

After killer cop walks free

Uprising rocks St. Louis

By Lyn Neeley and Minnie Bruce Pratt

Furious and frustrated, people in St. Louis have been taking to the streets since a Sept. 15 not-guilty verdict acquitting a white ex-cop for the 2011 killing of a young Black man, Anthony Lamar Smith. By Tuesday morning, Sept. 19, more than 120 people had been arrested during four days of demonstrations. Organizers foresaw more protests.

Cop Jason Stockley had been charged with first-degree murder and armed criminal action for shooting 24-year-old Smith five times under highly suspect circumstances. The charge carried a sentence of life in prison without parole. Probably doubtful that St. Louis residents would find in his favor, Stockley had waived his right to a jury trial, leaving the ruling up to Circuit Judge Timothy Wilson.

Prosecutors called the judge's acquittal of Stockley appalling, given the extent of damning evidence against him. They said Stockley was out of control during a three-mile car chase at over 80 miles an hour, and that he shot Smith without provocation. Audio evidence from the dashcam video in Stockley's car captured him telling his partner, "We're killing this m\*\*\*\*\*f\*\*er don't you know it." In less than a minute, he shot Smith five times.

Stockley is believed to have planted a gun in Smith's car. The gun was covered with Stockley's DNA but none of Smith's. Moments after the shooting, Stockley was shown on video rummaging through a bag in the back of his police vehicle and returning to reach into Smith's car.

In 2013 Stockley resigned and the St. Louis Police Department paid Smith's family a \$900,000 settlement. In 2016 the FBI and the SLPD turned over new evidence to prosecutors, generating this year's charges. But, once again, with the judge's ruling, a killer cop walked free.

After Stockley's acquittal on Sept. 15, protesters marched through St. Louis blocking highways. They surrounded Mayor Lyda Krewson's house, throwing red paint and rocks that broke two windows, and marched to a police precinct, where they blocked a bus full of riot cops and smashed the windshield of a cop car. Five cops were taken to the hospital.

As police used tear gas and shot rubber bullets, a St. Louis synagogue, the Central Reform Congregation, opened its doors to about 250 protesters to protect them from police. Rabbi Susan Talve of the CRJC stressed: "Black and Brown bodies are on the line every day just because of the color of their skin. I have to be out there putting my body on the line so that another mother doesn't lose another child." (Jerusalem Post, Sept. 18)

White supremacist and fascist groups responded to this act of solidarity by calling on cops to invade and gas both Black people and Jews in the synagogue. One



Determined resistance to militarized police in St. Louis.

PHOTO: ST. LOUIS PUBLIC RADIO

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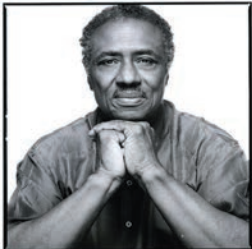


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# Indigenous peoples demand: ‘Return our land!’ and ‘Abolish the Entrada!’

By Workers World Boston bureau

## Pokanoket demand return of land from Brown U.

Members of the Pokanoket Nation and their allies set up an encampment in the Mount Hope area of Bristol, R.I. (Potumtuk), on Aug. 20, to draw attention to their quest to get Brown University to return unceded ancestral land there. This is the first time in 343 years that Indigenous people have governed and inhabited that land.



PHOTO: PO METACOM FACEBOOK

Potumtuk is the spiritual center of the Pokanoket Nation, and was also the site where Po Metacomb, leader of a regional revolt against the colonizers in the 1670s, was beheaded. English settlers then grabbed the land. In more recent years, Brown University’s Haffenreffer Museum has been located on part of Potumtuk.

The Pokanoket and some of their allies marched on Sept. 5 outside Brown’s student convocation ceremony, marking the beginning of the school year. They did this to draw attention to their struggle and provide information to students. The Pokanoket and Brown University are currently in discussions, as the encampment continues. For more information, see [tinyurl.com/yapnlfaf](http://tinyurl.com/yapnlfaf).

## Police repress peaceful protest in Santa Fe

Eight protesters were arrested in Santa Fe, N.M., on Sept. 8, as about 200 people rallied to abolish the Entrada, an annual local, racist celebration of the Spanish seizure of the land from the Pueblo people for a second time. It glorifies the conquistadors and features a re-enactment of the reconquest in the early 1690s.

The largely Indigenous #AbolishTheEntrada coalition called on officials in advance to renounce the anti-Indigenous racism that is at the heart of the Entrada. The city’s response was to use a sneak tactic, making the starting

Jennifer Marley at Santa Fe protest of ‘Spanish conquest and U.S. imperialism.’



PHOTO: #ABOLISHTHEENTRADA

time of the Entrada re-enactment earlier, while ensuring that a large police presence was there to suppress the right to protest.

The cops insisted on corralling the peaceful Indigenous protesters behind barricades in an out-of-the-way “free speech zone.” Eyewitnesses said that police snipers were on rooftops and that every effort was made to intimidate the protesters.

Some of those arrested were reportedly paraded through the streets of Santa Fe like prisoners of war. The abuse of the protesters and the arrestees brought to the forefront the racist violence that Indigenous people face daily. Protesters also heard white racists yelling at them to “go back where you came from” and “go back to the reservation.”

Jennifer Marley from The Red Nation said in a Sept. 11 statement: “This movement is not just about the Entrada. It is not just about revisionist history and the constant glorification of Spanish conquest and U.S. imperialism. This movement is about the protection of our land, livelihood, nationhood, bodies and sacred sites.” ([therednation.org](http://therednation.org), Sept. 11)

The #AbolishTheEntrada protesters also called for the defense of Chaco Canyon in New Mexico, site of massive fossil fuel activity, fracking development and federal land giveaways. Chaco Canyon has immense cultural and spiritual significance to the Dine (Navajo) and Pueblo peoples. □



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Post-Irma Florida

# Poor suffer most for lack of gov’t preparation

By John Catalinotto

The aftermath of Hurricane Irma, despite the storm hitting Florida with less force than at first expected, again highlights the lack of government preparation and the inequality of suffering in capitalist society.

Among the sectors of the population most abandoned by the government were the migrant Haitian and Latinx people outside Naples in Imokalee, Fla. A Sept. 14 article in The Daily Beast says these “residents outside Naples have been practically forgotten,” and they were “left to sleep in condemned trailers” and “forced to cook outside.”

“Entire neighborhoods were flooded by stagnant water, with piles of paneling strewn across roads and yards, trees draped over the tops of trailers crushing their roofs, and tarps acting as makeshift roofs. ‘There is no food, no light, no gas, nothing,’ said Pastor Louicesse Dorsaint of Haitian United Evangelical Mission.”

Immokalee’s migrant population works on nearby farms. Many are undocumented and feared Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents at a school shelter until they were assured they would not be picked up. When they returned to their

homes, many of them mobile homes, they found them condemned and couldn’t use them. (tinyurl.com/ybljy35j)

## Deaths in a nursing home

The most dramatic failure, and the one most widely reported, was the death of eight people in a nursing home in Hollywood Hills, in southeast Florida near Fort Lauderdale. More than 150,000 people live in assisted living facilities or nursing homes in Florida. Some 164 assisted living facilities and 29 nursing homes were evacuated after the storm, said Florida authorities.

Since power was out for millions of customers, many of the facilities were running on generators, if at all, though they are inadequate for keeping air conditioning running in the Florida heat, which put many of the elderly at risk.

At this particular facility, patients Carolyn Eatherly, 78; Miguel Antonio Franco, 92; Estella Hendricks, 71; Betty Hibbard, 84; Manuel Mario Medieta, 96; Gail Nova, 71; Bobby Owens, 84; and Albertina Vega, 99, all died, apparently from dehydration related to the heat. Some 158 were evacuated and rescued at the last moment.

Gov. Rick Scott cried “inexplicable,”

and quickly pushed through a ruling that all such facilities should have a backup generator and a four-day supply of fuel. But, truth to tell, it is all too explicable.

There are hundreds of privately owned nursing homes. As Dale Ewart, vice president of 1199SEIU, the United Healthcare Workers East union, told Democracy Now! on Sept. 14: “There are broader questions about what we’re willing to allow nursing homes to get away with and what kind of accountability we want to have for the billions of dollars in public money that supports this industry.”

He added that some “70, 80 percent of the revenue that supports this industry is our money through Medicaid and Medicare. Back in 2002, Florida passed a series of nursing home reforms that, among other things, created some of the highest staffing standards in the nation, for Florida’s nursing homes. And in the 10 years that followed, the nursing home industry, using its political connections, has rolled those back significantly.”

Like the rest of capitalist society, these homes operate to maximize profits. That means keeping wages as low as possible and staff to a minimum while cutting costs on things like backup generators. It also means keeping unions out.

“Inexplicable”? Tragedies like these post-Irma deaths are almost inevitable.

## When the s--t hits the fan

The poorest and most vulnerable lose most in these catastrophes, often their homes, sometimes their lives. Nearly all who had to or chose to stay in Florida during and after Irma paid a price for the lack of preparation and utter lack of infrastructure. As an article in the Sept. 14 New Republic put it, south “Florida was covered with a film of poop.”

South Florida used to be one big swamp, barely above sea level. Much of it was made habitable by draining and dredging. This left little leeway for storm surges and torrential rains.

In Miami, noted the article, “[T]he city’s South District Wastewater Treatment Plant reported a six-million-gallon sewage spill that reached Biscayne Bay, a state aquatic preserve. ... In Seminole County, north of Orlando, a sewer overflowed for six hours, spilling two million gallons.”

After Irma, “Pollution reports submitted to Florida’s Department of Environmental Protection” showed that “more than 28 million gallons of treated and untreated sewage [had been] released in 22 counties.” (tinyurl.com/ybjfeq9h) □

# Capitalism, environmental racism and injustice

By Dolores Cox

More than just torrential rains and flooding from Hurricane Harvey have put Houston in the spotlight. The fourth-largest city in the U.S., Houston has neighboring areas that contain more than a dozen oil refineries. In Baytown, 25 miles away, ExxonMobil operates the country’s second-largest refinery.

Ninety miles east of Houston, in Port Arthur, Texas, is the Saudi Arabian-owned Motiva Enterprise refinery, the largest such facility in the U.S. ExxonMobil operates another refinery there.

What these oil refineries have in common is that they spew millions of pounds of toxic pollutants and fumes into the air, in violation of the Clean Air Act and endangering the surrounding communities. ExxonMobil has flagrantly violated permits to expand its oil processing and refinery operations.

Port Arthur is home to the largest population of disadvantaged and marginalized people living in fence-line communities surrounded by refineries. Disproportionate numbers of these people suffer under a daily bombardment of toxic fumes. They do not have the resources

to leave or evacuate.

Communities adjacent to these petrochemical plants have one thing in common: They are occupied by predominantly poor, marginalized, Black and Latinx residents who are daily exposed to airborne toxic emissions. These carcinogens cause serious health problems, including an increased mortality risk from heart disease and cancer, as well as respiratory and neurological illnesses and birth defects.

Alleen Brown’s article in the Aug. 31 Intercept, entitled, “Harvey Victims Face Toxic Pollution as Hurricane Recovery Begins,” tells of a study last October by

the Union of Concerned Scientists and Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services. It showed vast health disparities between the Black and Brown lower-income communities of Harrisburg-Manchester and Galena Park, which sit near Houston’s petrochemical industry, and the two mainly white communities of Bellaire and White Oaks/El-dridge further away.

