted “Black Power!” and “No justice, no peace!” As the morning sun began to rise, we concluded with an enthusiastic and thunderous rally on Marion Square.



Charleston march against racism and economic injustice, Sept. 5.

Key issues included police terror and discriminatory enforcement; the minimum wage and the exploitation of low-wage workers; health care, public education, collective bargaining and new strategies toward achieving Black liberation. It was quite refreshing to see such a wide range of local and national organizations actually working together, very intentionally setting their differences aside for the sake of poor, working-class and oppressed communities.

Continued on page 6

BLACK LIVES MATTER

- ▶ Freddie Gray
- ▶ Yvette Henderson
- ▶ William Chapman II

7

KENTUCKY Super-rich push bigoted agenda 3

California prisoners END SOLITARY CONFINEMENT 6

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CENTRAL AMERICA Class struggle heats up 11

THE REFUGEE CRISIS and U.S. wars 9

OBAMA'S ALASKA TRIP 10

Lynne Stewart's message for Women's Equality Day

The following statement from the people's lawyer and former political prisoner, Lynne Stewart, was read by Betty Davis, a longtime activist for community control of education and a member of the New Abolitionist Movement, at the Aug. 26 Women's Equality Day speakout in New York City.



Betty Davis

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN



Lynne Stewart

My dear sisters, comrades, warriors:

I truly regret not being able to join you. I am going to take advantage of some cool, clean upstate air and just sitting on the porch with a glass of iced tea and thinking.

We are in the dog days when things move slowly but no less urgently for that. We must use this hiatus in our busy-ness to get ready to go forth into the autumn. There is so much. Iran, ISIS, Greece, and at home, climate, the growing gap between rich and poor, and the prisons. So much of our work must emanate from the horror that are those death camps.

Having an impact on so many, and of course, sustained by the blood-stained dollar are the jails that deliver a living hell to the younger prisoners and often a death warrant to the elders. As most of you know, since you brought me home from Carswell [prison] almost two years ago I have been focused on the release of political prisoners, the heroes of our movement in the '60s, '70s and '80s. Many of them have been imprisoned for almost 50 years and they are dying; witness the transition of our beloved Hugo Pinell in California.

They are counting on us to bring them back now to the community of hope and struggle and change that they have continued to serve, even behind cruel prison bars.

I believe the time has come for us to defeat the omnipotent police force that lobbies for continued incarceration; to use all the legal tools available, to go to the centers where people can be roused to bring home these sons and daughters. We must forge a bond, a natural one between those who have lost a loved one to the army of occupation and our political prisoners.

So much to do. So much to accomplish. Can we do it?? We can. We must! Start getting ready for great days ahead! Dare to struggle, dare to Win !

Love & Struggle, Lynne Stewart

Read more about Women's Equality Day speak-out at workers.org

WORKERS WORLD this week

★ In the U.S.

- 'Days of Grace' hits racism, poverty 1
- Lynne Stewart's message for Women's Equality Day 2
- Kentucky: Billionaires behind racist, anti-LGBT strategy... 3
- Rasmea Odeh speaks out against police crimes..... 3
- Facing a lockout: Steelworkers demand 'fair contracts'... 4
- Seattle teachers vote to strike 4
- Brazilian autoworkers strike, layoffs cancelled..... 4
- 'After we pay the rent ... the money's all spent!' 4
- African-American jobless rate stays high 5
- On the Picket Line..... 5
- Major victory ends solitary confinement 6
- Baltimore rally demands 'Justice for Freddie Gray!' 7
- Police officer charged with killing Black youth..... 7
- Emeryville, Calif.: Release Y. Henderson's autopsy report .. 7
- Obama's Alaska trip – Big Oil profits, war threats..... 10
- Letter: Deportations, racism vs. 'humane' democracy... 10

★ Around the world

- Iran deal: Imperialists search for new strategy 8
- Marxism and the war in Donbass 8
- U.S. wars caused refugee crisis 9
- U.S. veteran disputes anti-Korea stories..... 9
- Class struggle heats up in Central America..... 11

★ Editorial

- The govt's 'rosy' jobs report 10

★ Noticias en Español

- ¿Por qué sigue importando la vida de Emmett Till? 12
- Por qué la clase dominante estadounidense quiere un acuerdo con Irán 12

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WORKERS WORLD PARTY

Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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Kentucky

Billionaires behind racist, anti-LGBT strategy

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

A Kentucky county clerk, Kim Davis, was jailed on Sept. 3 for refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. The U.S. Supreme Court legalized these marriages in June. On Aug. 31, the high court denied Davis' argument that her Apostolic Christian faith gave her grounds to refuse the licenses on the basis of "freedom of religion."

Right-wingers and social media have spotlighted Davis, both praising her as a "martyr" and damning her with vile, anti-woman epithets for her Appalachian speech, sexual history and appearance.

But behind Davis' media image is a strategy concocted at the highest levels of the elite U.S. ruling class. It is funded by billionaires on Forbes magazine's list of the world's richest people, and it is part of a web of racist, anti-union, anti-worker, anti-woman, anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and anti-environment organizing.

Davis' lawyer, Matt Staver, is the founder of Liberty Counsel, a conservative evangelical law firm affiliated with Liberty University, the school established by reactionary televangelist Jerry Falwell in 1971. The firm has offices in California, Florida, Virginia and Washington, D.C.,

WW Commentary

and an "outreach in Israel."

Right Wing Watch's blog describes Liberty Counsel as one of "the most extreme religious right groups in the country." (June 12, 2014)

The Liberty Counsel web page describes its goals as "advancing religious freedom, the sanctity of life, and the family"—code words for an extremist Christian ideology focused on denying women reproductive rights and health care and denying LGBTQ people the right to marriage with its accompanying economic and parental rights.

Major donors to Liberty Counsel are brothers Farris and Dan Wilks, Texans who made billions with their company Frac Tech, selling fracking technology — also known as "well stimulation services." This is the dangerous gas drilling method opposed by environmentalists.

The Wilks brothers fund projects promoted by the extreme religious right and those in the Koch brothers' political network. Charles G. and David H. Koch are the main backers of the bigoted, rightist Tea Party movement. Their father made a fortune developing a new "cracking" method to refine heavy oil into gasoline.

According to Right Wing Watch, Farris Wilks also "funds a network of [so-called] 'pregnancy centers' that refuse, on principle, to talk to single women about contraception. (Married women need to check with their husband and pastor.)"

The Wilks brothers adhere to the ideologies of right-wing revisionist "historian" David Barton and conservative political operative David Lane who preach that the U.S. is "a nation founded by Christians ... for the Glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith."

Right Wing Watch states that the Kochs promote religious right leaders who spout the view that "the Bible oppos-

es the minimum wage, progressive taxation, capital gains taxes, the estate tax, and unions and collective bargaining." (June 3)

The South: racism, religion and the working class

Davis is both being used and caught between bourgeois forces in the Democratic and Republican parties, which are jockeying for control of the U.S. political and legal system.

In the ramp-up to the 2016 presidential election, Democrats are appealing to some elements in their base by enforcing the Supreme Court's same-sex marriage ruling at the state level. Republicans are vying to see which candidate can capture Southern white workers, and they are linking right-wing Christianity to their strategy.

The deeply racist character of the far-right's strategy is revealed by Donald Trump's immigrant bashing at a rally of 20,000 people in Mobile, Ala., on Aug. 21.

Also, conservative talk show host Glenn Beck marshaled 20,000 people to chant "All Lives Matter" in Birmingham, Ala., on Aug. 29. Beck's rally was part of a reactionary campaign to negate the important Black Lives Matter movement and co-opt its slogan into a clarion call to racists and the anti-choice Christian right.

These machinations conceal underlying contradictions for the capitalists. Bosses need educated, thoughtful, skilled workers to use new technologies being implemented in the auto, electronics and steel industries, and Google Tech centers, especially in the South. Yet, business owners also strive to keep workers misinformed, backward and divided — to prevent worker solidarity and unionization. They use their tools of racism, anti-immigrant bigotry, and gender and LGBTQ oppression to try to do so.

Kim Davis is a white worker who lives in Appalachia, which stretches from northern Alabama to southern Pennsylvania. Almost 30 percent of the

residents of Rowan County, Ky., where Davis is county clerk, live below the poverty line and 95 percent are white. (U.S. Census Bureau)

Despite Davis' actions, which she says are based on her religious beliefs, she is not protected from sexist slurs on social media. Conservative billionaires are using her as a pawn to promote reactionary religious views that keep workers from joining unions that would raise their wages, that oppose women's access to abortion, contraception and other essential health care, and that deny LGBTQ people their rights.

The racism of "Christian-nation" extremism divides Davis and others like her from the growing, dynamic Southern worker organizing led in large part by African-American and Latino/a activists and members of other oppressed communities. This rising tide recently won historic advances in raising low-paid workers' wages in Alabama and North Carolina and has resulted in an upsurge of union campaigns in Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee auto plants.

Right-wing Christian ideologue Farris Wilks is a funder of Davis' legal "defense." Right Wing Watch states, "[He] said, 'There are only two basic ideas in the world,' and they are free enterprise and socialism." Wilks is one of the world's richest individuals and staunchest upholders of capitalist exploitation.

As Karl Marx explained, "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature. ... It is the opium of the people," an ideology that offers hope to workers exploited under capitalism who see no hope. Marxism counters the reactionary religious extremism that opposes justice and the view of a better world — on earth — for workers and oppressed people.

Marxism gives a scientifically based, pro-socialist perspective that can effectively counter the dead-end despair of high-tech, low-wage capitalism, and offers the prospects of a hopeful future — a world built by and for all workers. □



Read this series by Leslie Feinberg. Do you know the history of struggle that gave birth to the Stonewall Rebellion and the modern LGBT struggle for equality and against oppression? Find it at: workers.org/lavender-red/

Rasmea Odeh speaks out against police crimes

Workers World reprints here a speech by Palestinian activist, Rasmea Odeh, originally circulated by the Fight Back News Service. Odeh spoke to the historic Aug. 29 march in Chicago for community control of the police. Fight Back! editors have urged all their readers to go to Cincinnati, Ohio, on Oct. 14, when arguments on the appeal of her unjust conviction are to be heard in federal court. For more information go to Stopfbi.net.

It is incredibly powerful to see all these thousands gathered here to raise our voices to stop police crimes, to demand a Civilian Police Accountability Council, and to continue to fight for justice, because we all have the same hopes and dreams, and believe in the same principles of freedom, justice and equality.

We Palestinians have been struggling for close to 70 years under Israel's illegal, colonial military occupation and its oppressive and racist practices. They continue to terrorize our people and commit brutal crimes. So we know the anger, the

outrage and the motivation to rise up against racist law enforcement policies that push our communities to the margins of humanity.

The police crimes against Black people in the U.S. are almost identical to what we experience in Palestine from the Israelis. This is why we talk about joint struggle, why our responsibility is to support the struggles of those oppressed in this country, in Palestine, and all over the world. We Palestinians and Arabs stand in unqualified solidarity with brave Black community members like all of you, who are rising up against every instance of vicious police violence in this country.

In addition, we demand police accountability and an end to racial profiling. That is why we are here as endorsers of the campaign to establish a Civilian Police Accountability Council, why we are supporting We Charge Genocide's challenge to the "Stop and Frisk" policies of the Chicago Police Department, and why my organization, the Arab American

Action Network, has launched a youth-led campaign to stop repression and racial profiling against Arabs and Muslims as well.

I believe our challenges are tough. Deconstructing racism and national oppression is not easy. Stopping police crimes will not be a simple task. But we should not be frightened by the challenges, and as long as we believe in our rights and the principles that we stand for, and rise up together, we become stronger and more effective. Then we can achieve our goals and beyond.

