



Fight Trump's racism, Clinton's militarism

By Deirdre Griswold

People in other countries are probably scratching their heads, wondering what is going on with politics in the United States.

A bare six months ago, it looked possible that a self-proclaimed socialist could win the Democratic nomination, something unheard of in U.S. history.

Now there are dire warnings that an erratic, boastful, racist, misogynist, anti-immigrant billionaire could be elected president and drag everything to the right.

Capturing headlines at the moment is the dismay of Democratic Party leaders that many of the politically active young people who have been involved in struggles like the Fight for \$15 movement, Black Lives Matter, immigrant rights, the environmental movement, the Bernie Sanders campaign, the LGBTQ movement and even the women's movement might not vote for Hillary Clinton.

Politicians and liberal establishment voices like the New York Times are conducting a no-holds-barred roundup to drive these potential Democratic voters into the fold. They are bemoaning the fact that when Sanders stumps for Clinton now, he attracts about one-tenth of the crowds he used to.

Their argument, of course, is that if these young progressives don't vote for Clinton, they could be held responsible for Trump winning the presidency.

Two-party system works — for the rich

For more than two centuries, the two-party political system devised by the early slave owners, bankers and industrialists to run this country has been highly effective in maintaining the rule of the wealthy few, while roping in the support or at least acceptance of the many.

In its early days the system served the interests of the Northern industrialists and bankers at the same time as the Southern plantation owners — until the two systems collided in a great Civil War.

But having resolved the issue of slave owner versus capitalist, chattel slavery versus wage slavery, the two parties revived their collaboration in the interests of profit with the betrayal of Black Freedom in 1876-77, ending the short-lived Reconstruction era.

The two-party system survived the challenge of the Populist movement toward the end of the 19th century, as well as the great labor struggles of the Depression. All along, both parties have held imperialist wars sacrosanct, making sure that the military-banking-industrial complex comes first, even in times of severe budget crises.

So what about the current quadrennial election? What's new about this one? As ever, it mainly features a Democrat versus a Republican, although the candidates

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WW PHOTO: TARYN FIVEK

'No more wars! No more fear! Our Muslim friends are welcome here!' chanted marchers in Minneapolis on Sept. 16. Page 8.

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Socialist campaign comes to Illinois, Wisconsin

By **Gerry Scoppettuolo** and **Andy Katz**

Monica Moorehead, Workers World Party’s presidential candidate, completed her Midwest tour in mid-September, bringing the party’s revolutionary socialist program to Chicago and to Milwaukee and Madison, Wis. Throughout the tour she met with community members, workers and students in a series of open discussions on the elections, socialism and the need for working-class solidarity.

In Chicago, Moorehead was part of a panel on Sept. 15, which included local activist Ruby Pinto and WWP organizer Danielle Boachie. Pinto, a member of the direct action collective Lifted Voices, discussed the need for Black and Brown unity. She gave examples of this from recent struggles in the city, including those which removed State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez from office and won reparations for victims of police torture.

Moorehead acknowledged during a presidential campaign the apparent contradiction of criticizing the elections as being fundamentally flawed: “While we understand that bourgeois elections offer no real fundamental social change for our class to better their lives, with maybe a few exceptions, we as revolutionaries are still obligated to use every arena to engage the masses in activism, to show that only independent mass struggle will get rid of capitalism, root and branch.”

Wisconsin campaign events

The next stop was Milwaukee, where Moorehead addressed a community meeting at the Wisconsin African-American Women’s Center on Sept. 16. This is not far from the Sherman Park rebellion of Aug. 19, when hundreds of people took to the streets six days after the police killing of Sylville Smith.

Milwaukee is perhaps the most racially segregated city in the United States, where the combination of racist police violence, massive unemployment and capitalist austerity have brought harsh repression — which sparked the recent rebellion.

Beginning her address, Moorehead emphasized the need for solidarity with the struggles and issues of the most oppressed people as central to all liberation movements.

She raised the example of the rebellion within the National Football League: “Just look how Colin Kaepernick’s refusing to honor the racist national anthem has given voice to the oppressed all over the world.”

Tish Minor, Milwaukee NAACP vice president, told of the high level of lead poisoning in the city’s water. She also explained how prison labor has replaced what used to be unionized state jobs. Center Director Josephine D. Hill likened that situation — the mass incarceration of African-American men — to the Attica rebellion 45 years ago.

Ahmed Mbalia, of the Pan African Peoples Party, brought a message of solidarity to the meeting.

Concluding the tour, Moorehead held an open community discussion in Madison on Sept. 17. In that city in 2011, some 100,000 students, workers and other community members protested, many occupying the State Capitol to fight austerity and union-busting, right-to-work legislation pushed by Gov. Scott Walker.

Moorehead stressed, “Madison was an example of how powerful the working class is when it comes together, and it is that working-class power that we need to tap into to change society.

“Revolutionary socialists have the job of exposing the injustice, the bankruptcy and the impossibility of reforming the capitalist system and of replacing it with socialism.

“Workers World Party understands that the struggle to unite the workers and the oppressed of the world — a part of the struggle that is essential to any genuine socialist movement and to wider socialist unity -- must also be a struggle to forge solidarity, in both words and deeds, with the most oppressed sectors of our global class.” □



WW PHOTO: ANDY KATZ

Monica Moorehead tours Midwest.



Who we are & what we’re fighting for

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

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a handful of billionaires! But we need a revolution to make that change. That’s why for 57 years WWP has been building a revolutionary party of the working class inside the belly of the beast.

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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No end in sight as Kaepernick-inspired protests grow

By Monica Moorehead

San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick continued his inspirational protest against racist oppression by kneeling during the national anthem, along with teammate Eric Reid, on Sept. 18.

Although Kaepernick started his protest on Aug. 10 at the beginning of the pre-season, he wasn’t noticed until Aug. 26 by NFL.com columnist Steve Wyche at a National Football League preseason game.

When Wyche asked why he was sitting, Kaepernick, an African American, stated he was protesting the police murders of Black people and the general oppression of Black and other oppressed people.

Kaepernick went on to say that he will continue not to stand for the anthem — whether other athletes follow his lead or not — until serious social change is made. Since this statement, other colleagues of Kaepernick’s have either “taken a knee” and/or raised their fists with black gloves. These include players with the Miami Dolphins, St. Louis Rams, Kansas City “Chiefs,” New England Patriots and Denver Broncos; the numbers continue to grow.

This protest has broadened way beyond the NFL. Entire high school football teams at Garfield in Seattle, Mission in San Francisco and Beaumont in Texas, including their coaches, have knelt. The Beaumont Bulls, who are mostly 11- and 12-year-old Black players, knelt for a second week in a row, despite receiving racist death threats.

The team captain of the Mission football team, Niamey Harris, is 17 years old and lived just a few blocks from Mario Woods, the 23-year-old African-American man fatally shot by San Francisco police in 2014, resulting in Bay Area protests and a federal civil rights investigation.

Harris motivated his team of Black,

Latinx, Asian and white youth to kneel, stating, “This is for helping everybody else in the world to understand that Black people and people of color are going through difficulties and they need help. It’s not going to take care of itself.”

Harris’ teammate, Marvin Pusung-Zita, who is Filipino, expressed solidarity with his teammates: “I consider my teammates my brothers, and being that my brothers on the team are Black and oppressed, then of course by all means I’m going to support them and take the knee.” (San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 15)

High school football players have taken a knee in a growing list of other states.

Many are moved to action

The entire women’s volleyball team at Minneapolis South High School knelt on Sept. 16. Megan Rapinoe, a white lesbian soccer player, continues to take a knee, despite being ostracized by the U.S. Women’s National Soccer Team. She could face disciplinary charges.

The entire Howard University cheerleaders team knelt at a Sept. 17 game. Two Penn State cheerleaders, Alexis Bazzen and Deena Char, knelt and raised a fist before a Sept. 17 game. Brazen said Kaepernick was her inspiration: “I believe that the climate of the world right now is very hostile. All over the news there has been brutality and violence against people of color and I truly believe in ... fighting for equality and standing up for what I believe in.” (The Daily Pennsylvanian, Sept. 17)

Many students at the University of Nevada, Kaepernick’s alma mater, sat in the stands during the anthem at a recent game. In the Missouri state Capitol, Sen. Jamilah Nasheed, an African-American representative from St. Louis, refused to stand for the “pledge of allegiance” in Capitol chambers on Sept. 14.

A Kroger store in Springfield, Ohio, sent home Elijah Scott, a 16-year-old African-American worker, after he wore his Kaepernick jersey for the “Wear a Football Jersey Day” on Sept. 11. During his lunch break, he was the only one asked by the manager to change his shirt because it was “disrespectful.” Kroger issued a public apology to Scott.

Cops face growing criticism

As the protests continue to grow, Dabo Swinney, the head coach of the Clemson Tigers college team, and Tony LaRussa, the chief baseball officer of Major League Baseball’s Arizona Diamondbacks, have expressed horrible criticisms of Kaepernick on sports shows.

The Broward County Sheriff’s Office Deputies Association in Florida, representing local deputies in the county’s largest law enforcement group, issued a statement Sept. 15 demanding that the four Dolphins players who took a knee on Sept. 11 — Arian Foster, Jelani Jenkins, Michael Thomas and Kenny Still — be suspended from the team.

The deputies association (which proclaims itself to be a “union”) has threatened to stop escort security for the players on the way to Miami’s first home game on Sept. 25. The Santa Clara, Calif., police also made but rescinded a similar boycott threat against the San Francisco 49ers.

Jumaane Williams, a New York City Council Member, said he will not stand for the pledge of allegiance to protest overtime pay given to New York cop Daniel Pantaleo, who choked Eric Garner to death on July 17, 2014. Garner was captured on video saying, “I can’t breathe,” while several cops threw him to the ground and Pantaleo put him in a chokehold. Pantaleo made over \$119,000 in overtime pay in 2016.

Williams stated, “Kaepernick deserves



support, not criticism for his actions. What does it say about our country when there is a national outrage over an athlete sitting out the national anthem, but the same outrage isn’t expressed when a young Black man is killed for no reason?”

Leilani Thomas, an Indigenous high school student in Lower Lake, Calif., accused her teacher of lowering her grade in retaliation for her not standing for the pledge of allegiance. Thomas said she has never respected the pledge due to this country’s genocidal treatment of Native peoples.

Kaepernick’s latest protest comes just two days after the fatal police killing of 13-year-old African-American Tyree King in Columbus, Ohio, on Sept. 14. The police claim King was a “threat” because he held a BB gun, similar to the excuse used by Cleveland police to murder 12-year-old Tamir Rice in November 2014.

Just hours before King’s murder, the 330,000-member National Fraternal Order of Police endorsed Donald Trump for president, as did the National Border Patrol Council, in support of Trump’s racist, anti-immigrant views. Kaepernick stated at an Aug. 26 press conference that neither Trump nor Clinton were viable candidates because of their racism.

Moorehead is Workers World Party’s 2016 presidential candidate. One of her tweets was retweeted by Kaepernick on Twitter to his more than 953,000 followers on Sept. 16. Moorehead thanked him and the Black Lives Matter movement for politicizing young people.

Baltimore meet-and-greet Candidates’ Night Lifts progressive independents and socialists

By Carl Lewis

Progressive and socialist candidates for Baltimore public office united at a Sept. 15 “meet and greet” session sponsored by the Baltimore Campaign for Peoples’ Power (BCPP). Speakers included Sharon Black, socialist candidate for president of the Baltimore City Council, who garnered over 8,000 petition signatures to get on the Nov. 8 ballot. Also speaking were Andre Powell, write-in socialist candidate for mayor, and Ian Schalkman, Green Party candidate for the City Council’s 12th District.

Unable to attend but expressing support for the other candidates were Nnamdi Scott, Ujima Peoples’ Progress Party candidate for the 7th District, and the Rev. C.D. Witherspoon, running for president of the Baltimore NAACP.