The study concluded that the fence-line communities “faced cancer risks and a respiratory hazard index that were at least 24 percent higher risk than the

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# Red Cross grabs disaster money, fails to serve

By Chris Fry

Over mainstream and social media, the American Red Cross is generating an avalanche of fundraising commercials for donations for both the victims of Hurricane Harvey in Houston as well as for Hurricane Irma in Florida. A host of well-heeled celebrities, including former President Barack Obama, have called on the public to empty their wallets and donate to this massive “nonprofit” charity.

As of Sept. 14, the Red Cross had raised more than \$300 million in donations for hurricane relief from both storms. (WRAL.com, Sept. 14) Of course, some of the money is tax-deductible donations from such corporations as Chase, ExxonMobil and Dow Chemical, as well as wealthy individuals. But much of it comes from individual donations by concerned workers.

The Red Cross bonanza has raised skeptical voices even from such capitalist mouthpieces as the New York Times, whose Aug. 30 editorial called the Red Cross a “master of promotion” in man-

agement of funds. The Times cited “media reports documenting the Red Cross’s disaster relief failures — including after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Sandy and the Haiti earthquake.”

A blistering 2015 report from ProPublica and National Public Radio documented the criminal relief failure of the ARC after it raised nearly half a billion dollars for the terrible Haiti earthquake that killed up to 316,000 people, injured 300,000 and displaced 1.5 million people from their homes. (cnn.com, Dec. 28)

“The Red Cross says it has provided homes to more than 130,000 people. But the actual number of permanent homes the group has built in all of Haiti: six,” reported ProPublica. “The Red Cross kept soliciting money well after it had enough for the emergency relief. ... Doctors Without Borders, in contrast, stopped fundraising off the earthquake after it decided it had enough money. The donations to the Red Cross helped the group erase its more than \$100 million deficit.” (propublica.com, June 15, 2015)

A 2014 article from ProPublica and NPR stated: “The Red Cross botched key elements of its mission after [the 2012 hurricanes] Sandy and Isaac, leaving behind a trail of unmet needs and acrimony. ... Red Cross officials at national headquarters in Washington, D.C., compounded the charity’s inability to provide relief by ‘diverting assets for public relations purposes,’ as one internal report puts it. Distribution of relief supplies, the report said, was ‘politically driven.”” (propublica.com, Oct. 29, 2014)

The expose continued: “During Isaac, Red Cross supervisors ordered dozens of trucks usually deployed to deliver aid, to be driven around nearly empty instead, ‘just to be seen,’ one of the drivers, Jim Dunham, recalls. ‘We were sent way down on the Gulf with nothing to give,’ Dunham says. The Red Cross’s relief effort was ‘worse than the storm.””



PHOTO: AMADI AJAMU

Haiti Relief Coalition demonstrates March 22, 2010, at American Red Cross headquarters in New York demanding all money donated for Haiti be spent in Haiti.

When Hurricane Isaac struck Louisiana and Mississippi, 90 percent of Red Cross workers assigned, some 460 volunteers, were kept for days in non-affected Tampa, where the Republican National Convention was being held.

When Hurricane Sandy struck the

*Continued on page 11*



# Anti-gentrification organizing heats up

By Joe Piette  
Philadelphia

About 50 housing activists from the Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities converged on a City Council meeting on Sept. 14 to demand a construction impact tax to offset the effects of gentrification on poor neighborhoods. The coalition is made up of 59 community groups, including the Food and Commercial Workers; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees District Council 47; United Home Care Workers of Pennsylvania; and other area unions.

Many Philadelphians agree with Demetrius Richardson, from the Point Breeze section of this city, whose complaint is featured on the PCAC website: “Today, the neighborhood is gentrifying, and I AM all for beautification of the neighborhood, but we built this community for the people that lived here, and now they can’t afford to stay and other people are



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

calling the shots.” (phillyaffordablecommunities.org)

Between 2000 and 2014, this city lost over 23,000 affordable housing units, defined as having rents plus utilities costing less than \$750 per month.

Philadelphia ranks first among the 10 largest cities in the U.S. for the number of families living in poverty — 25.7 percent. (Philly News, Sept. 13)

In fact, for the estimated 128,900 households in this city earning less than \$15,000 per year, gentrification is making it impossible to stay in their homes.

Gentrification mostly impacts the Black community in Philadelphia. Between

2000 and 2012, the African-American population in gentrifying neighborhoods decreased between 22 percent and 29 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Increased housing costs are one reason for this. But, in addition, wealthy developers, in order to clear neighborhoods of poor people, push for “stop and frisk” and other racist police policies that criminalize and attempt to justify the use of violence against Black and Brown people.

The PCAC’s proposed bill would set a tax per square foot of development, which would be used to fund affordable housing or other community uses. This legislation is far from a radical idea. Nevertheless, organizers have tried for several years to get legislation passed that would limit gentrification’s negative effects on our most impoverished communities — without success. The developers and bankers have had controlling influence on this city’s political structure for decades. □

# Union victory for LGBTQ health workers

By Megan Murray  
Philadelphia

In a victory for service workers and the LGBTQ community, Philadelphia’s Mazzoni Center front-line staff voted 51-34 in favor of unionization on Sept. 13. The vote for Service Employees Union (SEIU) representation follows walkouts and protests over the past several months organized by the nonprofit center’s staff in response to serious management problems.

Protests have dealt with issues ranging from negligence within the administration, failure to investigate sexual misconduct, and allowing racist, classist and transphobic institutional practices to flourish. Recently, workers demonstrated against the hiring of an alt-right,

anti-union consulting firm.

Before the vote on unionizing ended, activists with the Black and Brown Workers Collective, union organizers and patients gathered outside Mazzoni, encouraging staff to vote yes. “That’s the best way for them to be supported,” said one Mazzoni patient. “[Unionizing] is going to just help them provide better care. ... The patients have their back.” (GPhilly, Sept. 13)

The vote to unionize at Mazzoni is a step toward creating social support services capable of reaching the most marginalized members of the LGBTQ community. Mazzoni staff are part of the larger fight against racism, transphobia and classism in Philadelphia’s “Gayborhood” and its LGBTQ institutions.

The BBWC demonstrated

against oppression on June 1, 2016, in the HIV/AIDS nonprofit sector in Philadelphia, specifically addressing Philadelphia FIGHT, an AIDS service agency. Workers World/Mundo Obreiro reported: “Black and Brown workers have been targeted and even fired for speaking out against FIGHT’s oppressive practices. Shani Akilah, who was one of those fired, said: ‘Workers are united to demand justice and a change in organizational culture. FIGHT has a long history of this type of discrimination. We are tired of the retaliation. Workers who are still on their jobs are united with us.’”

The Mazzoni staff’s decision to unionize empowers workers in the nonprofit sector as well as LGBTQ workers who need affordable, accessible services. □

# UAW wins election despite intimidation

By Martha Grevatt  
Detroit

Warehouse workers at Penske Logistics in the Detroit suburb of Chesterfield voted on Sept. 13 in a National Labor Relations Board election to be represented by United Auto Workers Local 1248.

This vote, achieved in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, is a huge victory over the notoriously anti-labor and anti-worker Roger Penske. The 80-year-old billionaire’s Penske Corporation boasts “revenues in excess of \$26 billion, operating in more than 3,300 locations and employing over 50,000 people.” (Penske.com)

Penske has a history of resisting unions. Nevertheless, many

successful organizing drives have been held at Penske facilities around the country by the UAW, the Machinists and the Teamsters. In 2015, two dozen customer service representatives in New Jersey had to “overcome a full-blown anti-union campaign carried out by the company’s labor relations department” to win representation by the Machinists union. (njafclcio.org)

The 200 warehouse workers, who now have a voice at work, have been subjected to a ruthless disciplinary process. Workers complain about preferential treatment: Essentially anyone who doesn’t cozy up to the boss ends up in the street. Frequent firings under a hated point system have led to a high turnover

rate. Under work rules that are arbitrarily applied and changed without notice, a worker can be given points for any number of infractions, such as refusing to work overtime with as little as 15 minutes notice. Seven points result in automatic discharge.

Now that the facility is organized, workers will be able to challenge these oppressive conditions. While they were voting, dozens of UAW supporters gathered outside the facility at shift change to back them up. The UAW has been organizing warehouse and auto parts workers around Metro Detroit. Local 1248 currently represents Fiat Chrysler Automobiles workers at FCA warehouses in southeast Michigan. □

# On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

## Charter/Spectrum strikers fight union busting!

Over 1,800 Charter/Spectrum workers have been on strike in New York and New Jersey for nearly six months since March 28. They are fighting for a livable contract and against corporate greed, unfair labor practices and union busting. While Charter/Spectrum wants the workers to take a cut in benefits with no raise in pensions, Charter Communications’ CEO received a total compensation of \$98 million in 2016.

No wonder the members of International Electronic Workers (IBEW) Local 3 are marching west across the Brooklyn Bridge on Sept. 18 for a 4 p.m. rally in Foley Square. The New York City Central Labor Council has called out its members; for the first time AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka will join them.

Besides maintaining picket lines at Spectrum stores throughout the region, the union has used imaginative tactics to expose Spectrum’s unwillingness to offer them a contract they can live with. They marched across the George Washington Bridge on Aug. 23, had a huge contingent at the Sept. 9 NYC Labor Day march and raised a banner at the Sept. 10 Mets game.

You can help the strikers in two ways: 1) sign a petition at spectrumstrike2017.com to NYC elected officials to “immediately pull Charter/Spectrum’s franchise agreement” with the city; and 2) donate at tinyurl.com/yasvhw3 to help workers who are facing foreclosure and serious financial hardship.

## Auto mechanics’ victory in Chicago!

In a thunderclap win, 2,000 striking auto mechanics in the Chicago area celebrated a victory after enduring a grueling seven-week strike beginning in early August.

Members of Chicago’s Auto Mechanics Local 701, the largest mechanics’ local in the country, demanded a faster way to become a “journeyman” or professional mechanic. By withholding their labor, they won the faster path — from 10 to 5 years! Mechanics also gained a base pay increase from a guaranteed 34-hour week to a 40-hour week and an across-the-board wage boost.

The New Car Dealerships Committee, a conglomeration of 140 car dealerships, fought against the union’s just demands. But as the strike wore on, some businesses lost faith in their cabal and broke ranks to bargain individually with the union. That really helped Local 701. In a statement, the union thanked family and community supporters who joined the picket lines, helped with monetary donations and cooked food and pastries. Workers’ solidarity = victory!

## Chicago airport workers beat back low-paying contractors

Led by Chicago’s Service Employees (SEIU) Local 1 and in solidarity with community coalitions such as Jobs with Justice and Arab American Action, the 8,000-strong, multinational contract workers at O’Hare and Midway airports — baggage handlers, cabin cleaners, wheelchair attendants, janitors, security officers, ticket collectors and de-icers — have won improvements in their jobs and lives.

Workers fought for and won an ordinance that raises contract workers’ minimum wage to \$13.45 per hour starting July 1, 2018. As In These Times notes, this is well above the current minimum of \$11 an hour. A “labor peace” agreement also clears SEIU’s union organizing for takeoff! (Sept. 11)

Airport work once paid decently, but in the race to the bottom in the 1980s and 90s, profit-thirsty bosses sought to outsource jobs to contractors offering the lowest bid. Since SEIU began organizing in airports in 2015, the Chicago Tribune reports, 110,000 airport workers, including many workers of color, have already scored raises.

Luis Alvarenga told In These Times, “I think what we need most is a union that sees the injustices and stops the abuses.” Hatem Abudayyeh of the Arab American Network concurred: “These workers are our own people: Black, Arab, Muslim, Latino, other immigrants.”

