



iFIDEL!

The death of Fidel Castro Ruz on Nov. 25 shook the world. The great revolutionary leader not only guided, but assisted the world's poorest peoples and those fighting for national liberation and socialism, whether in Cuba, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, elsewhere in Latin America and the Caribbean or here in the United States.

Fidel was the "Maximum Leader" of the Cuban Revolution, acknowledged as such by all who fought to topple the brutal Fulgencio Batista dictatorship and liberate Cuba from U.S. domination and imperialist exploitation. He was the leader of first a student movement, then a guerrilla band and finally an army of revolutionaries. These fighters all had tremendous abilities. Among them were Celia Sanchez, Vilma Espin, Juan Almeida, Che Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos, Frank Pais, Raul Castro and many others.

Fidel was **the** leader among all these heroic leaders, as well as in the eyes of millions of oppressed and downtrodden Cubans, struggling in the cities and starving in the countryside. He carried out their will. The population was ready for revolution, and Fidel and his collaborators won the people's confidence with their tremendous courage, integrity and resolve.

Much of this issue of Workers World is devoted to honoring Fidel's revolutionary life and legacy. In these pages, writers contribute their recollections, tell what Fidel and socialist Cuba have meant to them and to the world, and take a glimpse at Cuba today.

We'll start off here with the message Workers World Party sent to Comrade Raul Castro and the Cuban people. WWP was founded in 1959 — the same year as the victory of the Cuban Revolution — and has organized solidarity with Cuba ever since. □

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FIDEL, ¡presente! 5-9

- A visit with Fidel •Cubans in Harlem •Time to end the blockade
- Upholding revolutionary theory •Kaepernick defends Cuban gains
- Declaring socialism •Cuba aids African liberation
- LGBTQ strides and struggle •U.S. activists meet on Cuba solidarity

Workers World Party salutes Cuban leader

To Comrade Raúl Castro
Central Committee
Communist Party of Cuba
Havana, Cuba

Dear Comrades:

Our hearts go out to the Cuban people and all those who loved Fidel Castro. He changed history in a thousand different ways, all to benefit the many millions who have suffered starvation and abuse under colonialism and imperialism.

His enormous confidence in the struggling masses and their ultimate victory — expressed in his heroic

speech to Batista's court, "History Will Absolve Me" — inflamed young fighters for justice in Cuba and all over the world, from Latin America and the Caribbean to Africa, Asia, Middle East and the U.S. itself.

He armed the Cuban people with internationalism, solidarity, unity and an iron will to defend their independence and sovereignty. So when Africa called, Cuba answered and helped defeat the scourge of apartheid.

Fidel stormed the fortresses of the brutal servants of the empire at a time in history when U.S. imperialism was riding high. The plutocrats were outraged when he offered new hope for a socialist future just as they were gloating over the anticipated victory of capitalism in the

Continued on page 5

March on ICE

Pennsylvanians resists anti-immigrant attacks

By Joe Piette Philadelphia

A march Nov. 21 on the Philadelphia office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement demanded a halt to deportation proceedings for Pittsburgh construction worker Martín Esquivel-Hernández. The demonstration by family members and supporters represented a growing movement of activists in Pennsylvania and other states willing to march in the streets, provide sanctuary and carry out civil disobedience even before President-elect Donald Trump takes office.

Trump has promised to deport up to 11 million migrant workers and their families, build a wall on the U.S.-Mexican border and cut funding for cities that refuse to cooperate with ICE.

Esquivel-Hernández was an activist in the Latino Parents Council, in the A+ Schools Community Alliance for Public Education, and a facilitator, along with his spouse Alma Brigido, for the recently completed Latino Needs Assessment Project to examine the challenges confronting Latinx families in Pittsburgh's Allegheny County.

Racially profiled in a traffic stop in the affluent suburban town of Mount Lebanon, Esquivel-Hernández was cited by police on March 26 for driving without a valid license and without insurance. Currently, 12 states and the District of Columbia allow undocumented residents to receive a driver's license. Lucha Pro Licencias PA and other groups have been fighting for seven years to make Pennsylvania the 14th such area.

