Racist rants backfire
Athletes resist Trump

By Monica Moorehead

Sept. 25 — In an unprecedented display of solidarity, over 200 National Football League players from the vast majority of its 32 teams knelt, sat, raised fists and/or locked arms, along with their coaches and staff members, during the U.S. national anthem at NFL games on Sept. 24. They were protesting — from a range of perspectives — Donald Trump’s divisive, inflammatory, racist, anti-woman and anti-worker Twitter remarks made on Sept. 22. (newser.com)

Trump made an attempt on Sept. 25 to not only soften the blow of the protest but to also divide the protesters by expressing approval for those who locked arms, but not those who knelt.

Trump’s bigotry caused a 2,000 percent spike in NFL protests a week after “NFL Sunday” on Sept. 17. That spike didn’t include protests at the Sept. 25 Monday Night Football game between the Dallas Cowboys and Arizona Cardinals, with both teams locking arms.

Trump sparked righteous anger and outrage among players and nationally when he ranted Sept. 22 at a Republican rally in Huntsville, Ala.: “Wouldn’t you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, ‘Get that son of a b—— off the field right now. Out. He’s fired! He’s fired!”

Trump’s tirade was a follow-up to his attacks singling out Colin Kaepernick. In the NFL’s 2016 season, the Black former San Francisco 49ers star quarterback took a knee during the national anthem to protest police brutality and other forms of social injustice. Kaepernick also called Trump a racist, someone who — along with Hillary Clinton — was not worth voting for. Kaepernick’s actions reflect the truth that many vaunted Black NFL players have their own stories to tell of experiencing bigoted police violence at very young ages.

Trump’s racist tirade focused on a league where at least 70 percent of the players are African American, but 83 percent of the fan base is white. No African Americans are majority owners of an NFL team, and there are no African-American CEOs or presidents in the league. (football.realgm.com)

That Kaepernick is currently unemployed — essentially “fired” — has led to calls for an NFL season boycott by supporters who say he is being white-balled by team owners. On the flip side, Kaepernick was just voted the NFL Players Association most valuable player for his charitable work in Black and Brown communities, especially for his Know Your Rights seminars that empower oppressed youth.

Continued on page 3
Ilyasah Al-Shabazz, daughter of Malcolm X, visited the Malcolm X Library and Performing Arts Center in San Diego for the first time on Sept. 14. Shabazz came to the city for a speaking engagement at the Aztec Student Union Center at San Diego State University. The Rev. Shane Harris, local chapter president of the National Action Network, arranged for her to meet with the Friends of the Malcolm X Library and to tour the only public library in the U.S. named after her father.

Ilyasah Al-Shabazz, including this writer, her staff, members of the community and some of the local media were there to greet Shabazz as she entered the library. Cell-phone cameras were flashing as she began the tour, led by library branch manager Lavonda Shaw. First was a viewing of the bust of Malcolm X and portraits of Malcolm X and Betty Shabazz mounted near one of the library’s entrances.

Cameras flashed as Shabazz observed the indoor fountain, which contains a quote by Malcolm X that reads: “I have often reflected on the new vistas that reading opened to me. As I see it today the ability to read woke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive.” The group moved to the children’s section, where Shabazz knelt and gave a high-five to a youngster using a computer. The tour ended in the Teen Center.

After the tour, Shabazz returned to the bust of her father, and took pictures with individuals and groups for nearly 90 minutes. The tour then headed to the performance annex, where she spoke. One of the first issues that Shabazz addressed was about homeless people sleeping on the streets. “It is really surprising to me. I feel here that would be something I would work on because I can’t bear to see someone homeless.”

Dr. Betty Shabazz spoke at library opening

Shabazz said she had not known what to expect. She added: “It’s definitely heartwarming. It’s beautiful. It’s very happy about this library being named after her husband. I love my people, and I understand that you are a reflection of me and I am a reflection of you.”

“The library is beautiful. Malcolm X’s spouse, toured this library and was the keynote speaker at its opening in the Valencia Park community on Jan. 6, 1966. She commented then on the fountain, the children’s reading tower and the computer stations that were wired for internet connections.

During an interview at that time, Dr. Shabazz said that she was tremendously pleased that a library had been named after her spouse nearly 35 years after his slaying in New York and that she was wondering why someone else hadn’t thought of a library since so much of Malcolm X’s transitional phase could be traced back to the library.

Present during the daughter’s visit was Apollo Olango, brother of Alfred Olango, an unarmed Ugandan immigrant who was killed by El Cajon, Calif., police on Sept. 22, 2016. El Cajon is a suburb of San Diego. The Olango family has launched the Al Olango Justice and Unity Foundation to honor their beloved relative. As it continues to expand, the foundation’s goal is to bring justice and unity to the world.

Ilyasah Al-Shabazz is a community organizer, social and political activist, motivational speaker and author based in New York City. Her official website is www.ilyasahshabazz.com.
By Christa Rivers
Philadelphia

"Colonialism is a crime against hu-
manity. The wounds from Puerto Rican
freedom fighter Oscar López Rivera, ring
even truer in the aftermath of Irma and
Maria. These hurricanes tore through
and left behind vast destruction on Ca-
ribbean islands that continue to be rav-
aged by colonialism and imperialism.

López Rivera was speaking en 1981 to
diverse group of over 200 people at
Trouxeriqueño, a community and
cultural center in North Philadelphia. He
was the honored guest of the National
Boricua Human Rights Network. When
the former political prisoner entered the
room, the crowd stood, erupting into
cheers and began chanting, "Se siente, se
siente, Oscar esta presente!"

A message was delivered from pris-
oners at Guantánamo Prison in Pedi-
ervania who wished to show appreciation
to López Rivera. They told him that his
example as a freedom fighter for the in-
dependence of Puerto Rico is inspiring
their own struggles for liberation from the
oppressive prison system.

López Rivera called for all political
prisoners to be free. He also focused on
the youth in the movement, calling them
the future who will carry on the work we
do now. He urged the young people in the
crowd, "Dare to struggle, dare to win."

Finally, López Rivera spoke about the
effects of colonialism on Puerto Rico. As
one of many colonies still existing in the
21st century, the island is being economi-
cally strangled by the United States. He
noted that the debt crisis on the island is
the direct result of colonialist exploitation
by the U.S. government and the collabo-
ration of the Puerto Rican government.

Repayment of the debt is being im-
pacted on the Puerto Rican people, who have
already seen 179 schools closed,

the oppressive prison system.

Philadelphia

Philip protesters stand with Colin Kaepernick

Activists held signs and chanted:
"We march! Y'all mad! We sit! Y'all
mad! We speak up! Y'all mad! We
die! Y'all dead!" as they marched at
a Stand for Kaepernick and Kneel
for Justice rally outside the Phila-
delphia Eagles stadium at their first
home game of the National Football
League season on Sept. 24. More
sports fans showed support with
fist bumps and sweatshirts.

"We will never back down."

Steph: consider this withdrawal a badge
of honor!"