The outpouring of support for the candidates during the petition drive indicates how working-class and oppressed people are fed up with racism, police terror, unemployment and unlivable housing conditions. Sharon Black emphasized the importance of defeating Jack Young, current City Council president: “Young voted against the \$15 minimum wage and says hard working Baltimoreans are worth only \$11.50 an hour,” a raise not in effect until 2022.

Black stressed that Young supports the Port Covington development in the West End, which is “a bad deal for poor and working-class people, increasing segregation and fueling racism.” Black pointed out, “Young has virtually abandoned the Eastside community to the big developers and Johns Hopkins Hospital,” displacing communities of color.

Andre Powell spoke of the need for a socialist agenda and presented information about Workers World Party’s candidate for president, Monica Moorehead, and Lamont Lilly, the party’s candidate for vice president. Both Black and Powell are also members of WWP and have created the hashtag #Socialist4Baltimore to mobilize voter support.

Powell also discussed the Peoples’ Power program for Baltimore, which includes demands for a \$15 minimum wage with no “phase in;” jobs, not jails; an end to police terror; housing fit for human beings; relevant education for all; heat, water and light as a right; good health for all people; a Baltimore free of all forms of racism and bigotry; reparations and taxing the rich, not the poor; and peoples’ power through peoples’ assemblies.

Rev. C.D. Witherspoon said that he stood in full solidarity with these demands, and as president of the Baltimore NAACP, he would work with the BCPP to

promote and sustain these goals.

Ian Schlakman, adamant about solving Baltimore’s deplorable housing situation, pointed out: “The City Council is working on behalf of big business rather than ordinary renters and homeowners. What is needed is both rent control and making the big developers contribute to a city-administered fund to develop affordable housing.” Schlakman also demanded shelter for the more than 3,000 homeless people on Baltimore’s streets and full services for the disabled, veterans, seniors and families in crisis.

On his campaign webpage, Schlakman calls for funding community centers and building social bonds in neighborhoods; fighting for workers’ rights with a \$15-an-hour minimum wage and “fair scheduling” legislation; supporting the Black Lives Matter movement in the struggle against racism in the wake of Freddie Gray’s death in Baltimore; and more public support and funding for local LGBTQ community centers.

Nnamdi Scott is an organizer with the Ujima Peoples’ Progress Party, which has worked with both the Peoples’ Power Assembly and Workers World Party in fighting for social and economic justice and against police terror and racism. Maryland’s first Black, worker-led political party, the Ujima Peoples’ Progress

Party has a program for African-American workers to free themselves from dependence on the Democratic Party and from the illusion that it represents social or economic justice or political enfranchisement for the masses of Black people.

In a Real News interview with Jared Ball, an African-American journalist, Scott commented on electoral politics and the role of the Ujima People’s Progress Party: “In practice, it is a mass-based, multiracial approach. Black workers got together and said, ‘We are tired of not being represented.’ So Black workers lead a worker-based electoral party. It does not have goals and objectives that deny that other workers will benefit from the kind of things that we move forward.”

Referring to the Democratic Party, Scott said, “We have two major parties in this country that agree on many of the assumptions about white supremacy, about capitalism and what people get the spoils of this economy. There are nuances between how [those two parties] want to achieve those goals.” (tinyurl.com/hl8cur2)

For Black and Powell’s campaigns, see Facebook/Baltimore Campaign for Peoples Power. For Schalkman’s campaign, see ian12.com. For Scott’s campaign, see nnamdiscott2016.com.

On the picket line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

Minnesota nurses on strike

Nurses in the Minnesota Nurses Association started a second unfair labor practice strike on Sept. 5 against Allina Health at five hospitals in the Twin Cities area. The 4,800 nurses, whose contract expired June 1, conducted a seven-day Unfair Labor Practice strike that ended June 25. At the last (22-hour) negotiating session on Sept. 3, Allina demanded a cap on its contribution to health care premiums and shifting cost increases onto nurses, and ignored the union’s request for training to deal with workplace violence and for improvement in the nurse-to-patient ratio. (mnnurses.org)

A group of Twin Cities legislators held a press conference Sept. 19 requesting Allina resume negotiations and work to end the strike. Member organizations in National Nurses United, to which the MNA belongs, organized local pickets and press conferences Sept. 13 in support of the strike. (nationalnursesunited.org) The last big, open-ended nurses’ strikes in the Twin Cities lasted 23 days in 2001 and 38 days in 1984. Stay tuned.

Silicon Valley food service workers win union

Cafeteria workers at technology giant Intel’s Santa Clara, Calif., headquarters voted to unionize with UNITE HERE Local 19 on Sept. 15. This success follows a monthslong struggle against contractor Eurest for basic dignity and workplace rights. Cafeteria cashier Monica Moreno told the press, “It’s so important that we won the union vote today because now we end the fear of not having enough money to live.” (bna.com, Sept. 16)

According to documents filed in May with the state Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the National Labor Relations Board, Eurest has illegally prevented the workers from accessing restrooms during shifts and “restrained, coerced and interfered” with their right to pursue union representation. Despite Intel pulling in billion-dollar profits yearly, the cafeteria workers who help make this possible are paid so little that many cannot afford to live close to work. According to Working Partnerships USA, service workers at tech companies make on average one-sixth the wages of the white-collar workers and are six times more likely to be Black or Latinx. (kron4.com, Sept. 15)

Ruling helps temp workers organize

The National Labor Relations Board issued a ruling July 11 that reversed an existing precedent on organizing temporary workers. It held that permanent employees and temporary staffing employees could be combined in the same bargaining unit without either the employer or the staffing agency’s consent. All that was needed was a “community of interest.” In an August 2015 ruling for “joint employer,” the board imposed new legal obligations on employers who hire through temporary agencies and potentially also on giant corporate franchisors in such industries as fast food, warehousing, manufacturing and food processing plants, recycling facilities, hotels and janitorial services.

“The ruling represents a blow to corporations that have moved forcefully, sometimes overwhelmingly, toward using temporary workers in an effort to block worker benefits and collective bargaining ... [and] to avoid labor contracts by using temporary services,” observed In These Times on July 12.

Since the recession of 2008, temp agencies account for more than 17 percent of net employment gains in low-wage service sectors where “permatemps” are used to staff entire departments or facilities. In many auto assembly and parts plants, for example, temp agency workers are paid half of what regular hires make and account for more than half the workforce. (labornotes.org, Aug. 23)

Petitions show urgency of low-wage struggle

The struggle for livable wages and a union isn’t just about putting more money in workers’ pockets. It’s about saving lives and protecting those with special needs. Sign two petitions that call attention to this. One from Fight for \$15 calls on McDonald’s to pay workers enough so they can afford health care: “Myrna De los Santos struggled with health issues for years — but she simply could not afford the health care she needed on McDonald’s pay. Last week, she passed away. She was 49.” The petition at bit.ly/2d9nijg reads: “McDonald’s, we call on you to pay every worker enough to afford the healthcare they need to live. As Myrna’s tragic case shows, McDonald’s low pay can be a matter of life and death.”

The petition at bit.ly/2cWtQpo by former Walmart worker Arleja Stephens calls on CEO Doug McMillon to respect pregnant workers. Stephens was fired when her high-risk pregnancy required her to miss work. “My experience is not an isolated incident. ... Women across the country reported that Walmart does not allow time off for doctor appointments, that they are not given light work as an accommodation, and that they are scared they will lose their jobs if they speak up or ask for help. ... Young, Black, working mothers, like me ... should not be forced to choose between a healthy pregnancy and the ability to provide for our families.” □



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL
Students back faculty’s struggle. Brooklyn, Sept.14.

Union victory in LIU lockout

By G. Dunkel
New York

When the Long Island University administration called off the lockout of its Brooklyn faculty Sept. 14, it was an indisputable union victory. Teachers got their jobs back and students started getting the education they had paid big bucks for.

That afternoon hundreds of students walked out and joined the faculty rallying outside the LIU gates, as they did every day during the lockout.

The administration had spent all summer hiring people to scab on the teachers. As it turned out, many couldn’t do the jobs they were hired for. Some quit as soon as they realized they were hired to scab. Others admitted to their classes that they didn’t have the qualifications to teach the course they were assigned.

Many City University of New York retirees find scabbing repulsive. Working for LIU during the lockout was most definitely scabbing. Advanced graduate students at CUNY and other New York schools agreed, even though Ph.D. underemployment is high in New York City.

According to a librarian speaking at a Sept. 14 rally, the people who were hired to scab couldn’t get the library running. They didn’t have the safety certificates to run labs or the licenses to run practicums in various graduate fields, like occupational therapy or teaching. LIU students, predominantly African American, Latinx and South Asian, were angry and

disgusted with the situation. An organized campaign argued that LIU was perpetrating a fraud by charging big money for education they weren’t providing and couldn’t provide. The campaign demanded that the Board of Regents of the state of New York remove LIU President Kim Cline from office.

The Board of Regents has this power and has used it in the past.

The union also sent letters to 14 accrediting agencies asserting that LIU was failing to provide education up to agency standards.

Given the challenges to its accreditation, the charges of fraud, the growing anger among the students, the solidarity in the broader academic community with the locked-out professors — the faculty at the University of San Francisco issued a solidarity statement — the administration at LIU decided to call off the lockout.

The university agreed to extend the current contract with the faculty until May 31, 2017, and bargain with a mediator.

The union statement on the end of the lockout made the following points: “The LIU administration will make the faculty whole for health care costs incurred during the lockout period. The union’s unfair labor practice complaints relating to the lockout and our arbitration on pay parity remain active and will be vigorously pursued.”

Trying to make the university operate with easily replaceable workers failed this time. It is clear that both workers and bosses will carefully examine the lessons of this struggle. □

‘Fight for \$15, fight for fair!’

By Mike Kühlenbeck
Des Moines, Iowa

Polk County Fight for \$15 activists are opposing a task force proposal that calls for a gradual \$10.75 minimum wage and a “youth wage exemption,” instead demanding a living wage for all workers.

On Aug. 25, nearly two dozen Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement members “packed the room” during a minimum wage task force meeting, according to Iowa CCI organizer Emily Schott. Despite the outpouring of support for \$15, the 13-member task force voted to gradually raise the minimum wage to \$10.75 an hour by 2019 “with a cost of living adjustment.”

Adding insult to injury, the panel also voted for a “youth wage exemption” affecting workers ages 14 to 17, who will earn only 85 percent of the minimum wage.

Schott said the supervisors are bowing down to big business so “large corporations like the grocery industry can continue to hire hard-working youth at terrible wages.”

The grocery industry is one of the biggest employers of youth, leading the charge for a youth wage in other states. According to Iowa CCI co-organizer Bridget Fagan-Reidburn, grocery industry representatives were present at the last task force meeting who were not at the other public gatherings.

The age discrimination being recommended by the task force affects teenage workers with children or family members to support, college students with school loans to pay off and other situations where workers struggle to make ends meet.

“No matter your age, you should be paid the same for doing the same work,” Fagan-Reidburn said.

The proposed exemption does not exist in local, state or federal law, but this is not the first time such a proposal has been suggested.

In “Fast Food Nation,” author Eric Schlosser tells about when McDonald’s co-founder Raymond Albert “Ray” Kroc donated over \$250,000 to President Richard Nixon’s re-election campaign in 1972, the same year the fast food industry lobbied Washington to support “the McDonald’s bill.” The bill would have allowed workers 16 to 17 years old to earn only 80 percent of the minimum wage — which was \$1.60 per hour back then. If enacted, “the McDonald’s bill” would have reduced some wages to \$1.28 per hour.

The bill wasn’t passed, but efforts to pick low-wage workers’ pockets continue.