## Overtime pay raise blocked for 4 million workers

The Labor Department under the Obama administration raised the salary ceiling for overtime pay for workers earning less than \$47,476, boosting the take-home pay of mostly women and people of color. The former ceiling had been \$23,660. But that rule change was rejected by a Texas judge on Aug. 31. Previously the judge had granted a temporary stay on implementing the rule, scheduled to go into effect in December 2016, after it was challenged by corporate mouthpieces and 21 states.

Christine Owens, executive director of the National Employment Law Project, was quoted by Rewire: “For working people [in the U.S.] ... this judge’s decision is one more reminder of how the rules are rigged in favor of corporate interests — and against ensuring that all who work for a living will make a decent living from work.” (Sept. 1) □



# Boston rally supports immigrants

Hundreds rallied at the Massachusetts State House on Sept. 16 to protest President Trump’s decision to end the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) policy for young immigrants known as “Dreamers.”

Mahtowin Munro of the United American Indians of New England opened up the rally by reminding the protesters that they were standing on Indigenous land, stolen by racist settlers who imposed false borders. “We will defend the 11 mil-

lion undocumented workers here and together beat back the attacks by Trump and all the settlers,” she said.

Other speakers included Andre François, president of the Boston School Bus Drivers, Steelworkers Local 8751, who represent 1,200 drivers and monitors. Some 900 are Haitians or Haitian Americans. Many of these workers have Temporary Protected Status. François said the union is demanding their immigration status be made permanent.

Members of the Massachusetts Teachers Association, Boston University Medical School students, and Dreamers from all over the state then made up an ebullient crowd that marched through the busy downtown shopping area. Chants like “No hatred! No fear! Immigrants are welcome here!” seemed to uplift the shoppers, workers and families. Many stopped to cheer, join in chants, raise fists, and film and photograph the demonstration.

— Report and photo by WW Boston bureau



WW PHOTO

## Seattle

# Stop ICE raids and prisons

By Jim McMahan  
Seattle

A hundred people rallied against Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids at ICE headquarters in downtown Seattle on Sept. 12. This was part of a chain of protests happening all over the country. The demonstration protested “Operation Mega,” the latest attack by ICE. People also rallied for DACA (the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program).

Rally speakers explained that Operation Mega is part of ICE’s deportation plan and reign of terror against immigrant workers and families. After the theft of DACA, the Detention Watch Network went public with information leaked from the Department of Homeland Security. The network says a number of people in ICE shared information on the Mega operation with immigrant rights advocates. Operation Mega plans to round up more than 8,000 people for deportation from Sept. 16 to 21.

The Seattle rally was called by the NW Detention Center Resistance. The demonstration delivered a Freedom of Information Act request to ICE. The FOIA request is for information about the detailed plans for Operation Mega, along with any potential future plans to institute mass immigration raids. The rally’s demand to ICE was “Show Your Papers,” which was printed on a banner. But ICE refused to meet with demonstrators and blocked their entry at the door.

Immigrant rights and community groups represented at the rally included Casa Latina, El Centro De La Raza and BAYAN-USA. Maru Mora Villapondo,

coordinator of NW Detention Center Resistance, said that ICE claimed that they cancelled the raids after the immigrant groups released their information. “But we can’t trust them,” she said. “We are using our constitutional right to assemble and show we are not afraid.”

Also speaking at the rally was immigrant rights lawyer Jorge Baron. He announced the formation of the Immigrant Solidarity Network, which will provide legal aid and “serve and strengthen communities across the state.” Their 24-hour hotline to report active raids and ICE activity is 1-844-RAID-REP.

The NW Detention Center Resistance held another rally on Sept. 16 at the detention center (penitentiary) on the Tacoma, Wash., tideflats. Behind a banner reading “End Immigrant Detention,” activists marched up and down in front of the for-profit, GeoCorp-operated prison where prisoner fightback is continuous. A group of prisoners had just ended the sixth group hunger strike of the year. A group of Cuban hunger strikers had been demanding release and protesting family separation.

Villapondo repeated the demands placed on ICE at the Seattle rally. She exposed that there had just been a prisoner hunger strike which made gains at Norcor, a new immigration detention jail in Oregon. She talked about the importance of opposing the ICE budget, while not supporting the two parties of big business. “You don’t represent us because you don’t understand us,” she said. In addition to petitioning against the prison, letter writing to the prisoners and upcoming activities were also stressed. □

# Political prisoner beaten, Free Herman Bell!

By Kathy Durkin

Herman Bell is 69 years old. This former Black Panther has been incarcerated for over 40 years. In a stunning attack on Sept. 5, a group of six prison guards at Great Meadow Correctional Facility (Comstock), brutally beat Bell, leaving him seriously injured. One guard pounded his head onto the pavement, while others viciously punched and kicked Bell all over his body. Mace was sprayed directly into his eyes.

As a result, Bell has fractured ribs, visible in x-rays taken at the prison infirmary. His left eye is swollen and bruised and his vision impaired. There are multiple abrasions and lacerations all over his body. He asked the prison doctor to photograph his hands and arms to show that he has no defensive wounds and didn’t offer any resistance.

As is often the case when guards beat prisoners, Bell has been falsely charged with “assault on staff.” After the beating, he was transferred to the Special Housing Unit (“the box”) at Five Points Correctional Facility. He is “locked down” 23 hours a day.

Bell’s spouse, Nancy Bell, visited him at Five Points Correctional Facility on Sept. 9 and described him as “chained and shackled behind glass and a screen, with a big black

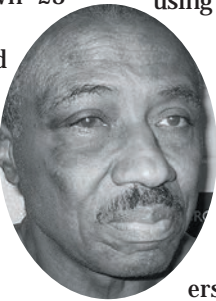
eye that was very runny and watery.” She described him as being in “excruciating pain,” and is concerned that “he may not regain vision in his eye due to the extreme amount of Mace he sustained.” (Amsterdam News, Sept. 14)

For over 20 years, Bell had not been charged with any disciplinary violations. Before the assault, he had been scheduled to have a three-day visit with his spouse in a few days, the first in two and a half years. Moreover, he was starting to prepare for his eighth parole board hearing, set for February 2018.

Now Bell has been charged with assault on a guard! If he is convicted, he faces a lengthy stay in the Special Housing Unit and the loss of privileges and “good time.” The possibility of parole could be squashed for years to come.

Bell’s supporters are asking that letters and cards expressing get-well wishes and solidarity be sent to him. This is to give him support and also show prison authorities that many people are paying attention to his health and well-being.

Send cards and letters to Herman Bell using this address:



Herman Bell 79 C 0262  
Five Points CF  
6600 State Route 96  
Caller Box 119  
Romulus, NY 14541  
It is suggested that white envelopes be used.  
Additionally, Bell’s supporters are asking that letters be sent to Anthony Annucci, Commissioner of New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, 1220 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12226. These letters should ask that Herman Bell be given medical attention at an outside hospital; that the officers responsible for the beating be fired; that the unwarranted charges against Bell be dropped; that Bell be transferred back to the general population at Great Meadow Correctional Facility where he had been on the Honor Block; and that his family visits be reinstated.

Bell’s beating is one of many that occur on a daily basis in the oppressive U.S. prison system, where 2.4 million people are incarcerated under brutal conditions, a disproportionate number African Americans and Latinx. Prison guards are allowed to terrorize those inside the jails and then escape culpability for the violence they mete out. This brutality must be opposed, and those responsible held accountable.

**Free Herman Bell!**  
Much of the information for this article came from freehermanbell.org. □

# ‘New York City is NOT for sale!’

At New York’s City Hall, Johnnie Stevens from the Oscar-Mandela Committee addressed a protest on Sept. 8 aimed against Mayor Bill de Blasio’s housing policies.



Johnnie Stevens, speaking, and Ed Figueroa at New York’s City Hall on Sept. 8 to protest mayor’s housing policies.

policies, which are displacing thousands of people. He blasted the mayor’s pro-big-real-estate rezoning plans as “racist to the core.” This was illustrated by a placard depicting both de Blasio and billionaire businessman President Donald Trump.

Ed Figueroa of the South Bronx Community Center chaired the rally and introduced speakers, including Yu Qiong of Local 318 of the Restaurant Workers Union and Marina Figueroa of the East Harlem Preservation Organization. They expressed anger at elected representatives who don’t represent the working class, and particularly, communities of color.

When speaking of the displacement of workers and communities of color, Stevens denounced the culprits. “This is Wall Street!” he asserted. And he urged the building of a broad movement to stop millionaire developers and de Blasio.

This protest was called by the Citywide Alliance Against Displacement and drew a large delegation from Chinatown. This community has rallied with friends and

neighbors from the Lower East Side and the Bronx to save their affordable apartments and neighborhoods from being displaced by highly profitable high-rise condominiums and hotels for the wealthy.

A coalition of 60 organizations built the Chinatown Working Group Rezoning Plan to protect their neighborhoods from displacement and real estate moguls’ overdevelopment. But City Council member Margaret Chin and de Blasio blocked their plan.

De Blasio is currently under attack by tenants, immigrants and other oppressed communities, as well as housing rights and social justice activists who are fighting racist gentrification around the city. Unsurprisingly, the Real Estate Board of New York, the top luxury developers’ lobby, has hailed the mayor’s policies. But to many New Yorkers, de Blasio is known as “the mayor of displacement, broken windows policing and corruption.”

— Report and photo by Anne Pruden





Jemele Hill and Michael Smith

By Monica Moorehead

Some of the most prominent athletes, especially in professional sports, are refusing to be viewed as “dumb jocks” or to be admonished with “just shut up and play.” They’re speaking out more and more on social issues, especially the ongoing crisis of police brutality and systemic racism. These voices are playing critical roles in helping to raise consciousness among broad layers of the U.S. population on centuries-old racial injustice.

Former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick ignited this recent trend in August 2016, when he refused to stand for the playing of the national anthem during preseason and regular season National Football League games. He made it clear that he was carrying out his protest against police terror on Black and Brown communities. He also stated that he refused to vote for either Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump for president because of their racist attitudes.

Once Trump was elected, more and more athletes have both verbally and in action expressed their opposition not only to Trump’s vehement racism toward Black, Brown and Muslim peoples, but also to his disgusting misogyny and anti-transgender attitudes. This is especial-

# Jemele Hill calls Trump a white supremacist

ly true given Trump’s outspoken affinity for white supremacist groups, especially the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazis, who viciously attacked anti-racist activists in Charlottesville, Va., on Aug. 12, killed white anti-fascist Heather Heyer and wounded Deandre Harris, a 20-year-old Black man.

## Hill speaks truth to power

The justified criticism leveled against Trump for giving the green light to racist, fascist scum to raise their ugly heads has not been confined just to athletes but also to prominent sports commentators. Jemele Hill is a perfect example. The 41-year-old Black woman is a prominent sportscaster with a Monday-through-Friday, prime-time Sports Center show on ESPN called “The Six” with her longtime co-host, Michael Smith, who is also African-American.

While some may say that Trump is a white supremacist supporter, Hill stated emphatically on her own Twitter feed that “Donald Trump is a white supremacist who has largely surrounded himself w/other white supremacists.” In response to racist feedback to her tweet, she stated, “The height of white privilege is being able to ignore his white supremacy, because it’s of no threat to you. Well, it’s a threat to me. ... Trump is the most ignorant, offensive president of my lifetime. His rise is a direct result of white supremacy. Period.” According to Twitter, Hill has at least 690,000 followers.