We stand for social justice and liberation in this country, the same way my people have dedicated their lives to the liberation of Palestine. The struggle of the Black Liberation movement in this country, and anti-colonial struggles in Africa, Latin America and Asia, have always been an inspiration to us. We continue to find inspiration and strength from those struggles and today's, and we recognize that Black Liberation in this



Support Rasmea Odeh (right) at Federal Court in Cincinnati, Ohio, Oct. 14.

country will lead to liberation for all.

Lastly, I want to say that I'm very proud to see that most of this crowd is young people. You are leading and providing fresh air that our communities need to breathe. Combine your resources with the wisdom of the older generation; with the experiences of your allies; and with other communities to ensure that you achieve the dreams and goals that belong to you and to all of us. Keep organizing today and every day until we achieve a Civilian Police Accountability Council. I know we will achieve this goal together!

Thank you all. □

Facing an illegal lockout

Steelworkers demand 'fair contracts'

By Martha Grevatt

On August 14, Allegheny Technologies Inc. abruptly locked out 2,200 members of the United Steelworkers union. Since then, USW members have been walking the picket line at ATI's 12 special metals production facilities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and Oregon. The company is headquartered in Pittsburgh.

Beginning in January, before the contract expired June 30 and months before negotiations began, ATI hired high-priced anti-union consultants to recruit scabs to maintain production in the event of a strike or lockout. The company forced union members to attend "captive audience" meetings — a tactic borrowed from nonunion employers who use these meetings to intimidate pro-union workers — conducted by the same consultants to scare workers into accepting outrageous concessions. These givebacks include a wage freeze, health benefit cuts, and reduction in vacation time and paid holidays.

The USW had nevertheless been bargaining in good faith and was preparing to bring the company's offer to the membership for a democratic vote, when ATI



Robert Traynham, USW 8751 member; Greg Oliver, retired member of USW 1357, representing the locked-out workers and Andre Francois, USW 8751 president, at the New Bedford picket line Sept. 1.

locked the workers out without warning. The union is calling this an illegal, unfair labor practice lockout.

In the first week, workers and supporters held mass rallies and marches in Columbus, Ohio; and Brackenridge and Midland, Pa. On Aug. 20, a solidarity motorcycle ride went from picket line to picket line, hitting all of ATI's seven southwest Pennsylvania facilities. International union supporters

were taken on a "solidarity tour" to visit the lines at these same facilities on Aug. 28. On Sept. 1, thousands marched on ATI's Pittsburgh headquarters, while locked-out workers rallied in Waterbury, Conn.; New Bedford, Mass.; and Lockport, N.Y.

Joining workers on the picket line in New Bedford were members of USW Local 8751, the Boston School Bus Drivers' Union, who are in their own fight against vicious, union-busting Veolia/Transdev. "Our members went down to show our solidarity. Their issue has been a long-drawn-out issue just like ours," Local 8751 President Andre Francois told WW. "When we saw the scabs, we did what we usually do, called them names and gave them a hard way to go. We plan on going back and are going to see if we can send a check at our next membership meeting."

USW will return to the bargaining table with ATI, under the auspices of a federal mediator, Sept. 11-12. In the meantime, the workers on the picket line remain strong in their determination to win a decent contract.

ATI was not the only protest target on Sept. 1. Steelworkers also marched on the Pittsburgh headquarters of U.S.

Steel, another company making huge profits, yet demanding more from the Steelworkers to boost their bottom line even more. "These proposals would take us back to the 1950s," said Dan Simmons, president of USW Local 1899 at the U.S. Steel plant in Granite City, Ill. "We know what [U.S. Steel CEO] Mario Longhi makes [about \$15 million], and those don't sound like 1950s wages to me." (usw.org, Sept. 1)

September 1 was the day USW contracts with U.S. Steel and Arcelor Mittal expired. Local 2911, representing Arcelor Mittal workers in Weirton, W.Va., sent 200 members to the march in Pittsburgh in solidarity. Steelworkers rallied outside Arcelor Mittal offices in Chicago and Burns Harbor, Ind., as yet another statement that the union is gearing up for a fight to win fair contracts. In the weeks leading up to the simultaneous Sept. 1 solidarity actions, thousands rallied outside U.S. Steel and Arcelor Mittal mills around the country.

The union charges that both Arcelor Mittal and U.S. Steel "are attempting to use the temporary downturn in the domestic steel industry as an excuse to strip away decades of progress at the bargaining table." (usw.org, Sept. 1) □

Seattle teachers vote to strike

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

The Seattle Education Association voted unanimously to strike on Sept. 3. After a thunderous "yes!" vote to strike, teachers reported you could hear a pin drop when the "no" vote was called for.

The strike by 5,000 teachers and staff will begin on Sept. 9. The SEA is bargaining against the anti-labor Seattle School District, which has tens of millions of extra funds available in one of the most expensive-to-live-in cities in the country. The city also has a large aristocracy and tax base.

"The Seattle School Board has rejected most of our proposals around competitive pay, reasonable testing, guaranteed

recess, student equity and workloads," said Phyllis Campano, a special education teacher and SEA vice president and bargaining chair. (seattlewea.org) The teachers haven't received a raise in years due to the hostility of the school district and state legislature. They are demanding an 18 percent raise over three years.

Anti-racist demands of the union include more support staff and fully funded race and equity teams in each school to deal with institutionalized racism, such as the disproportionate suspensions of Black students. The administration has offered just a little "pilot program."

The SEA has held several contract rallies attended by hundreds of teachers, staff and community supporters of the 52,000-student district. □

'After we pay the rent ... the money's all spent!'



Sept. 2 — More than 200 people from 60 families face eviction from two apartment buildings in Brooklyn's Crown Heights neighborhood. These mostly Black and West Indian tenants demand an end to unfair rent increases, while management's neglect

of apartment repairs continues.

Today, tenants rallied to demand a meeting and fair agreement with their landlord, Renaissance Realty. They spoke out in front of their Schenectady Avenue apartments, declaring a state of emergency. They told how their landlord "is exploiting loopholes in the laws to double or even triple our rents!" Many explained how their families have lived here for 40 years or more, but "today our landlord tries to kick us out. We built this neighborhood!"

As luxury housing intrudes in more working-class neighborhoods, realtors

Brazilian autoworkers strike, layoffs cancelled

The contracts between the United Auto Workers and Ford, General Motors and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles expire Sept. 15. Workers want to get back what the companies have taken away in recent contracts. Autoworkers in Brazil are showing other workers that it is possible to fight and win against a big multinational auto company.

There have been three successful strikes at GM, Volkswagen and Mercedes Benz, all of which stopped permanent mass layoffs. A 12-day strike at the GM plant in São José dos Campos ended Aug. 24 when the company converted almost 800 permanent layoffs to temporary layoffs. The Taubaté Metalworkers' Union struck Volkswagen Aug. 17 to protest 100 layoffs, 50 of which were put into effect immediately. The union ended the strike Aug. 28, when the company cancelled the layoffs and amended the contract to create a "voluntary redundancy" program and to discuss alternatives to layoffs with the union when future cuts are planned.

Most recently, Mercedes Benz was forced to cancel 1,500 dismissals after the São Bernardo Metalworkers' Union struck on Aug. 24, ending the strike a week later when Mercedes agreed to keep the workers and guarantee job security for one year under an Economic Protection Plan.

"Without a fight, we do not ensure rights," said National Confederation of Metalworkers (CNM/CUT) General Secretary João Cayres. "CUT metalworkers have, once again, made a demonstration of firmness, unity and class solidarity." (cnmcut.org.br) CUT is the United Workers Confederation of Brazil, which the unions in Taubaté and São Bernardo belong to. CNM/CUT is affiliated with the IndustriALL union, formerly the International Metalworkers Federation.

All three strikes received wide international solidarity. The way autoworkers around the world can win is by stopping production so the companies can't make a profit by exploiting workers' labor.

—Story by Martha Grevatt

capitalize by turning rented apartments into condos, even when there are not affordable homes to move to.

Today's rally enjoyed the support of the Crown Heights Tenants Union. Several politicians showed up to stand in the spotlight of cameras and reporters — although some of them have been seen, more than once, supporting developers with long-range plans for more racist gentrification of this area!

While elected officials present themselves as sympathetic to evicted tenants/renters, they ignore the displacement of working-class families by developers whom they make deals with. So tenants' groups grow, with plans to expose what these politicians really offer! Meanwhile, people learn firsthand how the capitalist govern-

ment does not serve their interests. These groups will continue to organize, demanding fairness, affordable housing and to live under a system that protects and guarantees such rights for everyone.

A citywide demonstration by homeless and housing/tenant groups is planned for Sept. 17 by the Brooklyn Anti-gentrification Network. Community organizers plan to publicize this demonstration by tabling at Brooklyn's West Indian Day Parade. Held on Labor Day, the parade brings thousands together to celebrate a cultural and political time. BAN will be there to support working-class and oppressed peoples' unity building. As was chanted at the Schenectady Avenue tenants' rally, "If they don't get it — shut it down!"

— Story and photo by Anne Pruden

On the Picket Line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

Oregon domestic workers win bill of rights

Domestic workers in Oregon, including nannies, in-home caregivers and housekeepers, won historic protections when the Oregon Domestic Workers' Protection Act became law on June 17. Called the domestic workers' "bill of rights," the law extends the basic protections in the National Labor Rights Act to farm and domestic workers who were explicitly excluded, as demanded by Southern congresspeople, when the NLRA was passed in 1935. The Southern economy was so heavily based on superexploitation of Black workers that any law threatening that would never have passed.

The Oregon law, which takes effect in 2016, mandates that employers provide live-in workers eight consecutive hours of time off during each 24-hour period, overtime payment, and protection against sexual harassment or harassment based on race, nationality, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation. The bill's sponsor, Sen. Sara Gelsler, noted that domestic workers are still predominantly low-waged women of color. Oregon is the fifth state to enact protections for domestic workers. (StatesmanJournal.com, Aug. 10)

NLRB ruling on 'joint employers' could help low-wage workers

On Aug. 27, the National Labor Relations Board, which oversees the National Labor Rights Act, ruled that a company in a California case was a "joint employer" with the contractor it hired to run its recycling center. This ruling, if applied to workers at fast food franchises, could give a huge boost to the Fight for \$15 campaign. The Aug. 29 New York Times noted that joint employers "could be held accountable for pay and working conditions" and would have to bargain with employees who unionize. No wonder the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other business organizations are up in arms at this ruling. But, as the Times notes, "Corporations routinely impose rules, policies, fees and technology on their franchises that effectively determine ... how much fast-food employees work and ... how much they are paid."

How will this ruling affect the long-term tug of war that is the class struggle? As Frederick Douglass observed in 1857: "Power concedes nothing without a demand." And: "If there is no struggle, there is no progress." Stay tuned.

Northeast Verizon workers continue contract fight

About 40,000 Verizon workers, represented from Maine to Virginia by the Communication Workers and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, have been exposing the blatantly anti-worker, union-busting concessions demanded by Verizon since their contract expired Aug. 1. The giant telecom company wants to slash job and retirement security while raising health care costs that would wipe out raises. No wonder the workers have dubbed the telecom company, which posts \$1 billion a month in profits, "Verigreedy."

The latest union report on contract negotiations states that Verizon "continues to have only one goal: to lower their costs of business at our members' expense. Their agenda continues to include retrogressive demands across virtually every area of our contracts from job security to pensions and work rules." (cwalocal2108.org, Sept. 3) That's why the workers say, "Hell no!"