"Hey @StephenCurry30, welcome to
the dub bro" was tweeted by Jemelle Hill,
The Black reporter for ESPN who cate-
gorized Trump as a "white supremacist
and present, who backed up Curry were
Chris Paul, Bradley Beal, Robin Lopez,
Earvin "Magic" Johnson and Mahmoud
Abdul-Rauf, who was forced out of the
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them in the 1990s.

The Pittsburgh Steelers, Seattle Sea-
hawks and Cincinnati Bengals stayed in
their locker rooms during the anthem,
the NFL but also pounded on the National
League Baseball player to kneel during
the anthem, said eloquently on
Sept. 24: "I don't think it is a fight against
Trump. I think we need to focus on the
real problem. The inequality, the pol-
icide brutality, that's the real problem. I
think people are taking it as Trump vs.
the League, Trump vs. the NBA, but it's
not about that. People need to see the
bigger picture. Guys don't really care about
Trump. They aren't sitting because of
that. They are sitting from what Kap
started, the movement he started and I
think people need to realize that it has
nothing to do with our military." (si.com)

Trump disses the Warriors

Trump didn't confine his attacks to the
NFL but also pounded on the National
Basketball Association's Golden State
Warriors. The morning of Sept. 23, he
took to Twitter to dissuade the reigning
NBA champions from visiting the White
House, an annual tradition for both am-
ateur and pro sports championship teams
since the early 1960s.

When the Warriors defeated the Cleve-
land Cavaliers in June to win the NBA ti-
tle, many of its players stated immediate-
ly that they wanted to boycott the White
House, based on Trump's racist and wom-
an-hating views. They raised these objec-
tions two months before Trump defended
the extreme violence of the Proud Boys
and the KKK in Charlotteville on Aug. 12.

During the Warriors' media day on
Sept. 24, which officially opened the new
season, Stephen Curry, the two-time
league most valuable player, regarded by
many as today's most popular NBA play-
er, reiterated his stance of not wanting to
meet to make a group decision on the

Trump also lashed out at pro athletes
who wished to show appreciation
for Justice rally outside the Phila-
delphia Eagles stadium at their first

Athletes resist Trump

DeMaurice Smith, president of the NFL
Players Association, announced firstly on
Twitter: "We will never back down. We
no longer can afford to stick to sports."

Kaepernick's impact transcends sports

Trump's words resonated even beyond
football. On Sept. 23, Oakland Athlet-
cics catcher, Bruce Maxwell, who is Afri-
can-American, became the first Major
League Baseball player to kneel during
the anthem. The reigning Women's Na-
tional Basketball Association champions,
the Los Angeles Sparks, refused to come
out of their locker room Sept. 24 during
the anthem before the WNBA finals' first
game with the Minnesota Lynx. When
volleyball players at Johnson C. Smith,
a historically Black university in North
Carolina, knelt before their match. Even
professional tennis player Venus Williams
took a knee during a recent concert.

An entire football team of 8-year-olds
in Belleville, Ill., inspired by Kaepernick,
took a knee Sept. 20 to protest the recent
acquittal of a racist cop for the murder of
a young black man, Anthony La-
mar Smith, in St. Louis, sparking sev-
eral days of protests there.

Some Black commentators are raising,
and rightfully so, whether Kaepernick's
main message got lost in the Sept. 24 pro-
tests, as other critics accused "disrespect" for
U.S. military veterans and the U.S. flag.

But the main takeaway is that Kapen-
neric's heroic stance against racism, police
brutality and social injustice will contin-
uete to educate and inspire many more
to take action. This will strengthen the
general movement to fight white suprem-
acy. As sports commentator, Dave Zirin,
written in his columns. "For the NFL, it was
"Choose Your Side Sunday": "Kaepernick
l the match." (thenation.com, Sept. 24)

Kenny Vaccaro, a New Orleans Saints
safety, who sat with other teammates
during the anthem, said eloquently on
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Cops kill campus Pride leader

By Dianne Mathiowetz

Late Saturday night, Sept. 16, the life of 21-year-old Scout Schultz was cut short by a single bullet that traveled from a Georgia Tech campus police officer.

Schultz was a deeply politically conscious activist and president of the LGBT Student Alliance at conservative Georgia Tech University.

Schultz identified as nonbinary and used “they” and “their” as personal pronouns.

At an educational institution that has a dual reputation for intense academic competition and fraternity-style hazing, many students can feel isolated. Gender nonconforming youthparticularly feel the sting of disparaging comments and looks.

While Schultz was an accomplished student, a remarkable leader and was much loved and respected, they had suffered from depression and anxiety while trying to handle all the oppressions of their life under capitalism.

It now appears that Schultz called 911 and reported a person with a knife acting strangely, perhaps drunk, in a parking lot near their dorm. The physical description Schultz gave was of themself.

Four campus police responded to the call and came upon Schultz, walking aimlessly in the deserted parking lot. In their hand was a multitime tool. The tool had a knife blade that was closed.

The video shows police positioned around Schultz, yelling orders to “drop the knife.” As the student turned toward Officer Tyler Beck, standing behind the parking gate arm, some 20 feet away, the officer shot Schultz. Beck says he feared for his life.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation officials say three suicide notes were found in Schultz’s dorm room.

On Monday night, Sept. 18, hundreds and hundreds of students, friends, family and community allies attended a very brief and sanitized candlelight vigil on the Georgia Tech campus. There was no mention by the speakers that the police had killed Schultz.

LGBTQ students express outrage

With the official ceremony over, out of the darkness came the anguished voices of other LGBTQ students who expressed outrage and anger over Schultz’s murder, the lack of mental health resources on the high-pressure campus, and the overwhelming failure to recognize the needs of LGBTQ students for basic things like bathrooms and dorm assignments.

Many called for action: others for love and communication.

A group emerged from the larger crowd, chanting “Hands off public housing!” and “End Police Violence.” After chanting for a while, they determined to march to the campus police station.

One hundred or more people, mostly Georgia Tech students, filled the street leading to the police building, followed by police cars.

As the crowd milled around the area, fireworks went off and flares were lit. When a police car erupted in flames, people scattered and ran, with police in pursuit, and some were tackled to the ground.

Three were arrested.

Vincent Castelloni, known as a CopWatch activist, 22-year-old Georgia State student Jacob Wilson and Georgi a Tech student Cassandra Monden, a Black transwoman, were arraigned on Sept. 20 on a variety of felony and misdemeanor charges. Their bonds range from $20,000 to $107,000.

All are barred from the Georgia Tech campus, including Monden, a registered student. Wilson will be fitted for an ankle monitor and is to be confined to his home from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Beck is on paid leave and all the GBI is in charge of the investigation to determine whether lethal force was justified.

Georgia Tech president, G.P. “Bud” Peterson, has publicly blamed “outside agitators” for the “violence” and there is a concertated campaign led by the Student Government Association and fraternities to “show love” to the campus police department.