As a result of expressing her views, the president of ESPN, John Skipper, who is white, criticized Hill’s remarks. He stated that ESPN is “about sports”; that “ESPN

is not a political organization”; and “where sports and politics intersect, no one is told what view they must express.” Skipper continued: “At a minimum, comments should not be inflammatory or personal. We had a violation of those standards in recent days and our handling of this is a private matter.” (si.com, Sept. 15) Skipper ceased to view this as a “private matter” when he demanded publicly that Hill apologize for her remarks.

The sportscaster responded on Twitter Sept. 13: “My comments on Twitter expressed my own personal beliefs. My regret is my comments and the public way I made them painted ESPN in an unfair light. My respect for the company and my colleagues remains unconditional.”

Trump and those in his administration have called for ESPN to fire Hill for telling the truth about his history of outright racism even before he became president. One of the most notable facts is that he called for the death penalty for the Central Park Five, young Black and Brown men who were falsely accused of raping a white woman in New York City. Following the Fives’ exoneration, Trump refused to retract his heinous statements. Trump was also in violation of the Fair Housing Bill of 1968, when he tried to maintain segregation in 39 buildings he owned in New York City. And Trump stated after Charlottesville that there were “good people” among the white supremacists.

Since calling Hill’s comment a “fireable offense,” White House Chief of Staff Sarah Huckabee Sanders is being hit with an ethics complaint by the Democratic Coalition, an anti-Trump Super PAC tied to the Democratic Party. The coalition says that Sanders violated a federal law which states that no executive branch employee can influence a private employer’s de-



Activists held a protest in Seattle before Sept. 17 game between the Seahawks and 49ers in support of Kaepernick being assigned to a team and for Michael Bennett, an outspoken Black Seahawk player, assaulted by Las Vegas police on Aug. 27. A similar protest was held outside the Atlanta Falcons stadium Sept. 17 during their first home game.

cision to hire or fire one of its workers “solely on the basis of partisan political affiliation.” (The Root, Sept. 16)

In the meantime, Hill’s colleagues, starting with Michael Smith and prominent athletes such as Kaepernick, Golden State Warriors’ forward Kevin Durant, progressive sports writer Dave Zirin and many others, have stated their support for Hill on Twitter with #IStandWithJemele. It was also reported that when Skipper sought to replace Hill on her Wednesday show, he got no takers — because replacing Hill would be seen as scabbing.

As of Sept. 17, “Blackout for Human Rights,” a coalition of athletes, artists and filmmakers, has initiated a boycott of the 2017 NFL season called “BlackOut-NFL” in solidarity with Kaepernick, Hill, Bennett and others “who speak out on injustice and white supremacy in America.” (blackoutforhumanrights.tumblr.com/) □



# Anti-racist banner hung at Red Sox game

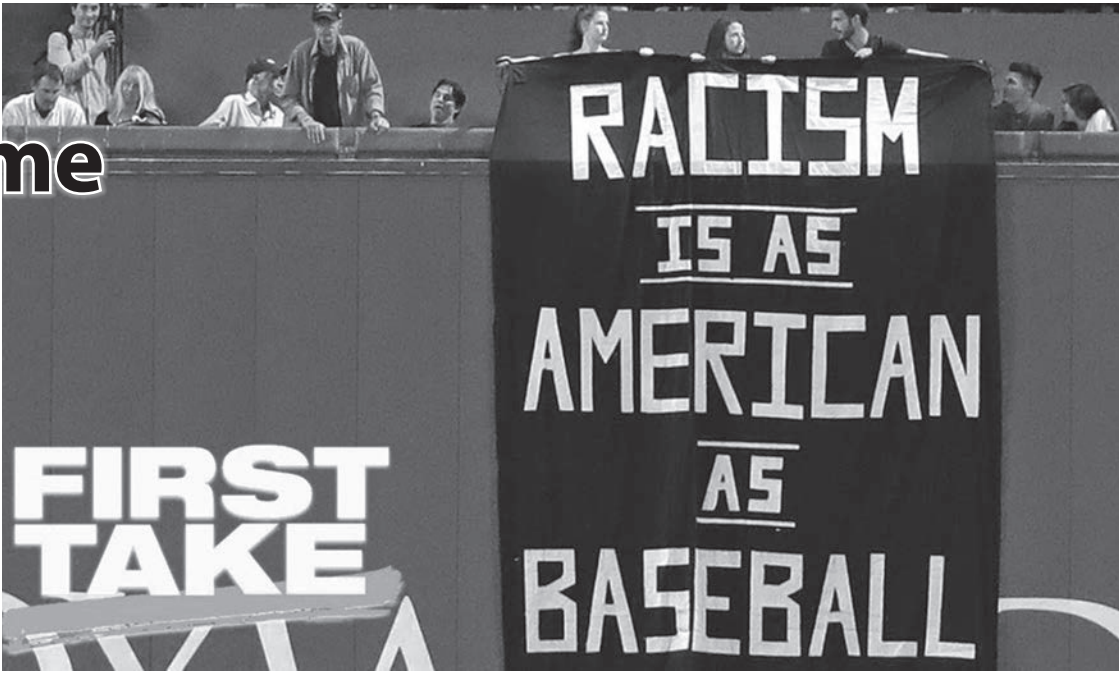
By Monica Moorehead

During a Sept. 13 Major Baseball League game between the Boston Red Sox and Oakland Athletics, four white anti-racists hung a huge banner from the stands that read: “Racism is as American as baseball.” A fifth activist provided videotape of the action. The banner received both national and international attention. Fenway Park, home to the Red Sox, recently made major headlines when racist fans hurled racist epithets in May at Adam Jones, an African-American outfielder with the visiting Baltimore Orioles. Other Black players stated that they experienced similar racism at Fenway. The Red Sox were the last team to integrate their roster in 1959.

The activists stated that the incident with Jones was prime motivation for carrying out this heroic action. After they were taken out of the stadium, the activists issued the following statement to the Washington Post: “We are a group of white anti-racist protesters. We want to remind everyone that just as baseball is fundamental to [U.S.] American culture and history, so too is racism. White people need to wake up to this reality before

white supremacy can truly be dismantled. We urge anyone who is interested in learning more or taking action to contact their local racial justice organization.”

One of the protesters added, “We are responding to a long history of racism and white supremacy in the United States that continues to pervade every aspect of [U.S.] American culture today. We deliberately chose a platform in an attempt to reach as many people as possible.” (Sept. 14)



## WHY COLIN KAEPERNICK IS RIGHT

Articles from Workers World/Mundo Obrero Newspaper [www.workers.org/books](http://www.workers.org/books)

## MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead.

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**Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy

**Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell

**The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead

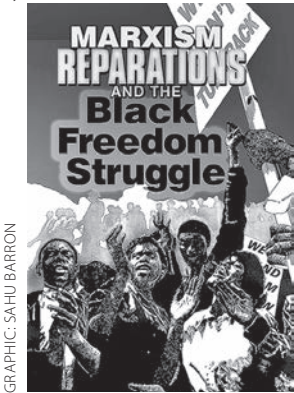
**Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights** Imani Henry

**Black & Brown Unity: Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad

**Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal

**Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation** Consuela Lee

**Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion** John Parker



GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

Available at major online book sellers.



# Do It Like Durham update: 'Struggle: a lifetime commitment'

By LeiLani Dowell  
Durham, N.C.

Some 200 people gathered at 9 a.m. at the Durham courthouse on a rainy Sept. 12 to support Workers World Party members and other activists who were facing charges for their actions during the toppling of a Confederate statue symbolizing white supremacy on Aug. 14. The group included people who had caravanned from around the country to be at the action.

After an hour-long rally, the nine activists emerged from the courthouse. Their cases had been continued to Nov. 14. Two other WWP activists face court dates on Oct. 11.

Wearing hats and T-shirts that read, "Do It Like Durham," the crowd then marched militantly through the streets to say "no" to white supremacy. They declared a victory at the site of the Confederate statue, which crumpled when WWP member and North Carolina Central University student Takiyah Thompson, along with others, brought it down. Finally, the group marched to a nearby park, where they danced, sang, gave speeches and

vowed to continue the fight. The uplifting action was held exactly a month after the people's resistance to fascism and racism in Charlottesville, Va., and the murder of activist Heather Heyer there.

At the opening rally, the Rev. Curtis Gatewood argued, a day after the anniversary of 9/11, that the government talks about terrorism but not about the terrorism it wages on Black and Brown people. Gatewood recently inaugurated the Stop Killing Us campaign. "There is terrorism in Michigan, North Carolina, Virginia — a terrorist is sitting in the White House," Gatewood declared.

Eva Panjwani, one of the rally's emcees and a member of WWP, noted that a lot of what passes for law in this country is racist, and the work of social justice movements is to point out these unjust laws. "It's never been just about the statues, but about white supremacy," they stated.

Lamont Lilly, the other emcee and Workers World Party's 2016 vice presidential candidate, asserted: "This is not



WW PHOTO

In Durham, N.C., at the toppled Confederate statue with LT Tran, A.A. Jones and Takiyah Thompson on Sept. 12.

the time to speak timidly — we must speak direct truth to power." He cited the long years of oppression, activism and organizing in Durham and throughout the country, asking, "Who keeps us safe?" The crowd responded, "We keep us safe."

Basma, of the Baltimore branch of Workers World Party, discussed how Durham is an antidote to any doubts people may feel about righteous struggle. Andrew Gil, of the Baltimore People's Power Assembly, mentioned the imposing of imperialist U.S. statues around the world, and the toppling of a statue of Gen. Douglas MacArthur in 2013 in the Philippines.

Standing at the site of the Confederate statue, Takiyah Thompson said, "People have been asking me how I feel all day. I feel powerful, I feel great. I'm not losing a wink of sleep. I slept like a baby. I slept like a free person last night because we are all more free thanks to the action that we took on Aug. 14. And we know that struggle is not an event. It's a lifetime commitment."

By Thompson's side, arrestee LT Tran paid tribute to Heather Heyer, the activist killed in Charlottesville on July 12: "We fight in her honor and in honor of free-

dom fighters over centuries. We do it because we love our people."

Anthony Jones, of Take Em Down NOLA, discussed the struggle to remove Confederate statues in New Orleans. "White supremacy is a system that only works for the capitalists at the top," Jones asserted.

At the energizing closing rally, activist-musician Toshi Reagon, who had traveled all the way from New York to be at the rally, performed a song with the refrain, "I'm going to get my baby out of jail." Grace Nichols, of Southerners on New Ground, discussed their organization's campaign to bail Black women out of jail. "In Durham," Nichols stated, "the population is 50 percent white, but the jails are 50 percent Black. They're criminalizing folks they don't want to see."

Other speakers represented Black Youth Project 100, North Carolina Environmental Justice Network, Greensboro Transparency Project, New York People's Power Assembly, Durham Beyond Policing, Michigan People's Defense Network, Inside-Outside Alliance and the Los Angeles International Action Center. □



# Breakthrough in Mumia's fight for justice DA ordered to release entire case file

By Betsey Piette  
Philadelphia

In the latest development in a months-long judicial tug-of-war between attorneys for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, Philadelphia Common Pleas Judge Leon Tucker ordered on Sept. 7 the DA to produce the entire case file of Abu-Jamal's criminal conviction.

Tucker ordered the DA to turn over all 31-plus boxes of prosecution files for his review by Sept. 21. While the DA will likely request a postponement and possibly attempt to appeal Tucker's ruling, Abu-Jamal's supporters see Tucker's ruling as an important step forward.