Esquivel-Hernández paid his fine on April 21, and according to U.S. District Court case records, he was identified as undocumented on April 25. On May 1, he and his family marched in an immigrants' rights rally from Beechview to Brookline. He and his young daughters held a sign that read: "Not one more deportation."

The next morning, at 6 a.m., ICE officers took Esquivel-Hernández from his Pittsburgh home.

Even though Esquivel-Hernández didn't meet the agency's established criteria for detaining and deporting undocumented residents, such as being a threat to public safety or national security, ICE continues to hold him in a for-profit prison in Youngstown, Ohio.

Martín's alleged crime is not that he is in the U.S. without authorization (being undocumented is not a crime). Rather, U.S. Attorney David J. Hickton has decided to

criminally prosecute Martín for "re-entry after deportation," for having repeatedly tried to cross the U.S.-Mexican border to be with his spouse and children.

Esquivel's family and supporters have led a campaign to keep the Esquivel-Hernández family together since late spring, most recently holding a march with faith and labor leaders on Nov. 15 in downtown Pittsburgh. After submitting a formal request for prosecutorial discretion, the Esquivel-Hernández family and community supporters traveled to Philadelphia to urge Thomas Decker, ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations field office director, to withdraw the case against Esquivel-Hernández.

Movement against deportations

Before marching, the Pittsburgh activists joined Philadelphia immigrant rights activists at the Arch Street United Methodist Church in Center City, where Javier Flores, his spouse and three children have received sanctuary since Nov. 13. Flores is a 40-year-old native of Mexico City who came to North Philadelphia without papers in 1997 and started a family. Since then, he has been deported and re-entered the U.S. several times, has endured 15 months in jail and was once again targeted to be deported on Nov. 14.

Black lettering on a twenty-foot-long orange banner at the front of the march read, "Devuélvenos Martín," "Bring Martin Home," "#NiUnaMas," and "Sign the petition at KeeptheEsquivelFamilyTogether.com." At the end of the march, in front of the ICE offices, Alma Brigido said, "These injustices are happening all over the United States to many families. ... This has got to stop."

Since the election of Trump on Nov. 8, thousands of students, professors, alumni and others at U.S. universities have signed petitions asking their schools to protect undocumented students from deportation.

Philadelphia and Pittsburgh are both sanctuary cities. They are two out of 300 cities from Seattle to Portland, Maine, where policies have been enacted to refuse to cooperate with immigration officials or persecute or track undocumented migrants.

The New Sanctuary Movement in Philadelphia has recruited over 750 people to join their Sanctuary in the Streets campaign, with the intention of disrupting ICE raids and supporting the families being targeted.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE Alma Brigido speaking in front of ICE.

WORKERS WORLD this week

★ In the U.S.

| | |
|---|----|
| Pennsylvanians resists anti-immigrant attacks | 2 |
| Standing Rock supporters crash 'Thanksgiving' parade | 3 |
| Oceti Sakowin defy U.S. Army Corps threats | 3 |
| Indigenous Day of Mourning | 3 |
| 'No mall on Ohlone sacred site!' | 3 |
| On the picket line | 4 |
| 'You have no rights' | 4 |
| Chicago protesters: 'Stop racist cops!' | 8 |
| Thousands march in Seattle against racism | 8 |
| Chicago: Youth light up Cuba meeting | 9 |
| From Virginia to Wisconsin: Broad front against Trump | 10 |
| Oligarch to head (mis) education department | 10 |

★ Around the world

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Chilean women march for rights | 9 |
|--------------------------------|---|

★ Editorial

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Reaction breeds resistance | 10 |
|----------------------------|----|

★ Remembering a revolutionary

| | |
|--|---|
| ¡FIDEL! | 1 |
| Workers World Party salutes Cuban leader | 1 |
| Meeting with Fidel | 5 |
| 1960: Harlem welcomed Cubans | 5 |
| Upholding Marxism-Leninism | 5 |
| Kaepernick defends Cuba's gains | 6 |
| 'Under the noses of the imperialists' | 6 |
| Fidel's legacy and African liberation | 7 |
| Cuba's LGBT Revolution | 8 |
| Fidel on the U.S. blockade of Cuba | 9 |

