Sanders campaign has people asking
What is socialism?

By Peter Gilbert

The large rallies and recent gains in the polls following the debate for Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, a self-proclaimed “socialist,” have many workers wondering what “socialism” is. Many more are confused because his ideas do not seem fundamentally different from those of others in the Democratic Party.

Sanders added to the confusion during the debate on Oct. 13, when questioned about socialism. Instead of clearly defining the term, he attacked wealth inequality as “immoral and wrong,” a view even some capitalists espouse, and promised universal health care and paid family leave, benefits that are available in many countries with capitalist economic systems. He did not distinguish socialism as an entirely different structure for society.

Whatever Sanders means by “socialism,” one thing is clear from his popularity, workers in the U.S. are open to discussing the idea and want to know more about what it means. A lexicographer associated with the Merriam Webster dictionary tweeted about searches for the definition of socialism after the debate: “Socialism’ spiking off the charts.”

Confusion about socialism stems not only from the decades of anti-socialist propaganda by the capitalist media, but also from the fluidity of its definition. Like any concept, the idea of socialism is not fixed or static; people use the word to mean many very different things. Even the co-author of the “Communist Manifesto,” Friedrich Engels, had to carefully distinguish the version of socialism he and Karl Marx described from earlier, “utopian” socialist experiments.

One reason why people with such varied and conflicting ideas all use the same word to describe their politics is that most of these ideas, parties and organizations had historic roots in the same socialist or social democratic parties of the 19th century, parties which were based on the ideas of Marx and Engels. (Workers World, April 26, 2012, tinyurl.com/pffh9e9)

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By Martha Grevatt

Detroit

Jorge Parra, president of the Association of Injured Workers and Ex-workers of General Motors Colomotores (Asotrecol), came to Detroit in September 2012. For six months he attempted to win a meeting with General Mo-
tors’ executives, with the goal of resolving the dispute he and hundreds of other former workers have with the company. GM fired them after being injured on the job, and had their medical records forged to state their injur-
ies were not work-related, thus denying them workers’ compensation and leaving them with no form of income.

While in Detroit, Parra saw his hopes shut and waged a 72-hour hunger strike, but GM would not budge. He re-
turned to Asotrecol’s tent encampment outside the U.S. Embassy in Bogota, set up on Aug. 1, 2011, to pressure the U.S. government, then GM’s majority share-
holder, to make GM honor the rights of the fired work-
ers. The encampment is still up despite arrests, beatings and eviction attempts.

What Asotrecol won during Parra’s stay in Detroit was a diverse network of friends who were moved by his heroic struggle. They welcomed him back to De-
troit this October, hosting numerous meetings with au-
toworkers, social justice activists, church members and others. Parra spent several hours with housing rights activist S. Baxter Jones, who is in the fourth week of his own hunger strike to keep his home.

Parra returned to Michigan to make a presentation to the Arcus Foundation at Kalamazoo College, which host-
ed Asotrecol and nine other finalists for its social justice award. Parra explained that while GM was still denying justice to Asotrecol, the struggle was having an impact.

GM has stopped discharging injured workers and has in-
stalled equipment to make work safer. Injured workers from other sectors, who have suffered the same fate as GM workers, are finding common cause with one another.

While another group won Kalamazoo’s juried award, Asotrecol and a Mexican Indigenous women’s group shared the audience award.

From Detroit, Parra flew to Stuttgart, Germany, for an internation-
antown workers’ conference that featured workers from India, South Africa, Europe, the U.S. and Latin America. The conference passed a resolution unani-
mosly in solidarity with Asotrecol. Parra made strong connec-
tions there, especially with Brazilian autoworkers who have waged successful strikes to stop mass layoffs.

Upon returning to Detroit on Oct. 19, Parra harassed the meeting of the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions & Utility Shutoffs. Coal-
ition members posed with Parra, holding a banner in solidarity with the Colombian anti-foreclosure group, Victims of Bankers.

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Some participants at Detroit meeting with Jose Parra, Oct. 19. (Photo: Martha Grevatt)
Debtors’ prisons fill up in deep South

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Across the U.S., local jails have turned into “debtors’ prisons” as cities and counties imprison poor people who can’t pay fines for traffic violations, minor offenses or “court costs.” Nowhere is this more dramatic than in the deep South, where imprisoned people are disproportionately young Black people, immigrants, people of color and LGBTQ people (“queer people.”)

In Alabama, Perry County Circuit Judge Marvin Wiggins told a courtroom full of people at an unpaid fines hearing on Sept. 7: “If you do not have any money and don’t want to go to jail, consider giving blood today and bring your receipt back, or the sheriff has enough handcuffs for those who do not have money.” (Equal Justice Initiative)

In Chilton County, retired steelworker Richard Garrett was jailed for two years and owed $10,000 simply for traffic and license violations, plus fees and fines accrued over 10 years. (New York Times, July 2, 2012)

Jailing someone for debt who is too poor to pay is a civil rights violation under the 1966 U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It is also illegal under the 1982 U.S. Supreme Court ruling Bearden vs. Georgia.

But though debtor’s prisons are not allowed under the law — by law — they are on the rise de facto. As part of a pris-ons-for-profit boom of the last 20 years, “offender-funded” initiatives throughout the U.S. “justice” system have shifted much of the cost to the system for the prisoners themselves. Economically squeezed cities and counties have actively adopted this approach to add to their “revenue stream.”