None of these attempts to blant the outrage over the murder of a mentally distraught student by an armed campus police force can alter the widening struggle against all forms of state repression and oppression.
An epidemic hits homeless population

By Gloria Verdieu
San Diego

Hepatitis A is desolating San Diego’s homeless population, which is the fourth-largest in the U.S. within a city. The county’s Health and Human Services Agency reported that 16 people have died, and 421 individuals have been sickened by this disease. It is a viral disease that has symptoms of fever, fatigue, nausea, and abdominal pain and sometimes leads to death. It can be treated and its spread prevented.

According to the Hepatitis Health Center, hepatitis A, B, and C are distinct viruses that affect the liver. Hepatitis A is caused by drinking contaminated or unclean water, eating shellfish harvested from sewage-contaminated water, or coming into contact with an infected person’s blood, stool or other bodily fluids. In early September, San Diego officials declared a public health emergency in this city because of hepatitis A cases.

Longtime San Diego resident Ibrahim Fardan lives in downtown San Diego and has spent much time observing the huge homeless population in this area and in other parts of San Diego County. Work- ers World had an opportunity to interview Fardan in Horton Plaza in the city’s downtown area.

GV: What do you think about this outbreak of hepatitis A in San Diego, which is devastat- ing the homeless population here?

IF: Well, they are saying that 16 people have died and over 400 are infected. I think that what the city is doing — putting in handwashing stations, opening up public bathrooms 24 hours a day, putting up a few tents for showers — are things that they should have done a long time ago. They knew this was coming for a long time. Also, they underestimate the numbers in the homeless population.

GV: Do you think the city of San Diego is doing all that can be done to prevent more cases and prevent the spread of this virus?

IF: They are doing more to harm the homeless. For example, they talk about washing the streets with bleach. I saw them spraying bleach on people’s tents and on their belongings early in the morning without any warning. Look at this courtyard: It is normally filled with homeless this time of morn- ing, but homeless “monitors” are here whose job is to keep the homeless out. If you are sitting for too long without buying anything, they come up to you and start asking questions and harassing you until you move on. They are doing more to get rid of the homeless, to make them disappear, than to help them.

GV: Where do they want them to go? Why don’t the homeless go to the shelters to get food and a place to bathe?

IF: The homeless are being pushed under bridges, into parks under trees, into the bushes and into residential ar- eas where they are not wanted. The city wants the homeless to be invisible, es- pecially to the tourists, because this is supposed to be “America’s finest city.” In some downtown areas, they are forced into such small spaces that they practi- cally live on top of each other.

There are not enough rooms in the shelters for them, and some homeless people don’t want to go to the shelters because they can’t take their stuff into the shelters with them. If they leave their stuff in the streets, the police will confis- cate all of it. I don’t know what they have to do to get it back, but it is a hassle.

Also, you have to qualify to go to the shelters. You just can’t go and take a shower. You have to be registered, and there is a bunch of rules you have to follow to be able to get into a shelter. The police treat all homeless people pretty much the same. I see the police harassing Blacks, Mexicans, migrants and white homeless people. It makes no difference to them what color you are. So when we speak for the homeless, we must speak for all of them.

Also, what I am starting to notice is that there are more and more homeless youth. Some are students who are at-
tending San Diego State University. I go to SDSU a lot, and I notice many of the students can’t afford housing and they end up homeless. I was not aware of this.

GV: Is it true that a lot of the homeless are mentally ill or have some psycholog- ical issues?

IF: The homeless are the unseen, which causes some of them to react neg- atively to their situation. I’ve seen people walk over someone whose face was in a puddle of water on the ground. When people are treated this way, they react to their situation by talking or singing to themselves, and even acting crazy. Oth- ers respond by getting a routine, a daily schedule that includes steps to get them- selves out of this situation.

In both cases, as their situations im- prove or they get into a program where there is hope of regaining their dignity, they begin to act more “normal.” I’ve seen this happen with men, women and youth who found themselves in a homeless situ- ation. Being homeless is a devastating, traumatic experience for most people. It’s like having PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder]. People react or respond in all kinds of ways. That’s just the way it is.

The homeless are being pushed out, walked over and crowded into smaller areas with no means of protecting them- selves from diseases. The city should deal with the issues of affordable housing, job preparation, and provide counseling, programs for dealing with depression, health education, drug ad- diction and all of the issues affecting the homeless.

But the city extends the hours for the bathrooms, puts out handwashing sta- tions and a few showers, washes the streets down with bleach, and calls for mass vaccinations of those who decide to show up. Yes, that’s just the way it is.

Prisoners in the NWDC have launched a series of hunger strikes since 2014. Since the beginning of this year, hunger strikes have been almost continuous. Most prisoners are there for only immi- gration infractions, yet their imprison- ment can lead to deportation. Protesters are the main demand for the minimum wage is one of the prisoners’ main issues, along with inadequate food, poor medi- cal care and mistreatment by the guards. Ferguson was backed up at his press conference by Jorge Baron of the North- west Immigrant Rights Project, who spoke about ICE’s detention centers. West Detention Center Resistance and other allies have also expressed com- munity solidarity with the prisoners’ de- mands. Different organizations protest at the prison practically every week.

Prisoners do all the real work at the center; preparing meals and laundry and cleaning all the rooms. Ferguson’s office said the contract with the federal gov- ernment requires it to follow state and local rules. These include the state mini- num wage, which has risen from $7.25 to $11 an hour since 2005.

The just demand for the minimum wage is one prisoners’ main issues, along with decent food, proper medical care and guardianship by the guards. The prisoners have met with Ferguson, demanding an end to these atrocities.

By Gloria Verdieu
San Diego

By By Martha Grevatt
Lansing, Mich.

The scene was a sea of red outside the Capitol Complex building in Lansing, Mich., on Sept. 20. Wearing red for “Sol- idarity Wednesday,” members of United Auto Workers Local 6000 — the largest state workers union in Michigan — and oth- er unions demonstrated outside a hearing of the Civil Service Commission. Inside, the hearing room was packed by workers angry about proposed rule changes that would impact collective bargaining rights when their contracts expire.

State law allows the unlected com- missioners, appointed by governors, to set limits on what state workers are al- lowed to bargain for in contract negoti- ations. The new rules, approved by three of the four commissioners in a vote held immediately after the hearing, include gutting prior protections and chang- ing the grievance process.

“Seniority is used in union contracts to promote fairness and efficiency. It is used as a way of avoiding individualized determinations that may say that they’re based on performance but may be based on other issues such as the kinds of nep- otism, cronyism and political consider- ations that the Civil Service Commission was designed to protect against,” Ava Rose Barbour, associate general counsel for the UAW, explained. Union fear the new rules will restore the old regime of management backed down.

EMUF President Daric Thorne be- lieves the open bargaining strategy was what secured the win. “We had members coming out to meetings all summer long, but we had a critical amount of people who showed up in early August, both members and people from the community and from other unions.” Solidarity rallies drew many student supporters. Feeling the heat from the rank and file and their labor, student and community allies, management backed down.