★ Noticias en Español

| | |
|--|----|
| Mensaje del Partido Workers World- Mundo Obrero al Partido Comunista de Cuba | 12 |
| El legado de Fidel y la liberación africana | 12 |
| Gracias, Fidel | 12 |
| Mensaje de condolencias de la Red de Mujeres en Lucha del Centro de Acción Internacional | 12 |

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MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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At Standing Rock: Oceti Sakowin defy U.S. Army Corps threats

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Standing Rock defense against the Dakota Access Pipeline received a new threat when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced on Nov. 25 that it planned to “evict” all water protectors from any land north of the Cannonball River. The agency claimed that area as “Corps-managed federal property.”

Then, on Nov. 28, North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple issued an order for all those encamped to evacuate, supposedly due to weather-related safety concerns. Dalrymple is closely allied with fracking and pipeline interests in the state, and has all along shown no concern for the well-being of the #NoDAPL water protectors.

Kandi Mosett, of the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN), commented in a Nov. 28 press release, “Our intention has always been to be here until the water is protected. We have no intentions or plans to go anywhere.” (tinyurl.com/zkh5gz9)

The land involved does not properly belong to the Army Corps of Engineers, nor should it be subject to the jurisdiction of the state of North Dakota. It is part of the ancestral home of the Oceti Sakowin (the Seven Council Fires of the Great Sioux Nation). It is also inside the boundaries of the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty, a treaty with the U.S. that is still in effect.

Since April, encampments have been set up there by Indigenous nations and allies in militant, determined #NoDAPL resistance. The pipeline currently under

construction violates Native sovereignty, desecrates sacred burial sites and dishonors historical treaties. The pipeline also endangers the safety of the people, their land and water, as well as the drinking water of the 17 million people downstream on the Missouri River.

Dec. 5 ‘eviction day’ threat

The Corps’ “eviction day” was designated as Dec. 5 — ironically the birthday of U.S. Lt. Col. George A. Custer, commander of the 7th Cavalry famously defeated by Lakota and other Plains Nations at the Battle of the Greasy Grass (Little Bighorn). The U.S. Army retaliated with more massacres of Native peoples, including one of Cheyenne people at the headwaters of the Powder River on Nov. 25, 1876.

Cheyenne River Sioux Chairman Harold Frazier responded to the Corps’ notice on Nov. 26, “I take your letter as issuing a direct and irresponsible threat to the water protectors. It appears to further empower the militarized police force that has been brutalizing and terrorizing our water protectors while imposing the blame and the risk on unarmed peaceful people.” (nativenewsonline.org)

He added, “We will no longer allow our rights as a Tribe or as Indigenous people as a whole to continue to be eroded. This decision, coming on the heels of the Thanksgiving holiday, is not only disrespectful, but continues the cycle of racism and oppression imposed on our peo-

ple and our lands throughout history.”

The strength of the water protectors’ resolve, and the international solidarity with Standing Rock, pushed back the Corps, which on Nov. 27 denied any plans to “forcibly remove activists,” while hinting that access to the area may be cut off. It is possible that could mean denial of all supplies and of water protectors’ freedom to enter. (Reuters)

Of the renewed threat by the governor, Dallas Goldtooth of IEN said in the same release, “We remain committed to peaceful and prayerful civil disobedience. We estimate there are 6,000 people in this camp, women, children, disabled people, veterans, all here for the purpose of protecting the water. We are now in the heart of winter ... and it is terrifying to think that the State of North Dakota is contemplating placing the lives of thousands at risk.”

Leading the resistance

Native women and Two-Spirit people have been at the forefront of the #NoDAPL defense of Standing Rock. They have been disproportionately impacted by sexual exploitation, assault and violence in “pipeline towns” along the construction route.