In a breakthrough in the struggle to free Abu-Jamal, a new challenge to his 35-year-old wrongful conviction in the death of a Philadelphia police officer was brought before Tucker's court on April 24. NAACP Legal Defense Fund attorneys Judith Ritter and Christina Swarns argued that Mumia had been denied due process because former DA Ronald Castille, now a Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice, refused to step down from hearing state appeals cases in which he had been involved as a prosecutor.

The challenge to Castille is based on a

2016 U.S. Supreme Court decision, Williams v. Pennsylvania. In that decision, the Supreme Court held that the constitutional right to due process is violated when a judge presides over a case in which they had prior significant or personal involvement.

The next breakthrough for Abu-Jamal came on April 28, when Tucker ordered the DA to produce all documents relevant to Castille's role as a top prosecutor during Mumia's initial appeal process. In response to Tucker's order, the DA released photocopies of a meager 50 pages of public record on May 30.

Again, on June 22, Tucker ordered the DA to comply, giving him a July 7 deadline and specific guidelines on the material to be produced. To coincide with this deadline, Abu-Jamal's supporters rallied outside the DA's office. They called on the DA to "open up your books" and brought poster-size copies of Tucker's order so that people passing by could see the DA cover-up for themselves. Their action also exposed the history of cover-ups and corruption rampant in the Philadelphia DA's office.

Continuing his outrageous cover-up, the DA responded to Tucker's second ruling with requests for extensions and finally produced "new files" that were sub-

stantially the same old files.

In addition to Abu-Jamal's challenge based on this ruling, 13 other cases involving Castille were heard by Tucker on April 24. He responded in four of these cases with the same order: that the DA turn over its case files for his review. In one case, an evidentiary hearing is set for Sept. 22.

## 'DA's office must be fuming!'

Following months of prosecutorial delays, Abu-Jamal's attorneys filed a request for an evidentiary hearing that would allow them to question prosecutors involved in the case. Unfortunately, Tucker's Sept. 7 order denied this. It also did not allow the attorneys any direct review of the files.

However, in ordering production of the entire file for "in camera" review in his chambers, Tucker is clearly acknowledging that what has been produced by the DA to date under court orders has been severely lacking.

Activist attorney Rachel Wolkenstein, updating the case for supporters, stated on Sept. 12: "While it is positive that the Judge has not accepted the DA's position — that the prosecution's records contain no evidence of Castille's involvement in Mumia's case — we are dependent on the



Mumia is innocent  
FREE MUMIA!

Judge's review and evaluation of what he finds in the files."

Wolkenstein further noted: "There is every reason to assert that Castille was personally involved in Mumia's prosecution — from the interest of the Fraternal Order of Police in his death sentence and conviction, to the constitutional issues raised in his appeals, including the racially biased jury selection. We have no reason to rely on an assertion of impartiality of the courts. The judicial record of review of Mumia's case in state and federal courts, including to the U.S. Supreme Court over five times, left him facing execution for almost 30 years and has him now on the slow death row of life imprisonment. As much now or more, we need to make ourselves heard demanding Mumia's freedom.

"In its own discovery responses, the DA indicated that its search for documents was incomplete and contradictory and they never fully disclosed which files they reviewed. The DA's office must be fuming!" □



# ‘End the blockade’ means better health for all

By Cheryl LaBash  
Washington, D.C.

Cuba’s health outcomes in life expectancy and low infant mortality exceed those in the U.S. — at far less cost. So when the International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity hosted its “Third Days of Action” to end the blockade of Cuba, it got a warm response from students, community, U.S. medical professionals and even some elected officials in Washington, D.C.

This mirrored opinion polls that show the majority of the U.S. population, including Cuban Americans, support U.S. actions to normalize relations.

The Days of Action concluded on Sept. 16 at the Miller Branch Library in Ellicott City, Md. After the viewing of “Dare to Dream,” a new video about U.S. graduates from Cuba’s Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM), the program featured three guests from Cuba: Dr. Jesus Reno Cespedes, head of pediatric oncology in Havana; Yoandrys Ruiz Villalon, secretary of the Union of Young Communists from Camaguey Province; and Lei-ma Martinez, from the North American Department of Cuba’s Insitute of Friendship with the Peoples. Also speaking was one of five U.S. graduates of ELAM.

Before that, during a Sept. 14 congressional briefing with the three Cubans, Congressperson Barbara Lee interrupted Dr. Reno as he described how medicine

and spare parts for medical devices are difficult or impossible for Cuba to buy anywhere, preventing it from adhering to international “best practice” treatments. Lee said, “I am so disturbed by this. ... In 2000 the rules changed to allow importation of medicines. ... Does Treasury still technically allow the sale of medicine?”

Dr. Reno replied that there are 68 medications that cannot be bought by Cuba. International pharmaceutical suppliers purchased by U.S. companies are not willing to risk financial transactions with Cuba because of the U.S. blockade.

**Blockade never ended**

A superficial illusion that the blockade has ended was created when the Obama administration eased travel restrictions. Obama traveled to Cuba with his family in 2016, and the U.S. government then allowed direct flights from U.S. airports. But this June 16, a dog-and-pony show in Miami featured the current president signing an executive order retightening travel and other restrictions against Cuba. It demonstrated the need to erase completely, once and for all, the web of laws that form the blockade.

Back in 1960, right after the Cuban Revolution, a U.S. State Department document, known

as the Mallory-Rubottom memo, admitted that the majority of Cubans supported the revolution. But it proposed that “every possible means should be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life of Cuba.” This should be “as adroit and inconspicuous as possible” and make “the greatest inroads in denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of government.” (history.state.gov)

Though not expressed so crudely, the aim of the current economic, financial and commercial blockade of Cuba is the same.

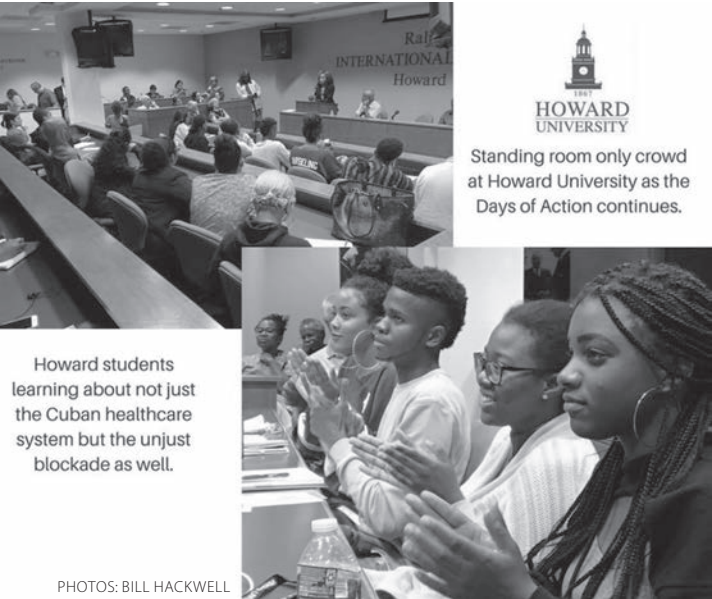
Planning for the Days of Action began in January, as the debate about the future

of health care services in the U.S. was heating up. The U.S. is the only industrialized country in the world without a national health care plan. Even in capitalist Britain and Sweden, health institutions are under pressure to privatize and services have deteriorated.

In January the focus was on repealing or saving the woefully inadequate Affordable Healthcare Act, which extended Medicaid to millions of poor, previously uninsured people. Coincidentally, this September an expanded Medicare bill was introduced, even as the Cuban socialist model for health care was being examined.

When someone at Howard University asked, “Are mental health services covered in Cuba?” Dr. Abraham Vela, graduate of ELAM, replied, “Everything is covered in Cuba’s free health care: prevention, rehabilitation ... not just health. In order for you to be healthy, Cuba practices the true meaning of health. What does it mean to be healthy? It doesn’t mean curing your symptoms. Bio-psycho-social health, Cuba does all of that for its citizens.”

Video streaming for most of the events can be viewed at TheInternationalCommittee.org. □



PHOTOS: BILL HACKWELL



# ‘We are all Venezuela’

More than 200 international delegates from 60 countries joined with Venezuelan activists and government representatives in Caracas on Sept. 16 and 17 for “Days of Global Solidarity — We Are All Venezuela.” They discussed international campaigns of active solidarity with the South American country against recent U.S. imperialist threats. As President Nicolás Maduro Moros described it: “It cannot be just one more gathering. This gathering has to be the

accumulation of events and actions to influence the battle. It has to be a meeting for coordination and action.” Delegates came from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, Latin America and the U.S. Seen here, Delcy Rodríguez, president of Venezuela’s Constituent Assembly, addresses the gathering.

— Report and photo by Berta Joubert-Ceci

# U.S. to occupy Afghanistan for 10+ more years

By John Catalinotto

If anyone made the mistake of thinking that racist, misogynist and xenophobic president #45 is going to make war less likely than would the neoliberal neocons in the Democratic Party, they should be going through a period of serious rethinking right now.

On top of its extreme threats against Korea, its announcement that the U.S. Embassy in Cuba would close, the continued encirclement of Russia by NATO and the escalated sanctions against Venezuela, the Trump administration has now moved to extend the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan for at least another decade.

The most obvious move was the news that the “Green Zone” in Kabul, the Afghan capital, would be more than doubled in size. While the administration hasn’t said it explicitly, this news is an admission that the last 16 years of war the U.S. government unleashed in this Central Asian country have failed to install a puppet regime able to defend the capital.

What this latest news promises is more horror for Afghanistan. What is called for is a movement in the U.S. to end the occupation.

According to the Sept. 16 New York Times, “The expansion [of the Green Zone] is part of a huge public works project that over the next two years will reshape the center of this city of five million to bring nearly all Western embassies, major government ministries, and NATO and American military headquarters within the protected area.

“After 16 years of American presence in Kabul, it is a stark acknowledgment that even the city’s central districts have become too difficult to defend from Taliban bombings.

“But the capital project is also clearly taking place to protect another long-term American investment: Along with an increase in troops to a reported 15,000, from around 11,000 at the moment, the Trump administration’s new strategy for Afghanistan is likely to keep the military in place well into the 2020s, even by the

most conservative estimates.”

Along with this news was the announcement a day earlier that the CIA was pushing to take over the drone bombing campaign from the Pentagon. This wouldn’t change the lethal nature of these attacks on Afghan civilians. It would merely conceal them.

As a Sept. 15 Newsday article points out: “If the CIA is ultimately granted the authority to operate in Afghanistan, it could potentially conduct strikes that accidentally kill civilians, but it would not have to acknowledge them. ... Some Pentagon officials reportedly fear this could place U.S. troops in danger because drone strikes have been known to increase animosity toward the U.S., especially when civilian deaths occur.”

Given the almost universal “animosity toward the U.S.” among the people of Afghanistan after 16 years of occupation, plus another 23 years of lethal intervention, the “Pentagon officials” may be hiding their real reason for opposing this new division of labor. Each department of U.S.

global rule wants its budget to grow and hates to give up its connections to the big money in the military-industrial complex.

**Time to step up the protest**

People have protested drone attacks from Kabul to Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany — a worldwide center for U.S. drones — to Syracuse, N.Y., another hub for the murderous, pilotless bombers. A CIA takeover would keep the attacks secret from the protesters, although not, obviously, from their victims.

Now that the unpopular Trump administration has taken ownership of the war on Afghanistan, it is an excellent time to step up the protest of this occupation from within the U.S.