The union includes veteran instructors who have taught at EMU for as long as 20 years. Without the new agreement, “they could fire us at almost any moment and they didn’t have to hire us back,” accord- ing to Thorne. (aft.org)

By By Jim McMahan
Seattle

After years of immigrant prisoners’ protests and hunger strikes, Washington state is finally demanding that the Geo Group, operator of the Northwest Deten- tion Center for immigrants, pay its pris- oners $10 a day. Washington state Gen- eral Bob Ferguson filed a lawsuit Sept. 20 in state court against Geo, which pays prisoners only $1 a day, sometimes ju- st chips and candy. The Geo Group op- erates 140 prisons in the U.S. and had revenues of more than $2 billion in 2016, according to the Sept. 21 Seattle Times. The government and corporate insti- tution of slave labor in prisons is an is- sue for the 2.3 million prisoners in this country as well as the millions of former prisoners who worked under slave-labor conditions in the past.

Washington state
Immigrant prisoners demand minimum wage

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

By Ibrahim Fardan
San Diego
Chicago forum against fascist attacks

The forum “Struggle Against Fascist Attacks at Home & Abroad” was held here the evening of Sept. 18, convened by Anakbayan Chicago and the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP)—Midwest.

Held on the 45th anniversary of the declaration of martial law by Philippines dictator Ferdinand Marcos, convenor speakers addressed the current martial law crackdown by the Duterte regime in the Philippines province of Mindanao. They exposed the even more widespread military repression against Muslim and Indigenous Filipinos, the regime’s so-called drug war that has claimed the lives of over 12,000 victims, and the growing U.S. military support provided to the Duterte regime by the Trump administration.

In addition, a panel featured presentations by Father Primo Racimo, a Marcos regime martial law survivor and human rights activist; Jazmine Salas, Stop Police Crimes Committee; Danya Zituni, U.S. Palestinian Community Network; and Jo Monet, Workers Party World. The panel addressed fascist attacks in the U.S. against Palestinian and other human rights activists, murderous police violence against Black and Brown communities, brutal deportations of undocumented immigrants, and the growing backlash against white supremacy exemplified by the struggles to take down Confederate monuments in Charlottesville, Va., and Durham, N.C.

In a lively discussion, attendees pledged to build a broad solidarity movement against oppression and injustice here and worldwide.
By LeLani Dowell

Continuing the righteous struggle to take down monuments to racism and white supremacy, some 50 protesters rallied at a Sept. 22 meeting of the North Carolina Historical Commission in Raleigh, N.C. Among the agenda items was a proposal by Gov. Roy Cooper to remove Confederate monuments from the State Capitol in Raleigh.

Protesters wore hats and T-shirts with the slogan "Do It Like Durham," referring to the toppling of a Confederate statue at the Durham County Courthouse on Aug. 14. The activists held a rally both before and after the hearing and sat in for the packed meeting, which was moved from the commission's usual small meeting room to an auditorium in the State Archives.

When commission member Sam Dixon suggested that one concern was that the statues "may be harmed or defaced, many people in the audience snickered loudly.

Several of the arrestees from the Aug. 14 action participated. Raul Jimenez said, "These statues have been in place for a long time representing hate, representing racism, representing the fact that the South fought for slavery, to keep slavery." (wral.com, Sept. 22)

Workers World Party member Quai-ma Wideman said, "We have the right to shape our own history, and we have the right to claim public space. Black people have the right to claim public space and feel safe." The arrestees, from both the Aug. 14 action and from an anti-Klan protest on Aug. 18, have court dates on Oct. 14 and Nov. 14.

Shortly after activists toppled the statue in Durham on Aug. 14, Cooper proposed to move three monuments from the Capitol grounds to the historic site of a Confederate battlefield some 50 miles south of Raleigh.

Dodge the issue, the commission voted at the Sept. 22 meeting to delay any decision on moving the monuments until April 2018, after a panel could be formed to study the "ramifications" of moving the statues.

In 2015, then-Gov. Pat McCrory signed a "Historic Artifact Management and Patriotism Act" after approval by the state's General Assembly. The law dictates that monuments can only be moved to a location in which they will be afforded the same "prominence, honor, visibility, availability and access" as the previous location. The 11-member Historical Commission has sole discretion in the matter.

Regardless of the state's maneuvering, WWP member Dante Strohino said, "We're going to keep organizing until these statues come down, and they're going to come down by any means necessary." (newsobserver.com, Sept. 22)

Racist monuments in Durham, N.C.: Coming down 'by any means necessary'

By Lyn Neely

Fiery St. Louis protests continue nonstop despite brutal police violence against demon-

strators that is drawing criticism from city officials, reporters and the community.

Protests first erupted on Sept. 15, immediately after the acquittal of a white cop, Jason Stockley, accused of murdering a young Black man, Anthony Lamar Smith. Stockley was released despite damning evidence against him.

During several days of protest, on Sept. 17, the following Sunday evening, police surrounded demonstrators in a move called kettlecing. Without warning they closed in, using excessive force and chemical weapons to arrest everyone, over 120 people.

The American Civil Liberties Union is suing St. Louis police for "unacceptable, unlawful and unconstitutional" behavior and for dispersing a crowd engaged in constitutionally protected assembly. The suit accuses police of ramming a police car into a dispersing crowd, the use of kettling, excessive force, chemical sprays, illegal arrests and destroying people's video footage of the cops' actions.

Mayor Lyda Krewson criticized police for derisively shooting "These streets are our streets," mocking a political slogan used by demonstrators: "Whose streets? Our streets!" However, protesters say that the mayor continues to take the side of the police. They are demanding that Krewson and the city address the racist behavior and escalating repression by city police.

Many protesters caught in last Sun-

day's "kettle" were knocked down and cuffed. Cops removed their goggles and sprayed them directly in their face. Several people who were not demonstrating were arrested and complained that they could not escape.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported that an undercover police officer, unrecognized by other cops, was knocked down, cuffed and hit several times. The mayor is asking for an investigation into how cops treated that officer. (Sept. 23)

Drew Burbridge, a visiting filmmak-
er, didn't hear cops telling the crowd to disperse. He was caught in the ket-
tle, pushed to the ground, grabbed and dragged away. He reported being sprayed with chemicals, knocked unconscious for 10 to 30 seconds and pepper-sprayed again when he came to. The mayor has not so far asked for an investigation into his case.

U.S. Air Force Lt. Alex Nelson, who lives in the neighborhood, was trapped in the kettle, kicked in the face and blind-
ed by pepper spray before being dragged away and arrested. The Associated Press reports that Nelson said, "I hear the police say it was their street, but it's literally my street. I have coffee on that street, and I own property on that street." (Sept. 23)

Prosecutors claimed that minutes be-

ore fatally shooting Smith five times on December 12, 2011, Stockley announced his intent "kill this motherf**ker, don't you know it." They say Stockley planted a gun in Smith's car which was covered with DNA from Stockley, but none from Smith.