Schott said the vote is just a recommendation and the Polk County Board of Supervisors will make the final decision on raising the wage in October. “[We’re] gearing up to take the fight to the supervisors in September to let them know it’s got to be \$15!” she emphasized. □

The elections are *not* the last word — keep fighting for socialism!

By L.T. Pham

Join Workers World Party and hundreds of activists from around the country and the world for the annual WWP National Conference on Nov. 11-13 in New York.

2016 has seen nothing short of an assault on the movement for justice, liberation and self-determination. But it has also been an incredible year of struggle, where the most militant people have risen up to say no more to exploitation, violence and repression, all facilitated by capitalism.

The conference will come only days after the presidential elections. Working and oppressed people will, without a doubt, be disappointed by the results. But where will we go from there? How will we channel our righteous rage and frustration into action? These are the questions we will take up as we honor the brave young people, communities and organizers who have confronted power and are claiming the future.

Regardless of who becomes the next president of the United States, we know that the truth remains: So long as the U.S. has the ability to terrorize Black and Brown people at home and abroad, so long as workers can barely afford to live, so long as LGBTQ people and women are under attack, so long as the politicians, bosses and bankers rule our lives, we must fight, fight, fight!

If you are interested in learning about and discussing why we must keep fighting for socialism, join Workers World Party at the Malcolm X & Betty Shabazz Center in New York City — the historical site of the Audubon Ballroom, where

Malcolm X was assassinated on Feb. 21, 1965.

The annual WWP National Conference will convene revolutionaries and organizers from the frontlines of struggles, from Black Lives Matter to Palestine Solidarity, from anti-war to Fight for \$15, from the LGBTQ struggle to women's liberation and immigrants' rights.

We lift up the struggles that need solidarity, not only here in the U.S. but also around the world — to end the blockade still on Cuba, end U.S. war aggression in Syria, stop the subversion of Venezuela, and show solidarity with migrants to the U.S. and the European Union. We lift up the banners of internationalism and socialist unity to build toward a revolution that will liberate all workers and oppressed people.

We choose ourselves — not the war-monger Hillary Clinton who called Black youths “predators,” not the hate-mongering billionaire Donald Trump who nurtures Klan and Nazi types. We choose solidarity — not the state's tools of division, not the comfort of isolation.

We choose the movement — not the lies of the election, not the idea that the powers that be will fall on their own. We choose a path to revolution — not the lure of a softer, kinder capitalism, not another day of chains and cages. Let us continue to build the movement against capitalism, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia and more!

Black Lives Matter! Defend Native sovereignty! Abolish the police! Smash capitalism! LGBTQ liberation now! End women's oppression! Free Palestine! The working class has no borders! □

No matter who wins the election...
WHY WE MUST KEEP FIGHTING FOR SOCIALISM

Workers World Party NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2016
NOV. 11-13
SHABAZZ CENTER
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Dr. Betty Shabazz

“You can't have capitalism without racism.”
 —Malcolm X

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Fight Trump's racism, Clinton's militarism

Continued from page 1

do provide a more striking contrast than in earlier presidential contests.

Moving left or moving right?

As the capitalist stagnation that has devastated so many areas drags on, the resulting widespread suffering is undermining the political status quo.

But the question is: Are the workers in the U.S. moving to the left or to the right? Is Trump appealing to a new right-wing movement? Or is his campaign picking up most of its votes from those who are not in motion, not organized, but seem to idolize a media superstar who promises he'll fix it all, just vote for him?

By constantly calling Trump supporters “white workers,” the corporate media can make it seem there is a reactionary shift going on in the working class. But when have they ever described the many progressive social movements in this country in similar class terms?

For quite a few years, many, many people have been marching, reaching out through social media, getting together flash mobs and other inventive forms of protest. They are largely young and very outspoken, breaking all kinds of repressive barriers. They have stood up to cops and security guards. And the vast majority of them are working class.

Dynamic people of color have been in the leadership of many of these movements, and there are also many, many white workers — with or without jobs — who passionately hate the system and all the forms of bigotry that divide our class.

Streets belong to the people

The streets belong to the people — it's

not just a slogan. The reactionaries, the bigots, are not in the streets. Except for a tiny hardcore, they have been hesitant to air their backward, hateful ideas for public scrutiny and criticism. But Trump and reactionary media moguls have given them a loud platform.

Since Sanders gave in and endorsed Clinton, the movement that had looked to him for a new course has had to rethink what to do next. They're not going for Trump, obviously. But they can't have much confidence in Clinton and the Democratic establishment, either.

They know that, after eight years of a Democratic administration, even one

headed for the very first time by an African-American president, little has changed in the racist, anti-worker, pro-corporate workings of the U.S. government.

The jails are still stuffed with the poor. Cops still shoot down unarmed Black people, even children.

The super-rich suck up an ever larger portion of the wealth, while cities like Flint, Detroit, Oakland, Chicago, Baltimore and Cleveland and many rural areas suffer unbearable levels of unemployment, homelessness and decay.

The Pentagon-banking-industrial complex continues to apply its expertise in killing people across the globe — and in seiz-

ing trillions in tax dollars from the public treasury in Washington.

The global environmental crisis continues to take a back seat to the profits of the oil and chemical companies and Wall Street portfolios.

Whichever capitalist candidate gets more votes in this election, it won't change all this — or eliminate the progressive movements in this country.

What is crucial is that the movements stay independent of the capitalist establishment and true to their origins, have confidence in their own strength, and not become an appendage to the “less reactionary” of the two imperialist parties. □



Monica Moorehead and Lamont Lilly

and Lamont Lilly for vice president — have marched against the Republicans in Cleveland and the Democratic Party machine in Philadelphia. They have gone coast-to-coast speaking to workers and people of color about **REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM**.

The campaign just sent a solidarity delegation to Standing Rock in North Dakota and finished a Midwest speaking tour. Visit our website at workers.org/wwp/campaign-news/ for weekly updates on our work.



Teresa Gutierrez

In the remaining weeks before the Nov. 8 election, we have a chance to reach millions more with ads, online voting, ballot access work and additional travel around the country.

But we can't do this without your support!

We are a working-class party and our only source of income is from people like you. Help us get out the voice for revolutionary socialism to counter the Clinton war machine and Trump's racist, anti-people offensives.

DONATE! DONATE! DONATE!

The Moorehead/Lilly presidential campaign needs your donation now



Contributions are urgently needed, no matter how small or large. Please make a generous donation today at workers.org/wwp/donate/. Mail checks to Workers World Party 2016 Presidential Campaign Committee, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011.

Paid for by the Workers World Party 2016 Presidential Campaign Committee.

PIPELINES & PROFITS

By Sara Flounders

Under Indigenous leadership, the determination of thousands who have gathered at Standing Rock is having a profound impact in exposing the environmental destruction caused by the mad profit drive of the oil industry.

Oil and gas corporations, the banks standing behind them, and the U.S. government that supports capitalist exploitation have been complicit in suppressing the immediate and long-term consequences of oil fracking, and the construction of a lethal network of porous pipelines. These pipelines have a history of rupturing and polluting streams, rivers and underground aquifers.

Pipeline endangers all

The Standing Rock Sioux and potentially 17 million others are threatened by the Dakota Access Pipeline route, a 1,170-mile oil pipeline that would run from North Dakota to Illinois. Data on oil and gas pipeline safety in the U.S. confirms a history of spills, contamination, injuries and deaths.

Since 1986, there have been nearly 8,000 incidents, resulting in more than 500 immediate deaths, more than 2,300 injuries and nearly \$7 billion in damage. Oil is by far the most commonly spilled substance, followed by natural gas, gasoline, diesel, propane and jet fuel.

Pipeline accidents have dumped an average of 76,000 barrels per year or more than 3 million gallons. This is equivalent to 200 barrels of oil pouring into the land and water every day for 30 years. (Center for Biological Diversity)

Reasons for pipeline spills include damage during excavation operations, metal failure, improper operation and corrosion. In most cases, cleanup is only

partially successful, leaving tens of thousands of barrels of oil on land or in water.

According to an Associated Press analysis of federal data: “As U.S oil production has soared, so has the number of pipeline accidents. Since 2009, the annual number of significant accidents on oil pipelines has shot up almost 60 percent, matching the rise in U.S. crude oil production.” (AP, May 23, 2015)

Danger: pipelines and oil trains

In the last five years, 423 oil trains have crashed or spilled oil in the U.S., with \$45 million in damages. A train derailment and explosion of oil from the Bakken fields of North Dakota totally destroyed the Quebec community of Lac-Mégantic in 2013. Forty-six people died in the flames. In West Virginia, oil burned for days after 26 tanker cars derailed and 19 caught on fire in 2015. Oil spilled into a nearby river. Damages totaled more than \$23 million.

These catastrophes gave rise to a movement challenging all transport of highly flammable oil by rail. But the oil industry simultaneously pushes for both pipelines and increased crude-by-rail, in an attempt to pit movements, struggling against each method, against each other.

Although pipelines spill three times as much crude oil as oil trains, all these forms of transport — pipelines, rail and truck — are dangerous and ruinous to the environment.

What is happening now at Standing Rock challenges us to look at the long-term damage the entire oil industry is wreaking on the earth and the global climate. Sustainable forms of energy, based on the sun, wind and water, are increasingly viable. Calculations based only on immediate profit are both criminal and shortsighted.

Profits determine pipelines

Pipelines are by far the cheapest way to move gasoline or oil. Transport by rail and truck costs about \$30 a barrel more. The huge difference in profit margins, not the danger of transport by rail, drives pipeline construction.

At the height of the Standing Rock struggle, corporate media have been almost totally silent as two states, Alabama and Georgia, declared a state of emergency due to a Sept. 9 pipeline spill in Shelby County, Ala. (NationofChange.org)

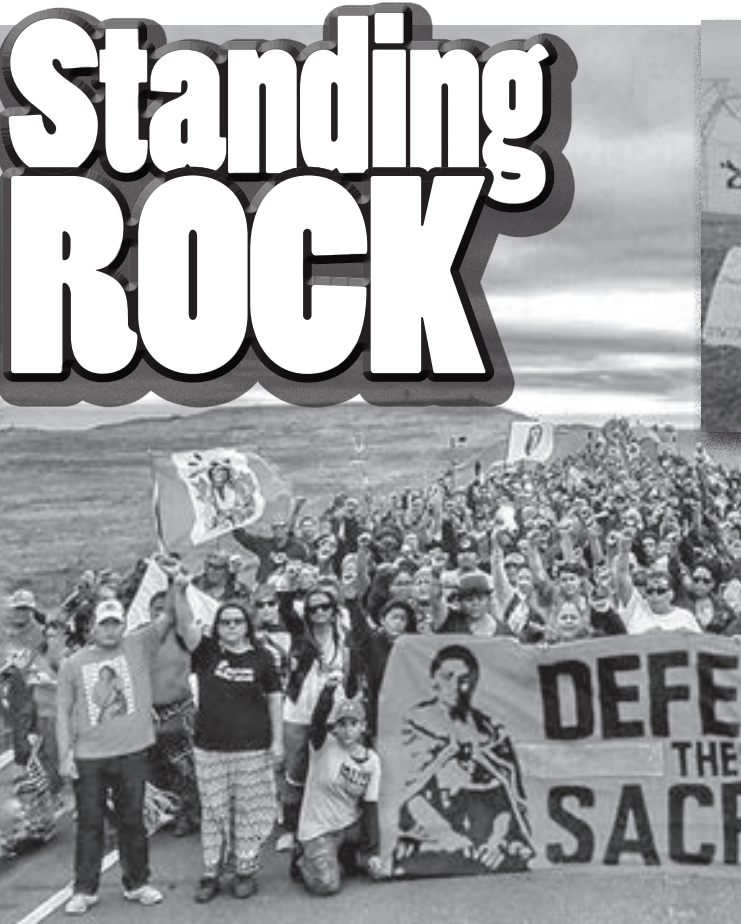
The ruptured fuel line carries refined gasoline from Houston to the East Coast. By Sept. 12, the break had leaked over 250,000 gallons of gasoline.