A coalition of antiwar, antiracist, social justice and community-based groups in the U.S. that have opposed this war over the years has called for a protest demonstration on Oct. 7 in New York City. For information on a Sept. 20 planning meeting, see the Facebook page at tinyurl.com/yecvjyq6. □



Haiti

# Thousands march against new budget

By G. Dunkel

Thousands of Haitians marched through Port-au-Prince on Sept. 12 chanting “Down with Jovenel!” “Down with the bourgeoisie!” and “Liberty or death! The revolution is beginning!” (Haïti-Liberté, Sept. 13) Moïse Jovenel is the current president of Haiti.

A leaflet passed out during the marches raised the issue of the “tuberculosis wages” resulting from the Parliament’s refusal to raise the minimum wage of \$4.77 a day. There is growing anger over Parliament passing a budget that requires drivers to pay \$158 for an income tax report, which is waived if their income is less than \$958 a year. (AFP, Sept. 13)

The day before, protesters had been in



PHOTO: HAITI-LIBERTÉ

a single large group led by Fanmi Lavalas, the party started by Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was elected President of Haiti in 1990 and 2000. The cops, using water cannon and tear gas, were able to

keep them contained and away from downtown. The next day, they broke into smaller groups and the cops had much more trouble.

The protesters set up barricades of burning tires and rocks, blocking key intersections. Behind the presidential palace, the people threw rocks at the cops, who had unleashed stinging, high-pressure water and tear gas at protesters.

Two cars in front of the law offices of Planning Minister Aviol Fleurant were set on fire, and the windows of other cars in the parking lot were busted. Shop windows throughout the city were also damaged.

Also in the new budget is a tax on all Haitians — even those living abroad — who want to use government services of 10,000 gourdes, or \$159, annually (depending on the exchange rate).

Another shocker in the budget, reported by Le Nouvelliste, is that it allocates 7.2 billion gourdes for 146 elected officials and only 6.14 billion gourdes for the health needs of 12 million Haitians.

More demonstrations have been called for Sept. 20-23 by Dessalines Family, headed by Jean-Charles Moïse, a former presidential candidate. According to Van Bref Info, Haiti’s National Police attempted to arrest him on Sept. 12.

The struggle in Haiti is nowhere over — no matter how firmly the U.S. supports the new government of Moïse Jovenel. □

U.S. empire in disarray

# Pentagon’s grim proposals

By Sara Flounders

U.S. war crises and threats are intensifying on every side of the globe, from Korea to Afghanistan, from Venezuela to Yemen. Meanwhile, superstorms are exposing deadly weaknesses in the U.S. industrial infrastructure, while economic foreboding erodes confidence in the midst of a dizzying stock market surge that looks like a bubble ready to burst.

Are the escalating and diverse crises a sign of a deeper systemic problem?

A recent study by a Department of Defense think tank weighs in on this discussion, and its evaluation gives a dire warning to the strategists of U.S. imperialism. Its solution, however, projects the same old militarist practices that it admits have already failed to deal with the escalating crises.

The 116-page study, entitled “At Our Own Peril: DoD Risk Assessment in a Post-Primacy World,” is the product of a year-long U.S. Army War College and Strategic Studies Institute research effort. The combined report includes participation of military think tanks.

Labeled a Joint Chief of Staff Report, it says a fundamental change is underway that can only be ignored “At Our Own Peril.”

What is of note is that the U.S. military itself recognizes this deteriorating U.S. position. In a “post-primacy world,” it says, the U.S. is no longer an unchallenged number one.

A July 17 article in Alternet by Nafeez Ahmen, headlined “Pentagon Study Declares American Empire Is ‘Collapsing,’” pulled out some key quotes from the report that capture the mindset of the military analysts.

The international order the U.S. established after World War II is described as “collapsing,” “unraveling,” “fraying,” and “The authority of governments’ part of international order is crumbling.”

“[The] U.S. can no longer count on its unassailable position. ... Nor can it rely on dominance it enjoyed for 20-plus years after collapse of Soviet Union.

“Global events will happen faster than DoD is currently equipped to handle, being outpaced by world events.

“In brief, the status quo that was hatched and nurtured by U.S. strategists after World War II and has for decades been the principal ‘beat’ for DoD is not merely fraying but may, in fact, be collapsing.”

Of course, the authors may exaggerate the chance of “collapse” in order to

attract more funding. Their solution still presents a dire threat to the rest of humanity: Pile on more of the same military expansion.

**Syria, Afghanistan, DPRK, Venezuela resist**

Still, there are areas where the U.S. has really been less than dominant. In Afghanistan, nearly 16 years of occupation have led nowhere.

Six years ago Washington demanded that the entire government of Syria must resign and a government handpicked by imperialism must come to power. Now determined forces of the Syrian government, with assistance from Russia, Iran and Hezbollah, have pushed back the brutal war for regime change and turned the tide.

The response of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to U.S. nuclear threats and extensive war games is to again call for signing a peace treaty and ending the threats. “The time of dictating orders by brandishing U.S. military might has gone,” said the DPRK’s foreign minister. (Al-Jazeera, April 17)

Threats of a coup, extreme shortages and sabotage rained down on Venezuela if it dared to move forward on holding a democratic election July 30 for a Constituent Assembly, a body really representing all the sectors in society. Venezuela dared to go ahead.

Today Syria, People’s Korea and Venezuela are not safe. But they have fiercely resisted and survived.

The report defines the major problem the U.S. faces: “Generalized disintegration of traditional authority structures ... fueled, and/or accelerated by hyper-connectivity and the obvious decay and potential failure of the post-Cold War status quo.”

Most dangerous is the release of “Facts that challenge legitimacy.” This means, for example, the courageous exposés carried out by Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden, who dared to release highly classified information of criminal activity by the U.S. government and the Pentagon.

“Facts that challenge legitimacy” is a fairly accurate description of the impact of their actions.

**What is the report’s goal?**

So what is the U.S. Army War College report really saying and to whom is it directed?

The report is being used as an imperialist wake-up call. It is making the

rounds to influence think tank members, policy makers, talking heads, corporate media and the small billionaire class.

The report is directed at every millionaire in the Senate. Such reports shape the pitch from lobbyists and funders behind every congressional campaign and speak to the billionaire media CEOs, the biggest banks, the oil, gas and military corporations.

This report tells them: Your rule is coming to an end, unless you get totally behind us and really take the gloves off.

The report proposes:

- More investment in surveillance
- Improved propaganda
- A larger, wider, more flexible U.S. military
- Weaponization of information and disinformation
- The U.S. and its “partners” must have “unimpeded access to air, sea, space, cyberspace.”

Why? Because the U.S. empire must “maintain global access to resources.”

With “loss of primacy,” expanding the U.S. military is the only option. This is the only option that a system driven by maximizing profit is capable of offering. The superprofits of the military-industrial complex are imperialism’s lifeblood.

The unsolvable contradiction is that while it needs war to sustain its empire and keep its system afloat, such horrendous social expense and the global hatred it arouses are what will help bring this corrupt system down.

Technological limitations

U.S. imperialism has the capacity in one launch to end life on earth, and it can use this threat particularly against countries that have no nuclear capability. Yet it brings nothing to win hearts and minds — no improvement in life, only weapons that create mass hatred and burning resistance.

Drone technology is enormously powerful. But even that has contradictions. Military planners face a growing problem: They cannot block access to the simplest forms of technology that are available on a world scale.

A small, off-the-shelf drone camera and a laptop can map the inside of a U.S. base or a command post. A cell phone can set off an explosion.

In Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, etc., the U.S. military depends on an array of drones to snoop on and stalk insurgents. But increasingly insurgents are tapping into those same drone broadcasts.

As the U.S. War College Report laments,

# Forum exposes U.S.-Israel collusion

Chicago, Sept. 13 — A forum sponsored by Jewish Voice for Peace was held here this evening to explore the “deadly exchange” between U.S. and Israeli police, military, immigration and border patrol agents, and other repressive government forces. The “deadly exchange” shares “worst practices,” including extrajudicial executions, shoot-to-kill policies, police murders, racial profiling, massive spying and surveillance, deportation and detention, and attacks on those who protest these policies.

Speakers detailed how so-called charities like the Jewish United Fund and the Anti-Defamation League sponsor frequent trips to Israel by top police officials from Chicago and other big U.S. cities to train them in techniques used by the Israelis to suppress the Palestinian liberation movement. They further explained how Israeli officials are likewise trained by U.S. federal, state and local police agencies in techniques they use to suppress protests by groups like Black Lives Matter. JVP has launched a national campaign calling for an end to these exchanges.

— Report by Jeff Sorel

“[The] Pentagon can no longer rely on secrecy and operational security. ... In the end, senior defense leaders should assume that all defense-related activity from minor tactical movements to major military operations would occur completely in the open from this point forward.”

A major sorrow expressed in the report confirms the power of global solidarity: “One of the biggest threats is uncontrolled spread of information.”

It is more important than ever to understand the power of determined resistance.

The response to this report — and to the proposed further expansion of U.S. militarism — must be to help shape a consistent worldview that builds opposition to all U.S. wars, interventions and sanctions.

Connections are needed with all the forces involved in resistance in the U.S. — from Black Lives Matter and the Take ‘Em Down movements, from solidarity with immigrant activists to all those under attack. Meanwhile, we also need to build a strong, united international movement with all forces resisting globally. □



WORKERS WORLD

editorial

Trump and Harry Truman

The bully-in-chief had another opportunity to grandstand this week. This time, it was at the U.N. General Assembly, where Trump threatened to “totally destroy” north Korea and called Iran a “rogue nation.” He also said the United States was “prepared to take further action” on Venezuela, another open threat against a country trying to break free of U.S. domination.

Even as Trump’s talk focused on saber rattling, yet another highly destructive hurricane was ravaging the islands in the Caribbean, starting with the near total destruction of Dominica. It’s a fact known to all scientists that it is global warming, not north Korea, that is threatening the world with ever greater devastation. Meanwhile, the U.S. ruling class, supposedly so worldly and wise, panders to a president who tosses science out the window and speaks poisonous nonsense from the hip.

While Trump captured the headlines, the congressional political machinery bought and paid for by the military-industrial-banking complex passed a \$700 billion Pentagon budget — the biggest ever. There’s no doubt that this huge gift to the war makers will further bankrupt any useful domestic programs remaining in the budget.

But don’t put it all down to Trump. In many ways, he epitomizes the parasitic ruling class of billionaires running this country. However, he is taking his lumps from many in the capitalist establishment. They may think like him, but he’s just not supposed to say these things openly. That can get him in trouble, even with some of his peers.

Real, not fake, history

U.S. imperialism is in a very different position than it was at the end of World War II. It took credit then for defeating Nazism and fascism in Europe, even though it was the USSR that had borne the brunt of the Nazi offensive. It was Soviet troops that liberated Berlin, tore the swastika down from the Reichstag and raised the red flag. And it was Italian Partisans, led by communists, who captured and executed Mussolini.

Today the admirers of Hitler and fascism are alive and well in Trump’s USA. He has even put an equal sign between the neo-Nazis/Klan and those fighting to end white supremacy and the terrible legacy of slavery in the U.S.

The USSR occupied Eastern Europe after World War II, but having lost 30 million people and most of its industry it had

limited means to support the progressive governments set up on the ashes of the pro-Nazi regimes that had ruled there.

U.S. capitalism, on the other hand, was riding high. Its imperialist rivals in Europe and Asia had either been destroyed or terribly weakened. The U.S. emerged with its vast industrial machine intact and producing half the world’s manufactured goods.