The St. Louis demonstrations echo the 2011 Ferguson protests that helped give rise to the Black Lives Matter movement. In Ferguson, just 15 miles from St. Louis, pro-

tests erupted after the acquittal of another white cop, Darren Wilson, for the killing of unarmed teenager Michael Brown.

Police attacks on protesters continue, Sept. 23.

St. Louis protests expose brutal cops

St. Louis workers.org

United Movement Against All Forms of Supremacy, Led by Trump Regime

Class Issues Relief

Imperialism and Occupation Continues

Solidarity with St. Louis community

Workers World Party members in St. Louis and the community of slain Anthony Lamar Smith. Community members spoke out, including civil rights attorney Walter Riley, who said: "Cops don't own the streets! We can't accept that chaos." Cat Brooks of APTP explained, "We've got to show solidarity whenever these things happen. The 'I am Oscar Grant' signs in Egypt re-energized Oakland."

— Report and photo by Terri Kay

Workers World Party member Qasi-Ma Wideman said, "We have the right to shape our own history, and we have the right to claim public space. Black people have the right to claim public space and feel safe." The arrestees, from both the Aug. 14 action and from an anti-Klan protest on Aug. 18, have court dates on Oct. 14 and Nov. 14. Shortly after activists toppled the statue in Durham on Aug. 14, Cooper proposed to move three monuments from the Capitol grounds to the historic site of a Confederate battlefield some 50 miles south of Raleigh.

Dodge the issue, the commission voted at the Sept. 22 meeting to delay any decision on moving the monuments until April 2018, after a panel could be formed to study the "ramifications" of moving the statues.

In 2015, then-Gov. Pat McCrory signed a "Historic Artifact Management and Patriotism Act" after approval by the state's General Assembly. The law dictates that monuments can only be moved to a location in which they will be afforded the same "prominence, honor, visibility, availability, and access" as the previous location. The 11-member Historical Commission has sole discretion in the matter.

Regardless of the state's maneuvering, WWP member Dante Strohino said, "We're going to keep organizing until these statues come down, and they're going to come down by any means necessary." (newsobserver.com, Sept. 22)
PUERTO RICO

Devastated by hurricanes, colonialism

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

As of Sept. 25, two weeks after Hurri cane Irma, the island was hit by ano- ther deadly storm, Hurricane Maria, hit the archipelago of Puerto Rico, the total damages inflicted on this U.S. terri- tory-colony are still not known. Images shared on social media show vast devastation: collapsed houses, roof- tops and trees and electricity poles downed, vegetation gone, as if a fire had engulfed the previously lush foliage. The pictures of entire neighborhoods flooded reminded us of the terrible scene following Hurricane Katrina’s effect on New Orle- ans: Some neighborhoods have just been wiped out. The impact on the mountain regions is still not accounted for. No area has been spared, as shown in aerial views presented on some news websites.

Bridges, roads and other infrastructure were destroyed, further complicating the isolation of entire cities that have not been able to communicate with the rest of the country. The whole country has been with- out electricity for days. There’s no safe wa- ter, either, due to the need for electricity to power the pumps. Telecommunication is also nonexistent. Only a few radio sta- tions can broadcast, most of them AM.

Cellphones are mostly useless now, since only a few spots have a signal. For example, cars line up on the Teodoro Mos- coso Bridge in the San Juan area in order to access the limited signal available there. Even the government cannot commu- nicate with its own agencies throughout the country. The now-privatized mobile network depends on electricity. Most of its facilities do not have backup genera- tors, which the formerly public PR Tele- phone Co. used to have. This, together with fallen towers, has caused a commu- nications desert at a very critical time. Amateur radio aficionados and satellite phone users are trying to compensate for this lack of connection.

The desperation of families not know- ing about the fate of their loved ones is re- lieved by a spontaneous network of social media with hashtags such as #dondeestaciudadan, and the available radio stations, which to- gether operate as a connecting link, pass- ing information between Puerto Ricans in and outside the diaspora.

The lack of electric power and also of vital medical supplies has shut down small hospitals and health facilities. Af- ter a $73 billion “debt” in municipal bonds, which is AEE’s share of the more than $73 billion of illegitimate “public” debt the government is expected to pay to Wall Street bondholders. In addition to payments on the bonds issued, recent policies imposed on the AEE by the U.S. through the consultant firm Alix Partners have reduced the in- ventory of materials needed for the gen- eration of electricity, without taking into consideration the fact that, in extreme weather, AEE would be unable to receive these materials via shipping.

However, the PR Electric Power Au- thority (AEE in Spanish) has reduced its workforce by half in the last few years and has failed to maintain the infrastructure, letting it deteriorate in order to make the people accept its privatization as the only way to prevent repeated power outages and higher electricity bills. This cost cutting is in order to “repay” a $9 billion “debt” in municipal bonds, which is AEE’s share of the more than $73 billion of illegitimate “public” debt the government is expected to pay to Wall Street bondholders.

Crisis aggravated by colonial status

Electricity is a major problem in Puerto Rico. For years, several bourgeois govern- ment administrations have tried to pri- vatize this vital state industry. Only the people’s struggle, particularly the fight- work of the workers in the UTIER union, has prevented complete privatization. This report and others on the austerity im- posed on Puerto Rico by the banks can be found at refundproject.org/#puerto-rico.

The banks underwrote bonds that no longer had an investment grade in 2014. Investment grade, downgrading AEE’s since 2007 approximately 75 percent of the $9 billion to $12 billion in bonds issued by Puerto Rico’s Electric Power Authority, AEE is unable to repair and maintain the electrical infra- structure, has instead gone to pay debt service, termination fees on interest rate swaps, and fees to financial advisers on the $9 billion in bonds owed by the utility.

The effects of this usury on AEE, as well as on the entire Puerto Rican economy, left the electric company in complete disrepair even before the recent hurricanes. For much the same reason, the people of Puerto Rico now face at least six months with no electricity. The debt service imposed by the banks and financial institutions has led to huge in- creases in rates and utility bills for the poor.

What follows is a brief summary of this usury practiced by financial capital. These facts were highlighted in the recent report “Wall Street’s Power Grab in Puerto Rico,” pre- pared by the Refund America Project of the Action Center on Race & the Economy. This report, which is available on-line or sold by bookstores, was prepared by the banks can be found at refundproject.org/puertorico.

AEE’s bonds are triple exempt, mean- ing that investors don’t pay state, local or federal taxes on them, which means they are considered great investments for financial capital. A June 2013 study by the Puerto Rico House of Representatives’ Small and Medium Businesses, Commerce, Indus- try and Telecommunications Commis- sion found that of more than $11 billion in AEE bonds issued between 2000 and 2012, only $2.7 billion was dedicated to capital projects. One hundred sixty-five million went to financial “advisors” for fees, and the rest, more than $8.5 billion, went to interest payments and to refi- nance earlier debt.