UE first U.S. union to support BDS movement

In keeping with its longtime activist commitment to social unionism, the United Electrical Workers union adopted a resolution at its national convention endorsing the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement and calling on Israel to end the occupation and recognize Palestinian self-determination. Representing 30,000 workers, UE is the first national U.S. union to endorse BDS.

The resolution, passed Aug. 20, calls on Congress and the Obama administration "to end all U.S. military aid to Israel; and to pressure Israel to end the occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem and the siege of Gaza and negotiate a peace agreement [that includes] Palestinian self-determination and the right of return for refugees." The resolution also urged UE to become fully engaged in "the movement for peace, justice and equality between the Palestinians and Israelis." (ueunion.org, Sept. 1) Though UE has received angry protests from pro-Israeli organizations, the BDS movement has welcomed its support with open arms.

Continued on page 6

African-American jobless rate stays high

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Despite the unemployment figures released Sept. 4, indicating that the rate of joblessness has gone down to 5.1 percent, the figure among African Americans remains more than twice that of whites.

Historically, since the advent of the tabulation of jobless statistics, African Americans have maintained consistently higher figures for those looking for work who cannot find employment. This is a symptom of how national oppression overlaps class exploitation.

That African-American unemployment rates over the course of the last five decades are consistently double that of whites illustrates that institutional racism is still alive and well within the economic structures of the United States. The massive closings of industrial facilities in the last four decades, as well as outlawing affirmative action in many states, have served to restrict employment opportunities and fuel the substantially higher levels of poverty among the oppressed.

An article published in the Aug. 8 Atlanta Blackstar says "that [the] percentage masks the unemployment disparities between white Americans and minorities across individual states. Right now the national unemployment rate for white Americans is about 4.6 percent, for Hispanics, it is 6.5, and for Blacks, 9.1."

This same article continues: "On the record, Washington, D.C., hit the peak of Black unemployment with a 14.2 percent rate. New Jersey followed with 13 percent, South Carolina was at 12.8 percent, and Illinois at 11.5 percent. Tennessee holds the lowest rate of Black unemployment, which is equivalent to the highest rate of white unemployment in West Virginia."

Compounding this problem is the failure of the federal government, the U.S. Congress and the corporate community to even address this glaring crisis. Instead, law enforcement agencies across the country have intensified the repressive apparatus of the state, killing African Americans in astronomical numbers and placing many more in the clutches of the prosecutorial offices, the courts and the prisons.

Political context for jobless rates

Latino/a unemployment continues to be disproportionately high as well, but African Americans have the highest rate in the country of the ethnic groups in the Economic Policy Institute study entitled "How the Economy Has Performed for Workers This Year." The study, published Aug. 25, reveals that pre-recession and "post-recession" jobless rates for African Americans are basically the same.

The EPI analysis Algernon Austin published in his June 19, 2013, study entitled "50 Years of Recessionary-Level Unemployment in Black America" holds true today: "The figures show the average of the annual unemployment rates for whites and blacks from 1963 to 2012. It also shows the average of the national unemployment rate during recession years in this period. The average unemployment rate for the recession years is 6.7 percent. Over this period, whites have an average unemployment rate of 5.1 percent, significantly below the recession average."

This observation continues, stressing, "In fact, for most of the 50 years, the white unemployment rate was below 5.1 percent, at times falling to as low as 3.1 percent. By contrast, the average unemployment rate for blacks over the past 50 years, at 11.6 percent, is considerably higher than the average rate during recessions of 6.7 percent. In only one year (1969), did the black unemployment rate dip slightly below the recession average to 6.4 percent. Thus, over the last 50 years, the black unemployment rate has been at a level typical for a recession or higher."

The lower rate in 1969 coincided with the advent of urban rebellions and revolutionary mass organizing in the industrial, civic and educational arenas. The repressive apparatus of the U.S. during this period saw the wholesale attack on a wide range of organizations from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Black Panther Party and other community and youth formations leading to political assassinations, forced exile and domestic imprisonment.

Oftentimes economists link unemployment in the African-American community with the lack of fund-

ing for schools in urban areas. Others include educational achievement with previous career experience.

Nonetheless, the upcoming generations of African-American students are finishing colleges and universities at increased rates, yet a degree is still not enough to protect African Americans from the systemic institutional racism still permeating the work force. With no governmental or judicial pressure to establish guidelines and quotas in hiring practices, it is almost impossible to prove in court the intent to discriminate.

The Center for Economic Policy Research undertook an evaluation of hiring practices in 2014, which revealed that 12.4 percent of African-American college graduates ranging in age from 22 to 27 were without jobs in comparison to 5.6 percent of college graduates overall in the same age category.

EPI Director of the Program on Race, Ethnicity and Economy Valerie Wilson was quoted in the Sept. 7 Black Enterprise magazine: "Even when you compare blacks and whites with the same backgrounds, blacks get less employment opportunities. When we say racial discrimination, we often have overt practices in our minds. But it's taken on different forms. It's not as blatant as it once was, but it still plays out in decisions and perceptions about blacks," she emphasized.

Labor participation rate worst in decades

The recent jobless figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and other sources fail to properly account for the decreasing labor participation rate, which is the lowest in four decades. Tens of millions of people have dropped out of the official labor market in large part because of the lack of jobs and the stagnation in wages.

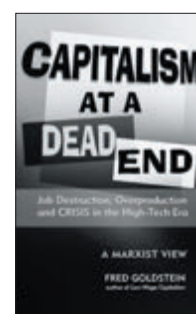
The website of zeroedge.com on Sept. 4 notes that "the main reason why the unemployment rate tumbled to the lowest since April 2008 is because another 261,000 Americans dropped out of the labor force, as a result pushing the total number of U.S. potential workers who are not in the labor force, to a record 94 million, an increase of 1.8 million in the past year, and a whopping 14.9 million since the start of the second great depression in December 2007 while only 4 million new jobs have been created."

Even according to the BLS, the labor participation rate is hovering around 62 percent, meaning that nearly 40 percent of the work force either is not seeking traditional jobs or is employed in the informal sectors of the economy.

In many African-American urban communities, such as Detroit, centers of employment are located miles outside of their neighborhoods. The lack of public transportation and non-ownership and access to vehicles hamper African Americans' ability to reach areas where hiring is taking place even for low-wage employment. This absence of transportation resources, coupled with institutional discrimination, creates conditions that are potentially volatile socially.

In areas where rebellions and mass demonstrations have erupted over the last 13 months — specifically St. Louis County, Mo., and Baltimore — both have high rates of unemployment and poverty. Also the repressive nature of the municipal police and courts places further obstacles to obtaining employment due to the rate of traffic stops, citations and incarceration.

Until these issues are addressed on a national level, the situations prevailing in African-American communities across the country will remain tense. Anti-racist movements, including Black Lives Matter, must continue their efforts to halt the arbitrary harassment, physical abuse and killing of African Americans. At the same time the growing resistance to state-sanctioned violence must expand to include an economic program demanding jobs, quality education, public services and a guaranteed income. □



Capitalism at a Dead End
Job destruction, overproduction and crisis in the high-tech era

For information on this book and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com

Available at major online booksellers.

Due to prisoner hunger strikes

Major victory ends solitary confinement

By Terri Kay
Oakland, Calif.

The Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition (PHSSC) announced at a press conference Sept. 1 that a historic agreement had been reached in a federal class action suit. The state of California has agreed to end long-term solitary confinement.

The named plaintiffs, Todd Ashker, Sitawa Nantambu Jamaa, Luis Esquivel, George Franco, Richard Johnson, Paul Redd, Gabriel Reyes, George Ruiz and Danny Troxell, all held in Pelican Bay's infamous Security Housing Units for more than 10 years, issued a statement:

"This settlement represents ... an important step toward our goal of ending solitary confinement. ... California's agreement to abandon indeterminate SHU confinement based on gang affiliation demonstrates the power of unity and collective action. This victory was achieved by the efforts of people in prison, their families and loved ones, lawyers, and outside supporters. ...

"The prisoners' human rights movement is awakening the conscience of the nation to recognize that we are fellow hu-

man beings. ... We celebrate this victory while, at the same time, we recognize that achieving our goal of fundamentally transforming the criminal justice system and stopping the practice of warehousing people in prison will be a protracted struggle."

When *Ashker v. (Gov. Jerry) Brown* was filed in 2012, thousands were held in SHUs in California. According to the Center for Constitutional Rights, as of Aug. 31, 2,858 prisoners were in SHUs.

CCR states, "This landmark ... fundamentally alter[s] all aspects of this cruel and unconstitutional regime. Ultimately, it is the result ... of a widespread community effort led by prisoners and their families."

"From the historic prisoner-led hunger strikes ... to the work of families, loved ones and advocates, this settlement is a direct result of our grassroots organizing," said Dolores Canales of California Families Against Solitary Confinement, and mother of a Pelican Bay prisoner. "It will only make the struggle against solitary and imprisonment everywhere stronger." (ccrjustice.org, Sept 1)

A PHSSC press release notes, "The prisoners embarked on two hunger strikes in 2011 and another in 2013 that became the largest prisoner hunger strike in history,

[involving] over 30,000 prisoners across California. ... Their[s] is a long-standing struggle to abolish a torturous practice that was instated to repress and attack the powerful prisoner-led movement in the 1960's and 70's.

"The settlement ... limit[s] the use of punitive isolation to only cases where there has been a substantiated serious violation of 'behavior.' The prison system can no longer send people to the SHU because of accusations of gang affiliation or their political ideas and interests. ...

"The settlement was negotiated with the active participation of prisoner representatives, who will continue to participate formally ... to monitor implementation."

The PHSSC says: "It is estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 prisoners will be released from SHU within one year. ... A higher security general population unit will be created for a small number of cases where people have been in SHU for more than 10 years and have a recent serious rule violation."

According to CCR, hundreds have for decades "spent nearly 24 hours per day in cramped cells, often without windows, and were denied phone calls, all physical contact with visitors, and recreational,

educational, and vocational programming. ... Prisoners validated as gang affiliates used to face indefinite SHU confinement, with a review for possible release to general population only once every six years, at which even a single piece of evidence of alleged continued gang affiliation led to another six years of solitary confinement. That evidence was often as problematic as the original evidence ... — for example, a book, a poem or a tattoo."

Under the settlement, "after serving a determinate sentence for a SHU offense, prisoners whose offense is related to gang activity will enter a two-year, four-step, step-down program to return to the general prisoner population. Prisoners will receive increased privileges at each step.

"California will review all current gang-validated SHU prisoners within one year. ... The vast majority of such prisoners are expected to be released."

Anne Weills, a lawyer who has spent countless hours on this suit, said at the press conference, "We wouldn't be here if not for the leadership of our prisoner clients. All honor to the jailhouse lawyers, who were the leaders and strategists of this struggle."

Read the entire article at workers.org.

'Days of Grace' hits racism, poverty

Continued from page 1

Keynote speaker, the Rev. William Barber, president of the North Carolina NAACP, took attendees to the mountaintop of truth and grace. "We're in the embryonic stages of the third reconstruction," Barber said, noting that many of the same issues from 100 years ago are still with us today. "The first consciousness we have to change is the consciousness of the people," he said, noting that it will take a mass movement to move state legislatures to win progressive concessions for the oppressed.

Clarence Thomas gave a stirring speech calling for workers to shut down the economy, mentioning the recent May Day shutdown of the docks on the West Coast.

Though supporters of presidential candidate Bernie Sanders were in attendance, guest speakers and conference organizers reminded the people that neither Republicans nor Democrats will grant the poor and working class genuine people power — a valid point that was carefully articulated later in the day.

A solidarity message from the National Network on Cuba was read from the stage.