On Nov. 27, a women’s march of hundreds confronted the concrete barriers, razor wire and construction equipment on Highway 1806 where water protectors had been viciously attacked and critically injured by cops on Nov. 20. Their chants rose up, “Respect our water. Respect our land. Respect our people. Honor our treaties. Mni Wiconi. Water is life. What do you do when your people are under attack? Stand up fight back.”

Continued on page 4

Indigenous Day of Mourning



WW PHOTO: STEVE KIRSCHBAUM

The 47th annual National Day of Mourning organized by the United American Indians of New England was held Nov. 24 in Plymouth, Mass., to debunk the racist myth of “Thanksgiving.” Over 1,000 people gathered in solidarity with the fighting spirit of Indigenous peoples, who continue to resist racist U.S. genocidal policies dating back to Christopher Columbus.

That resistance lives on today, especially in Standing Rock, N.D., where hundreds of Native nations have united since last spring against the building of the multibillion-dollar Dakota Access Pipeline within a four-state radius. The DAPL threatens to poison the water supply of at least 17 million people and desecrate sacred burial lands. Indigenous peoples and their supporters there have endured and resisted unimaginable brutality by militarized police and private mercenaries from such companies as G4S, a global security firm notorious for human rights abuses.

Another major focus for NDOM is the

ongoing struggle to free beloved Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier, who sent a letter of solidarity to NDOM. Increased efforts are being made to force President Obama to grant clemency for 72-year-old Peltier, falsely imprisoned since 1976 and in failing health.

The rally of all Indigenous speakers included UAINE co-chairs, Moonanum James (Aquinnah Wampanoag) and Mahtowin Munro (Lakota), Thalia Carroll Cachimuel (Kichwa), Juan Gonzalez (Maya), Bert Waters (Wampanoag), Deborah Spears Moorehead (Wampanoag) and the Nettukusqk Eastern Woodland Singers. Additional speakers were Billy Myers (Iahtehotas), Sister Bello (Mexicana), Tiokasin Ghosthorse (Cheyenne River Lakota Nation) and Elder Vanessa Meztli Inaru (Taino).

Following the rally, a spirited march took place before everyone enjoyed a collective feast. For updates, check workers.org.

— Monica Moorehead



Emeryville, Calif.

‘No mall on Ohlone sacred site!’

The Ohlone people and their supporters held the 17th annual protest at the Bay Mall in Emeryville, Calif., on Nov. 25, the day pushed by retail businesses as so-called “Black Friday.” This infamous mall was built upon an Ohlone people’s Shellmound.

Supporters spread out over several blocks distributing fliers to shoppers, asking them not to shop at this mall. Everyone converged back at the sacred site at 2 p.m. to hear speakers and join the closing ceremony. The event’s Facebook page noted that over 200 people came together to “draw connections between the amazing resistance by Water Protectors in Standing Rock and the protection of sacred sites here at home in the Bay Area.” (tinyurl.com/jqy6ppy)

The same post explains, “In 1999, the City of Emeryville built the mall that now sits on the corner of Shellmound Street and Ohlone Way. This space was once an Ohlone village site and it was one of the largest Shellmounds in the Bay Area. The sacred Shellmound once stood over 60 feet high and 350 feet in diameter and it was considered the largest funerary complex of the Ohlone people.

“When the mall was built, we petitioned the city council and asked them not to destroy our sacred sites, but the developers and the businesses ignored our voices. Although the mall was built, our resistance is alive and it has never died.”

Corrina Gould, one of the Ohlone or-

ganizers, asked for support to stop a new threat to the West Berkeley Shellmound where developers want to create an underground parking lot by digging into the sacred site. Public hearings on this issue are being held in Berkeley on Dec. 1 and 8.

There was also a packed house for a fundraiser for the warriors at Standing Rock, N.D., on Nov. 27 at the Intertribal Friendship House in Oakland. Several people who had traveled there reported on the situation. Everyone listened intently when a participant at the Standing Rock encampment called into the event with a status update about the struggle.