More than $2 billion of the proceeds from AEE bonds from 2007-13 was al- located to paying older debt and debt-re- lated fees such as capitalized interest, lines of credit and swap penalties. Rather than being used to fund infrastructure improvements, the bonds were used pri- marily to make interest payments on debt and pay off previously issued bonds and interest rate swaps. Only about 31 per- cent of bond revenues since 2007 were allocated to AEE’s construction fund to upgrade and repair infrastructure.

Cancel the debt

The banks underwrote bonds that pushed final maturity of the debt beyond the Puerto Rican Constitution’s 50-year limit. Banks like JP Morgan and Chase col- lected at least $65 million in termina- tion penalties on interest rate swaps connected to AEE bonds. These banks also wrote the original bond deals that inflated the toxic wealth — giving them multiple paydays on the same bonds. This is at least a conflict of interest and potentially a violation of securities law.

AEE bonds with a principal of $822 million issued in 2010 were underwrit- ten by Citigroup and JPMorgan Chase. At least a quarter of the bond proceeds was designated to repay a line of credit with these institutions.

The ratings agencies Standard & Poor’s, Moody’s and Fitch gave AEE positive in- vestment grade ratings for major bond offerings as late as 2013, despite knowing that AEE did not have revenues sufficient to cover the debt. They did so because they are funded by the banks who pay them to rate the bonds.

Wall Street pressured AEE into an unfair debt restructuring when it was clear AEE was heading to a default on the bonds. This pending default was precipi- tated by the banks that underwrote the bond, which had fraudulently rated the bonds investment grade, downgrading AEE’s investment grade in 2014. Hedge funds like Blue Mountain Capi- tal, Oppenheimer Funds Inc., Mass. Mu- tual Life Insurance, Goldman Sachs and Franklin Rothschild have already paid 50 cents to 60 cents on the dollar. They then pushed AEE into a restructuring agreement that allows for automatic rate increases for AEE customers when energy use declines due to people being unable to afford their electricity or leaving the island entirely.

When Puerto Rico filed to restructure its debt under the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Act (POMESA) in May, the $9 billion in AEE debt was not included in the filing. After Gov. Ricardo Rosello took office this year, he negotiated a revised restructuring agreement with an effective repayment rate of 85 percent on the bonds, despite the fact that Puerto Rico could afford to pay only about 25 percent of the existing public debt.

Further fleecing AEE and the people of Puerto Rico, financial “advisors” like ABX, Wachovia, and the Koch brothers, way over the norm and twice the original estimates for their involvement in the re- structuring.

The people of Puerto Rico have ev- ery right to demand that the debt to the banks and financial institutions be can- celled and that these robbers be forced to fund the reconstruction of the island and its infrastructure.
Cuba rebuilds despite U.S. blockade

By Chris Fry

Revolutionary Cuba’s record of mobilizing to defend its population from natural disasters was put to the test when, starting on Sept. 7, Hurricane Irma ravaged more than 200 miles of its north coast for three days. Hitting with 185-mph winds, Irma devastated the provinces of Cama-
iguay, Ciego de Avila, Sancti Spiritus, Villa Clara, Matanzas and Havana, with approximately 14,000 tourists, into shelters in government buildings, schools and even motels.

The Guardian newspaper reported on Sept. 13: “The week before the storm hit, the island’s pharmaceutical industry was instructed to put other medicines on hold because the government and its popular organizations placed more than 2 million people, in- ternally displaced because of the storms...” The storm severely damaged Cuba’s electrical network, water supply system and large parts of the island’s agricultural sector. It damaged 4,000 buildings, partially or totally destroying 1,200.

Because of the U.S. 57-year-unprecedented blockade imposed on Cuba, the country has inadequate resources to build suf-
iciently sturdy homes, let alone reinforce existing buildings enough to withstand these terrible storms — storms made worse by the severe damages caused by hurricane Katrina in 2005 which was rejected by the U.S. government to back down. These measures included the provision of $12,200,000 to New Orleans in the aftermath of Hur-
ricane Katrina in 2005 was rejected by the U.S. government to back down. The day after Macron signed executive orders putting a new labor law in place, the political party led by Jean-Luc Melenchon, brought about 150,000 people out in Paris to protest the law. FI, the Left Front and the New Anti-capitalist Party (NPA) and the Socialists joined the protest but were critical of the law as a “social coup d’etat” and “destabilizing.” They said that the U.S. will not lift its sanctions until Cuba undergoes “fundamental reforms,” that include letting Cuban citizens change and the restoration of capitalism.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry announced a special bank account to accept donations for hurricane relief, the block- ade makes it difficult or impossible for people to donate, even from outside the U.S. The U.S. government has frozen Eu-
ropean banks for conducting financial transactions with Cuba, which has hampered previous donations efforts. Carefully consider the most important issues facing labor. In September, three major protests have taken place against President Emmanuel Macron, whose party, Forward France, has scheduled its 2017 national elections in this call. (tinyurl.com/y8avsf7c)

The protests on Sept. 21 and Sept. 22 were smaller, with only 200 declared strikes and tens of thousands of workers, youth and retirees out in the streets. The CGT felt that these actions helped keep pressure on the government and morale up among the militants.

The day after Macron signed executive orders putting a new labor law in place, the political party led by Jean-Luc Melenchon, brought about 150,000 people out in Paris to protest the law. FI, the Left Front and the New Anti-capitalist Party (NPA) and the Socialists joined the protest but were critical of the law as a “social coup d’etat” and “destabilizing.” They said that the U.S. will not lift its sanctions until Cuba undergoes “fundamental reforms,” that include letting Cuban citizens change and the restoration of capitalism.

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ropean banks for conducting financial transactions with Cuba, which has hampered previous donations efforts.
The Public Broadcasting Service documentary series on the Vietnam War has provoked angry and insightful responses from anti-imperialist and imperialist commentateurs — and rightly so.

However, many will see this series as the definitive “history,” especially of the 1960-1975 period. It may become a frame of reference for many youths interested in the history of U.S. imperialism and its revolutionary opponents.

Those who went through that period of genocidal war against the Vietnamese, which provoked anti-war solidarity against the U.S. imperialist government, have the responsibility — some would say, the duty — to fight for an account of the war that exposes the U.S. government’s complete criminal brutality. We must make it harder for today’s Washington regime to wage war.

Workers World first commented on this series before its release, based on its makers’ statement that it would be “something all can embrace.” After viewing the first three of 10 episodes, there’s “something all can embrace.” After viewing the first three of 10 episodes, there’s

**U.S. continues threats against DPRK**

By Andre Grieswold

To borrow a phrase from LeBron James, “U Bum!” would be an appropriate response to President Donald Trump’s latest round of threats and racist insults hurled at the leader of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Kim Jong Un was being relatively restrained when he called Trump’s behavior “mentally deranged.” He was responding to the U.S. president’s “blood agony” speech to the United Nations General Assembly, which drew gags of disbelief from the assembled diplomates when Trump threatened to “totally destroy North Korea.”

Has this sunk in with the people of the U.S.? That the person who supposedly has his hand on the nuclear button is talking like a 1920s Chicago mobster, crudely threatening war with a country that now has nuclear weapons to defend itself.