Working-class unity not usually seen in the South

Following the march was a mass con-

Lamont Lilly,
Louisha Barnett and
Johnnie Stevens

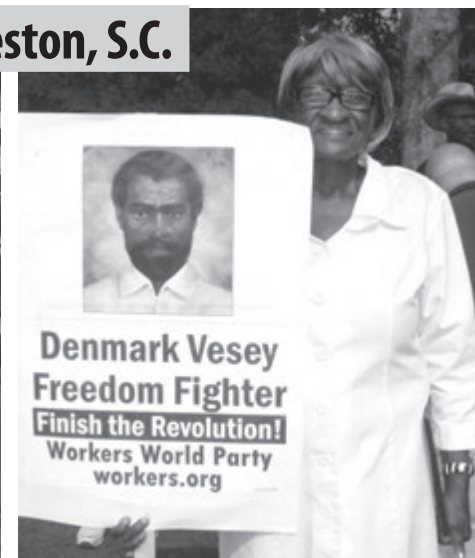
vening at the International Longshoremen Association Hall on Morrison Drive that hosted workshops, vendors and teach-ins. Angaza Laughinghouse, Vice-President of the United Electrical Workers Local 150 and Black Workers for Justice, led a session discussing the economic plight of Southern workers who are mostly un-unionized and without collective bargaining.

Local Black Lives Matter organizer Muhiyyidin d'Baha conducted a teach-in on "Strategizing Against Police Terror." T-shirts bearing the images of Denmark Vesey and the 1739 Stono Rebellion, the largest rebellion in the colonies led by slaves outside Charleston, were quite inspiring.

During the Sept. 6 final plenary, Ajamu Dillahunt, long-time organizer with Black Workers for Justice, reminded us, "This march was very unique. We had the Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power Movement, Black Lives Matter and the Fight for



Charleston, S.C.



PHOTOS: WISCONSIN BAIL OUT THE PEOPLE

On the Picket Line continued from page 5

S.F. Letter Carriers against jail expansion

Letter carriers in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area took a stand against jail expansion and mass incarceration on Sept. 2. The resolution passed by the Letter Carriers (NALC), Golden Gate Branch 214, opposes a proposal by the San Francisco sheriff to construct a new jail there, calling it "costly and unnecessary."

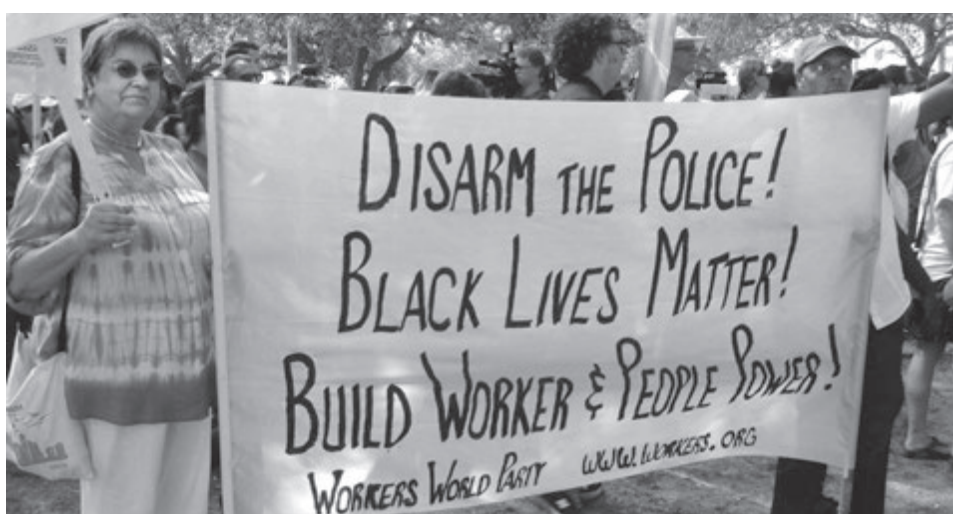
"The reality is that San Francisco already has too much jail space," the resolution notes, citing the city's continually

declining jail population and glut of vacant jail cells. The union calls instead for sentencing reform, crime prevention measures and pretrial diversion, which "have proven to be best for keeping families together, stabilizing communities, and preparing prisoners for a productive life on the outside." The NALC local joins a growing list of groups opposing new jail construction, including the United Educators of San Francisco, the National Lawyers Guild, the Coalition on Homelessness and the S.F. Tenants Union. (Read the full resolution at workers.org.)



MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. **Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination** Larry Holmes • **Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy • **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** Leilani Dowell • **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead • **Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights** Imani Henry • **Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad • **Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal • **Racism & Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales • **Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions** Pat Chin • **Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation** Consuela Lee • **Are Conditions Ripe Again Today?** Anniversary of 1965 Watts Rebellion John Parker
Cover graphic: Sahu Barron
Available at Amazon and other bookstores.



Baltimore rally demands 'Justice for Freddie Gray!'

By Colleen Gillan
Baltimore

About 100 protesters rallied outside the Clarence Mitchell Courthouse in Baltimore on Sept. 2 in a protest to demand justice for Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old Black man who died in the custody of Baltimore cops on April 19. The protest was called by the Baltimore People's Power Assembly.

April 2 marked the first pretrial hearing in the case of the six police officers charged in Gray's death. Three major defense motions were being decided upon. The first was that State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby, who was elected to her position, be dismissed from the case. The second was that the charges be dismissed against the officers who killed Gray, and the third was that the cops be tried separately.

The protesters gathered at 8 a.m., to coincide with the start of the hearing. Many people shared their testimonies of living in fear of being brutalized by the police.

After the rally, a group of about 50 protesters marched downtown and blocked a major intersection. As they linked arms across the street and began to face off with the police, one protester, Kwame Rose, was attacked by police.



Rev. C.D. Witherspoon speaks outside of Sept. 2 hearing.

Rose had fallen behind and then been hit by a car, which some said was a police vehicle. He was handcuffed and held down by four officers, even though witnesses say he was not resisting in any way and had been injured by the car that hit him. As he lay on the street handcuffed, police held a Taser to his back and repeatedly screamed, "Do you want to get Tased? Is that what you want?"

Rose yelled for medical attention and

received none. Instead, he was dragged into a police van, and it wasn't until the protesters demanded multiple times for the police to allow him medical attention that an ambulance arrived. He was taken away in an ambulance and was later transferred to Baltimore's Central Booking, where he was released on bail later that night.

At 6:30 p.m., protesters gathered again at the courthouse for a rally led by the

family of Tyrone West, who had been beaten to death by Baltimore cops in 2013. His family is still seeking justice, two years later.

The speakers testified about the violence they had faced at the hands of the police; demanded justice for Freddie Gray, Tyrone West and all victims of police brutality; and included some poetry and creative expression.

David Card of "Fight Imperialism, Stand Together" said, "The only reason that the six officers were indicted was because of the power of the people in the streets, and the only thing that will see them convicted and jailed is if we continue to stay in the streets and fight for justice."

As the rally came to a close, the crowd was optimistic, having just received news that the judge had denied the motion to drop all charges against the officers and also denied the motion to dismiss Marilyn Mosby from the case. He approved the motion for the officers to be tried separately, however.

These were some small but important victories and a step forward in what will be a long and arduous struggle for justice for Freddie Gray and all victims of police brutality. □

Police officer charged with killing Black youth



William Chapman II

By Kathy Durkin

A police officer in Portsmouth, Va., has been charged with murder in the deliberate and senseless killing of African-American youth, William Chapman II. A grand jury indicted officer Stephen Rankin on Sept. 3 for first-degree murder and using a firearm to commit a felony, announced Commonwealth Attorney Stephanie Morales.

Rankin, who is white, fatally shot the unarmed 18-year-old Chapman in a Walmart parking lot in Portsmouth on April 22. Medical Examiner Donna Price ruled the death a homicide. The Virginian-Pilot newspaper obtained the autopsy report, which showed that the slain youth had been shot in the face and chest from a distance. It noted that his hands were handcuffed behind his back.

Jon Babineau, a Chapman family attorney, calling the indictment "unprecedented," said that the evidence and facts were so significant that the Commonwealth charged Rankin with the highest charge of first-degree murder, "which as an essential element includes premeditation." (Virginian-Pilot, Sept. 4)

Sally Chapman, the slain youth's mother, was "thankful" and "felt justified" by the indictment, saying "Justice, justice, justice." Earl Lewis, another relative, said, "Justice has been served, and it has been shown that black lives matter in Portsmouth, Virginia." (Atlanta Blackstar, Sept. 4)

Rankin had a history of using lethal force. When he gunned down unarmed 26-year-old Kazakh Kirill Denyakin in 2011, a grand jury absolved him of responsibility for the death. The June 1 Guardian newspaper says that he was then removed from street patrols for three years.

Rankin was put on administrative leave after shooting Chapman, but only after his indictment did police officials fire him. Babineau criticized police brass for allowing Rankin to stay on the job, first after shooting Denyakin, and then after killing Chapman.

A Navy veteran and former Marine Corps martial arts expert who served in Iraq, Rankin was said to be "dangerous" by police commanders. After he gunned down Denyakin, Rankin showed no remorse, writing: "When I was in Iraq, that would have been a good shoot. ... Nobody would have given it a second thought." (Atlanta Blackstar) He has posted racist pro-lynching and anti-Serbian, pro-Nazi images on social media.

Activism matters!

Sally Chapman, whose innocent son was "murdered for no reason," has steadfastly pushed for answers and accountability for his death. Yet, she was mistreated, too, while investigating what happened. When she sought information at Walmart's regarding the store's allegation of her son's "shoplifting" that fatal night — which she says he never did — and requested the surveillance video, managers called the police to eject her.

Six days after Chapman's death, James Boyd, president of the NAACP's Ports-

Release Yvette Henderson's autopsy report

Emeryville, Calif.

Family and community supporters seeking justice for Yvette Henderson converged on the Emeryville, Calif., City Council on Sept. 1, demanding that the council call on the Alameda County Coroner to release Henderson's autopsy report. The action was organized by the Anti Police-Terror Project.

At least 30 people spoke during the council's public comment period, each demanding the release of the report and the demilitarization of Emeryville's police department, including the removal of AR-15 rifles and other assault weapons from their arsenal. In a door-knocking event the previous weekend, members of "Showing Up for Racial Justice" launched a petition campaign that received overwhelming support from Emeryville residents.

Henderson, a Black woman, mother of four and grandmother, was killed in Oakland, Calif., on Feb. 3 by Emeryville police,



Cat Brooks from the Anti Police-Terror Project at Emeryville City Council meeting, Sept. 1.

who used weapons including an AR-15. An employee at the Emeryville Home Depot had accused her of shoplifting. Henderson had sustained a head injury from a Home Depot security guard and requested an ambulance. When police came instead, she wound up fleeing to Hollis Street, just inside Oakland city limits, where she was shot and killed.

— Caption and photo by Terri Kay

mouth chapter, expressed the community's outrage and anger at "what's been going on in our community for the last couple of months. They want answers and we want answers!" (13newsnow, April 28)

Boyd condemned Chapman's brutal death and the March 24 Portsmouth police killing of Walter Brown III, a 29-year-old African American. Despite "official" investigations, no one has been charged in Brown's death.

Press conferences and protests have been held with Chapman's family members, students and other community supporters, calling for justice for the slain youth. Demonstrators rallied on May 1 in Walmart's parking lot on Frederick Boulevard, site of his death. They chanted and carried signs saying, "Black lives matter!" "End police brutality!" and "No justice, no peace!"

Some 100 students and faculty members assembled outside Webb Center at Old Dominion University on Sept. 1, to support the Black Lives Matter movement. They distributed leaflets listing

the names of African Americans who have been killed by police and whose stories are being told on social media at #BlackLivesMatter.