— Story and photo by Terri Kay

Standing Rock supporters crash ‘Thanksgiving’ parade

By Mond
Detroit

Starting early on Thursday morning, Nov. 24, activists came from all over southeastern Michigan to demonstrate solidarity with the Water Protectors at Standing Rock in the midst of the annual “America’s Thanksgiving Parade” in downtown Detroit. Demonstrators were vocal about their disdain for not only the colonialist celebration of the genocide of Native peoples, but also the disregard for the current situation at the Standing

Rock camp in North Dakota.

People running the “Turkey Trot” marathon seemed to give positive responses to the demonstrators. Performers in the parade, however, looked as if their spotlight had been stolen, stolen like the land on which their floats glided.

Passersby often joined in, in support of our message in solidarity with the Indigenous struggle to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline. There was a wide variety of age groups among the ranks of the demonstrating activists, with the youth leading most of the chants. □

Detroit



WW PHOTO: JULES AYRES

Support for water protectors, Nov. 24.



Calif. largest public employees union set to strike

Some 95,000 California civil service workers represented by Service Employees Local 1000 voted to strike Dec. 5 after contract negotiations hit a standstill on Nov. 22. The majority-women workforce, including administrative assistants, custodians, nurses, teachers and others, accused the state of bargaining unfairly and refusing to close the gender pay gap. According to Local 1000 President Yvonne R. Walker: “Since June, the state has had a ‘take it or leave it’ approach and has engaged in unlawful conduct and bad faith bargaining. The state has inexplicably failed to budge from its opening proposal on salary and benefits and has even bargained regressively.” (seiu1000.org/strike) The state’s proposed pay increases — a paltry 2.96 percent each year for four years — would be offset by cuts to employee and retiree health care plans. (sacbee.com, Nov. 22)

Meanwhile, Gov. Jerry Brown’s bargaining team has refused to respond to the union’s concerns about the pervasive gender pay gap among California public workers. According to a Human Resources Department report, women earn 79.5 cents for every dollar men workers are paid. Despite this injustice, state unions representing more male-dominated professions such as engineers, lawyers and scientists have negotiated substantially higher pay raises. (sacbee.com, Oct. 28) Workers and supporters are urged to join picket lines throughout the state on Dec. 5.

Federal injunction halts expansion of overtime eligibility

A federal judge issued a preliminary injunction on Nov. 22 against a new expansion of overtime eligibility for millions of workers. A predictable assortment of business groups, headed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Retail Federation, as well as a coalition of 21 states, led the opposition to the new Department of Labor regulation. Under the old regulation, only workers with a yearly salary of \$23,660 or less were qualified for overtime pay, meaning one-and-a-half times their regular hourly pay for work above 40 hours a week. The new regulation, which was scheduled to go into effect Dec. 1, raised that yearly salary to \$47,476, which would grant the right to overtime pay to 4.2 million workers. Since Congress first enacted the rule in 1938, the Labor Department had raised the salary base repeatedly, until 2004. It hasn’t been raised since then. The DOL is considering an appeal to the judge’s ruling.

The injunction is a gift on a silver platter to Trump, who has vowed to reverse many regulations instituted by the Obama administration. However, as the Nov. 23 New York Times observed, rescinding the rule could require a lengthy process similar to the one that produced it, and might lead to a “deal” raising the limit more gradually below the slated amount. The Times noted that “the politics of essentially withdrawing a planned salary increase from many workers could prove complicated for an incoming president elected on a message of improving workers’ economic circumstances.” Will Trump help middle-income workers or side with his wealthy business buddies and his own narrow interests as a boss?