The U.S. then posed as the peacemaker of the world, spending over \$13 billion to rebuild Western Europe through the Marshall Plan. This investment, taken out of government funds, paid off many times over for U.S. corporations.

There were lots of jobs then in this country, and the bosses, under pressure from a powerful strike wave in 1946, granted some wage increases. But at the same time they began a domestic war against the progressive movement, driving “reds” out of the unions, campuses and public jobs. (One of those fired was Vince Copeland, a former steelworker and the first editor of this newspaper.) It was part of preparing for the Cold War against the USSR and another hot war, this time aimed at the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

The Republican Trump isn’t the first U.S. president to threaten to “destroy” north Korea. The Democrat Harry Truman actually tried to do just that in one of the most brutally uneven wars in history. From 1950-53, the U.S. poured some 5 million troops into Korea and more bombs than it had dropped in the Pacific during the whole world war. The Pentagon did destroy almost every building in the north, and millions of Korean people.

But it could not destroy the Korean people’s spirit of resistance.

We owe it to ourselves — and to the people of the world — to resist just as heroically the current U.S. capitalist leaders. They are preparing for bigger and more destructive wars, even as the problems at home mount for all workers, but especially those facing the double or triple whammy of racism, sexism, anti-LGBTQ and anti-immigrant oppression. □

VVAW celebrates 50th anniversary

By Michael Kramer  
New York

Over 75 anti-war military veterans and their supporters met in midtown Manhattan on Sept. 16 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of Vietnam Veterans Against the War. VVAW was formally formed on June 1, 1967, by six U.S. Army veterans. It soon spread to all branches of the U.S. military and had a peak membership of 30,000, including former officers and enlisted veterans.

The program included speakers from other U.S. wars and occupations — Korea, Somalia, Guantanamo, Iraq, Afghanistan — and representatives from About Face (formerly Iraq Veterans Against the War) and Veterans For Peace.

Berkeley politicians defend hate speech

By Terri Kay  
Berkeley, Calif.

At a hastily called mid-day Berkeley City Council meeting on Sept. 12, Mayor Jesse Arreguin and six of nine City Council members once again stood this city’s so-called liberal reputation on end by voting to add pepper spray to the Berkeley Police Department’s arsenal.

Pepper spray had been banned for use in crowd control here since 1997. The worst part was the premise for this “emergency” measure: to protect the “First Amendment rights” of white-supremacist right-wingers and Nazis, who have been holding rallies and booking speakers at the “liberal” University of California Berkeley campus since February.

In two hours of audience testimony, almost all opposed use of pepper spray. A speaker from Workers World Party pointed out that hate speech, which incites violence against Blacks, Muslims, people of color, the LGBTQIA community, disabled, Jewish, im/migrant communities and others is not protected speech at all. Many others pointed out the health dangers of pepper spray to people with asthma and other medical conditions.

In a statement published after the decision, the Anti Police-Terror Project said that it is “those of us who pose the most risk to the State and its agenda that get categorized as violent. And there is nothing in the history of the BPD that should give the people any faith that they will operate inside of the rules. One only has to remember the murder of Kayla Moore, or look at the fact that they still refuse to release the full findings of their internal audit on racial profiling.”

The APTP statement also said: “Each time the right-wing white supremacists have come to the Bay Area under the pretense of ‘free speech,’ violent acts directed at Black, Brown, LGBTQIA persons and progressive businesses with Black Lives Matter signs in their windows have been committed. People have been called racial slurs, spit on and had their windows broken. Activists have been doxxed, had their personal information spread



PHOTO: BROOKE ANDERSON

Militarized Berkeley cops threaten rally against white supremacy.

across social media platforms — including where they live and work — received death threats, have had to move into safe houses and bring security to meetings and court dates.

“Yet none of these egregious acts of violence prompted Mayor Jesse Arreguin to attempt to classify these groups as gangs (as he [has] with Antifa) or inspired him to call for increased police aggression. Instead, the Mayor has called for increased police violence against those community members who stand up and refuse to let hate flourish in the Bay. Even the Mayor himself admittedly received thousands of death threats from these same groups he is rushing to now defend.”

The rush to defend white supremacist “free speech” comes on the heels of a successful anti-fascist weekend in the Bay Area on Aug. 26-27, when a broad coalition of organizations and people kept the Nazi alt-right groups from holding rallies in either San Francisco or Berkeley. In Berkeley, a strong contingent of Antifa helped lead the defense of that march. (See workers.org, “Bay Area drives fascists out,” Aug. 29.)

The pepper spray proposal was deemed urgent by Berkeley Police Chief Andrew Greenwood because of planned protests against the scheduled speech of right-wing commentator Ben Shapiro at UC Berkeley’s campus on Sept.14.

Nine people were arrested during the protest against Shapiro. A couple dozen people hung signs over a walkway where ticket holders were being checked that read, “UC protects fascism, not students,” and “Trans lives matter here.” Other rallies against hate are currently scheduled for Sept. 23 and 25.

Additionally, an entire right-wing “free speech” week is scheduled at Cal on Sept. 24-27, including Milo Yiannopoulos, Breitbart editor Steve Bannon and Ann Coulter. According to dailycal.org, “132 campus faculty members from various departments have called for a complete boycott of classes and campus activities during ‘Free Speech Week.’”

African-American Studies Associate Professor Michael Cohen said: “This is a clear threat to public higher education. People are coming to humiliate others and incite violence. ... The boycott is a refusal to allow this to happen on our campus.” □

THE KLAN & GOVERNMENT: Foes or Allies?

The capitalist government has covertly encouraged and promoted the Klan over decades. It is often overlooked in media reports that the durability of the Klan rests on long-term bonds to the state.

The capitalist government not only tolerates organizations like the Klan, but once the class struggle of the workers and oppressed people takes on the character of a mass upsurge, the capitalist government is more likely to encourage the Klan.

If the U.S. is resorting to naked armed force on a world scale, to threatening nuclear first-strikes, is it likely that the peace of the oppressor imposed on the oppressed will prevail?

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



# Uprising rocks St. Louis

Continued from page 1

anti-Semitic tweet, which went viral, was “#GastheSynagogue.”

‘Kill our kids, we’ll kill your economy!’

Protests continued on Sept. 16 as demonstrators went to malls in mainly white suburbs shouting “Black Lives Matter” and “Cops and jails, the whole damn system is going to fail.” One sign read, “White silence is violence.”

In an upscale suburb, the Delmar Loop area of University City, protesters demanded that the police resign. They called for an economic boycott of St. Louis, chanting, “If you kill our kids, we’ll kill your economy!” Protesters also marched through shopping malls in a wealthy St. Louis County area. (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Sept. 17)

Hundreds of cops in riot gear poured into protest areas and became more violent against demonstrators because they supposedly “refused to disperse.” However, protesters said cops corralled, or “kettled,” them, so they could not leave,

and then attacked.

This was confirmed by St. Louis Post-Dispatch reporter Mike Faulk, caught in the kettling, who was knocked down by multiple police, kicked in the head, pepper-sprayed and “subdued.” (Chicago Tribune, Sept. 19) One video shows a swarm of cops in heavy armor attacking an elderly woman. They shove her to the ground, walk over her, then force her into handcuffs with no attention to her injuries. (Fox2News)

On Sunday, Sept. 17, more than 1,000 people gathered at police headquarters, then marched through downtown St. Louis. During Monday morning rush hour, Sept. 18, silent protesters marched arm-in-arm to city hall, and actions continued into the night.

Mayor Krewson issued a statement Sept. 19 denouncing “destructive” protesters, but former St. Louis Comptroller Vivus Jones responded within two hours in a Facebook post: “Most of the destruction in North Saint Louis was government-sanctioned and promoted. N. StL

poverty is 50% in zip codes.”

The cops mocked protesters Sunday night by co-opting a movement slogan, chanting, “Whose streets, our streets,” while battling the crowd. Police Chief Lawrence O’Toole boasted: “I’m proud to tell you the city of St. Louis is safe and the police owned tonight.” (Washington Post, Sept. 18)

But on-the-ground Facebook reports documented the extreme lack of safety for those at the mercy of military-level police violence. The cop chant was a near-fascistic assertion that state control is in direct contradiction to justice for oppressed and poor people.

Teresa Montgomery commented that the mayor should see “my video of being threatened with arrest for standing on a sidewalk.” Leigh Maibes wrote: “I have video of the cops using horrendous force on nonviolent observers. Not to mention they Tased other journalists this evening.”

Megan Ellyia-Green posted a video of “people maced while sitting cuffed on the ground. Journalists and legal observers

arrested.” Buzz Hirsch exclaimed: “The cops and police commissioner O’Toole have just escalated the war and given ordinary folk a new reason to protest. Surrounding and arresting, then handcuffing, beating and macing.”

Koach Baruch Frazier recorded hours of video, posted on Facebook, to document his statement: “[The attack] goes down the same way every time. They block you in, and they wrangle you so you have no way to go, and they attack. The narrative that we are doing something wrong that encourages violence against us is utterly ridiculous and untrue. These people hate our innards, they hate us because we are Black, and they bring all their fucking police to kill us.”

The Stockley verdict evokes the 2014 acquittal of the racist cop who killed unarmed 18-year-old Michael Brown in nearby Ferguson. That ruling sparked months of angry protests. Michael Brown’s father responded to Smith’s killing by saying: “My people are tired of this.” (New York Times, Sept. 17) □

# Capitalism, environmental racism and injustice

Continued from page 3

wealthier communities,” showing the greater environmental harm done to people of color.

During Hurricane Harvey, explosions of chemical plants emitted black smoke into the air produced by highly volatile chemicals. Over 1 million pounds of toxic emissions above legal limits spewed from industrial facilities in Texas following Harvey. (Reuters, Sept. 11).

‘Harvey: a catastrophe waiting to happen’

Dr. Robert Bullard, distinguished professor at Texas Southern University in Houston, is known as the “father of the environmental justice movement.” He told Democracy Now! on Aug. 29 that “unrestrained capitalism made Harvey a catastrophe waiting to happen.” He stressed that throughout the U.S., zip codes and institutional racism against oppressed communities are the best predictors of health and well-being. Environmental

vulnerability has a historical color.

“All communities are not created equal,” stated Dr. Bullard. Houston’s oppressed communities “historically have borne the burden for environmental pollution” and the impact of other man-made disasters. It is the only city without zoning, but oppressed communities are “unofficially zoned as compatible with pollution.”

The placement of these large industries often dramatically lowers the property value of homes in these communities. Being unable to sell their homes at a value high enough to purchase property elsewhere often prevents residents from relocating.

Bullard explains that due to redlining practices, Black and Latinx people can’t get loans or insurance in fence-lined communities. Redlining occurs when banks, corporations and the government racially profile certain communities, and then banks discourage investment there by identifying certain areas as high-risk. So redlining geographical areas results

in disinvestment and discrimination occurs despite laws against it.

In Louisiana, Baton Rouge and Norco are fence-line communities of Shell Oil. Hurricane Katrina in 2005 severely affected lower-income Black residents who lived in New Orleans’ neglected Ninth Ward. The government abandoned residents for days. Nearly 2,000 people died. Some residents were sent to Houston, where they were displaced again due to Hurricane Harvey. Studies show that Black people are less likely to return to their cities after displacement.

Institutional racism hurts Bronx residents

The Bronx in New York City is among the poorest and most oppressed counties in the U.S. More than one-fourth of its Black and Latinx residents live below the poverty line. For five decades, the Bronx has been denied equal access to resources due to institutional racist policies and practices, including redlining.