Samantha Conyers, president of the school's NAACP chapter, which organized the activity, stated, "We're here to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives due to police brutality," reported the Sept. 5 Mace & Crown, the student newspaper.

Chapman was among those honored. Sally Chapman and Earl Lewis spoke to the group about the importance of activism in their communities. Lewis emphasized: "We just want justice. That's what this is all about."

The influence and strength of the national Black Lives Matter movement doubtlessly contributed to the indictment of Rankin — in addition to the local protests and family persistence. The beginning of justice for Chapman's young life was obtained. Now, the struggle will be to ensure that Rankin is found guilty and imprisoned — and that there is justice for Walter Brown, too. □

Iran deal

Imperialists search for new strategy

By Deirdre Griswold

What made crucial U.S. senators get behind the Iran nuclear deal?

The agreement was the product of negotiations between the Iranian government and what are called the P5+1 — the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany. Four of the six are imperialist countries that have fought major wars among themselves to recarve the world: the U.S., Britain, France and Germany.

Just before the Obama administration announced that it had secured enough votes in Congress to keep its political opponents from shooting down the deal, we wrote in *Workers World* that the agreement was generally supported by the U.S. imperialist ruling class.

Two days after that, the newspaper that speaks most authoritatively for the billionaire corporations and banks on Wall Street and their policy makers revealed what had happened to tie down the votes in Congress that Obama needed.

In a front-page story in the Sept. 3 *New York Times*, Carl Hulse and David M. Herszenhorn wrote from Washington:

“Just before the Senate left town for its August break, a dozen or so undecided Democrats met in the Capitol with the senior diplomats from Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia who delivered a blunt joint message: Their nuclear agreement with Iran was the best they could expect. The five world powers had no intention of returning to the negotiating table. ...

“For many if not most Democrats, it was that message that ultimately solidified their decisions, leading to President Obama on Wednesday securing enough

votes to put the agreement in place over fierce and united Republican opposition. One after another, lawmakers pointed to the warnings from foreign leaders that their own sanctions against Iran would be lifted regardless of what the United States did.”

Once Obama announced that Congress couldn't nix the deal, Gen. Colin Powell, a Republican who had once been chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and then secretary of state under George Bush, also endorsed it.

This writer cannot recall any previous instance of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China in a bloc telling U.S. politicians they would no longer go along with sanctions that had been imposed mainly through Washington's pressure.

This certainly has never happened in the 55 years of sanctions on Cuba, despite yearly U.N. General Assembly resolutions to end the blockade, in which Washington usually could count on only one or two other votes against the rest of the world. Of course, China and the USSR, later Russia, never joined in the sanctions against Cuba.

The unprecedented intervention in favor of the Iran deal by the five countries was of course welcomed — and presumably engineered — by the Obama administration, which had faced stiff, although largely demagogic, Republican opposition.

Two parties, one ruling class

Most liberal media in this country portray the Democratic Party as the party of the “people” and the Republicans as the party of big business. The truth is quite different. Both are really parties of big business and have served the interests of the super-rich well. When it comes to for-

eign policy — and especially the launching of aggression to facilitate imperialist plunder — they have always joined together in waving the flag and voting funds for war.

Republican and Democratic administrations have alternated in launching these wars, with the enthusiastic support of the party out of office.

But right now, the imperialists are in a big mess in Southwest Asia and Northern Africa. Their costly wars against Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya may have pumped up the profits of the military industries, but they have yielded little else except immense suffering of the people, completely unstable puppet regimes and an unprecedented flood of desperate refugees into Europe.

Ever since the Iranian Revolution of 1979 overthrew the Shah, a puppet put on the throne by a CIA coup, both U.S. capitalist parties have stoked hatred against Iran. But Iran has survived, even under sanctions, and imperialist efforts at regime change have not succeeded.

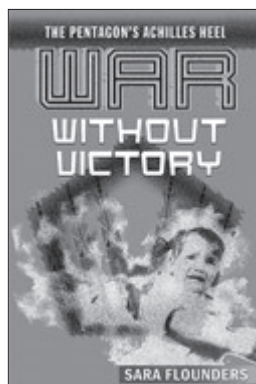
Politics in the imperialist countries are so geared to pumping up big-power chauvinism that it seems easier for the capitalist parties to start a war than to

back off from one, even when they know it will only blow back on them. In this case, however, that's what their imperialist masters want the politicians to do, at least for now.

It is clear that the foreign policy establishment is trying to come up with a new strategy that will boost Wall Street's fortunes in this strategic area. That's not easy. While the U.S. and its European imperialist allies have often joined in bombing and/or invading countries in an attempt to set up neocolonial regimes, they are also in cutthroat competition with one another, made all the fiercer by worldwide capitalist economic stagnation.

Moreover, all the previous Pentagon interventions have only turned more and more of the targeted peoples against them.

The working class in the United States — the 99% — has the same enemy as do the peoples of Iran, Libya, Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq: the imperialist plutocrats. These robbers will do anything to boost their profits, from paying below-minimum wages at home to laying waste to whole countries. A setback to their plans would be a welcome development for all workers and oppressed peoples. □



WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

“By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds insight on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity.”

— Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,

President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009;

Foreign Minister of Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

Available at bookstores around the country.

PentagonAchillesHeel.com

Marxism and the war in Donbass

Borotba organization spokesperson Victor Shapinov wrote a comprehensive analysis that aims to show that revolutionary and workers' parties should support the Donbass rebellion against the Kiev regime and its Western imperialist backers, rather than taking a neutral position. The full article can be found at tinyurl.com/odj9sg4. Below we publish brief excerpts from Shapinov's conclusions:

“War is nothing more than the continuation of policy by other means,” wrote the military theorist Carl von Clausewitz. This statement is recognized approvingly by the classics of Marxism.

What are the policies continued by Kiev and Donbass?

Policies in Kiev

The policies of Kiev in the civil war are a logical continuation of the policies of the Maidan. This has several components:

1. “European integration” and subordination to imperialism. The first slogan of the Maidan was so-called “European integration,” which in economic terms means the surrender of Ukrainian markets to European corporations, the transformation of Ukraine into a colony of the European Union as a source of raw materials and disenfranchised migrant worker-slaves. Today, more than a year after the victory of Maidan [the victory of the counterrevolution with pro-fascists in the leadership], the economic results are already being felt so deeply that they cannot be

ignored by even the most hard-nosed “Euro-optimists.”

The new regime in Kiev also finally abandoned sovereignty and became a puppet state. The handing over of the militarily and logistically strategic Odessa region to the direct control of a U.S. protégé, former Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili, clearly testifies to this.

2. Neoliberalism. The post-Maidan government has consistently pursued policies dictated by the IMF. Movement toward all-out privatization and the systematic destruction of the remnants of the welfare state -- that is the essence of the economic policies of the Poroshenko-Yatsenyuk regime.

3. Nationalism and fascism. Nationalists and outright fascists managed to impose their agenda through the Maidan. Our organization wrote in winter 2014: “The undoubted success of the nationalists is due to the fact that, because of their high level of activity, they have managed to impose ideological leadership on the Euromaidan movement. ... The rest of the opposition parties did not have a clear-cut ideological line or set of slogans, leaving the neoliberal opposition to adopt the nationalist slogans and nationalist agenda.”

Thus, the neoliberal-Nazi alliance was formed. This alliance was “consecrated” by representatives of imperialism, such as Catherine Ashton, Victoria Nuland and John McCain.

Another important point in the fascistization of society after Maidan was the

legalization of paramilitary Nazi groups and the integration of the Nazis into the law enforcement agencies of the state.

4. The violent suppression of political opponents, repression, censorship of the media, banning of communist ideology.

5. Contempt for the working class, “class racism.” Established on Maidan under the leadership of the oligarchy, the ideology of the social bloc of nationalist intelligentsia and “middle class” petty proprietors has infected the Western Ukrainian “man in the street,” who clearly defines his class enemy: the “cattle” in Donbass. With this “class racism” against the working-class majority of the South-East, the oligarchy rallies broad social strata around itself.

These are the main elements of the policy of the new regime in Kiev. This is the class politics of transnational imperialist capital and the Ukrainian capitalist oligarchy, which tries to escape its crisis at the expense of the working class.

Policies in Donbass

Since the statehood of the territories liberated by the rebels of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions is just being established, it is probably too early to draw final conclusions about the policies of the DNR and LC. However, we can highlight some trends.

1. Anti-fascism. The rebels of all political persuasions definitely characterize the regime established in Kiev after Maidan as fascist. Often without a clear scientific understanding of fascism, they

nonetheless reject the following features of the Kiev regime: extreme nationalism, chauvinistic language policy, anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, repression of political opponents, exoneration of Nazi war criminals and collaborators.

2. Anti-oligarchism. The role of the Ukrainian oligarchy, as the main sponsor and beneficiary of Maidan and the right-nationalist coup, became an essential element of the consciousness of the resistance movement in the South-East. Also, during the winter and spring of 2014, the complete dependence and subordination of the Ukrainian oligarchy to imperialism, headed by the United States, became apparent.

In this regard, it can be argued: for the rebels of Donbass and the masses involved in the resistance movement in the South-East, anti-oligarchic slogans are not mere “populism.” This distinguishes the mass progressive movement in the South-East from the mass reactionary movement of Maidan.

3. Anti-neoliberal policies. An important feature of the internal life of the Donbass republics is the trend towards social-democratic, Keynesian models of economic development, socially oriented state capitalism. While this is only a trend, though an important one, it is the opposite of the economic policy of the Kiev authorities.

4. Friendship of peoples, internationalism and Russian nationalism. Everyone who has been in the Donbass

Continued on page 9

U.S. wars caused refugee crisis

By Sara Flounders

U.S. wars, starvation sanctions and planned destabilization are the overwhelming cause of the surge of hundreds of thousands of war refugees flooding across European borders and across the Mediterranean Sea. The major European-NATO powers collaborated with U.S. imperialism in each war.

The corporate media are publishing painful pictures of drowned children, sinking boats, news stories of suffocating trucks and reports of thousands camped in train stations and along roadways. They rob these reports of context by omitting the cause of the refugee crisis. Some people fear the enormous media coverage could even be cynical preparation to justify a new military offensive by NATO countries against Syria.

The real dimensions of the humanitarian disaster are largely hidden. The 340,000 destitute refugees who have reached Europe constitute only 3 percent of the over 10 million displaced people barely surviving in refugee camps in Syria or in countries bordering Syria. These neighboring countries are also destabilized by the surge of refugees and disruptive sanctions against Syria that ripple throughout the region.

The European governments dismissed the war-caused havoc as long as the crisis was kept off their doorstep.

The refugees' dire conditions worsened because the meager United Nations Food Program has exhausted its funds and is now cutting hundreds of thousands of refugees off its aid in U.N. administered refugee camps in Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Syria. The U.N. agency needed a mere \$236 million to keep the program funded through November.

According to NationalPriorities.org, the U.S. government has spent that much on wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria every 28 hours since 2001.

The largest numbers of refugees are fleeing from war-torn Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and South Sudan. U.S. corporate power, driven by its insatiable drive to secure control of valuable resources and push back progressive change, had targeted each of these countries. Not one of these wars was for humanitarian purposes. Each war is a source of enormous super profit in mil-

itary contracts for U.S. and European Union corporations — and ruin for millions of people.

Washington's strategy in each of these imperialist wars has been to enflame sectarian, ethnic, national and religious differences. This means organizing contending militias, pitting group against group to break down national pride and unified resistance. Divide and conquer is the strategy that dates back to the U.S. wars against Indigenous peoples on the North American continent.