Local governments also augment revenues by contracting with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to arrest and jail undocumented immigrants in order to fulfill quotas to keep “beds filled” at for-profit detention centers run by corporate giants like Corrections Corporation of America and GEO Group. Incarcerated immigrants then incur costs in the local “fee stream.” (grassrootsleadership.org)

Predatory companies such as Judicial Corrections Services are contracted by local cities and counties to collect fines, restitution and fees from convicted or incarcerated people. Boasting they are “saving taxpayer dollars,” the profit-driven companies hound poor people for all kinds of fees, including jail book-in, public defender application, drug testing, DNA testing, drug rehab, electronic monitoring, as well as jail per diems for pretrial detention, court costs and more. (globalrepresentsearch.com)

The private companies charge the local governments nothing; they make their profits by adding extra fees to court defendant bills.

The companies are bill collectors with the power to decide if someone goes to jail for not paying. Poor defendants have no power to decide if someone goes to jail for not paying. Poor defendants have the right to legal counsel in criminal cases, but not in civil cases — such as in debt. That leaves poor defendants at the mercy of profit-hungry companies like JCS.

A 2010 study by the Brennan Center for Justice looked at the fee structures in 15 U.S. states with the largest prison populations, including California, Florida and Texas. The study noted the user fees “create new paths to prison for those unable to pay their debts and make it harder to find employment and housing as well as to meet child support obligations.” Criminal-justice debt also affects eligibility for a driver’s license and credit worthiness.

Prisoners fight back

A national campaign against debtors’ prisons is picking up speed. On Oct. 21 the American Civil Liberties Union filed a federal lawsuit against JCS, the city of Biloxi, Miss., its police chief and a municipal judge, charging they operate “a modern-day debtors’ prison.” That lawsuit targets and jails impoverished people in a scheme to generate municipal revenue.

Last January the ACLU filed a similar suit in Georgia against DeKalb County and quickly reached settlement in March, achieving limited systemic reform. Under this pressure, the day before the ACLU suit was filed in Mississippi, the JCS announced it was ceasing business in Alabama.

Militant prisoner actions nationwide preceded these legal challenges and continue to fuel the increasing national struggle against prisons-for-profit and mass incarceration.

In 2013 prisoners in California’s Pelican Bay State Prison launched a hunger strike against solitary confinement sentences that routinely lasted over 10 years. By 2013 over 30,000 California prisoners had joined the strike, the largest in history. Under tremendous pressure from prisoners, their families and their communities, Gov. Jerry Brown bowed to a settlement to phase out indefinite solitary confinement.

This March mothers in the immigrant Karnes Family Detention Camp in Texas went on a work and hunger strike, demanding to be freed with their children.

In June mothers at the Berks County, Pa., Family Detention Camp launched a similar work strike. A federal judge ruled in their favor on Aug. 21, ordering the Obama administration to release all detained mothers and children by Oct. 23. (EndFamilyDetention.com)

On Jan. 1, 2014, the Free Alabama Movement announced “a cross-racial collective action ... for Human and Civil Rights, in the form of a work stoppage” that spread to the St. Clair County and Elmore County jails. FAMS is a grassroots organization founded by men incarcerated in Alabama.

The Free Alabama Movement is clear about the basis for their strategy of resistance: “Prisons don’t function without inmate labor. And every day that the prison doesn’t function, the prison profit margin plummets.”

Protesters tell Houston sheriff: ‘Stop deportations!’

By Gloria Rubac

Houston

People who support immigrant rights gathered outside the county jail here to protest the Harris County Sheriff’s Office for its complicity in the deportation of over 1,000 people every month in Houston. The Oct. 10 picket line faced dozens of sheriff’s trying to intimidate the demonstrators while participants took the mic to denounce the recent immigration raids in Houston.

The action was initiated by the Houston Socialist Movement. Speakers included representatives of many organizations, including the International Worker’s Unity to End Mass Incarceration-Houston. Many undocumented youth participated, including César Fiero, from Immigrant Families Workers of the World and End Mass Incarcerations, including the International Socialist Movement. Speakers in -

A speaker representing Workers World Party pointed to the line of cops monitoring the protest and said: “These uniformed goons standing here are the ones separating families, causing un-told grief and deporting honest people. This is criminal. They are the people that should be locked up for their crimes against humanity, not the immigrants fleeing terror at home, not families trying to find work, not students denied jobs even after graduating high school and even college.”

After the demonstration, the crowd walked up the steps of the building housing the sheriff’s office, which is inside the huge county jail, in order to deliver a letter to Sheriff Ron Hickman. A line of cops blocked the entrance and doors were locked. Angry protesters be-

PHOTO CREDIT: FREE ALABAMA MOVEMENT

PHOTO CREDIT: FREE ALABAMA MOVEMENT
Texas strikes blow at poor women

By Sue Davis

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission stripped Planned Parenthood of its Medicaid contracts on Oct. 19. Defunding was based on alleged violations of federal taxation programs.

Such allegations stem from widely discredited, deceptively edited videos issued in the anti-abortion, so-called Center for Medical Progress. The videos insinuate that Planned Parenthood engaged in selling fetal tissue for profit. Ohio’s weekly takedown in California for fraud, is closely associated with far-right, anti-abortion, bigoted groups. The organization has a history of arrests for blocking clinics and harassing patients.