Capitalism is driven to maximize profit. Every decision is based not on human need nor on environmental safety nor even on the future of the planet. Corporate decisions are based on what is most immediately profitable.

Power plants, pipelines and U.S. land theft

Through the 1950s and into the early 1960s, the U.S. government seized hundreds of thousands of acres of land remaining to Indigenous Nations, in an aggressive plan to build dams along the Missouri River Basin.

One was the Oahe Dam, creating the Oahe Lake, in the area that is now being defended against DAPL by the Oceti Sakowin (the Great Sioux Nation). According to Native American Netroots, that



dam destroyed more Native land than any other public works project in U.S. history by flooding 90 percent of the timber and bottomland of the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Nations.

Their villages and towns were destroyed for agribusiness irrigation, and for a big-business power plant to supply electricity to much of the north-central U.S.

Among the Oceti Sakowin activists now stopping the DAPL pipeline, there are people who remember their land before its expropriation and flooding for Big Energy profits.

Though further impoverished by the loss of their lands, the Standing Rock Sioux have resisted granting applications for oil drilling or pipelines. Other impoverished Indigenous Nations have felt forced to turn to the profit-promising made by Big Energy oil drilling, fracking and coal mining corporations in order to build their tribal economies.

IN SOLIDARITY ‘Honor the treaties! NO DAPL!’

BY WORKERS WORLD STAFF

The struggle at Standing Rock, N.D., led by the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires of the Great Sioux Nation), has brought together hundreds of Indigenous Nations, thousands of Indigenous people and many supporters to block the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). They are united in the fight against corporate pollution of water, protection of sacred Native sites and defense of Indigenous sovereignty.

Protests in solidarity with this historic and crucial struggle have occurred in various cities in the U.S. and internationally. Here are reports about some of them.

DETROIT

Over 150 activists from Detroit and around Michigan turned out on Sept. 12 to demonstrate solidarity with Standing Rock and oppose Big Oil’s destruction of the planet. The evening “light protest,” called by the Detroit Light Brigade, the Detroit Coalition Against Tar Sands and the Blood Oil Campaign Against Marathon, was held outside a Marathon Oil refinery in southwest Detroit. Marathon’s airborne toxins have made its 48217 ZIP code area the most polluted part of Michigan.

Illuminated letters spelled out the message “No DAPL, Honor the Treaties, Stop ETP,” while the Light Brigade’s “bat light” flashed “Stop the desecration — #Rezpect-OurWater” on the side of a building. ETP refers to Energy Transfer Partners, whose Bakken Project includes the DAPL. ETP

recently sold a 37.5 percent share in the Bakken Project to Marathon and Enbridge Energy Partners.

Organizers of this action have demonstrated previously against Marathon and Enbridge. Enbridge caused a catastrophic pipeline break that contaminated a portion of Michigan’s Kalamazoo River. It also operates the Line 5 pipeline that runs under Lake Superior. Environmental activists and Indigenous peoples in Michigan have protested with canoes and kayaks to demand the shut-down of Line 5, whose aging pipes pose a danger to the Great Lakes, the largest group of freshwater lakes on Earth.

The protest took over the street and blocked traffic, with participants chanting “Whose streets? Our streets! Whose water? Our water!” The slogan “Water is Life” resonates with southeast Michigan, which still feels the impact of the water contamination crisis in Flint and the thousands of water shutoffs in Detroit.

Flint activists have posted about the Standing Rock struggle on their Facebook pages and Black Lives Matter Detroit pledged solidarity. The Moratorium Now! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs ended its weekly Monday meeting early to send a delegation to the action.

— Martha Grevatt



PHILADELPHIA

Around 500 people gathered in Philadelphia on Sept. 17 for a solidarity rally with the Indigenous peoples challenging the DAPL at Standing Rock. The rally, which gathered at City Hall, brought together Native peoples from the Philadelphia area, along with a diverse array of mainly young activists from the Black Lives Matter movement, the low-wage workers struggle, the immigrant rights movement and the broader environmental justice movement.

Many demonstrators came from area unions, including the Transit Workers Union, the American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers. Members of Working Educators, a progressive grouping in the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, attended. Palestine solidarity activists participated with signs linking Indigenous peoples everywhere who are fighting against the colonial and corporate interests trying to steal their lands.

The rally was followed by a spirited march through Center City, where it received broad support from people on the streets.

In a separate action, seven people, including members of the Philadelphia Student Union, were arrested for occupying the lobby of TD Bank, a pipeline funder.

— Betsey Piette

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEATTLE

Over 500 Native people and their supporters marched in downtown Seattle on Sept. 16 behind a huge banner which read “Stand with Standing Rock! Water is Life! #NoDAPL!”

The march began outside City Hall, where Mayor Ed Murray signed a proclamation supporting Standing Rock. Several City Council members said they backed the struggle. The Seattle City Council had already passed a resolution in solidarity with Standing Rock.

The march was led by drummers who continued drumming throughout the rally. Representatives of Northwest Native Nations and Indigenous peoples from Alaska, Hawaii, California and the Great Plains attended as well as supporters. Many protesters had previously traveled to Standing Rock.

Rally chairperson Millie Kennedy, Alaska Native and member of the Tsimshian Nation, greeted demonstrators at Westlake Center. Matt Remle, who is from Standing Rock, announced the demonstration was being live-streamed to the encampment there. Remle stressed that Indigenous peoples’ struggles are central to the global movement to save the planet: “Native peoples are 4 percent of the





Lamont Lilly, Second from left is the 2016 Workers World Party U.S. vice presidential candidate.



Dallas Goldtooth, a Mdewakanton Dakota and Dene organizer for the Indigenous Environmental Network, points out that the Standing Rock resistance is creating solidarity against environmental devastation. He describes the 189 resolutions or solidarity statements with Standing Rock from Native Nations as “amazing, historic. ... A lot of tribes that are heavily dependent on resource extraction have also come out in support. Three Affiliated Tribes — 30 percent of the Bakken oil shale is under their lands. ... The Navajo Nation ... heavily dependent on coal. The Crow Nation ... all coal. All sent statements of solidarity. ... It opens up a door for more organizing.” (yesmagazine.org)

Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center, was part of a recent Workers World delegation to Standing Rock.



world’s people, but we’re protecting 85 percent of the world’s biodiversity.”

Quinault Nation President Fawn Sharp told the rally, “When another country can take unilateral action against our land and resources, that is a political injustice and an assault on all of us.”

Northwest Sacred Water Canoe Family members expressed their pride at rowing 40 miles down the Missouri River and then being welcomed by the Standing Rock gathering.

The program included members of the Makah, Swinomish, Tulalip, Suquamish and other Native Nations. City Council member Kshama Sawant and Emily Johnson of 350 Seattle, an organization fighting for climate justice, also spoke.

Joe Williams, of the Swinomish Nation, emphasized, “This is not only a Native fight. This is a fight for everybody. We all need to come together and join this fight.”

For three consecutive weeks, Northwest Native Nations have marched in Seattle demanding a halt to construction of the DAPL. Other actions in the state included a protest at Michels Corporation, a DAPL contractor in Kirkland, Wash.

— Jim McMahan

‘Local protest has become monumental’

By Lamont Lilly

The mainstream media would have most of us believe that the current struggle at Standing Rock, N.D., is all about clean water — that its only focus is stopping the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) from running through Indigenous reservation land. And, yes, it is about these things. But while such a narrative may create “hot headlines,” it fails to capture the full truth and essence of what’s really going on there.

On Sept. 9 through Sept. 12, our Workers World Party delegation gathered with 8,000 others in answer to the national call to mobilize for support. I realized that Standing Rock is actually an entire race of peoples’ fight for sovereignty and complete liberation, a fight for the right to exist without forced displacement and assimilation.

Standing Rock’s “stand-off for water” is a struggle against corporate interests, a struggle against greed and the big oil companies — and against the ruling class and white supremacist power structure.

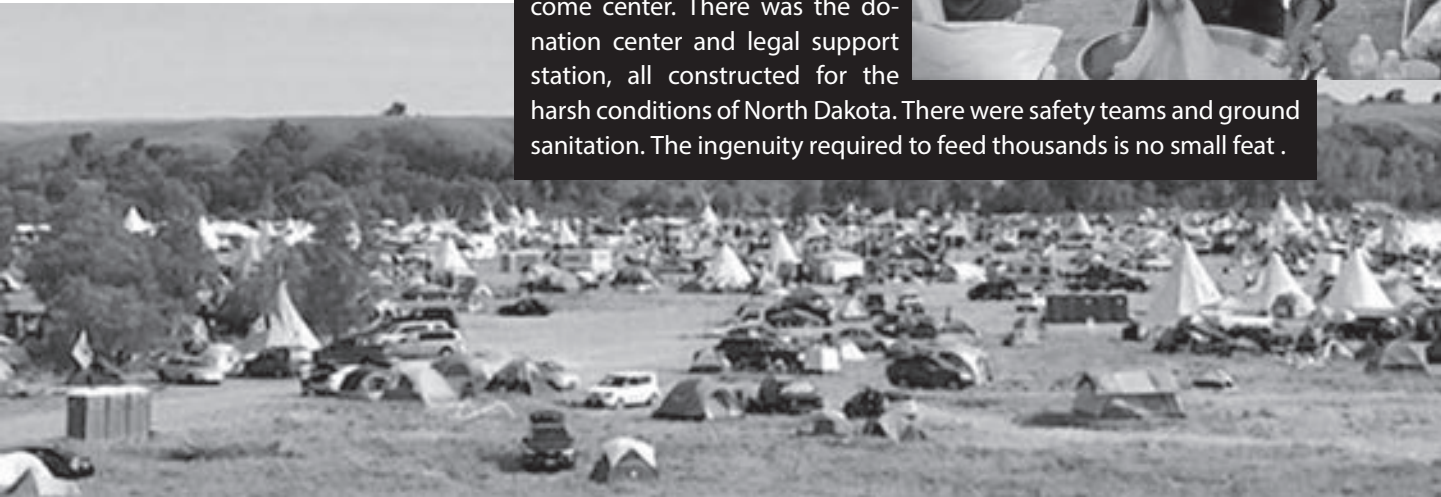
Resistance, unity and mass consciousness

Shortly after our flight into Bismarck, N.D., we went to the state Capitol building, where I began to realize that this was much bigger than just a fight for water. Is water a central component to this struggle? Yes, yes, it is. But what I shortly realized, as local members of the Indigenous community began to gather, and as school-aged Native youth began to march down the street in the rain, is that the significance of the developments at Standing Rock was nothing short of historically majestic. This “local protest” had become monumental.

Representatives of Indigenous Nations began pouring into Bismarck from all over the country and from other countries. In spite of the rain, more and more people just kept coming. A protest had become a reunion, a reunion even for some who had never spoken to each other, a reunion many thought would never happen again. The struggle for water had performed a material miracle. Resistance had created both unity and mass consciousness.

It was Friday and we had just arrived. So much was unfolding, and we hadn’t even made it to the official campground at Standing Rock yet. We had merely decided to support a Bismarck protest we heard about before traveling to Standing Rock, getting settled and set up for the evening. After the protest, we finally arrived at the Main Camp at Standing Rock late on Friday afternoon, with plenty of time before dark. We debated for a half hour about where to pitch our tent, and finally found a spot.

Word broke during camp that evening that the Obama administration and the U.S. government had decided to temporarily “halt” further construction of DAPL in the immediate Lake Oahe area by Standing Rock. But certainly the overall DAPL project had not been canceled in North Dakota or elsewhere.



Indigenous Nations came from all over: Ontario (Canada), Hawaii, Ecuador, Jamaica, Alaska, Massachusetts, California. There were elders and small children, women and men.