The Pentagon cynically targets civilian infrastructure, including electric grids, fuel depots, irrigation, water purification, sanitation, local industries and especially schools in an effort to demoralize and disorient the population. Washington arms and empowers the most reactionary forces and corrupt warlords as collaborators.

Refugees of current U.S. wars

Syria today has the highest number of people displaced by war. U.S. sanctions as of 2010 were followed in 2011 by U.S./NATO and Saudi arming and financing of mercenary forces. This war has destroyed a formerly prosperous country where the population had modern infrastructure, quality free health care and free education.

Now almost half of Syria's 23 million population is displaced. More than 4 million Syrians have fled to neighboring countries. Mercenary and fanatic sectarian forces within Syria now number about 125,000 in a thousand competing bands from 80 or more countries.

The U.S. war in **Iraq** from 1990 to 2003 included massive, systematic destruction of infrastructure and 13 years of economic sanctions. The 2003 U.S.-British invasion and occupation of Iraq brought catastrophic ruin and orchestrated sectarian violence unknown in Iraqi history. Refugees and internally displaced people reached 4.7 million people. Almost half of the Iraqi refugees received shelter in overburdened Syria.

Since the 1978 Saur Revolution, which overthrew the monarchy in **Afghanistan**, the Pentagon has provided more than \$3 billion to counterrevolutionary and warlord forces to destroy the revolution. For three decades, war-torn Afghanistan led in the U.N. lists in the number of war refugees. Through the 1980s, there were 3.5 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan and 2 million in Iran.

The 2001 U.S./NATO occupation of Afghanistan created new waves of refugees. There are currently 1.5 million Af-

ghan refugees in Pakistan and 1 million Afghan refugees in Iran and millions of displaced people within Afghanistan itself.

In **Libya**, seven months of U.S./NATO bombing in 2010 destroyed the entire infrastructure of a modern state where nationalized oil helped achieve the highest standard of living in Africa. Hundreds of thousands of workers throughout Africa had found jobs in Libya, which had also provided economic development aid throughout Africa.

In appealing for assistance, **Tunisia's** President Moncef Marzouki explained that two million Libyans, or one-third of Libya's pre-NATO-intervention population, have taken refuge in Tunisia. The number is equivalent to one-fifth of Tunisia's population.

Today, **South Sudan** has the largest number of refugees in Africa. According to the U.N. Refugee Agency, there are 2.25 million refugees and spiraling civil war in this oil-rich country. As the Jan. 3, 2014, New York Times explained, South Sudan is in many ways a U.S. "creation, carved out of war-torn Sudan in a referendum largely orchestrated by the United States, its fragile institutions nurtured with billions of dollars in American aid."

More than 2 million refugees in **Ukraine** represent the newest refugee crisis, caused by the expansion of the U.S.-commanded NATO military alliance to the borders of Russia. While Washington fails to provide funds to feed refugees from U.S. wars of aggression, the U.S. government spent \$5 billion to fund the fascist forces and social networks that overturned the elected government in Ukraine. Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland even bragged of this funding. The Kiev coup government is now waging war against anti-fascists in east Ukraine.

According to Russian Federal Migration Service-FMS statistics, a total of 2.6 million Ukrainians are currently in Russian territory. Some 1 million are from Ukraine's southeastern regions, fleeing armed conflict in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions.

Past waves of U.S. war refugees

U.S. wars in Southeast Asia ripped **Vietnam, Cambodia** and **Laos** apart in the 1960s and 1970s. The effort to dominate the region failed but the massive destruction left 4 million dead, millions maimed and 2 million Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees desperate for resettlement.

U.S. aircraft bombing Libya.



Funding militias, warlords and drug lords was U.S. policy in **Central America** in the 1980s. The U.N. estimated that one-third of the workforce of El Salvador fled the country in the 1980s. More than a half million reached the U.S.

The war to expand NATO and dismember **Yugoslavia**, in Bosnia in 1995 and in Serbia in 1999, again used destruction of civilian infrastructure and enflaming sectarian differences. According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, 3.7 to 4 million people were displaced and became refugees.

It should not be forgotten that it is more than 60 years of U.S. funding and equipping of Israel that enabled the expropriation of hundreds of thousands of people from **Palestine**, the longest and most protracted refugee problem in the world. BADIL, a research and advocacy center focusing on refugee rights, estimates that there are more than 7 million Palestinian refugees and displaced persons. This figure includes the 4.2 million Palestinians registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other Palestinians displaced in 1967 and still displaced internally in Israel.

While billions of dollars continue to be allocated for war preparation, the World Food Program cut 1 million Iraqi refugees and millions of Syrian refugees from receiving \$14 monthly food coupons. This confirms in the most violent terms that capitalist rulers are incapable of solving the humanitarian disaster that they have created. War preparation is profitable. Distributions of surplus food are not. □

War in Donbass

Continued from page 8

notes the international character of the region. Dangerous trends of Russian nationalism in response to the Ukrainian chauvinism of the new Kiev authorities have not developed in a serious way (although that danger has been actively exploited by opponents of the people's republics for propaganda purposes).

Also, there has been no serious development of another danger -- clericalization of the resistance movement. This distinguishes the resistance forces from the Maidan, wherein the Greek Catholic Church played a significant role.

These are the main elements of the policy of the people's republics of Donbass. Of course, this policy is not socialist. But it leaves room for the left, the communists, to participate in such a movement under their own banner, with their own ideas and slogans, without abandoning their own views and program.

Translation by Workers World contributing editor Greg Butterfield.

By Deirdre Griswold

Tensions on the Korean peninsula escalated in August as the U.S. carried out massive "war games" aimed at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north. At the same time, the U.S. media said little about the 30,000 U.S. and 50,000 south Korean troops that were menacing the DPRK.

Instead, they were full of stories accusing the DPRK of having planted three landmines in the demilitarized zone that separates the two halves of Korea, mines that injured two south Korean soldiers.

U.S. veteran disputes anti-Korea stories

The DPRK rejected the charge, calling it "a ridiculous farce." A former U.S. soldier who had been stationed in south Korea agrees.

Michael Bassett, a retired U.S. Army staff sergeant, had this to say: "Having patrolled those same trails for years as a recon team leader, I find it impossible to believe that KPA (North Korean) soldiers could walk 450 meters south across the military demarcation fence with AP mines in hand, and not get blown up or captured on camera." Bassett is a member of Veterans for Peace.

The VFP called on its members in an

email "to remain skeptical about the mainstream media's reports on Korea and to call on the White House and Congress to take steps to reduce military tensions in Korea, including entering talks with North Korea, and to support H. Res. 384, which is co-sponsored by three remaining veterans of the Korean War in the Congress, calling for a formal end to the Korean War. War is not the solution; ending the lingering Korean War with a peace treaty is the right answer." (veteransforpeace.org) □

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

The gov't 'rosy' jobs report

"There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics," wrote Mark Twain.

The U.S. government issued its monthly jobs report on Sept. 4. Although only 173,000 new jobs were added — fewer than expected — the Obama administration immediately heralded the new unemployment figure of 5.1 percent, which they claim is the lowest since 2007.

Does this mean — as many capitalist apologists and economists claim — that the U.S. economy is improving and that workers are better off now? It is crucial to look at the lies and obfuscations behind the report.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, which creates these figures, has a very arcane way of determining who is "unemployed." The figure is not an accurate measure of the number of people who want and need jobs. The real unemployed are not counted.

Rather, the BLS surveys 60,000 households, which are selected because they "represent" different U.S. regions and populations. The bureau asks people in those households whether they have been actively seeking work in the prior four weeks. If they have worked at all during that period, regardless of their earnings, or whether the work is part-time or sporadic, they are counted as employed.

Jobless number at 38-year high

A more accurate, but still very imperfect, BLS figure is the labor force participation rate. This shows that only 62.6 percent of the non-institutionalized, non-military population was employed for the third month in a row. This means that 37.4 percent — or 94 million people — were not employed. This is the highest number since 1977.

The U.S. government does not report or explain why these people do not have jobs. For one reason, there has not been a real jobs' recovery since the Great Recession began. Many employers have cut their work forces, using speed-ups and automation with fewer workers, hiring part-time or temporary employees or outsourcing jobs abroad.

The government statistics omit the millions of unemployed workers who despair of ever finding jobs and have given up. The Sept. 4 Fiscal Times says that the low labor force participation is "a sign that the [official] unemployment rate may be low because workers who might otherwise be seeking jobs become discouraged by the lingering effects of the Great Recession and have permanently left the labor force."

The BLS does note that 6.48 million people who need full-time jobs are involuntarily working part time, an increasing trend. The government also reports, but neglects to explain, the steady decline in wages and benefits for workers lucky

enough to have a job. For most workers, real wages — adjusted for inflation — have stayed flat or been falling for decades. And for those working in the top four employment categories today — retail sales, food preparation and serving, cashiers and office clerks — the pay is less than \$10 per hour.

Then there are the millions of workers who earn less than minimum wage or do unpaid work, who are among the most exploited, including agricultural and dairy workers, domestic workers, those toiling in sweatshops, immigrants, prisoners, people with disabilities, tipped employees and victims of human trafficking.

BLS omits biases in hiring

Moreover, government reports do not address racist, anti-immigrant, sexist and anti-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-queer bigotry and discrimination which factor into who is hired and who is not. Discrimination against people with disabilities is omitted. Prisoners are not even counted. The denial of educational opportunities to low-income individuals and the exclusion of youth — especially African American, Latino/a and Indigenous — from many jobs are not discussed. The biases against entire groupings of workers — so endemic to capitalism — are not mentioned in "official" reports.

The "reserve army of labor" is the term coined by Karl Marx for the vast numbers of jobless workers. This unemployed "army" is intrinsic to capitalism and key to how it functions. But it is one of the system's greatest vulnerabilities. Corporate bosses fear that the multinational working class will launch a powerful fightback, expanding the current "\$15 and a union" demand for low-wage workers to "Jobs for all at a livable income!" □

letter to the editor:

Deportations, racism vs. 'humane'

Jorge Ramos, the nightly news co-anchor on Spanish-language TV station Univisión who was thrown out of Donald Trump's press conference in Dubuque, Iowa on Aug. 25, 2015, and was then allowed back in, asked Trump how he would deport 11 million undocumented. Trump responded: "Humanely. I have a bigger heart than you."

As an activist with an immigrant-rights organization who has personally known a number of immigrants in deportation proceedings, I can safely say that deportations may be many things, but "humane" is not one of them.

However, Ramos's question goes to the heart of something even deeper. What type of country will we become if we

Obama's Alaska trip – Big Oil profits, war threats

By Chris Fry

With great fanfare, while making an unprecedented presidential trip to Alaska on Aug. 31, President Barack Obama "renamed" the tallest mountain in North America back to Mount Denali, the name given it long ago by the Indigenous community of the area, the Athabascan nation.

This was indeed a long-standing demand by the Native Alaskan people and their supporters, who have long rejected the name "Mount McKinley."

But President Obama did not make this trip to Alaska to rename mountains. It is a bitter irony that while changing the name of Alaska's most famous mountain from that of an imperialist war maker, William McKinley, Obama is "planting the flag" of U.S. imperialism in the Arctic Ocean region to "square off" against Russia, China and other countries to assert U.S. oil companies' domination of this treasure house of oil and natural gas wealth.

In a fundamental way, Obama is imitating the same policy of imperialist domination that McKinley exhibited more than a century ago, when he presided over a war of conquest and the colonization of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines.