Meanwhile, Planned Parenthood, the largest national provider of reproduc-

tive health care services for women, announced on Oct. 19 that it would no longer accept Medicaid patients who have donated fetal tissue in the past five years and documents covering patient, billing and personnel records, including employer home addresses and salaries.

To serve the subpoenas, investigators from HHSC’s Office of Inspector General arrived without warning at Planned Parenthood of Great Texas in Dallas and Houston and gave the clinics 24 hours to deliver thousands of pages of documents. Ken Lambrecht, head of Planned Parenthood of Great Texas, called this “a politically motivated… fishing expedition.”

That charge appears accurate, reported Mother Jones on Oct. 22, because a reporter arrived at the Planned Parenthood clinic in San Antonio at the same time as state investigators. The state raid, noted the magazine, was to be “looking for an excuse to justify its politi-

cally motivated attacks.”

Also on Oct. 20, the Ohio Senate passed a bill defunding Planned Parenthood. Pro-choice Sen. Edna Brown condemned the measure because it would disproportionately affect low-income women. “There is no one, no one but Planned Parenthood in poor and African-American communi-

ties.” (RH Reality Check, Oct. 22)

Relentless attacks continue

The House of Representatives held a hearing on Planned Parenthood on Sept. 29, during which President Cecile Richards stood up to hours of insulting comments and harangues by anti-abortion critics, the House announced Oct. 23 that it is convening yet another investigation.

The eight Republican members of the Select Investigative Panel have “100 percent ratings from the National Right to Life Committee,” reported the Huffington Post on Oct. 23.

Pro-choice Democrats criticized the new panel and said they may boycott it as it is a waste of taxpayer dollars.

RH Reality Check editor-in-chief Jodi Jacobson compared watching the Sept. 29 hearing to “witnessing an inquisition” like those of anti-communist Sen. Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s. (Oct. 3) She point-

ed out that no evidence was presented to substantiate charges of selling fetal tissue for profit. She maintains that Planned Parenthood as lies and demands for lists of providers, clinics and staff as ways to intimidate and frighten people.

Jacobson quoted two dictionary defi-

nitions of McCarthyism: “the practice of making accusations unsupported by proof or based on slight, doubtful or irrel-

evant evidence” and “the practice of mak-

ing unfair allegations or using unfair in-

terrogative techniques especially in order to restrict dissent or political criticism.”

A startling example of today’s McCar-

thyism is the website set up Sept. 28 by the deep-pocketed anti-abortion group known as the Alliance Defending Freedom. (Oct. 22) The purpose of the site, getyourcare.

org, is to provide “alternatives” to Planned Parenthood if it is defunded nationally. The website, based on data from lists of Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Centers, is supported by a bill of the country’s most prominent anti-abor-

donation, groups, including the ultraright Fam-

ily Research Council, which is also hostile to same-sex marriage.

Yet when RH Reality Check writers called dozens of these facilities, they discovered elementary, middle and high

school; homeless shelters; nursing homes; pediatric centers; and even the District of Columbia jail. All of them said they were not prepared to provide repro-

ductive health services for poor women.

Drawing a parallel between McCarthyism and today’s reactionary agenda is spot on. These right-wingers seek to promote their ruthless austerity agenda against oppressed and working people, while lin-

ing the pockets of the already-rich.

The attacks on Planned Parenthood — because they strike at the quality of life for millions of poor women of color, youth, immigrants, women who are homeless due to domestic violence, wom-

en with disabilities and rural residents — are integral to that reactionary agenda.

All progressive people must join the fightback to defend Planned Parenthood.

Chrysler workers vote ‘yes’ on new contract

By Martha Grevatt

A new contract between the United Auto Workers and Fiat Chrysler Auto-

motive Company was ratified on Oct. 20. It was ratified by an overwhelming majority of workers, after they rejected a previous agreement that was forced through.

The labor deal faced mass, organized opposition on the shop floor, with rank-and-file workers bringing demonstrations attacking CEO Sergio Marchionne’s advocacy of a “cul-

ture of poverty.

What made the first contract so unpopular?

In 2007 the Big Three auto companies had leveraged their negative financial posi-

tions to get UAW to accept a two-tier pay structure. This meant while the existing workers did not have to take a pay cut, future employees would receive substantially lower pay.

Many workers at General Motors, Ford and especially Chrysler — now FCA — had voted against that contract; two-thirds of the Chrysler negotiating committee had campaigned against it, opposing two-tier.

For decades, the divisions and inequalities have led a majority to now conclude that two-tier must go. Yet UAW International President Dennis Williams and Vice President Gary Jones had brought a contract before the members that would have kept the system in place.

Also, thousands of second-tier workers were promised four years ago they would be brought to top pay when the last con-

tract expired — a broken promise. That contract also created a perpetual two-tier system for workers in the axle plant and the Mopar parts division.

Though other workers complained about the first contract they rejected, such as an overly strict attendance and tardiness procedure, no relief from un-

popular “alternative work schedules,” a questionable plan to create a health care co-op and projected product moves that threatened to eliminate jobs.

With the second-tier workers’ contract the new is that nearly all current second-tier workers, including Mopar workers, now have the opportunity to earn the same wages as permanent pay workers. Many will reach the top before the end of this contract, which will mean substantial pay raises. That is a huge victo-

ry. The contract also identifies the conditions determined to create a permanent lower tier, as higher seniority workers retired.