The problem is not just Trump, of course. The Pentagon says that on Sept. 25, U.S. B-52 bombers and F-15C fighters were over the coast of the DPRK above the demilitarized zone for the first time.

And the U.S. government has imposed a new round of sanctions on the DPRK meant to paralyze its economy.

None of this will deter the DPRK from developing the means to defend itself from a U.S. attack. In fact, just the opposite — Trump has confirmed that the Koreans can expect nothing but further hostility from the U.S. ruling class and therefore they must strengthen their country’s defense by any means necessary.

The foreign minister of the DPRK, Ri Yong Ho, answered Trump in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 23, the same day that U.S. warplanes were flying along the coast of his country. Ri told his listeners:

“A most rampant violation of international justice can be seen on the Korean peninsula. Unprecedented acts of injustice such as imposing harsh sanctions on a victim for the reason that the victim chose to stand up to the oppressors are openly committed in the name of the U.N.

“The essence of the situation on the Korean peninsula is a confrontation between the DPRK and the U.S., where the former tries to defend its national dignity and sovereignty against the latter’s hostile policy and nuclear threats.

“The United States is the country that first produced nuclear weapons and the only country that actually used them, massacring hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians. It is the U.S. that threatened to use nuclear weapons against the DPRK during the Korean War in 1950, and first introduced nuclear weapons into the Korean peninsula after the war.

The U.S. started large-scale joint military exercises against the DPRK during the Cold War period and further increased their scope and aggressive nature after the Cold War, staging the exercises several times a year by mobilizing more of nuclear strategic assets.

“What else could be a bigger threat than the violent remarks such as pouring ‘fire and fury,’ ‘total destruction’ coming from the mouths of the world’s biggest nuclear power?”

“The very reason the DPRK had to possess nuclear weapons is because of the threat from the U.S. to continuously develop and strengthen its nuclear force onto the current level to cope with the U.S.”

**U.S. imperialists underdetermine DPRK**

Trump expresses in the crudest terms the miscalculations of an imperialist war machine, which would become a major reason for nuclear weapons. It was unthinkable to his class of billionaires that a small country like the DPRK could recover from the total destruction of a nuclear war of 1950-1953, rebuild its economy and become a nuclear power.

It may only take a single DPRK round of threats by calling its leaders “dictators” and its people “robots” who have been forced to do their bidding. In fact, the DPRK’s spectacular development has been made possible by the tremendous enthusiasm of its workers, farmers and intellectuals for building an independent socialist society free from colonial and imperialist oppression.

The DPRK has been able to marshal its resources and mobilize its industrial and agricultural plants that now have nuclear weapons.

Endnote

5

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

Miguel de Eckbo BRANDON, President, U.N. General Assembly, 2010-2009; Foreign Minister of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government. Available at online booksellers.

**WORKERS WORLD editorial**

**Vietnam: Truth and documentary**

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

*“If you think U.S. imperialism was unable to impart historical truth, Catalyst/2’s ‘Turn the Guns Around’ would be required reading. He tells the true story of this epoch, which deals with key questions. Without the massive G.I. rebellion against the Vietnam War, the anti-war veterans’ movement or the history of soldier revolts from the Paris Commune to the Port au Prince AWOLs.”* — Pvt. Larry Holmes GI resistor and organizer for the American Servicemen’s Union 1972-94

**Available at online booksellers**

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**TURN THE GUNS AROUND**

Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions

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**WAR WITHOUT VICTORY**

by Sara Flounders, PenthouseAdvised.com

*“By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds light on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity”*
Rallies denounce sanctions on Zimbabwe

By Johnnie Stevens
New York City

On a weekday afternoon, dozens of people demonstrated on Sept. 21 in Dag Hammar- skjöld Park across from the United Na- tions to support Zimbabwe. At that time, Zimbabwe’s President Robert Mugabe was speaking inside to the General Assembly. Like Cuba, Iran, People’s Korea and Venezuela, the African country has been attacked by U.S. economic sanctions.

Under the leadership of President Mugabe, Zimbabwe’s people have retained land stolen by European colonial settlers.

Millions of acres have been turned over to those who work the land.

That bold action has inspired others in Africa and enraged the banksters of Wall Street and London. Zimbabwe refuses to be intimidated. In his speech to the General Assembly, President Mugabe called Trump “a giant gold Goliath.” At the rally, Omowale Clay of the De-

cember 12th Movement (D12) denounced the sanctions against Zimbabwe as a form of war and compared them to those against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Venezuela. Dr. James McIn- tosh of the Committee to Eliminate Media Offensive to African People (CEMOTAP) emphasized the need of oppressed peoples to have their own media.

D12 Chairperson Viola Plummer also spoke in defense of President Mugabe.

Among other speakers was Workers World Party First Secretary Larry Holmes.

In addition to calling this action, D12 also organized a demonstration on Sept. 16 where people marched through the streets and went in support to Zimba-

deeve’s U.N. mission.

Solidarity message to the people of Mexico from Workers World Party/Partido Mundo Obrero

The members of Workers World Party reach out to the brave Mexican people who are suffering the terrible consequences of a 7.1 magnitude earthquake that took place on Tuesday, Sept. 19.

We echo the many messages and expressions of solidarity sent from different parts of the world.

The people of Mexico are not alone.

With much sadness we have seen the harrowing images of buildings and other collapsed structures and the increasing number of fatalities—from children whose lives have been prematurely mowed down, to people of all ages.

Since our party is in the very belly of the violent and cruel empire that is the United States, we are filled with much anger that the evil, fascistic and cruel empire that is the United States, we are filled with much anger that the evil, fascistic and cruel empire that is the United States has said in their slogans: “We did not cross the border, the border crossed us.”

It also fills us with indignation that Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto, instead of putting ended down, to people of all ages.

The overall sentiment expressed is that even though they lost their materi- al possessions, the people feel lucky they are alive, describing the hurricane expe- rience as something apocalyptic. In fact, it is the worst hurricane to hit Puerto Rico since 1928.

Message after message has been an up- lifting “Puerto Rico will be stronger.” This is a very welcomed statement at a time when the criminal Fiscal Control Board appointed by the U.S. Congress to pay the wages be- longing to individuals using social net- works, has been the extraordinary ca- pacity of resilience and cooperative work shown by the people. In photos, even small children can be seen clearing fallen tree branches from the roads.

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In the aftermath of the two storms, the people of Mexico who are now suffering this tragedy are giving the world lessons in solidarity and cooperation. These are also lessons in sovereignty. Rescue brigades from trade unions, stu- dents and other organizations have taken up the difficult and sad task of removing debris in search of survivors.

Puerto Rico devastated by hurricanes, colonialism

Continued from page 8

organized way.

One message that appears in many re- ports, both in regular commercial media as well as from individuals using social net- works, has been the extraordinary ca- pacity of resilience and cooperative work shown by the people. In photos, even small children can be seen clearing fallen tree branches from the roads.