Obama's trip to Alaska is being paraded by the White House as a campaign against the terrible effects of global warming. After all, even the Pentagon measures the warming of the Arctic region to be twice the rate of the rest of the planet. (tinyurl.com/2wslkbbk)

But at the same time that Obama railed against the terrible wildfires wreaking havoc in the West, the global heat waves,

the droughts, the intensifying cyclones (all rooted in the burning of fossil fuels), the giant Shell Oil drilling rig is planted on the Alaskan shore of the Arctic Ocean. The U.S. Coast Guard prevented environmental activists from stopping the rig from leaving Seattle in June.

And just as those same activists have foretold, strong storms in the Arctic Ocean have forced Shell to shut down the rig and temporarily evacuate it. Obviously, the oil companies would not be able to stop an oil leak in this area. "Imagine trying to respond to a spill in that kind of weather," stated Pam Miller, a longtime Arctic researcher and environmental advocate in Fairbanks, in an Aug. 31 Juneau Empire article. (tinyurl.com/ouhpnc)

U.S. Navy and Wall Street — partners in crime

Environmental impact or not, oil glut or not, estimates are that there are \$1 trillion worth of oil and natural gas in the U.S. Arctic region. That is a lot of profits for investors on Wall Street to forego versus protecting the planet from a climate catastrophe.

The U.S. Navy is publicizing its nuclear submarine operations in the Arctic region, each sub carrying missiles, torpedoes and mines. Why? "The Arctic is going to be a place of growing strategic importance. The Russians are active there," Defense Secretary Ash Carter told a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing in March. (cnn.com, Aug. 31, 2015)

As with the U.S. military's support of the right-wing regime in the Ukraine, the Pentagon is eager to brandish its saber against Russia in the Arctic.

The U.S. Navy actually sees global warming in the Arctic as a great oppor-

pend the money and resources for such a massive undertaking? Conservative columnist and TV personality George Will estimates that this would be about 94 times as large an undertaking as the rounding up of the 117,000 Japanese Americans at Manzanar during WWII. Will we sacrifice all of the other things that demand the nation's attention, such as crumbling schools and infrastructure? Will we officially become a dictatorship? And, while I do not like this type of hyperbole, will we become like Nazi Germany when it was rounding up Jews, Gypsies [Roma people] and other groups in disfavor with the régime?

In addition to the fact that it will not be done "humanely," as Trump main-

tains, with such a large undertaking it is all but guaranteed that people who are not intended targets will get caught up in the web. If history offers any lessons it will also be done not only with intimidation and threats of violence, but with actual violence.

Another lesson of history is that Trump's type of nativist, anti-immigrant rhetoric leads to violent attacks on "the other" or the perceived "other," promotes the so-called "security State" and destroys all remnants of "democracy." One need not look too far to see this.

After being told of a homeless immigrant being beaten up in Boston in August by a couple of men who invoked his name, Trump initially replied that he hadn't heard about it but that if it were true, it would "be a shame." He then hastened to add: "I will say, the people that are following me are very passionate. They love this country. They want this country to be great again."

Coupled with his demand in 2011 to

Esto explica por qué hay apoyo para el acuerdo de Irán de un sector poderoso del complejo industrial-militar-bancario. La agenda de la administración Obama no es más "liberal" que la de muchos republicanos — sólo que está más en sintonía con Wall Street y menos afectada por la retórica e ideología de la extrema derecha. □

WORKERS WORLD
MUNDO OBRERO 

Un acuerdo con Irán

Continua de pagina 12

idenses, una pérdida de confianza en el liderazgo de EUA podría amenazar la posición del dólar como moneda de reserva del mundo, dijo el jefe de la diplomacia estadounidense el martes. "Si damos la vuelta y anulamos el acuerdo y luego decimos: "Tú tendrás que obedecer nuestras reglas y sanciones de todos modos", esto es una receta, muy rápido... para que el dólar estadounidense deje de ser la moneda de reserva del mundo", dijo el

secretario de estado Kerry en un evento de Reuters Newsmaker".

Es muy raro que un funcionario del gobierno suene con pánico sobre la economía estadounidense, incluso cuando esté motivado por la necesidad de defender alguna gran iniciativa. Pero el pánico, al parecer, está en el aire tanto en Wall Street como en las juntas de administración de las grandes compañías petroleras.

Su estrategia para ampliar grandemente la producción de petróleo de EUA

y hacer miles de millones por fracturamiento hidráulico para petróleo y gas, una manera muy costosa de obtener energía - ha resultado totalmente contraproducente cuando la sobreproducción mundial y las economías estancadas o en contracción, recientemente condujeron el precio del crudo por debajo de \$40 por barril. El petróleo de Arabia Saudita e Irán todavía puede ser rentable a ese precio - pero no el petróleo de las arenas bituminosas de Canadá o de gran parte de EUA.



A victim of global warming in the Arctic.

tunity to industrialize the area and array its forces in the region: “The observed changes in the Arctic region climate and the reduced extent of summer ice reveal the potential for the Arctic Ocean to become a more visible route of international shipping over the coming decades. Opportunities exist for infrastructure development and commercial investment, resource exploitation, fishing and tourism. ... If the Arctic becomes more heavily traveled, and some nation poses a threat, the U.S. Navy plans to be ready.” (cnn.com, Aug. 31)

The U.S. military burns more oil than any other single institution in the world: more than 100 million barrels a year. (“The U.S. Military and Oil,” ucsusa.org) They are the single greatest source of global warming, and for what purpose? To force the will of Washington and Wall Street on the peoples of the planet with aircraft carriers, with bombs and with the infamous drones.

With summer melting of the Arctic ice pack expected to accelerate over the coming decades, the Pentagon has already drawn up plans to send more and more of its surface fleet into the region, to parade its military might and protect oil company property.

The Arctic region, just like the rest of the planet, belongs to all of the people of the world. Whatever Obama says, it is under threat by the mad quest for profits and domination by Washington and Wall Street. Only a revolutionary, worldwide, organized movement by the workers and oppressed can protect it. □

democracy

see President Obama’s birth certificate and his not-so-subtle insult of Jorge Ramos for being Latino, telling him to go back to Univisión, Trump may be the most racist candidate for President of the USA since Strom Thurmond ran as a Dixiecrat in 1948.

Even Ronald Reagan — of whom Trump was an early supporter, and who was the first major-party candidate to be openly endorsed by both the KKK and the Nazis — was a little more subtle. As bad as Reagan’s appeals to racism were, and they were pretty terrible, did he ever say how much people who engaged in racist violence “love this country” or “want it to be great again?”

Trump’s appeals to racism, not to mention his sexism, and his willingness to waste precious financial and human resources on deporting 11 million undocumented immigrants while ignoring the country’s actual needs, indicate that he is sending all of the wrong messages. Ramos said in an interview on CNN that reporters are only thrown out of press conferences in dictatorships. Not very “humane.” That is something worth pondering.

Dave Schraeger Aug. 31

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The writer is a longtime labor, peace and immigrant rights activist in New Jersey.

Class struggle heats up in Central America

By Ramiro S. Fúnez

There is an important struggle taking place in Central America — the same one that is being waged all over the world: the class struggle between the rich and the poor, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

This struggle is intensifying by the minute, like a tea kettle reaching its boiling point. The bourgeoisie, who represent the steel casing of the kettle, are no longer able to contain the proletariat, the boiling water, from violently bursting out of its boundaries.

However, the bourgeoisie are often prone to temporarily tone down the intensity of the fire, to prevent the water from escaping as steam from the kettle. This is what is happening to the class struggle in two particular Central American countries: Guatemala and Honduras. In the former country, this is being done through illegitimate elections, and in the latter, through illegitimate dialogues.

‘Elections’ in Guatemala

General elections were held on Sept. 6 in Guatemala for the selection of a new president and vice president, as well as for new deputies in municipal offices, the national Congress and the Central American Parliament. This follows the Sept. 2 resignation and Sept. 3 arrest of former right-wing president Otto Pérez Molina, who was involved in two major corruption scandals.

The first involved a multimillion-dollar customs fraud exposed by a United Nations report released in April. Guatemalan government officials were reported to have been accepting bribes in exchange for lower customs duties for private corporations.

The second involved Guatemalan Social Security Institute officials who signed a \$15 million contract for dialysis with a company that had no experience or adequate medical tools in exchange for kickbacks. Molina was an accomplice to and beneficiary of both acts of corruption.

Now that he and other politicians involved in the scandals have been arrested, the Organization of American States and other United States-aligned political institutions are promoting the general elections as the solution to corruption in Guatemala. The representatives of these institutions hope the millions of Guatemalan masses who successfully ousted Molina will trade their protest signs for election ballots.

But as Guatemalan activist María Luisa Rosal said during a recent interview, “People are trying to vote for the least worst candidate.” (Think Progress, Sept. 6) These include Jimmy Morales, a comic actor with no political experience, and Manuel Baldizón, a right-wing business owner connected to Molina, among others. Rosal added that these elections only served to legitimize “an oppressive system that has only benefitted the oligarchs and the multinational corporations.”

These illegitimate elections represent the attempts of the bourgeoisie to tone down the class struggle in Guatemala.

‘Dialogues’ in Honduras

National dialogues have been held between OAS leaders and representatives of Hondureños Indignados (Indignant Hondurans), a mass movement leading weekly, and often daily, protests against



the government of incumbent right-wing President Juan Orlando Hernández.

Last June, the left-wing political news channel Globo TV revealed that corporations linked to an embezzlement scandal involving the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS) provided funds for Hernández’s National Party during his 2013 presidential campaign. Private Honduran medical companies like Dimesa helped finance Hernández’s campaign, using profits made from backroom deals with IHSS officials. Dimesa has held a contract with the IHSS since 2011. Social security officials knowingly approved the purchase of overpriced medical equipment and low-quality medicines in exchange for bribes, just like in Guatemala.

As mentioned in a previous article (WW, June 28), approximately \$330 million was stolen from the IHSS, significant portions of which were siphoned into Hernández’s campaign. Thousands of Hondurans have died, and are still dying, as a result of the theft of IHSS funds originally intended for medicine and equipment.

Now that Hernández’s involvement in the scandal has been exposed, OAS representatives and IHSS officials are hoping the Indignant Hondurans will not replicate the actions of their Guatemalan neighbors and initiate a movement to remove the president. Instead, these politicians are calling for “dialogues” and “compromises” between the right-wing government and the masses, who have been calling for the resignation of Hernández for several months.

These “conversations,” however, have almost exclusively been dominated by the OAS and Honduran politicians on Hernández’s payroll, all of whom have expressed opposition to his ousting. Many in Honduras refer to the talks as “monologues,” since the primary demand of the masses has been silenced and ruled out.

These illegitimate dialogues represent the attempts of the bourgeoisie to tone down the class struggle in Honduras.

Struggle intensifies despite minor concessions

If the bourgeoisie is toning down the class struggle in Guatemala and Honduras, why does the title of this article claim the struggle is heating up? The reason is simple: contradiction.

Contradiction is commonly defined as a combination of statements, ideas or

features of a situation that are directly opposed to one another. German social theorist and revolutionary Karl Marx elaborated on this understanding of contradiction, applying it directly to the class struggle between the rich and the poor, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Marx explained that class struggles are the locomotive of history, each time ending either in the “revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.” Chinese communist revolutionary Mao Tse-tung contributed to Marx’s theory of contradiction with his understanding of the universality of these antagonisms, mentioning that “contradiction exists in the process of development of all things,” including political concessions.

If we apply their theoretical and practical contributions to present conditions in Guatemala and Honduras, it becomes easier to understand why the class struggle in both countries will continue to intensify.

Although the flames that ignite the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat of these Central American nations have been temporarily toned down by way of minor concessions such as “elections” and “dialogues,” the fire still exists, and will continue to intensify if it is not turned off, as in the case of the water boiling inside the kettle. This is because the fundamental contradiction has not been resolved; poverty and corruption persist, despite cosmetic changes. Even if new representatives are elected and amicable dialogue is held, the real-life material conditions remain the same. These conditions of poverty and corruption are directly produced by capitalism, the globally dominant economic system.