The solidarity behind the shop floor vote for the new contract was forced Williams’ push for equal pay. The UAW and Fiat Chrysler negotiated in good faith, Williams insisted. Whatever the outcome, workers know they gained another contract fightback to defend Planned Parenthood.

There are many problems with the new contract. Thousands of UAW members did vote ‘no’ again. The claim that it puts two-tier to rest is a false one, but it takes a close reading to find all the hidden tiers.

For example, it will take a worker eight years to make top pay. Those who don’t hit the top under this contract could see their pay raises canceled in the next. Benefits are still unequal. Second-tier workers at the axle plant have an even lower pay rate under the second contract.

Also, second-tier workers were promised four years ago they would be brought to top pay when the last contract expired — a broken promise. That contract also created a perpetual two-tier system for workers in the axle plant and the Mopar parts division.

Third-tier workers, the divisions and inequalities have led a majority to now conclude that two-tier must go. Yet UAW International President Dennis Williams and Vice President Gary Jones had brought a contract before the members that would have kept the system in place.

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**Detroit union supports political prisoner**

By David Sole

The case of Michigan political prisoner the Rev. Edward Pinkney has attracted the attention of — and won support from — professors employed by the Wayne County Community College District, based in and around Detroit. Five faculty members who had been discussing Rev. Pinkney’s plight brought the issue before the Oct. 23 membership meeting of Local 2000 of the American Federation of Teachers.

After hearing about the many racist injustices committed against Rev. Pinkney and his sentence of 2.5 to 10 years in prison, the local, representing 800 college professors, went on record in his support.

**Union ratifies contract gains**

By Workers World Milwaukee Bureau

Members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 958 ratified a tentative agreement on Oct. 21.

“We are humbled by the solidarity shown to us from Milwaukee transit riders, labor unions and community activists who stood with us throughout our fight for a fair contract,” ATU 958 President James Macon said in a statement.

The struggle by ATU 958 members and labor-community supporters ended when negotiators eliminated the bosses’ demands to increase the number of part-time workers and also deleted existing language about part-timers in the old contract. Other victories included no coinsurance payments by workers; uncapping the cost of living allowance (meaning the COLA has no ceiling and no expiration date); the work stoppage call against workers’ attendance records; and the pension, while not increased, was not decreased.

This people’s win occurred despite a climate of deep austerity and union busting in Wisconsin. A highlight of the struggle was the three-day work stoppage in July during the world’s biggest music festival, Summerfest. This action showed the possibilities going forward for creative uses of social-union organizing models in this state.

**Longshore workers:**

**‘Shut it down May Day 2016’**

By Cheryl LaBash


Thomas and a delegation of International Longshore and Warehouse Union members from various locals had only a month before attended the Charleston, S.C., “Days of Grace” Labor Day march, rally and conference, in the aftermath of the racist murder of nine women and men at the historic Mother Emanuel Episcopal Church, as well as the videotaped police killing of Walter Scott.

The longshore workers traveled from the West Coast to demonstrate solidarity with International Longshore Association Local 1422, whose membership lost family members in the church murders.

It was in Charleston that an ILWU Local 10 resolution calling for a “National Day of Mourning” on May 1, 2016 — International Workers’ Day — was announced. And it was news that broke the night before on Oct. 10 of reports justifying the police slaying of 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland that focused Thomas’ reflections.

Thomas recalled that the 1995 Million Man March was on a work day, yet huge crowds of working-class black men traveled to Washington, D.C., instead of reporting to their jobs. Although the call was from Nation of Islam leader Minister Louis Farrakhan, most of the attendees were not Muslims or adherents of the NOI.

Organized labor, unfortunately, did not have a voice at these events, except at the 2005 10th anniversary Millions More Movement. Pat Ford from the Service Employees union, Chris Silveira from the Teamsters National Black Caucus and Thomas all spoke from the platform after Farrakhan had spoken at an earlier TNBC Educational Conference. In his talk Silveira, representing 400,000 Black Teamsters, challenged the Bush administration for suspending prevailing wage requirements, opening the door to substandard wages for the cleanup of the devastation from hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Facing wide opposition from the labor movement, the Bush administration reversed itself.

Refraining to the report laying groundwork for the exoneration of the cops who killed Rice, Thomas thought that if the police were not held responsible there might be a large response to a National Day of Mourning on May Day in ports across the U.S. “That could be the spark,” said Thomas.

To be heard, labor must shut it down, Thomas asserted. “That is the only leverage we have. All of this talk means absolutely nothing. We have had discussions about cameras on dashboards, cops’ body cameras, and they still are killing us.

“If we can get longshore workers across the country to shut down for eight hours on International Workers Day 2016 — and it is on a Sunday — I think we may be able to get some real serious discussion about income inequality and structural racism.”

A longer version of this article can be found at workers.org.

**Capitalism at a Dead End**

Job destruction, overproduction and crisis in the high-tech era

El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com Available at all major online bookellers.
Another victim of a killer cop

By Kathy Durkin

Early on the morning of Oct. 18, Corey Jones was sitting in his broken-down SUV on the roadside of an I-95 exit ramp, waiting for a tow truck to arrive. Jones, 31 years old and African American, was driving the car as a drummer with his band, when his vehicle broke down in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. At 2:22 a.m., Jones spoke to his brother by cell phone. By 3:15 a.m., he was dead, killed by three police bullets.