Main Camp organizers noted that over 260 Nations had gathered, the largest of any such gathering since Wounded Knee in 1973. Morale was high, but people were still leery of the government. After 500 years of colonial lies, false promises and broken treaties, many of the elders had seen this story before. They reminded the media and informed the various Nations to stay vigilant.

As organizer and Standing Rock Sioux elder Phyllis Young stated: “Our freedom is in our DNA. Our culture is bigger than the U.S. Constitution. When one Nation’s rights are violated, we are all violated.” On the subject of false treaties, Young reminded us that “these agreements are problematic because they do not recognize our sovereignty. They have not kept their promises.”

Building collective memory

Our time and efforts were divided between four different encampments. If you’re coming from Bismarck, the first encampment you’ll approach is “The Frontline.” This was the site where private security firm G4S sprayed the Water Protectors with pepper spray and prompted dogs to attack women and defenseless children.

Just off the road, the camp is small in size, but well-guarded and protected. A few yards behind the company’s barbed wire gates, you can actually see the uprooted soil, courtesy of U.S. Army Engineers and private construction vehicles. North Dakota later issued a misdemeanor warrant for Democracy Now host, Amy Goodman, for simply documenting what happened there.

Main Camp is where the masses reside — a 20-acre plot of flatland surrounded by sacred burial space, “Facebook Hill” (where people can pick up enough cell service to post on social media), and scattered marsh remnants of the Missouri and Cannonball rivers. Main Camp is where most of the socializing and public assemblies took place.

Though much smaller, Sacred Stone is probably the camp most recognized by name. Sacred Stone is the location of the initial resistance, dating back to the spring of this year.

Last, but certainly not least, is Red Warrior Camp — the heavily targeted and radical youth encampment located just between Main Camp and Sacred Stone. Red Warrior Camp has really inspired

and galvanized the young people. We were honored to formally meet with them the day before we left. In return, we left the Red Warrior Camp much of our camping equipment and the supplies that we could spare. Their spokesperson, Cody Hall, was arrested during the time our delegation was in North Dakota.

Main Camp, which was where we stayed, was highly organized and well laid out. Tents and tipis were sporadically spaced at the site of your own choosing. The kitchen, dry storage and main assembly circle were all conjoined. While the main circle was open-air seating, all other stations were well constructed for the harsh conditions of North Dakota.

There was a medical room and camp infirmary as well as a freedom school and welcome center. There was the donation center and legal support station. There were safety teams and ground sanitation. Several thousand of us were fed, sheltered and provided for, every day. There were many participants who came on faith and with very few resources. The ingenuity required to seamlessly feed three meals a day to thousands is no small feat.

In addition to the elements of traditional dance and clothing and tribal flags, there was also a special emphasis placed on remembrance — remembrance of the old names and Native languages that so many still fight to preserve, remembrance of the past freedom fighters and political prisoners. Elders and youth alike noted the important contributions of Sitting Bull and Leonard Peltier, Russell Means and John Trudell.

With over 260 Indigenous Nations represented, were there a few internal differences? Yes, of course. But there was also a celebration of those differences, a moment of material magic that so many were able to come together and build on their commonalities. Not only was there a collective sense of pride, urgency and organization, a collective memory was etched in communal stone, passed down to the next Seven Generations.

“We want our grandchildren to see this, to be here and touch the land,” said Chief Arvol Looking Horse. “I remember my grandmother teaching me about Wounded Knee, and we have to pass this down. The story of today.”

It was so important that the youth and children were able to witness such a display of unity. This is the moment that they too, will pass down to their children — the preservation of culture, history, tradition — the interconnection of water, soil, air, life — the importance of respecting the

Continued on page 9

Tents and tipis were spaced at the site of your own choosing. The kitchen, dry storage and main assembly circle were all conjoined. There was a camp infirmary as well as a freedom school and welcome center. There was the donation center and legal support station, all constructed for the harsh conditions of North Dakota. There were safety teams and ground sanitation. The ingenuity required to feed thousands is no small feat .

Tuskegee Airmen fought racism in the U.S. military

By Dolores Cox

2016 is the 75th anniversary of the Tuskegee Airmen's formation. The Airmen were the first African-American aviators in U.S. Army Air Corps history. They were pilots, bombardiers, navigators, flight trainers, mechanics and support personnel. Before then, African Americans were barred from military aviation because of their skin color.

Although Blacks had actively participated in the military since the American Revolution, it was nearly impossible for them to attain high-ranking positions. The Tuskegee Airmen were determined to rise above racial barriers and break "Jim Crow" segregation in the military, which enforced separate barracks, dining halls and opportunities.

"Whites only" signs created barriers for all Black people. African descendants were not offered positions in prestigious schools and competitive jobs — and constantly had to do more and achieve more just to prove they were equal.

Few, if any, schools would train Black people to earn private flying licenses. Even with a license, Black men were repeatedly rejected as aviators. Outrageous racist myths held that Black people were not capable of flying or serving in any combat position due to "inferior intelligence and capabilities" and were physically "unfit" to fly complex aircraft.

However, the Tuskegee Airmen proved



the racists wrong. They were fighting against the Nazis during World War II and against racial discrimination at home.

The Tuskegee Airmen's story began in 1941. With the war in Europe escalating, and pressure from Civil Rights activists, the Army Air Corps started an experimental program that year for the first all-Black flight school at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Under African-American Lt. Col. Benjamin Davis Jr., men trained vigorously to master skills in aerial combat.

In 1943, Tuskegee Airmen were sent to Italy to escort bombers flown by white pilots, protecting them from Nazi combat planes. These Airmen were called the "Red Tail Angels" due to their aircraft's color.

Nearly 1,000 Black aviators passed arduous training at the Tuskegee airfield by 1946. They learned to fly and maintain military aircraft. The Airmen's struggles and valiant accomplishments led to greater changes. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had authorized Black men to fight in World War II, and in 1948, Presi-

dent Harry Truman issued an executive order integrating the military.

The Tuskegee Airmen proved that Blacks deserved the opportunity to succeed. They fought bigotry just as effectively as they fought the Nazis. With persistence, patience and skill, they won a major victory against racism. They learned to be twice as good to get half as far and to persevere and not give up. Their guiding principles were "Aim high, believe in yourself, use your brain, be ready to go, never quit and expect to win."

The first Black student to graduate from West Point was Benjamin Davis Jr. White students shunned him and refused to share a room or meal with him or even speak to him. When Davis was ready to enter military flight training, he was denied that opportunity because there were no squadrons for Black pilots. But in 1941, Davis was assigned to train at Tuskegee Airfield and became one of its first Airmen.

'Freeman Field Mutiny' defied officers' racism

African-American officers were barred from entering officers' clubs due to racist segregation. When they entered the club at Freeman Field, Ind., in 1945, 103 were arrested and charged with mutiny and disobedience. The "Freeman Field Mutiny" received help from a young lawyer, Thurgood Marshall, who later became a Supreme Court justice.

The Tuskegee pilots flew 1,578 combat missions in Europe during World War II

and destroyed 162 Nazi aircraft. They were heroes for their courage and excellence that brought down barriers and for forging the way for other African Americans.

Several Tuskegee Airmen died this year. The legendary Roscoe Brown Jr. died at age 94. He was commander of the elite African-American fighter aircraft squadron. Brown was the first U.S. pilot to shoot down a German military jet.

Brown challenged the racist military system and remained a champion for civil rights. He dedicated his life to improving education, earning a doctorate in the field. He became director of African-American Affairs at New York University and the Center for Urban Policy. Brown was a professor at City University of New York Graduate Center and CUNY Bronx Community College president for 17 years.

Shelby Westbrook died at age 94. He recalled the intense level of racism he and the other Airmen experienced and its effect on them. For example, German troops captured by the U.S. were treated better than Black troops. Westbrook and many other Tuskegee Airmen received the French Legion of Honor in 2013 for their "extraordinary bravery" in liberating France from the Nazis.

The number of living Tuskegee Airmen is rapidly dwindling. They should be remembered as legendary heroes who triumphed over adversity and broke Jim Crow barriers within the military.

Sources: redtail.org; CNN; *Montgomery Advertiser*; *Associated Press*.

Somali Muslims and allies protest Islamophobia

By Taryn Fivek
Minneapolis

Sept. 16 — Cars honk and passersby raise their fists as over 250 people protest Islamophobia, racism and U.S. wars abroad in the Minneapolis neighborhood of West Bank. The crowd marches, chanting, "No more wars! No more fear! Our Muslim friends are welcome here!" and holding signs that read "Stop the war on Muslims at home and abroad" and "No U.S. military intervention in Syria." The Minnesota Anti-War Committee and Minnesotans Against Islamophobia sponsored the march.

Minnesota is home to more than 30,000 Somali immigrants, around one-third of the total living in the U.S. The majority live in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. They are targeted by racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia.

Burhan Mohamed, who grew up in the West Bank neighborhood, decided to get involved after reading and dealing personally with the racism and poverty that afflict his community. "You start to realize that, you know, you're not poor by the lack of hard work, you're not poor because you're irresponsible.

"I'm a first generation immigrant that grew up here. Muslim and Black, obviously. You start to look over your shoulder."

Minneapolis is one of the three major cities implementing "Countering Violent Extremism," a federal program that locally targets Somali-Americans.

When I reviewed terrorist attacks in the U.S. since the 1980s, I could not find one where a person of Somali descent was convicted. Since the implementation of the CVE program in 2014, at least ten young Somali men have been arrested after being entrapped by FBI informants.

Three were convicted by an all-white jury in Minneapolis in June of this year; five pleaded guilty before their trials.

With their sentencing in November, some face life imprisonment.

"You're saying that we're all potential terrorists, potential extremists," says Burhan.

The Minnesota Anti-War Committee says the CVE program "criminalizes and spies on the Somali community in Minnesota and is a classic divide-and-conquer tactic using 'trusted' individuals and organizations, infiltrators posing as friends, teachers in schools, and social service organizations."

Somali-Canadian rapper K'Naan is developing an HBO series about "jihadi recruitment" set in Minneapolis called "The Recruiter." The executive director of the series, Kathryn Bigelow, directed the pro-militarist films "Zero Dark Thirty" a fictional account of the CIA hunt for Osama bin Laden and "The Hurt Locker," which praised soldiers occupying Iraq.

The Somali community and supporters protested K'Naan when he visited the Twin Cities area last week and were met with pepper spray and arrests from the police. While K'Naan met with protesters later to say the show would not demonize the Somali community, many remain unconvinced as long as Bigelow is attached to the project.

Islamophobia to continue post-election

The crowd begins stopping traffic and ends up in front of the Republican Party's office, chanting, "No Trump! No KKK! No racist USA!"

Does Burhan think anything will get better for Muslims after the presidential election in November?

"To be honest with you, I think that it won't. You have Hillary — who has a proven record, has a proven history of her supporting policies and her saying very devastating and very problematic statements against people of color."

"You have Trump, who has literally ...

spilled out all his bad guts about his feelings about Muslims and about immigrants.

"I am terrified. As a Black person, as a Muslim, I'm terrified. Because now, it's like — what do you do? How do you protect yourself?

"I think a socialist system, something that really includes the whole body of the people. ... I think that's the system

that would help us. But capitalism? You know Trump's a capitalist, Hillary is a capitalist.

"Today's rally, today's march ... this is why I sort of breathe easy. Because I see there's a collection of people that honestly do care about the future of this country. They care about the world, and they care about humanity." □

Victory to Zimbabwe!



By Stephen Millies

More than 100 people marched and rallied in New York City on Sept. 17 in defense of Zimbabwe; the country's president, Robert Gabriel Mugabe; and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front. U.S. economic sanctions have targeted the African country since its people, led by President Mugabe, started taking over land stolen by white plantation owners in the late 1990s.