N.C. sweet potato farmworkers win back wages, union rights

If you’ve enjoyed a sweet potato recently, chances are it was harvested in North Carolina by migrant farmworkers, who supply nearly half of all sweet potatoes in the U.S. Although the state’s minimum wage is currently \$7.25, the workers who produce the state vegetable are paid piece rates that fall well below the minimum wage. (america.aljazeera.com, Nov. 27, 2014)

In 2014, four farmworkers at Birch Farms filed a lawsuit against their employer for widespread wage theft and other labor law violations. With help from the AFL-CIO’s Farm Labor Organizing Committee, the workers negotiated a settlement that included over \$7,000 in payouts to the four plaintiffs, remunerations for the rest of the workers and a three-year collective bargaining contract. In total, Birch Farms paid out over \$200,000. Armed with union power, the workers have won an hourly pay raise to \$10.72, as well as protection from unjust firing. (floc.com)

Workers win contracts at Giant Food, Safeway

The 17,000 grocery workers at Giant Food and Safeway stores in mid-Atlantic states were prepared to strike on Nov. 18 to prevent takebacks such as higher health insurance costs — which would wipe out wage increases — and elimination of higher pay on Sundays. But they didn’t have to strike to get the three-year contract they ratified Nov. 16. Starting wages are now increased to over \$9 an hour for members of Local 27 and Local 400 of the Food and Commercial Workers. Wages will increase more frequently based on months of service, not number of hours worked. The workers credit their win to widespread customer support for the union’s demands.

State to Flint and Detroit: ‘You have no rights’

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

Attorneys for the state of Michigan have filed a 62-page motion to dismiss a lawsuit on behalf of children in the Detroit Public Schools. The DPS student body is over 90 percent African American. The lawsuit argues that, based on the 14th Amendment, all children have the right to literacy. This right is denied by the conditions under which Detroit children are forced to learn: buildings infested with rodents, insects and mold; classrooms that are frigid in winter or steaming hot due to malfunctioning heaters; widespread shortages of books, desks, supplies and even teachers; and class sizes over 50. Teachers staged walkouts during the previous school year to protest these deplorable conditions.

Assistant Attorney General Thomas Haynes argued that “literacy is a component or particular outcome of education, not a right granted to individuals by the Constitution” and that “the U.S. Supreme Court has unambiguously rejected the claim that public education is a fundamental right.” Apparently he slept during class when Brown v. Board of Education was discussed.

Since 1999, DPS has been under a governor-appointed

emergency manager; the elected school board has no real power. DPS debt ballooned under emergency management, with interest payments to the banks sapping much-needed funds. The tax base was eroded over decades, first by auto plant closings and then by falling home values after the banks created the foreclosure crisis. Low-performing, for-profit charter schools are a financial drain.

The current EM, federal Bankruptcy Judge Steven Rhodes, presided over the Detroit municipal bankruptcy through which city EM Kevyn Orr slashed retiree pensions and handed city assets over to private, state or regional control.

‘Flint has no right to water’

Though out of the public spotlight, Flint, Mich., continues to suffer from a water crisis caused by decisions made by state-appointed EMs. The city was lead-poisoned after the EM decided to stop supplying water from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department and draw water from the polluted Flint River. When Flint, in order to cut costs, did not add anti-corrosive chemicals, the lead from aging pipes leached into the water supply. Children with elevated blood lead levels were suddenly failing school.

Flint has since switched back

to Detroit water, but the replacement of lead service lines has been at a snail’s pace. While properly filtered water has been deemed safe to drink, many households still lack correctly installed, functioning filters.

On Nov. 10, federal Judge David Lawson ordered the state to distribute bottled water door-to-door to anyone still unable to drink water from their faucet. The order came after the Natural Resources Defense Council sued on behalf of Flint residents.

As with literacy, the state denies that even water is a human right. On Nov. 21, attorneys for State Treasurer Nick Khouri filed a notice of appeal of the judge’s order, claiming it “increases the scope of the state’s emergency response to an unnecessary and insurmountable degree.” As of this writing on Nov. 27, the state has not begun delivering water, forcing residents to continue to go to a distribution center. Because Flint, like Detroit, is a majority-Black city teeming with the state’s poorest residents, many people do not own vehicles, which only increases their hardship.