The Jones family and their attorneys, Benjamin Crump and Daryl Parks, met with the Palm Beach County State Attorney’s office on Oct. 22, asking how and why their loved one was killed. The lawyers reported that plainclothes police officer Norman Raja had driven a large, unmarked department van with tinted windows to the encounter with Jones, without flashing police lights or showing his badge.

Raja fired six bullets at Jones. He claims that Jones confronted him with a gun, but the young man, who had a legal permit for a gun he’d purchased only three days earlier, never fired a shot. Attorney Crump said that Jones was running away, and that his body was found nearly 100 feet from his vehicle. His gun was not found near his body or his car.

Crump stressed: “There are so many unanswered questions. It’s hard to understand because it makes no sense to them and it makes no sense to me.” (Guardian, Oct. 22)

Raja has a history of violating police procedures. He was disciplined three times for mishandling documents and evidence with his former employer, the Atlantis, Fla., Police Department. By driving an unmarked police van to confront Jones and not identifying himself, Raja breached departmental rules. He is now on administrative leave — with pay.

After their meeting, Jones’ relatives joined hundreds of demonstrators as assembled outside the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department, demanding the truth about Raja’s actions and Jones’ death. They dispute the officer’s version of events, and are calling for an independent investigation.

The next evening, hundreds of people comprised outside the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department, demanding the truth about Raja’s actions and Jones’ death. They dispute the officer’s version of events, and are calling for an independent investigation.

The hepatitis C virus has been known as “silent disease,” Pennsylvania’s Department of Health director investigation.

The hepatitis C virus has been known for all its citizens, regardless of income or ethnicity. Health care is free there!

Each well-informed panelist gave

For Mumia and the right of hep C prisoners to medical justice, was a member of the Russian Revolution, was a member of the Russian

Workers World New York Bureau

From left: Bob Boyle, Pam Africa, Suzanne Ross, Joe Piette, Estela Vasquez, Sue Davis and Dr. Melissa Barber.

Sanders campaign has people asking

What is socialism?

Continued from page 1

V.I. Lenin, the leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, was a member of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. Of the last 150 years, disagreements over two main ideas led to the big differences between groups claiming the term socialist. Those main points of contention are over the issue of ownership of the means of production and the idea of revolution.

Ownership of the means of production

The “means of production” is a term used by Marx to mean all the infrastructure of modern society that produces and transports goods and services. It includes factories, trains, stores, farms and warehouses. In a capitalist society these are all owned by a relatively small number of people, even though millions of people work to build them and work to make them useful. Even when workers own shares of stock directly or through their pensions, the control of these industries remains in the hands of the ruling class. The owners take huge profits while people who work there their whole lives barely survive.

Engels wrote in his book, “Socialism, Utopian and Scientific,” that prior socialist experiments failed because they were not based upon an understanding of the progression of society and its productive forces. The scientific socialism that Marx and Engels described would be based upon workers seizing the “socialized
means of production," from the capitalist class that currently owns them, the “cvs” (really one-tenth of one percent), and converting them into socialized production, based upon a planned economy, with the output of production put to the use of all of society rather than simply to produce profit for the few.

Sanders does not advocate taking the ownership of factories and corporations away from capitalists, ending the profit system that exploits workers, or creating a system where decisions about what and how to produce are made based upon human need rather than private profit. He describes himself as a “democratic socialist,” and seeks to keep the capitalist system intact, only expanding the social safety net, providing universal health insurance, lowering barriers to education and increasing taxes on corporations.

Several European countries' capitalist classes provide more benefits for workers, better health care, more vacation time and higher wages, similar to what Sanders proposes, and other countries are often labeled “socialist” or “social democracies,” even though they still have predominantly capitalistic systems, where corporations generate massive profits by exploiting workers.

Some ruling-class political scientists have said that Sanders is really more of a “social democrat” than a “democratic socialist,” terms that only further confuse many workers. (Washington Post, Oct. 17, tinyurl.com/osvyhzx4) What they mean is that he is not talking about a social democracy like Sanders, keep the capitalist system in place but seek to reform it. On the other hand, as the Washington Post goes on to say, “Democratic Socialists in the United States want a system where workers or the government own factories and other means of production. In the April 26, 2012, editorial referred to earlier, WW wrote, “When Workers World describes someone or some party as socialist without quotes, this means they are for the taking of means of production — including land — out of the hands of the capitalist ruling class and having it owned publicly.” Some who describe themselves as democratic socialists also demand public ownership of the means of production, but what they usually mean is nationalized property, industries owned by a capitalistic government, or worker-owned collectives within a capitalist society, not the planned, socialized production described by Engels, where everything is held collectively for the benefit of all.

This brings us squarely to the second key question that separates socialists like Sanders from social democrats, or social democrats, an understanding of the state and the necessity for revolution.

Revolution

When Bernie Sanders talks about a “political revolution,” he makes clear that he is not talking about the kind of revolution made by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in 1917. Lenin thought it necessary to smash the capitalist state because the state itself is a tool of the capitalist class used for oppression and exploitation. Sanders rhetorical calls for a “political revolution,” asking for people to vote for him and others who promise various reforms to the capitalist system, but he opposes fundamental changes to the government. He praises “American [U.S.] democracy” even though it is founded on the genocide of Native Americans and slavery and continues to deny even basic democratic rights to women, people of color and immigrants.