President Mugabe, the former chair of the African Union, is scheduled to address the United Nations.

The march started at Citibank's world headquarters and went to Zimbabwe's Mission to the United Nations to show support. Marching in military order in the streets, demonstrators finally reached the U.N. at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza.

The militant action was organized by the December 12th Movement and Friends of Zimbabwe. The People's Organization for Progress, Universal Negro Improvement Association, African Diaspora for Development, All-African People's Revolutionary Party and the International Action Center, among other organizations, participated in the demonstration. □

Workers World Party condemns the blockade of Cuba



Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez announced on Sept. 9 that Cuba will submit a resolution to the upcoming United Nations General Assembly meeting titled “The necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.”

The Workers World Party Presidential and Vice Presidential Campaign joins with the Cuban people and millions globally who declare #YoVotoVsBloqueo — “I vote against the blockade.” We reiterate our party’s longstanding support for revolutionary socialist Cuba and respect for its sovereignty and self-determination against the imperialist bully to the north.

There is now a commonly held, but false and dangerous, illusion that the genocidal financial noose around Cuba has ended. This illusion is fostered by the U.S. government’s positive agreement on Dec. 17, 2015, to restore diplomatic relations with Cuba, which it broke in 1961. President Barack Obama visited Cuba and commercial flights to the island began on Aug. 31. The unique restriction banning U.S. travel to Cuba has been reduced to a computer check box. However, Cuba’s 2016 report states that the blockade has in fact been toughened.

In its 40-page document, Cuba details the large, small and even new ways the web of U.S. laws and regulations that make up the blockade hurt the Cuban people, while touching every continent with their extraterritorial reach. The full report can be read in English at cubavs-bloqueo.cu.

Here are a few examples.

Cuba’s Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB) has exported pharmaceuticals to Thailand for many years. An order from PharMaLand pharmaceuticals for 60,000 bulbs of Cuba’s HeberBiovac HB Hepatitis B vaccine could not be filled because the bank in Thailand handling the order received a warning it should not enter into transactions with Cuba due to U.S. sanctions.

Payment for work in Ecuador and Ethiopia by Cuban technical and professional teachers was held back because that would violate U.S. sanctions. In Guatemala, Cuban sports technicians could not provide services because there were no

banking channels through which remittances could be sent to Cuba. The bank subsidiaries there have relations with U.S. banks.

Between April 2015 and April 2016, the U.S. imposed 61 measures against foreign banks because they had relations with Cuba. These included closing bank accounts, holding back funds, refusing to provide banking services and to process letters of credit, delays due to the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control requiring permits to process documents and turning back bank transactions in North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania.

Cuba offers more than 200 internationally recognized, quality medical programs in 47 health institutions serving 15,000 foreign patients annually. But medical treatment does not fall into the 12 categories of travel permitted by the U.S. government. In short, it is illegal for a U.S. resident to seek medical treatment in Cuba, even though Cuba has developed effective treatments like a vaccine for lung

The statement on this page condemning the continuing U.S. blockade against Cuba was issued by the Workers World Party 2016 Presidential Campaign.

cancer and Heberprot-P, which prevents more than 70 percent of diabetic foot ulcers. These treatments reduce medical costs and markedly improve quality of life, yet are out of reach for U.S. residents.

Cuba constitutionally guarantees free education and health care as well as access to culture and sports. The well-being of the people, not profits, is the purpose of its socialist organization of society. The blockade hurts all aspects of Cuban society, from construction to food import and production to the right of development itself.

President Obama has not done all that he could to dismantle the blockade of Cuba. He continues the Medical Professional Parole Program, a brain drain that offers special benefits to Cuban medical professionals who abandon international assignments.

According to Cuba’s 2016 document, Obama could allow Cuban banks to open

accounts in U.S. banks; authorize direct exports of U.S. products to Cuban companies; permit imports of Cuban services or products like biotech products, including those manufactured in third countries containing Cuban raw materials; authorize U.S. companies to invest in Cuba; and allow ships that have docked in Cuba to dock in U.S. ports, eliminating the present six-month waiting period.

As the vote against the U.S. blockade in the United Nations General Assembly nears, the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) has begun days of action under the title, “We remember: Solidarity against the blockade and terrorism.” On Sept. 4, ICAP began by commemorating the 1997 bombing of a Havana hotel that killed the young Italian Fabio di Celmo. The days of action will end on Oct. 27 with the twenty-fifth consecutive United Nations vote calling on the U.S. to end its blockade of Cuba. □

Workers demand repeal of new labor law

FRANCE

By G. Dunkel

In French big cities — Paris, Lyons, Tours and Nantes — and in 110 communities in all, 170,000 workers and students came out on Sept. 15 to demand repeal of the new labor law, which was pushed through Parliament without a vote and went into effect July 21.

This was the fifteenth national demonstration and strike against the law, the first since summer vacations. Some trains, mass transit and airline flights were impacted by the strike, and some sharp skirmishes were held between demonstrators and the cops, who were very aggressive.

The struggle of French workers against this repressive labor law has won a great deal of international solidarity. Work-



French police attack protesters in Nantes, western France, during a massive demonstration against the new French labor law, on Sept. 15



ers’ organizations in Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Russia, the Czech Republic, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, Cameroon, Réunion, the Comoros and Argentina have sent messages of solidarity, according to the CGT, one of five labor confederations.

In Paris, units of the CRS, the national anti-riot cops, blocked many roads

to the gathering point, didn’t let unions bring in sound trucks and searched the bags of the 40,000 people who marched. They used tear gas and water cannons to control the marchers. One union member belonging to Solidaire lost his eye due to a tear gas grenade and is charging the cops with brutality.

In Tours and Nantes, where the struggle against the labor law this spring was very intense, the Sept. 15 protests were larger and much more militant than the cops expected.

Since these protests involve losing a day’s pay to strike, and there have now been 15 this year, a debate has opened up in the labor movement about shifting the focus to legal challenges and enterprise-by-enterprise struggles, fighting each set of rules that implements one of the points in the law. While it is not clear how the unions plan to proceed, they are well aware that the polls show seven of every 10 people in France oppose the law.

A date for the next national demonstration hasn’t been set, but the seven unions and student organizations mobilizing for these protests have called for a meeting at the end of September.

The CGT released a statement on Sept. 15 setting out its strategy: “The CGT will continue to fight, on every level, to block the application of this law, point by point, measure by measure, whether it is on the local level, in enterprises with their employees, or nationally before the courts. It intends always to block this wicked law even while having recourse to other axes of mobilization.” □

Standing Rock ‘Local protest has become monumental’

Continued from page 7

land, animals and fellow human beings.

Water is life, not a business

Standing Rock is more than just a fight to stop construction vehicles from digging up the soil to lay pipes. What this is really about is the preservation of the Indigenous way of life — a way of life that walks in accord with the natural elements and resources around them — a way of life that not only honors each other but also the Earth, the land, the water. It is a way of life that deeply respects the air we breathe, the sun, the soil — a way of life that seeks to live in unity with these elements, not to somehow profit from them. Water is life, not a business.

And Standing Rock is not only a struggle to create change. It is not only a struggle to defend the sovereignty of Indigenous Nations. It is, as well, part and parcel of a class struggle of the poor and working class against the interests of the super-rich.

This struggle is about supporting the

right to be free from corporate greed and white supremacist domination, the right for Indigenous people to determine their own destiny, the right to exist without the U.S. government meddling in the internal affairs of Native Nations and exploiting their differences to divide and conquer.

What we saw and heard at Standing Rock were the effects of colonialism continuing to play out, 500 years later. Some Indigenous people have survived through surface-level assimilation, adopting more Eurocentric names, styles of dress and religious practices. Others have refused to assimilate and remain rooted in the old ways. Some favor prayer through action; others embrace a more militant form of resistance by any means necessary.

The only negative aspect of our entire stay was state repression. Drones, helicopters and aerial surveillance were a constant. The road checkpoints, encampment warrants and threat of arrests were very real. Supporters and organizers were quite conscious of the repressive charac-

ter of the state, yet refused to allow that presence to dampen the occasion. But I guess that’s to be expected when you’re pursuing liberation.

Nearly 70 people have been arrested for simply standing in the way of DAPL, but many more are springing up to take their places. When we are talking about #NoDAPL, it’s really important that we demand that all the charges be dropped.

I came to realize that we have to do more to uplift and amplify this struggle. We have to do more to connect this struggle to Black Lives Matter, to the Palestinian resistance and the Latinx movement. Everyone needs to stand with Standing Rock, and we must connect this and all the many other Indigenous struggles to the overall struggle against capitalism and white supremacy.

Much thanks to Standing Rock for allowing us to be there! Long live all the Indigenous Nations! Free Leonard Peltier!

Lamont Lilly is the 2016 Workers World Party U.S. vice presidential candidate.

Generals over the White House

The Sept. 17 bombing of Syrian troops by U.S. planes shows the Pentagon runs the show. The generals went over the heads of the White House and the State Department, sabotaged a ceasefire agreement with Russia by launching deadly airstrikes and provoked a new war crisis.

In 1980 Sam Marcy, founding chairperson of Workers World Party, wrote a pamphlet titled “Generals over the White House” (tinyurl.com/j59gj43). Not much has changed since.

The U.S. ruling-class media spelled out this dispute as it unfolded.

On Sept. 9, the New York Times reported Secretary of State John Kerry had reached an agreement with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, “that, if successful, could lead for the first time to joint military targeting by the two powers against Islamic jihadists in Syria.”

A Pentagon 2015 Military Strategy paper claimed that “threats to world peace” came from Russia, China, Iran, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Islamic State group (IS). The Sept. 9 agreement meant that the U.S., for now, should ally with one “threat,” Russia, to defeat another, IS.

Kerry had worked on the deal for months. President Barack Obama encouraged him.

Then on Sept. 13, the Times reported: “The agreement that Secretary of State John Kerry announced with Russia to reduce the killing in Syria has widened an increasingly public divide between Mr. Kerry and Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter, who has deep reservations about the plan for American and Russian forces to jointly target terrorist groups.”

While Kerry and Carter agree on the goal of promoting U.S. imperialist inter-

ests, their tactical differences were great enough that the fight became public. For the Pentagon, Russia is a bigger “threat” than IS.

The generals made sure they’d win this argument. They cut short all the discussion with a fait accompli.

U.S. planes, in a Sept. 17 attack lasting a whole hour, bombed and rocketed Syrian Army positions in the eastern province of Deir Ezzor. The attack killed at least 90 Syrian troops and wounded another 110, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The generals admitted the attack, claiming it was an “error.” But this was no simple errant bomb. It was a sustained attack with a political goal.

The attack sabotaged the ceasefire agreement. It sent a harsh message to the Syrians and the Russians that there could be no deal with the U.S. civilian government that the U.S. military was constrained to obey.

The assault also allowed Islamic State forces to recapture important strategic positions that Syrian government forces had been on the verge of seizing.

If the Obama administration continues to avoid confronting the generals, then it is conceding foreign policy to the Pentagon. As it did in Afghanistan in 2009.

The Pentagon’s arrogance also sent a message to the people of the United States: If you want to prevent new wars, you’d better get out in the streets, stop work and mobilize, not depend on government officials, elected or appointed, to stop the bombers.

Anti-war forces have called demonstrations in different parts of the U.S. in the coming days to protest the new U.S. aggression in Syria. Help make these protests strong! □

Unions, unity and Standing Rock

Workers all over the world are in the fight of our lives to keep predatory, profit-hungry capitalism from killing us, our loved ones, our jobs and work, our communities, and the very earth and water.

The epic struggle at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) gathers together and upholds the struggles of poor and working people for survival while fighting to protect the water and defend Indigenous sovereignty. Led by people from the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires of the Great Sioux Nation) and hundreds of other Indigenous Nations, the encampment has been joined by many non-Native people from many communities.