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“IT IS TIME TO PAY. What we need now is for the U.S. to repair the damage it has done to us. Here are some examples: for the forced sterilization of our women; for the contamination of waters, air and soil by chemicals, coal, pharmaceutical and military plants; for the destruc- tion of Viques and Culebra by the U.S. Navy; for the death of thousands of young people in wars with which Puerto Rico had nothing to do; for the imposition of a merchant marine that does not let us trade with other countries.

For these and many other reasons we demand: Cancel the odious debt! REPARATIONS NOW! Sovereignty with Inde- pendence! No criminal Fiscal Control Board!”

Joubert-Ceci is a Puerto Rican woman from the south- ern city of Ponce who, as of the writing of this article on Sept. 25, has not yet been able to communicate with her relatives on the island.

Protesters demand sovereignty for Puerto Rico

Continued from page 8

in Spanish, with singing, drumming and traditional instruments that caught the attention of everyone in the area.

At different points in the day, the gath- ering was joined by students from Mex- ico, activists from Black Lives Matter, supporters of Palestine and performance artists in the battle against New York City’s colonial Columbus statue.

Participants gave out flyers to passers- by explaining the United States’ colonial hold on Puerto Rico, from the 1898 inva- sion to the 2016 Promesa (Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Act), which, in effect, calls for closing schools and hospitals, selling off beaches and cutting workers’ wages—all to make sure foreign banks can collect $70 billion of so-called debt.

Endorsers of this effort included the Oscar-Mandela Committee, Partido Na- cionalista de Puerto Rico (New York and Puerto Rico), Partido Independentista de Puerto Rico, Pro-Libertad, the Indian Community House, the International Center, Workers World Party, the Rev. Luis Barrios, Labor Against Racist Terror and United American Indians of New England.

In the aftermath of the two storms, many of these same activists are now col- laborating to collect donations and ma- terial aid for Puerto Rico at community locations such as the El Maestro Center in the Bronx.

On Sept. 21 at a solidarity rally for Zim- babwe, a statement from that country’s president, Robert Mugabe, was read by revolutionary Viola Plummer, expressing “condolences to the people of Puerto Rico and other nations devastated by natural disasters such as hurricanes and earth- quakes” and concluding that the world “demands more, not less solidarity.”

Long live internationalism! ¡Que viva Puerto Rico libre!"
Oscar López en Filadelfia

‘El colonialismo es un crimen contra la humanidad’

Por Christa Rivers
Filadelfia

“El colonialismo es un crimen contra la humanidad”. Estas palabras, del luchador por la independencia puertorriqueño Oscar López Rivera, son una de las verdaderas después de Irma y María. Eso hartacanes atravesaron por el Caribe dejando atrás destrucción en estas islas que están siendo arrasadas por el colonialismo y el imperialismo.

López Rivera habló el 19 de septiembre a un multitud de más de 250 perso-
nas en Taller Puerto Rico en el norte de Filadelfia. Fue el invitado de honor de la Red Nacional Boricua de Derechos Humanos. Cuando el ex prisionero político entró en la sala, la multitud se levantó en aclamaciones de pie y comenzó a cantar, “Se siente, se siente, Oscar está presente”.

Otro participante en la reunión público entregó un mensaje de prisioneros de la prisión estatal de Gratersford en Pensilvania que deseaban mostrar su aprecio a López Rivera. Le dijeron que su existencia como luchador por la independencia de Puerto Rico fomenta sus propias luchas por liberarse del sistema penitenciario.

López Rivera pidió que todas/os los presos políticos sean libres. También habló de las/os jóvenes en el movimiento, diciendo que ellas/os son el futuro y que el trabajo que hacemos ahora será llevado a cabo por ellos. Dijo a las/os jóvenes en el movimiento: “Atrévase a luchar, atrévase a ganar”. Por último, López Rivera habló sobre los efectos del colonialismo en Puerto Rico, que como una de las muchas colonias que aún existen en el siglo XXI, la isla está siendo estrangulada económicamente por Estados Unidos. La crisis de la deuda en la isla es el resultado directo de la explotación de este gobierno colonialista y la colaboración del gobierno en Puerto Rico.

El pago de la deuda está siendo transformado en soberanía para ese pueblo hermano con el país no haya demostrado la necesaria humildad para ese pueblo hermano con el gobierno colonial de Puerto Rico como la única forma de poner fin a la absurda relación colonial.

Desde las entrañas del imperio, las y los miembros del Partido Workers World-Mundo Obrero enviamos un fuerte abrazo solidario al pueblo borin-
cano que enfrenta en estos momentos las devastadoras consecuencias del poderoso huracán María.

Esta desgracia se ha visto aumentada por los procesos de privatización de algunos sectores como la comunicación tan esencial en estos momentos. Las pri-
vatizaciones nunca beneficiar al pueblo; son huracán San Felipe de categoría 5 en la escala Saffir-Simpson en el Atlántico ocasionara 300 muertes a su paso en el 1998, llega al archipiélago en las peores circunstancias políticas y sociales en la historia de esa nación.

Hemos visto con mucho dolor las esce-
nas de inundaciones y catástrofes ocurridas a pesar de que las devastadoras consecuencias del poderoso huracán María.

El gobierno colonial de Puerto Rico está haciendo tan poco, así que la gente lo está haciendo por sí misma. Una vez más, este gobierno imperialista y colonialista que hace fracasar una isla y empuja la deuda sobre el pueblo, es posible.

En su apoyo a López Rivera, la audiencia estaba apoyando la auto-
determinación y la liberación de las/os puertorriqueños.

Mexico

La membresía del Partido Workers World-Mundo Obrero se une al dolor del valiente pueblo mexicano que sufre las terribles consecuencias del terremoto de gran magnitud – 7,1 en la escala Richter - que destruyó la ciudad de Juchitán el pasado martes 19 de septiembre.

Hacemos eco de los múltiples men-
as y expresiones de solidaridad emitidas desde diferentes lugares del mundo. El pueblo de México no está solo.

Hemos visto con mucha tristeza las desgarradoras imágenes de edificios y otras estructuras colapsadas y el creciente número de víctimas fatales – desde edificios con ventanas y puertas rotas, de quienes toque las aguas electrificadas, edificios con ventanas y puertas rotas, tejados volados, e innumerables destrozos que aún no se han podido cuantificar por la falta de comunicación existente.

Esta desgracia se ha visto aumenta-
da por los procesos de privatización de algunos sectores como la comunicación tan esencial en estos momentos. Las pri-\nvatizaciones nunca beneficiar al pueblo; son huracán Hugo, que la comunicación podía mantenerte sin el servicio eléctrico.

Desde allí y también por los ciudadanos de esta nación, que son descendientes de quienes sufrieron una auténtica catástrofe durante el huracán Hugo, que la comunicación podía mantenerse sin el servicio eléctrico. Desde allí y también por los ciudadanos de esta nación, que son descendientes de quienes sufrieron una auténtica catástrofe durante el huracán Hugo, que la comunicación podría mantenerse sin el servicio eléctrico.