Social democrats and democratic socialists, even those who advocate some form of collective ownership of the means of production, believe that sufficient changes to society can be made by working within the existing “democratic” process, that is, within what Marxists call bourgeois or capitalist democracy. History has proven this is false. Where socialist candidates have been elected who seek to make revolutionary change, world imperialism has used violent methods to overthrow them, such as with Salvador Allen-de in Chile in 1973, or with the imperialist coup in 2002 against Hugo Chávez, when he was subsequently defended by a mass uprising. The tiny ruling class refuses to give up capitalism — and the huge profits it makes for the capitalists — without a violent response. Even the modest promises of Bernie Sanders, as attractive as they are to workers, clash with the current corporate drive to increase profits while constantly de-creating the number of workers employed. Corporations worldwide are demanding “austerity” from the workers, which means expropriating even more of what workers produce. Any concessions to workers can only be won through struggle.

In its statement, “What is WWP”, the party writes, “Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party dedicated to organizing and fighting for a socialist revolution in the United States and around the world.” (tinyurl.com/ g5exuwv) That means that WWP recognizes that only through revolutionary struggle can the racist exploitation of the capitalist system be overthrown.

Capitalism won’t allow systemic change to be simply voted into policy.

By John Catalinotto

Anti-war forces have been demonstrating throughout Europe, especially in Europe’s southern states. They are protesting NATO’s aggressive “Trident Juncture” exercises.

These war games tested the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s combined structures from Oct. 3 to Oct. 16, and troop movements and operations from Oct. 18 to Nov. 6. They involve 36,000 troops from 33 countries, using 60 ships and 200 aircraft and are taking place on the territories of Portugal, Spain and Italy. NATO was founded in 1949 as a U.S. initiative. U.S. generals have always commanded NATO. Washington mobilized the ruling classes of the West European capitalist classes to confront the Soviet Union and prevent any united workers’ and European working classes from putting their representatives in power.

In post-Soviet 1999, Washington succeeded in turning NATO into a sort of worldwide intervention force for use in Eastern Europe, Africa and West Asia. In 2015, Washington has developed direct aggression against Iraq, Afghan-istan and Libya and has worked through proxy forces in Ukraine and Syria. The NATO interventions have left all these countries in turmoil, with 1 million to 2 million people killed and millions more made refugees.

The “Trident Juncture” exercises are aimed at testing a rapid “Response Force.”
Global warming, nuclear power and China

By Deirdre Griswold

In a surprise move, China and Brit-
ain’s Conservative Party government
have signed an agreement in which China
will help build four nuclear reactors
in Britain. Criticism of the deal comes
from those, including members of the
British Labor Party, who claim that Chi-
na’s participation could compromise
the “national security” of this NATO
member-state.

China’s Global Nuclear Power Corp.,
a state-controlled corporation, will pro-
vide $6 billion toward the completion of
the Hinkley Point C power station, giving
China a 33.5 percent interest in the plant.

Until now, the plant has primarily
been a project of the French company EDF.
Its first nuclear reactor, completed in
1991 in its电力 infrastructure contributes al-
most a third of the world’s nuclear power
since 1995. However, its agenda for broader
nuclear power plants has been restrained.
Thus far, with funding help from Britain,
power plants have been completed in
South Korea and perhaps helping it to
turn more nuclear plants abroad.”

New York Times, Oct. 21)

Canada is divided into 338 election
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cent of the vote in both 2011 and 2015.
The following statement was issued Oct. 21 by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in response to the ongoing resistance of Palestinian youth to apartheid Israel’s stepped-up campaign of genocide and displacement.

The cold-blooded killings and extra-judicial executions being carried out against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, Jerusalem and the 1948 occupied lands by Israeli soldiers will not break the will of the Palestinian youths rebelling for the victory of Jerusalem and Palestine, said Comrade Jamil Mizher, member of the Political Bureau of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and leader of its branch in Gaza.

Mizher noted that there is a proposal being brought by the Front to the factions to form a unified leadership to build these mass actions and revolt into a massive popular uprising. He described these executions and assassinations as a desperate attempt to stamp out the fire of the uprising.

“These attempts to kill the young men and women of Palestine in cold blood reflect the racism and fascism of the Israeli state and its goal to break the backbone of the Intifada. On the contrary, these executions are, in fact, a strong incentive to continue the Intifada and deter the terrorist settlers’ attacks,” said Mizher.

George Abdallah is a Lebanese revolutionary who was found guilty of the assassination of a U.S. Army lieutenant colonel in Paris in 1982 and sentenced to life in cold blood reflect the racism and fascism of the Israeli state. Even Amnesty International, a liberal organization that supports so-called humanitarian interventions by U.S. imperialism, has declared that the detention of George Abdallah is currently held in a French prison.

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Along with the club, the Taser, tear gas and the gun, imperialism maintains its grip over the oppressed and workers around the world by swallowing falsehood after falsehood.

The reason for this is quite simple. While no one can deny that on one side, it's a sign they're in trouble, losing ideological control of the population. But the more desperate their lies and the less believable they become, the more trouble the imperialists are in.

Thus, we examine two statements made this week in Europe. One in occupied Palestine, that strain credibility so much that their repetition may boomerang on the liars.