The #NoDAPL battle at Standing Rock embodies the old union slogans, “An injury to one is an injury to all” and “Solidarity forever.”

But at the height of this battle, Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO, has issued a statement attacking Standing Rock. He defends DAPL, he says, because it provides “family-supporting jobs” and “makes the U.S. more competitive.” He demonizes the Standing Rock resisters, claiming they are “attackers” who are holding workers’ jobs “hostage.”

In those phrases, Trumka ignores centuries of European colonization and U.S. government genocide and exploitation of Indigenous Nations — the settler and military massacres, the seizure of resources and land, even the theft of Native children from their families and their cultural and physical torture at government schools.

Trumka’s words are a betrayal of the working class. He is siding with big business as it fracks over workers and leaves behind devastation in communities. These words deny that Indigenous people and people of other oppressed communities are integral to the multinational working class that has built the infrastructure of the U.S., from colonization to capitalism — built the canals, the rail-

roads, the interstates, erected the skyscrapers and put up the telephone lines, laid the digital cables and now answers the phone calls when we need assistance.

This is the same old business-unionism mistake — supporting corporate privatization in the hope of getting short-term jobs instead of fighting for the long-term progress that solidarity between the workers and oppressed communities can win for unions.

Many unions support Standing Rock

But Trumka isn’t speaking for all the unions in the federation. Others have come to the defense of Standing Rock with solidarity statements affirming the unity of demands of workers and oppressed people: the ATU transit workers, the California Faculty Association, the Communication Workers, the National Nurses United, the National Writers Union UAW Local 1981, the UE electrical workers, and locals from across the U.S., including the San Francisco region of the Inlandboatmen’s Union/ILWU and the homecare and public-service workers of SEIU 503 in Portland, Ore.

Labor for Palestine has started a petition demanding the AFL-CIO reverse its pro-corporate, anti-worker, anti-Indigenous support for DAPL.

The AFL-CIO should never be backing business interests oiling their way across North Dakota and the rest of the country to get megaprofits as federal and state governments ease their way because the intent of capitalists will always be to cut jobs and break unions. Certainly there are enough unmet human needs and deteriorating infrastructures to provide work for millions for a long, long time.

As Winona LaDuke, an Anishinaabe author and activist from the White Earth Nation, has said: “Flint, Michigan, has a problem. ... What we need is those skilled laborers to be put to work in Flint.”

She says, and we wholeheartedly agree, “Pipelines for people!” □

Brown U. study shows

Wars on Iraq, Afghanistan costing \$5 trillion

By James Carey

Sept. 18 — Professor Neta Crawford of the Watson Institute at Brown University released a report detailing the costs, both currently and estimated for the future, of the United States’ wars in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan, totaling \$5 trillion (that’s \$5,000,000,000,000!).

The wars are a topic rarely discussed by Western media and the cost has almost never been touched on. Indeed the findings of the report lay out a bleak picture of the truly astronomical costs of such a large imperialist military operation.

The costs factored into the study account for everything from initial Department of Defense and State Department appropriations, current and future veterans’ health care costs, Homeland Security costs for countering and preventing terrorism on U.S. soil and, of course, the interest itself on all the money borrowed to pay for everything up to this point.

The figure of \$5 trillion is only an estimate of costs by the year 2053. This may seem far away, but the bad news is that a majority of that projection has already been spent or borrowed. The current bill

already stands at around \$3.7 trillion, or about the equivalent of what has been requested by the federal government for their regular budget for the 2016 fiscal year.

One of the largest costs that is currently already owed is the interest, which has already reached a total of \$453 billion (almost a half trillion). This sum is expected to keep climbing since the federal government has made no moves to pay back any of the money borrowed from foreign lenders and selling U.S. Treasury bonds.

The interest payments are the most

troubling. The report even warns that interest payments could “add over \$7.9 trillion to the national debt.” This can only get worse since President Barack Obama has already requested approximately another \$93 billion for fiscal year 2017 for the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, as well as to bolster DOD programs.

Obviously this amount of money devoted to any single sector of the U.S. economy deprives other sectors in desperate need. Prior studies have shown the negative effects that war spending

has had on job creation, infrastructure development, increased interest rates on federal borrowing and the explosion of the national debt.

The report admits it is also almost impossible to factor in external costs of the wars for allied countries and the countries that have been devastated by over a decade of military operations. It will be a long time before we know what the real costs of repairing the devastation in nations like Iraq and Syria will cost the world and how those countries will actually pay that price.

The costs are going to continue to rise worldwide as the so-called war on terror goes into its fifteenth year. The Pentagon is guilty of causing material and financial devastation both domestically and worldwide.

This report lays out just one aspect of the damage done since September 2001, and the world will continue to see the loss of life and physical consequences as time goes on. Except for a handful of corporations and individuals that have grown rich from war spending, humanity as a whole has only suffered from U.S. imperialist aggression. □

Table 1. Summary of War-Related Spending in Current Dollars⁷

Category	\$ Billion
DOD and State (Overseas Contingency Operations or OCO) FY2001-2016	1,742
Other War-Related: estimated additional DOD base budget (\$733 B) and Veterans (\$213 B) spending, FY2001 - FY2016	946
Homeland Security spending for prevention and response to terrorism, FY2001- FY2016	548
Interest on borrowing for wars, FY2001-FY2016	453
Total War Appropriations and War-Related Spending through 2016	3,689
Estimated Future Obligations for Veterans Medical and Disability 2017 - 2053 ^a	1,000
FY2017 Request for DOD and State OCO, incl. Afghanistan, Iraq/Syria	66
FY2017 Request for Homeland Security for prevention and response to terrorism	37
Total Spending and Future Obligations through 2053	4,792

‘White Helmets’ — pawns for U.S. militarism

By Sara Flounders

The dangerous U.S. military escalation of its 5-year war to overturn Syria’s government can be seen in the Sept. 17 bombing, which killed 62 Syrian Army soldiers and aided the position of the Islamic State group. The attack sabotaged a U.S.-Russian brokered ceasefire and led Russia to call for an emergency U.N. Security Council meeting.

At the same time, there has been a heavy barrage of U.S. war propaganda. “White Helmets,” a new film, is part of the sophisticated disinformation campaign.

War propaganda is always more insidious on the home front, but it is an essential ingredient of imperialist wars. Charging the enemy with genocide, baby killing, mass rapes, mass graves and weapons of mass destruction have all been debunked after a U.S. war. But they saturate the media before a war and seem indisputable.

Samantha Powers, U.S. ambassador to the U.N., has denounced both Russia and Syria. She labels U.S. wars “humanitarian interventions,” and has used unsubstantiated war propaganda to justify wars in West Asia, North Africa and the Balkans that have decimated countries, killed hundreds of thousands of people and displaced millions.

Social media hype

The film praising White Helmets, a U.S.-British-funded group embedded with U.S.-funded reactionary opposition forces, is trending on Netflix. The documentary’s well-publicized launch is calculated to help it win awards and convey the call for deeper U.S. military involvement in Syria. It premiered the Sept. 17-18 weekend at the Toronto International Film Festival.

NBC News praised the featured group as “Angels on the Front Line.” The Washington Post, New York Times and Wall Street Journal sang the movie’s praises and White Helmets’ “selfless, humanitar-

ian role.”

The White Helmets defines itself as unpaid, unarmed first responders in Syria, claims 3,000 members and alleges it is a Syrian Civil Defense group. It claims to have saved 40,000, even 60,000 lives in Syria, by rescuing survivors from bombsites.

Most claims about the White Helmets are unverified self-promotion on social media. Interviews with and media coverage of the grouping show desperate appeals for an increase in U.S./NATO military action in Syria — not peace and reconciliation. New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof and other journalists have quoted its calls for a no-fly zone as a “humanitarian” option.

The much-hyped White Helmets is not a Syrian organization, nor was it created by Syrians, nor is it educational. It is a U.S.-British creation. Former British Army officer James Le Mesurier, self-described as a British “security” specialist, founded it. He previously worked for Blackwater, the mercenary organization universally condemned for its murderous brutality in Iraq.

U.S. AID funding

The White Helmets’ website declares the group is “unfunded, independent and neutral.” At an April 27 press conference, U.S. State Department Deputy Spokesperson Mark Toner acknowledged the organization has received \$23 million from the U.S. Agency for International Development. That agency’s website explains, “Our work ... advances U.S. foreign policy objectives.”



Anti-war organizations have called for protests in September against U.S. aggression in Syria.

Additionally, the White Helmets receives millions of dollars from billionaire financier George Soros, the Netherlands and the British Foreign Office. Equipment and vehicles come through Turkey.

The White Helmets has never functioned as a neutral force. While attacking the Syrian government and calling for more U.S., British and NATO bombing, the group functions exclusively in Syrian areas held by the Nusra Front, a terrorist organization linked to al-Qaida. This well-funded group operates on the ground with U.S.-, British-, Israeli- and Saudi-funded militias committed to destroying Syria’s government.

While claiming to be “unarmed,” the White Helmets appears in videos with weapons, surrounded by armed militias.

The U.S. brought White Helmets’ leader Raed Saleh to the U.N. Security Council in 2014 to testify against the Syrian government and to lobby for a U.N. resolution approving a U.S.-enforced no-fly zone — meaning direct U.S. intervention. Saleh promotes bombing to “save” the people of Syria and is hardly “neutral.”

Washington later barred Saleh from the U.S. when he tried to attend a gala

dinner honoring White Helmets with a keynote speech from US-AID. The State Department deported him, citing his connections to “extremist organizations.”

The White Helmets is the latest of a series of front groups, designed to give a “humanitarian” gloss to Washington’s latest war of regime change in the Middle East.

White Helmets was established as a social media presence of the Syria Campaign, AVAAZ and Purpose — interlinked campaigns that push for U.S. destruction of Syria. They quote each others’ material and create the illusion of a democratic, independent opposition in Syria.

These forces are also pushing for a Nobel Peace Prize nomination for White Helmets to further legitimize their calls for an expanded war. They also campaigned for Washington to bomb Libya under the guise of a “humanitarian” no-fly zone.

Resources that tell the truth

While the corporate media and TV entertainment channels seem to be taken in by this slick film, it takes little effort to expose who White Helmets is and reveal its role in the ugly U.S.-funded war in Syria. Information is available online in various formats. But this has not stopped the constant, orchestrated promotion of White Helmet.

“The White Helmets — al Qaeda with a Facelift” is a 4-minute video on Youtube which reveals the truth about the grouping. (tinyurl.com/zojokn3) The Syria Solidarity Movement, including Eva Bartlett, Vanessa Beeley, Ken Stone and Hands Off Syria, which made the video, has extensively researched White Helmets’ funding and role.

Change.org’s petition opposes the Nobel Peace Prize nomination, concluding that the White Helmets is “terrorism and neocolonialism under the umbrella of humanitarianism.” (tinyurl.com/z52cttu) □

Still faces charges Chelsea Manning’s hunger strike wins medical care

By Chris Fry

Chelsea Manning, sentenced to 35 years in prison for exposing U.S. war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan, launched a hunger strike on Sept. 9 to demand that she receive full treatment for her gender transition from her U.S. Army jailers.

“I need help. I am not getting any. I have asked for help time and time again for six years and through five separate confinement locations. My request has only been ignored, delayed, mocked, given trinkets and lip service by the prison, the military and this administration,” she stated.

“Today, I have decided that I am no longer going to be bullied by this prison — or by anyone within the U.S. government.

“I do not believe this should be dependent on any arbitrary factors — whether you are cisgender or transgender, service member or civilian, citizen or noncitizen.

“I am no longer asking. Now, I am demanding.