As long as the systemic exploitation of the poor by the rich continues, the antagonism between these irreconcilable classes with opposed interests will continue. The contradiction between those in favor of minor policy reforms and those in favor of major structural revolutions is already coming to the fore in Guatemala and Honduras.

The boiling water, the oppressed, will eventually burst outside the boundaries of the kettle, the oppressors, and bring forth a revolutionary reconstitution of society. The recent concessions are certainly not the end of the class struggle — only a new beginning. □



Emmett Till y su madre Mamie Till Mobley

Por qué la clase dominante estadounidense quiere un acuerdo con Irán

Por Deirdre Griswold

Ahora que la temporada de 18 meses de elecciones nacionales burguesas en EUA ha comenzado, no sorprende que un acuerdo negociado entre el gobierno iraní y el P5+1 — los cinco miembros permanentes del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU más Alemania — se haya convertido en una gran cuestión política.

La administración Obama dice que el acuerdo impedirá que Irán desarrolle armas nucleares al menos durante 15 años. A cambio, los imperialistas occidentales dicen que levantarán algunas — no todas — de las sanciones que se han impuesto a Irán desde 2005. Al impedirle a Irán vender petróleo en el mercado mundial, entre otras restricciones, han limitado su economía.

El acuerdo está siendo atacado por todos los precandidatos republicanos casi como una “traición”.

El congreso debe votar para el 17 de septiembre si aprobar o no el acuerdo. Algunos demócratas se han unido a los republicanos diciendo que se opondrán. Hay un cabildeo furioso por ambos lados, incluyendo no sólo presión directa sobre representantes y senadores, sino también anuncios en periódicos y televisión.

El último ejemplo fue una carta a Obama firmada por 214 generales y almirantes estadounidenses jubilados que también apareció como un anuncio en el New York Times el 30 de agosto. Llamó el acuerdo, conocido como el Plan Completo Conjunto de Acción, “peligroso” y dijo que el acuerdo “hace probable que la guerra que el régimen iraní ha emprendido contra nosotros desde 1979 [sic] siga, con riesgos mucho más altos para nuestros intereses de seguridad nacional”.

Anteriormente, el 11 de agosto, un grupo de tres docenas de generales y almirantes jubilados habían enviado una carta a Obama argumentando lo opuesto. Dijeron que “el acuerdo con Irán beneficia la seguridad nacional estadounidense”. El Washington Post indicó: “Los firmantes de la carta [a favor del acuerdo] incluyen a un general retirado y oficiales de bandera de cada rama del servicio. Incluyen a los generales de cuatro estrellas de la Marina James Cartwright, el ex-vicepresidente de los Jefes del Estado Mayor Conjunto, y Joseph P. Hoar, ex-jefe del Comando Central EUA; y los generales Merrill McPeak y Lloyd W. Newton de la Fuerza Aérea”.

El gobierno de Netanyahu en Israel se opone violentamente al acuerdo. Para demostrar que había apoyo judío y hasta sionista, sin embargo, el Post también indicó que uno de los firmantes, el almirante jubilado Harold L. Robinson, era un rabino que se describe como “sionista de por vida”.

El Post añadió: “La carta de los militares retirados siguió a la publicación este pasado fin de semana de una carta a Obama por 29 de los científicos más importantes del país, quienes llamaron el acuerdo de Irán ‘técnicamente sólido, riguroso e innovador’ y dijo que proporcionará la seguridad necesaria en la próxima década y más, de que Irán no desarrollará armas nucleares”.

Argumentos falsos distorsionan historia

Hay tantos argumentos falsos puestos en este debate que un poco de historia es necesaria para entender lo que realmente está pasando.

En primer lugar, EUA y los otros imperialistas occidentales no tenían problemas con Irán cuando fue gobernada por el autocrático y brutal Shah Reza Pahlevi, quien había conseguido su puesto por un golpe de estado organizado por la CIA en

1953. El agente de EUA que coordinó ese golpe fue Kermit Roosevelt Jr., nieto del famoso imperialista Theodore Roosevelt. En su libro “Contra el golpe: la lucha por el control de Irán”, KR se jactó de llegar a Teherán montado en un tanque.

La industria del petróleo iraní, que había pertenecido a la nación iraní, fue desnacionalizada en 1955. Tres años más tarde, Kermit Roosevelt dejó la CIA para trabajar para la Gulf Oil, convirtiéndose pronto en vicepresidente de la empresa.

El Shah en su Trono de Pavo Real fue el conducto para que el imperialismo occidental se enriqueciera del mayor recurso comercial de Irán, el petróleo.

Tan pronto como el Shah fue investido por EUA, los banqueros británicos y los magnates petroleros, anunció en 1953 que Irán lanzaría un programa nuclear civil como parte de la iniciativa “Átomos para la paz” del presidente estadounidense Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Los imperialistas occidentales estaban todos de acuerdo — incluso facilitaron el programa nuclear de Irán — hasta 1979, cuando las masas se levantaron en una lucha heroica y derrocaron al Shah y su brutal policía, la Savak.

Fue entonces cuando los imperialistas comenzaron a buscar maneras de justificar una guerra económica contra Irán. A mediados de la década de 1990, la administración Clinton impuso sanciones contra Irán, ostensiblemente por su programa nuclear. Eso fue hace 20 años, y la hostilidad de EUA ha empeorado desde entonces.

Si la razón para las sanciones realmente fuera la posibilidad de que en algún momento el programa de energía pacífica de Irán pueda terminar en armas nucleares, entonces ¿por qué no se ha sancionado a Israel por su ampliamente conocido pero nunca admitido arsenal nuclear? Nunca ha firmado el Tratado de No Proliferación; Irán sí lo ha firmado.

Ahora viene la posibilidad de que, a pesar de todo el alboroto sobre “los riesgos para la seguridad nacional”, el acuerdo del P5+1 con Irán pueda llegar a ser una realidad — aunque podría ser necesario que el presidente tenga que vetar una mayoría “no” en la Cámara y/o en el Senado para conseguir la aprobación del acuerdo. Sesenta y siete de los 100 senadores tendrían que votar “no” para anular el veto de Obama.

Inestabilidad impulsa Washington

Hay especulación en los medios de comunicación corporativa que Obama quiere aprobar el acuerdo con el fin de consolidar su “legado”. Pero los informes muestran que el gobierno estadounidense — y una parte importante de la clase dominante que se basa en las ganancias del exterior — tiene preocupaciones mucho más grandes que esa. De hecho, ellos están tratando de encontrar la manera de apuntalar su posición, sobre todo en el suroeste de Asia, donde las horribles guerras de agresión EUA/OTAN han creado condiciones críticas para decenas de millones de personas — y han perturbado totalmente la vida económica en la que las grandes empresas se robustecen.

La volatilidad actual en los mercados financieros internacionales es sólo una de las indicaciones de lo inestable que se ha convertido la posición de los principales países capitalistas.

El secretario de estado John Kerry defendió el acuerdo en un acto televisado el 12 de agosto. El servicio de noticias Reuters informó: “Si EUA se aleja del acuerdo nuclear con Irán y exige que sus aliados cumplan con las sanciones estadoun-

Continua a página 10

Editorial, 1º de septiembre

¿Por qué sigue importando la vida de Emmett Till?

Durante el apogeo del Movimiento de Derechos Civiles en el Sur en la década de los 1960s, activistas como Jimmy Lee Jackson, Medgar Evers, Viola Liuzzo, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, el Rev. James Reeb y otros perdieron la vida a manos del Ku Klux Klan. Pero la reacción a un linchamiento anterior, junto con el boicot de autobuses de Montgomery-Alabama, ayudó a desencadenar este movimiento. Fue el linchamiento brutal de Emmett Till, un joven afroamericano de 14 años quien hace 60 años, el 28 de agosto, perdió su preciosa vida en Money-Misisipi.

Emmett Till nació el 25 de julio de 1941 y creció en Chicago. Sus padres habían migrado al Norte al igual que millones de negros/os para escapar de la opresión del Sur. A finales de agosto de 1955, Emmett viajó al corazón del Delta de Misisipi para visitar a un tío.

Su madre Mamie Till Mobley, le advirtió que la actitud de los blancos en Money hacia los negros era “diferente” de la de los blancos en Chicago a pesar de que ambas ciudades estaban marcadas por la segregación.

Roy Bryant, un rabioso segregacionista, era dueño de una tienda en Money frecuentada por aparceros negros. Cuando Till salía de la tienda, la esposa de Bryant alegó que el adolescente, quien sufría de un defecto del habla, le había silbado.

Días después en medio de la noche, Bryant, J.W. Milam y otro blanco racista secuestraron al adolescente a punta de pistola de la casa de su tío.

Willie Reed, un aparcerero negro que trabajaba para Milam, afirmó en el documental de 2003, “El asesinato de Emmett Till”, que escuchó a Till siendo golpeado por los tres hombres en un cobertizo de herramientas. Oyó al adolescente gritando en agonía. Till, empapado de sangre, fue conducido a las orillas del Río Tallahatchie donde le dispararon en la cabeza.

Un ventilador desmotador de algodón fue atado con alambre alrededor de su cuello. Su cuerpo fue arrojado en el río donde fue encontrado días después. Después de que Reed fue obligado a lavar la sangre de Till de la parte trasera del camión, desapareció temiendo por su propia vida.

El asesinato de Emmett Till salió en titulares nacionales e internacionales. Cincuenta mil personas negras asistieron a su funeral en Chicago.

Su madre exigió que se abriera el ataúd para que todo el mundo pudiera ver la cara irreconocible y mutilada de su hijo debido a la salvaje golpiza con la culata de una pistola de calibre .45.

Roy Bryant y J.W. Milam fueron absueltos por un jurado blanco después de solo cinco días de testimonios. Cuatro meses después, Bryant y Milam, sabiendo que legalmente no podían ser juzgados, admitieron en un artículo de la revista Look que habían asesinado a Till.

Menos de cinco años después de este linchamiento, estudiantes universitarios negros/os comenzaron heroicas sentadas en mostradores de almuerzo contra la segregación en Woolworth y otras tiendas.

Como Christopher Benson, co-autor del libro “Muerte de la inocencia” dijo sobre el asesinato de Till en una entrevista: “Antes de Trayvon Martin, antes de Michael Brown, antes de Tamir Rice, estuvo Emmett Till. Esta fue la primera historia de ‘Vidas Negras Importan’. No es de extrañar entonces que cada vez que leemos acerca de otro joven negro desarmado ha sido matado en la calle — injustamente — por una figura de autoridad, se menciona el nombre de Emmett”. (New York Times, 31 de agosto)

Y ¿qué con los cientos de Emmett Tills anónimos que perdieron la vida durante el Huracán Katrina hace 10 años en lo que hoy conocemos fue la inundación planificada del barrio negro (Ninth Ward) con diques deteriorados, y los homicidios policiales de negros que intentaban escapar de la inundación de Nueva Orleans? Cientos de miles de gente negra hasta hoy en día han sido desplazadas de forma permanente después de Katrina mientras Nueva Orleans sigue aburguesándose por los grandes intereses de bienes raíces para traer de vuelta a blancos ricos y prósperos. También hay los Emmett Tills que viven en un infierno en vida, ya que languidecen bajo la encarcelación en masa.

El linchamiento de Emmett Till nos recuerda a todas/os que la verdadera justicia para Till y otras víctimas que vinieron antes y después de él, solo puede ocurrir con una eliminación revolucionaria del sistema capitalista que perpetúa diariamente el racismo sistémico. □