Netanyahu’s Big Lie

The first was so unbelievable that it defies all reason. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu turned to a vicious, racist lie to attack the new Palestinian rebellion. In a speech on Oct. 20 before the 37th Zionist Congress, Netanyahu stood historic on its head. He said that, until 1941, Adolf Hitler had only planned to expel Jews from German-occupied Europe, not kill them, and that it was the Grand Mufti Haj Amin al Hussein, a religious leader from Jerusalem, who convinced the Nazi leader to exterminate the Jews. The only problem is that such a conversation ever took place. Every non-Nazi historian, including Israeli historians who have contradicted Net- anyahu, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, agree that the systematic murder of European Jews was entirely the idea of Hitler and his war machine.

Palestine Liberation Organization Secretary General Saeed Erakat pointed out that by telling this Big Lie, Netanya hu is “further fueling the political issue of European Jews was entirely the idea of Hitler and other Nazis.

Today, however, “that many officers unfairly sin- glet out African Americans for stops and arrests, and too often used force that was unjustified.” (nytimes.com, Oct. 24)

What binds together these two slander- ers, one from Israel’s bloody leader and the other from a former Nazi state? Their goal: to undermine the growing strength of oppressed people to throw off their chains and to achieve liberation from the racist forces arrayed against them.

Young people today, however, both in oc- cupied Palestine and the imperialist U.S., seem to be adhering in greater and greater numbers to the words of Malcolm X when it comes to Big Lies and the struggle: “I’m for truth, no matter who tells it. I’m for justice, no matter who’s for it or against it.”

Imperialists want unity amid crisis

The migrant crisis has deeply divided the imperialist-led EU member-states, prompting the leaders of France and Germany to issue a joint statement call- ing for unity.

Other countries such as Hungary have erected fences to keep migrants out, while abusing those who have entered by force- ing them into detention centers and by beating and gassing seniors, men, women and children.

Two desperate, racist lies

By Abayomi Azikiwe

Editor, Pan-African News Wire

A further militarization in the Medi-terranean has been approved through a resolution passed by the U.N. Security Council on Oct. 9. By a 14 to 1 vote, Euro-pean and U.S. naval forces were empowered to halt and turn back vessels transporting migrants across the Mediterranean into Southern Europe. Only the Bolivarian Re- public in Venezuela remonstrated in the face of imperialist pressure. Millions of people have been dislo-ca-ted throughout Africa, the Middle East and Asia since the conclusion of World War II.

This renewed effort, called “Operation Sophia,” consists of six naval warships from the EU in constant patrols off the coast of Libya. These vessels have been given the ability to halt, seize, detain and destroy boats used by human traffickers between thousands and one- thousand every week.

One Italian aircraft carrier, a French frigate and another from Britain, along with a Spanish ship, will use the EU’s entire naval force to maintain order off the Libyan coast.

The migrant crisis is a direct result of US-led imperialist militarism in various geopolitical regions as well as the ongoing world capitalist crisis. Turkey, a NATO state, is heavily involved in the destabi- lization of Syria, raising questions about US-NATO-Turkey’s war on migrant ships and political crisis, with more than 3,000 killed so far in 2015.

Imperialism’s big lies — the racist lies — will put the imperialist military and its col-laborators on trial. (tinyurl.com/pbj6b6d)

In Italy, thousands of demonstrators held a national march through Naples on Oct. 24 and a protest in Rome the next day. The “No to NATO” organization is holding round-the-clock meetings and demonstrations, includ- ing the capital, in the coming weeks.

On the opening day of the active exer-cises, U.S. Ambassador Alexander Versho- kow called the deputy secretary general of NATO, held a news conference at Trapani-Birgi military airport in Sicily. Vershkov pro-mised that NATO will not shield even France and Germany from any critical. NATO

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South Africa
Student struggle stops tuition hikes
By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Oct. 26 – South African President Jacob Zuma announced a moratorium on planned tuition fee hikes with effect from Oct. 23. These fee hikes were scheduled to go into effect for 2016 as Africa’s most industrialized state faces a burgeoning economic crisis of sluggish growth and increasing unemployment in the labor market.

The president’s proclamation came as two weeks of student protests closed universities in Pretoria, Fort Hare, Johannesburg, Cape Town and other cities and towns. The Twitter hashtag #feesmustfall has been used by students throughout South Africa. They demonstrated in the streets, at the parliament building on Cape Town’s Union Building in Pretoria and even outside the ruling African National Congress party headquarters at Luthuli House.

At Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg, a premier higher education institutional administrator, closed the campus to students on Oct. 14. These demonstrations rapidly spread to other campuses and shut down many.

The Witwatersrand Acting Student Representative Council (SRC), Sibonelo Mzimela, and Sheareea Kalla, explained a broader context, “There is a majority of Black students every year who are academically excluded from this university and financially excluded from this university. That is the reality and we are tired of that reality.” (eNCA.com, Oct. 16)

Governors of Universities and Vice chancellors, who were meeting in Durban the week of Oct. 12 during the National Education Summit to discuss the state of higher education, were taken off-guard by the protests. Witwatersrand University’s Vice Chancellor, Professor Adam Habib, was compelled to leave the conference and immediately return to Johannesburg to meet with protesting students.