“Until I am shown dignity and respect as a human again, I shall endure this pain before me. I am prepared for this mentally and emotionally. I expect that this ordeal will last for a long time. Quite possibly until my permanent incapacitation

or death. I am ready for this.” (theverge.com, Sept. 9)

Global support for hero

Manning’s heroism has won her tremendous support around the globe, with many rallies and demonstrations showing that the public from many countries is behind her. The British Guardian newspaper, which has published several of Manning’s articles, has named her as one of its official correspondents. Other writers for the paper have written editorials demanding her release.

In August, statues of Chelsea Manning, Edward Snowden and Julian Assange, the three whistleblowers who have exposed many of U.S. imperialism’s crimes, were unveiled in Geneva, Switzerland. “They have lost their freedom for the truth, so they remind us how important it is to know the truth,” said Davide Dormino, the statues’ sculptor, during the unveiling in front of a large crowd. (yournewswire.com, Aug. 13)

Assange, founder of the website Wikileaks, who was forced to find shelter in Ecuador’s Embassy in London for the last four years, has offered to take Manning’s place in prison. Snowden has been forced into exile in the Russian Federa-

tion. A recently released movie, entitled “Snowden” directed by Oliver Stone, depicts how Snowden decided to expose the hacking and surveillance activities of the National Security Agency.

In the face of Manning’s courage and strong outside support, the U.S. government was forced to step back. As Manning’s hunger strike passed the fifth day, her American Civil Liberties Union lawyer Chase Strangio announced, “Chelsea has received word from the military that they are moving forward with the recommendation for surgery.” (nytimes.com, Sept. 14)

End solitary confinement!

Manning has decided to end her hunger strike, but she still endures solitary confinement. She is not even permitted to let her hair grow out, as she has demanded and her prison physicians have recommended.

There will be a disciplinary board hearing on Sept. 22 on the serious charges leveled against Manning because of her recent suicide attempt. Seventy pages of “evidence” have been compiled against her.

Manning will not be allowed to have legal counsel at the hearing, but must

represent herself. This anti-war hero has been threatened with “indefinite solitary confinement,” which could extend to the 30 years left on her sentence.

Chelsea Manning has already been imprisoned far longer than any other whistleblower in history. U.S. imperialism is using its full weight of repression to attack those who challenge its “right” to keep U.S. imperialism’s crimes secret — whether the machine-gunning of civilians and journalists in Iraq; bugging of government officials around the world, even their allies as in Germany; monitoring massive numbers of phone calls and emails here and abroad; or undermining political leaders who threaten Wall Street’s interests, like Bernie Sanders.

Trumped-up charges against Snowden and Assange must be dropped, and the struggle to support and demand freedom for Manning must continue to grow. Exposing imperialism’s crimes are acts of heroism, not crimes.

Send letters of support to Chelsea Manning at the address below; write it exactly as stated.

Chelsea E. Manning 89289
1300 North Warehouse Road
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
66027-2304 □





Libertad para Oscar López Rivera, ¡YA!

EE.UU. acepta de Haití Oct. 9 votación, pero retiene los fondos

Por G. Dunkel

El régimen de facto del presidente de Haití, Jocelerme Privert ha fijado la fecha del 9 de octubre para la primera vuelta de las elecciones presidenciales y enero del 2017 para una segunda vuelta, si es necesario.

El poder de Washington sobre las elecciones en Haití se manifestó hace cinco años, cuando la entonces Secretario de Estado, Hillary Clinton fue a Haití y ordenó a los funcionarios electorales poner a Michel Martelly en la papeleta para una segunda ronda de votación.

El gobierno de Estados Unidos invirtió \$33 millones en las elecciones de Haití en el 2015 y desaprobó la decisión de las autoridades electorales para cancelar una segunda vuelta que se había fijado para enero del 2016. Sin embargo, el fraude en las

elecciones del 2015 había sido tan evidente y la ira de las masas y la protesta fue tan grande que los funcionarios electorales no tuvieron más remedio que cancelar.

Washington retiró su financiación electoral el 7 de julio, Kenneth Merten, el de coordinador especial de Departamento de Estado para Haití, dijo: “Estoy seguro de que los haitianos pueden organizar buenas elecciones. Si las elecciones son buenas, los EE.UU. no tiene ningún problema con el gobierno de Haití.” (Haití elecciones del blog 21 de agosto)

La arrogancia y la hipocresía del papel de los EE.UU. en Haití también es clara en el comentario de Merten. Pensemos cual sería la reacción de los medios corporativos en los EE.UU. si, por ejemplo, Haití declarara que aceptaría los resultados de una elección en EE.UU. sólo si se les permitía a millones de ciudadanos de

la raza Negra sus derechos de voto.

El Consejo Electoral Provisional ha anunciado que ha improvisado financiación de un número de diferentes fuentes gubernamentales y de los miembros de la diáspora haitiana, es decir, los haitianos que viven en otros países. Casi 11 millones de haitianos viven en el interior de Haití, 1 millón en los EE.UU. y más en Canadá, Francia y la República Dominicana.

La campaña electoral comenzó la última semana de agosto. El Dr. Maryse Narcisse, el candidato de Fanmi Lavalas (FL), y el ex presidente Jean-Bertrand Aristide llevaron a cabo una gran marcha el 29 de agosto en Pétienville, un suburbio acomodado de Port-au-Prince, la capital.

El público coreaba, “Que viva Aristide! ¡Ahí está nuestro padre!”, Así como” No estamos aquí por dinero! ¡Estamos aquí por dignidad! ¡Estamos aquí voluntariamente!

“La multitud dejó claro que estaban de acuerdo con una encuesta de opinión pública poniendo Narcisse en el cuarto lugar.

En una conferencia de prensa después de la marcha, Narcisse dijo: “El país está enfermo en todos los ámbitos, en los planos políticos, económico y social. Necesitamos que todos los hijos e hijas de la nación sean capaz de curar la enfermedad de la sufre. Para esto, abro los brazos a todos los niños de la nación para proporcionar soluciones sostenibles a muchos problemas de la nación “. (Haití-Liberté, Vol. 10, No. 8)

Los otros candidatos principales son el ex senador Moise Jean-Charles, de Los Niños de Dessalines (PD), una escisión del FL; Jude Célestin de la Liga Alternativa para el Progreso e Emancipación de Haití (LAPEH); y Jovenel Moïse del Partido Calvo de Haití de Martelly (PHTK). □

‘Unión Europea tiene plena responsabilidad por guerra civil en Ucrania’

Por un autor invitado

Lo que sigue es una entrevista a mediados de septiembre con Vasilij Volga, presidente de la Unión de las fuerzas de Izquierda, ex miembro del Parlamento y ex director de la Comisión Estatal de Servicios Financieros de Ucrania, por el austriaco Wilhelm Langthaler.

Wilhelm Langthaler: ¿Cuál es, en retrospectiva, su posición sobre el acuerdo de libre comercio entre Ucrania y la Unión Europea?

Vasilij Volga: El acuerdo es realmente perjudicial para el interés económico nacional de Ucrania. Había un elemento populista en la propaganda de las fuerzas que protagonizaron el golpe militar como, por ejemplo, facilitar los visados, etc. Debemos cancelar de inmediato el acuerdo de comercio y reconstrucción de los lazos económicos con Rusia y toda la región con el fin de servir a nuestro interés nacionales.

El levantamiento popular en el este se ha dirigido también contra este acuerdo injusto. Si la rebelión había ganado, si el interés nacional no hubiera sido traicionado, la guerra civil podría haberse evitado. Ucrania podría haber desarrollado sus fuerzas económicas de una manera dinámica como puente entre Europa y Asia.

WL: ¿Qué piensa sobre el actual gobierno encabezado por Poroshenko?

VV: Es realmente criminal y ha cometido el espectro completo de los crímenes contra la humanidad. Con el fin de lograr sus objetivos, Poroshenko y su equipo han sido la destrucción de las instituciones básicas del Estado. Ellos están apoyando y promoviendo el radicalismo. Podría dar muchos ejemplos de eso.

WL: Es el acuerdo de Minsk un camino hacia la resolución de conflictos?

VV: Para cumplir con el acuerdo de Minsk es sólo una posibilidad para lograr la paz. Estamos en contacto constante con nuestros amigos de Donbass, que no está bajo el control de Kiev. Existe, de

hecho, la oportunidad de traer la región de nuevo a Ucrania si se les concede la autonomía y la federación. Pero esto requiere la plena aplicación del acuerdo.

Una ley de amnistía debe ser aprobada y la condición especial de Donbass debe fijarse constitucionalmente. Necesitamos una misión de observación internacional. Tenemos que luchar contra cualquier provocación que busca la división entre naciones, lenguas o grupos étnicos. El sistema judicial debe ser devuelto de acuerdo con la constitución. Se debe procesar a los medios de comunicación y sus propietarios que han estado presionando para este conflicto. Paso a paso vamos a tener que reconstruir un estado común.

WL: ¿Qué papel jugó la UE en este conflicto?

VV: Fue la UE, la que trajo esta tragedia en nuestro país. Ellos firmaron un plan de paz con el presidente Yanukovich que se comprometieron a garantizar. En virtud de dicho acuerdo, Yanukovich estaba programado a retirarse después de medio año. Al día siguiente, Alemania y Francia apoyaron y reconocieron las fuerzas de derecha ultra radical. Si se trataba de un mal acuerdo, ¿por qué lo firmaron? ¿Si se trataba de un buen acuerdo, por qué no ponerlo en práctica?

Si tratamos de reconstruir nuestro país y establecer la paz, ¿cómo podemos confiar en Alemania y Francia para jugar el papel de los mediadores? En cualquier caso, la UE tiene que llevar toda la responsabilidad por el conflicto - por no hablar de los EE.UU.

WL: ¿Puede explicar el proyecto de la Unión de las Fuerzas de Izquierda?

VV: Estamos tratando de formar una alianza de fuerzas de izquierda, que están totalmente dispersos por ahora. El régimen de Ucrania está a punto de desmantelar los últimos vestigios del estado de bienestar. Todas las fuerzas políticas que luchan por la justicia social están siendo reprimidos. Este es el sentido de la llamada ley de la descomunización bajo la cual se prohibió también el Par-

tido Comunista. Ni socialistas ni los socialdemócratas son capaces de operar. La Unión de las Fuerzas de Izquierda quiere establecer una plataforma jurídica para la izquierda, que está tratando de defender y proteger los logros sociales restantes. Las personas clave en el CP se unieron. Lo mismo hicieron exponentes del Partido Socialista y de la Organización de Control Civil (una organización no gubernamental se convirtió en una formación política).

WL: ¿Qué pasa con la represión contra usted personalmente?

VV: Mis posibilidades de expresarme son muy limitadas. Cuando fui atacado físicamente durante una conferencia de prensa en Zaporozhye en la primavera pasada, muchos canales de televisión tomaron imágenes. Así que hay un montón de pruebas. Me dirigí al ministro del interior, la presidencia y los servicios secretos para iniciar la persecución penal. En un mensaje transmitido en privado, el Ministro Avakov dio una respuesta clara: Cualquier oficial de hacerlo sería despedido. El Tribunal Supremo de Ucrania, sin embargo, decidió abrir investigaciones, pero Avakov sólo se rió de esa decisión. Nada ha ocurrido hasta ahora. Cualquier actividad pública por nuestro grupo es atacada por los paramilitares Azov y ninguna autoridad puede moverse en contra de ellos.

WL: ¿Cómo, en estas condiciones, se puede pensar a las elecciones?

VV: Realmente no lo sé. Las personas tienen miedo en este momento. La fuerza física se utiliza en contra de nosotros. Mi esposa está bajo constante terror psicológico de las llamadas telefónicas y correos electrónicos. Teniendo en cuenta todos estos problemas, que no sabemos si podemos asumir esta responsabilidad.

Vasilij Volga está programado para abordar el No Foro Euro, que tendrá lugar en Chianciano Terme, Siena, Italia, a partir del 16 al 18 de septiembre.