Bronx residents suffer serious health conditions caused by disproportionately polluted environments. Government funding is lacking, and so is political support for environmental improvement and sustainability. Officials don’t even acknowledge the issues.

Massive expressways built straight through the community have caused

the forced relocation of hundreds of thousands of low-income people and increased auto and truck emissions. An overabundance of factories, waste treatment plants, municipal landfills and incinerators developed, to the detriment of residents’ lives and futures. Pollution by air, water and waste severely damage Bronx residents’ health; extremely high rates of asthma prevail.

As Houston recovers from Hurricane Harvey, the question arises of whose community will be restored and rebuilt. In the rebuilding projects, environmental and economic justice must be built in, free of inequity. Will oppressed communities still be neglected and invisible, while oil corporations and banks capitalize on their suffering and destruction? Will they receive the protection of rebuilt infrastructure?

The Environmental Protection Agency has dragged its feet for years on complaints and civil rights lawsuits, and has given waivers to oil companies. Exxon-Mobil, for instance, greatly influences government policies.

In March, the Trump administration declared it would roll back pollution protection. It proposed cutting back funding and reducing EPA staff, eliminating money for environmental justice programs and deregulating protections against toxic pollution. □

# Red Cross grabs disaster money, fails to serve

Continued from page 3

East Coast in 2012, the Red Cross raised some \$312 million to fund relief. “But while its fundraising was torrential, its disaster response was a trickle,” the 2014 ProPublica article states. Instead, public relations was its priority, with multiple officials complaining that relief vehicles and key relief workers were tied up at press conferences, while neighborhoods along the beaches, like the Rockaways, couldn’t get food and drinkable water.

A senior Red Cross official recalled that “an emergency response vehicle was dispatched to an early December photo-op with supermodel Heidi Klum to tour affected areas with Red Cross supplies: ‘Did you know it takes a Victoria’s Secret model five hours to unload one box off a truck?’ the official said. ‘I was so mad.’”

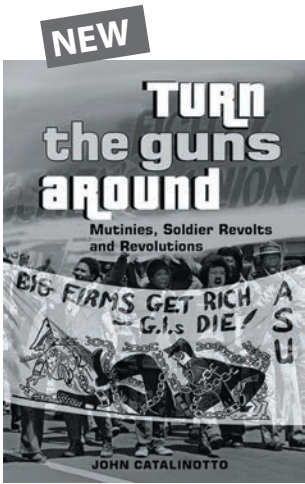
The American Red Cross is a huge nonprofit corporation employing 26,000 workers, with nearly \$3.5 billion in as-

sets. (redcross.org, June 30, 2015) Its CEO, Gail McGovern, hired after the huge scandal about Red Cross operations around Hurricane Katrina, came from AT&T, as did several other executives. She makes more than \$500,000 a year.

More than 9 percent of Red Cross donations are spent on “non-relief” items, such as publicity campaigns — a higher proportion than many other charities.

It should be the government’s responsibility, not only to prepare and protect communities from impending natural disasters, but also to fund and coordinate relief efforts.

But the capitalist-run government does not prioritize the needs of disaster-struck people, who then must turn for hope to huge “nonprofit” corporations like the American Red Cross. These “relief operations” should be under the control of the communities and the workers who are in need, not executives from Wall Street. □



TURN THE GUNS AROUND  
Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions  
by John Catalinotto

Weaving together GI letters, interviews and first-hand narratives with historical research, the author brings to life GI resistance in the Vietnam War era, shows its relation to capitalist state power and highlights why breaking the military chain of command is an essential step to ending oppression around the globe.

“If schools in the United States really wanted to impart historical truth, Catalinotto’s ‘Turn The Guns Around’ would be required reading. He tells the true story of this epoch. Few participants know more about the massive GI rebellion against the Vietnam War, the anti-war veterans’ movement or the history of soldier revolts from the Paris Commune to the Portuguese coup.”

— Pvt Larry Holmes *GI resister and organizer for the American Servicemen’s Union 1972-74.*

Available at online booksellers





WW/MO FOTO: JOE PIETTE

# Del pueblo de Venezuela a la gente de los EE.UU.

*El gobierno bolivariano de Venezuela ha hecho disponible gasolina gratis a todos los trabajadores de rescate del huracán Harvey, bomberos y otras personas que respondieron primero en Texas y Louisiana. El ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Jorge Arreaza, anunció en Twitter, el 2 de septiembre, que el gobierno estaba actuando en solidaridad con las familias del área que sufrían. La gasolina está disponible en las estaciones de Citgo, a través de Citgo Holding Inc., una filial de Petróleos de Venezuela, la petrolera estatal del país. El anuncio se produjo un día después de que los administradores de Citgo hicieron una donación de US \$5 millones al Harvey Relief Fund de Houston. (teleSUR)*

## Carta abierta al Pueblo y Gobierno de los Estados Unidos del Pueblo de Venezuela

Nosotros, el Pueblo de Venezuela, queremos dirigirnos al Pueblo de los Estados Unidos de América. Usted debe saber que el 11 de agosto de 2017, el Presidente Donald Trump amenazó a la República Bolivariana de Venezuela con una intervención militar directa. Esta peligrosa amenaza fue rechazada por todas las naciones y por el pueblo de los Estados Unidos. Sin embargo, dos semanas después, el Presidente Trump nos impuso sanciones severas e injustas, admitiendo públicamente que su intención era aislar económicamente a Venezuela. Es la misma estrategia - reconocida por

el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos - que se implementó para derrocar al gobierno democrático de Chile en 1973, allanando el camino para la despiadada dictadura de Augusto Pinochet.

Estas amenazas y decisiones unilaterales afectarán nuestra economía y nuestros medios para obtener recursos para la alimentación, la atención sanitaria y la producción, perjudicando gravemente la vida cotidiana de nuestros ciudadanos. El Presidente Trump intenta fabricar una crisis política en nuestro país forzando al Presidente Nicolás Maduro fuera de su cargo, aunque fue elegido democráticamente en el 2013.

Además, estas acciones también afectan a los ciudadanos estadounidenses, que podrían enfrentar la posibilidad de un alza en la gasolina, mientras que miles de trabajadores se arriesgan a perder sus ahorros ganados con esfuerzo ya que los fondos de jubilación se ven afectados por la prohibición de los bonos venezolanos.

Este comportamiento es inconsistente con el eslogan de la campaña de Donald Trump, “Make America great again.” Más bien, crea nuevos problemas, dentro y fuera de los Estados Unidos, haciendo la vida más dura tanto para los venezolanos como para millones de ciudadanos estadounidenses, genera rechazo global y resentimiento hacia el gobierno de los Estados Unidos, y de hecho hacia su pueblo, que no tiene nada que ver con estas acciones belicistas.

Como en el caso de Irak, podríamos

estar al borde de una intervención militar injusta e infundada, donde el petróleo es primordial. Sin embargo, nada puede justificar que los jóvenes estadounidenses se vean obligados a entrar en otro conflicto militar, y mucho menos si ello implica enfrentarse a un país amistoso y pacífico como Venezuela.

Venezuela no es ni un enemigo de los Estados Unidos ni representa una amenaza para su seguridad. Admiramos su historia, cultura y logros científicos. Por lo tanto, es imperativo poner fin a esta irracional política de agresión y en su lugar promover la comprensión política, por lo que esta larga tradición de amistad entre los dos países se puede hacer florecer.

El Presidente Maduro ha tratado de llegar al Presidente Trump varias veces, para facilitar la comunicación y generar soluciones basadas en el Derecho Internacional y el respeto mutuo. Lamenta-

blemente, hasta ahora, el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos ha ignorado y desatendido todas las iniciativas de diálogo propuestas por el Gobierno venezolano.

El Pueblo de los Estados Unidos es un pueblo de paz, y creemos que deberías liderar los esfuerzos para neutralizar las intenciones jingoistas de tu gobierno. Por eso nos dirigimos a ustedes, en fraternidad y sinceridad, para instar a todos los estadounidenses de buena voluntad, a unirse a nosotros para trabajar juntos por la defensa de las libertades de nuestros pueblos, el bienestar de nuestros niños, hacia la cooperación y la paz para nuestra región. Es un tiempo para el diálogo y la comprensión. No perdamos esta oportunidad y en las palabras de John Lennon: Vamos a darle a la paz una oportunidad.

Patrocinado por el Ministerio de Poder Popular para Asuntos Exteriores (emhve.uswsh@mppre.gob.ve). □

## Oscar López Rivera en Filadelfia



WW/ FOTOS: JOE PIETTE

Ex prisionero político Oscar López Rivera habló la noche del 18 de septiembre en Filadelfia sobre la necesidad de lograr la unidad en la lucha por la misma existencia de Puerto Rico. Cientos de personas de la comunidad puertorriqueña asistieron a la reunion para recibir a Oscar.



## Cuba después del huracán Camagüey se recupera a golpe de trabajo

Por Miguel Febles Hernández | febles@granma.cu

### 18 de septiembre

Camagüey – Sanear una ciudad que supera los 300.000 habitantes no es cosa de juego, mucho más si a los desechos que genera de manera cotidiana se suman miles y miles de metros cúbicos de escombros, troncos, ramas y otros desperdicios acumulados tras el paso del huracán Irma.

Transcurrió una semana de intensas jornadas de higienización y todavía queda un volumen importante de basura por recoger en los 19 consejos populares que conforman la otrora villa principieña, empuñados los lugareños en dejar, al término de los trabajos, una ciudad más limpia, funcional y ordenada.

Combatientes de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (FAR) y del Ministerio del Interior (Minint), junto a trabajadores de la Agricultura, Azcuba, la Construcción y la Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad de Camagüey, conforman las seis brigadas especializadas que respaldan la labor de los Servicios Comunes en el sa-

neamiento integral de los cuatro distritos de la ciudad.

Resulta ya cotidiano, desde el mismo amanecer y hasta bien entrada la tarde, el trasiego de vehículos rumbo a los vertederos temporales que, según Ever Ávalos Piñeda, director provincial de la entidad, ha habido que habilitar en las afueras de la cabecera provincial para poder asimilar tanta carga de desechos sólidos.

El directivo considera oportuno que la población aproveche la «operación limpieza» para extraer del interior de las viviendas y de los patios la basura acumulada y los objetos inservibles, pues ello contribuye también a mejorar la situación higiénico-ambiental y a evitar la proliferación de enfermedades.

Insiste igualmente Ávalos Piñeda en la necesidad de una más activa participación ciudadana, disciplina y exigencia en las labores de saneamiento de los barrios, para que, una vez concluidos los trabajos en cada lugar, no vuelvan a formarse microvertederos y se arrojen por la borda tantas horas de esfuerzo colectivo. □

## El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

La tesis de este libro es que la crisis económica, que se inició en agosto de 2007, marcó un punto de inflexión en la historia del capitalismo. El autor sostiene que el sistema no se recuperará, no volverá al ciclo capitalista normal de auge y caída.

Durante décadas, la clase capitalista ha utilizado la revolución tecnológica digital para aumentar la productividad del trabajo a un ritmo récord. Menos trabajadores producen más bienes y servicios en menos tiempo con salarios más bajos. El resultado es una serie de “recuperaciones sin empleos” que hace que las cosas vayan aún peor.

Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tasa decreciente de ganancia, para demostrar por qué el capitalismo global ha llegado finalmente a un punto de inflexión.

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

lowwagecapitalism.com