The administration at Witwatersrand, which is at the center of the nationwide dispute, had proposed increases in registration, tuition and accommodation fees by an average of 10 percent for 2016. Despite Zuma’s announcement, student protests continued on Oct. 26. At Witwatersrand, student activists interrupted a university senate meeting designed to discuss the resumption of the academic program. They demanded the withdrawal of all demands for free university education, among other things.

The Oct. 26 South African Teachers’ Union (SATU) General Council held Oct. 8-11, reported that on most campuses students continued the protests: “They are demanding free education for all and that universities stop the outsourcing of staff and services.”

Education reflects broader challenges
The problem of higher education affordability is a manifestation of the increasing economic problems in South Africa where the government, due to its adoption of neoliberal policies, has been unable to implement free education, a mandate that the ANC won in 1994, the year of its Charter.

Since the ANC took office in 1994, assistance to students pursuing postsecondary education has increased substantially and gold-producing industries have adopted measures that have not adequately met the demands of work-class and poor communities.

Additionally, South Africa’s universities’ system allows individuals to determine internal governance issues such as fee increases, and student and labor affairs. Many aspects of the former apartheid system of institutional racism and class bias remain in the functional framework of education.

On Oct. 21, when Minister of Finance Nhlanhla Nene was delivering the mid-term budget before parliament, police were using teargas to disperse the thousands of students demonstrating outside the building. That did not deter the students from battling with security personnel.

Nene reported that the national debt has grown from 26 percent to 47 percent of the gross domestic product since the 2008-09 global economic crises when South Africa instituted counter-cyclical measures to combat the downturn. The growth of debt service is a major concern for bond ratings agencies, which can determine the cost of borrowing and foreign capital’s investments in the national economy.

These developments are aggravated by the decline in the rand’s value, which has slipped to the level of more than 13 to 1 against the U.S. dollar; it was about 7 to 1 in 2007. Nene’s administration expects the debt to rise to another $44 billion over the next three years, while stabilizing as a percentage of the GDP.

Debt service is the government’s fast-growing expense. Many of these difficulties stem directly from declining prices for commodity exports — and capitalist relations of production, where private businesses seek to cut labor costs amid declining currency values.

Debate intensifies inside Tripartite Alliance
The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr. Blade Nzimande, who is also the Secretary General of the South African Communist Party, has been harshly criticized for not acting decisively to solve the problems of increasing fees for education. The ANC parliamentary leader also reported that some youth leaders, including newly appointed ANC Youth League President Colman Maine have called for Nzimande’s resignation.

Others in the Tripartite Alliance — the ANC, SAPC and Congress of South African Trade Unions — have taken varying positions on this question in a wide-ranging debate. Accusations from elements in the ANC and the SAPC say they support the demand for free education. However, there could be another political struggle over the government’s stabilization of the economy and views about the demonstrations.

A polemic between the SAPC and the ANC has surfaced about the ANC’s National General Council held Oct. 8-11. The African Communist, a theoretical journal of the SAPC, openly criticized the General Council’s program in its third quarter issue, saying there needs to be a move away from neoliberal economic policy through larger state spending geared toward correcting the legacy of apartheid and colonialism.
Residente expone asesinatos por drones EUA

Por Minnie Bruce Pratt

Documentos clasificados del Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos fueron publicados el 15 de octubre por un “denunciante muy valiente y con grandes fuerzas”, seguido por los “objetivos”.

El ejército de EUA habitualmente clasifica a las personas no identificadas que mueren en los ataques dirigidos, como “enemigos muertos en acción”. Esto significa que todas las víctimas son llamadas “enemigos” varios meses o años después que de re- pente nos damos cuenta de que cuando pensábamos que iban tras un objetivo muy importante, terminamos dándonos cuenta que estábamos persiguiendo a su madre”. (Theintercept.com, 15 de octubre)

Desarma a EUA de drones

Mientras los Documentos Drone estaban siendo publicados, un grupo de manifestantes llegaban al final de una jornada de 165 millas con la intención de organizar una resistencia al terror armado de los drones.

El 19 y 20 de octubre manifestan- tes llegaron a la Estación de la Reser- va Aérea en las Cataratas del Niágara después de comenzar su viaje el 7 de octubre en la Base Aérea de la Guardia Nacional Hancock en Syracuse-NY. La marcha fue organizada por la Coalición Nacional Hancock en Syracuse-NY. La parada final fue impulsada por la Coalición Upstate to Ground the Drones. (upstatefreenation.com)

Residentes de Detroit enfrentan saqueadores corporativos

Por Martha Grevatt, Detroit

Lo que el sistema llama saqueo – to- mando quizás algunos comestibles o un abono de teléfono en una tienda durante una rebelión – puede llevar a una perso- na a la cárcel. El saqueo por banqueros mientras que está en casa, en- tén robar un museo, un parque, propiedad de la ciudad, un departamento de agua y las asociaciones de vecinos que está en la cadena de mando como el denunciante anónimo de Drone Papers, quien decidió que “... basta” y liberó los datos críticos al uso de drones.

Daniel Ellsberg, resistente de la guer- ra contra Vietnam, el fuego de los documentos clasificados de una cadena de denunciante en sábado fue publicado los Pape- les del Pentágono clasificados en 1971 que ayudaron a incitar una resistencia popular a las “guerras sin fin”. Esto significa que para volar el MQ Reaper se necesitan, por lo tanto, haber hecho lo que hicieron labor de otro negocio que no es reflexiva o pacífica.” (The Guardian, 15 de octubre)