The state of Michigan is brazenly asserting that Detroit and Flint have no rights the state is bound to respect. The election of Donald Trump as president has likely further emboldened these racist politicians. □

At Standing Rock Oceti Sakowin defy U.S. Army Corps threats

Continued from page 3

Calls have also gone out for the immediate release of Red Fawn Fallis, arrested along with 140 other water protectors on Oct. 27. Fallis was brutally arrested while walking away from cops, who then accused her of firing a gun at them. Bystanders assert she had no gun, but the charges could punish her with 20 years in jail.

Fallis had the state charges against her dropped on Nov. 29.

However, she was immediately taken to the federal courthouse in Bismarck, where she was charged with possession of a weapon and denied bond.

Red Fawn Fallis was considered a “mother” by many youth at Standing Rock. She often used a four-wheel vehicle to rescue those who needed medical attention during police confrontations. An American Indian Movement member, Fallis is from an Oglala Lakota family dedicated to fighting for

Indigenous rights. She is now a political prisoner.

Red Power Media commented Nov. 7 on Red Fawn’s arrest: “To some pipeline protesters, who described [her] as a passionate activist dedicated to peaceful tactics, her detention is the latest sign that North Dakota police are aggressively targeting a growing movement and will go to great lengths to protect a powerful corporation threatening sacred tribal lands.” □

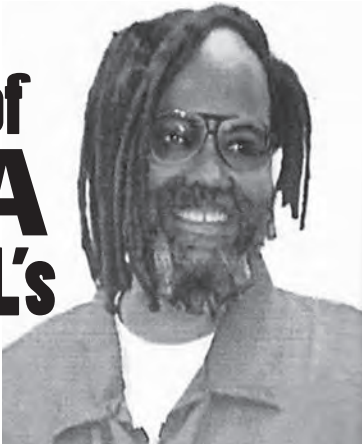
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3 pm Rally & March

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15th St. and JFK Blvd.

5:30 pm Indoor event

Arch Street United Methodist Church

Corner Arch St. and Broad St.

Food will be available for donation

6 pm – 9 pm Program

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NYC-Newark Bus Info 212.330.8029

\$20 round trip

tickets must be purchased by Dec 6

10 AM Maysles Cinema

343 Malcolm X Blvd, between 127th & 128th

11 AM 475 10th Ave between 36th & 37th

12 noon 53 Lincoln Park, Newark

Remembering a revolutionary

Meeting with Fidel

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Much has been said and written about Comandante Fidel's contributions to liberation struggles in Latin America, the Caribbean and all over the world. His personal contributions and his attributes are rarely highlighted enough. It was Fidel's revolutionary qualities that made his leadership take such a gigantic step forward on behalf of peoples' liberation and revolutionary socialism, not only in Cuba but also internationally.

Fidel left such a tremendous legacy, so many lessons, teaching through personal example how to be a true and consistent revolutionary socialist!

I met Fidel in 1993 during a medical-aid delegation to the island. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, writer Alice Walker and American Indian Movement founder Dennis Banks led the 10-person delegation, which also included several medical doctors.

It was a time of an optic neuropathy epidemic that affected thousands of Cubans and was exacerbated by the U.S. criminal blockade on Cuba, which imposed great difficulties in obtaining materials from abroad. The crisis, however, was resolved like so many difficulties in Cuba through the creative spirit of the Revolution inspired by Fidel — not to accept a defeat, but to transform it into victory.

That is how the setback after the July 26, 1953, attack on the Moncada — when many revolutionaries were killed by Batista's forces and Fidel was imprisoned — later became a victorious revolution.

The delegation met Fidel late at night for three hours at the Palacio de la Revolución. His great ability to converse with people was impressive. He made us feel at ease and got us to talk about valuable and relevant issues, while deepening our own understanding and ability to reflect on them.

This wasn't just a nice personal feature. It illustrated vividly his thoroughly dialectical approach to life, what we as Marxist revolutionaries must constantly be vigilant about and pursue, particularly when we live in a society marked by metaphysical thought — the premise that basically things don't change and that there is no interrelation with other developments.

Casual conversation was not part of Fidel's vocabulary. For him, every person he met was a source of new information, of new experiences. Talking with Fidel was like unraveling a mystery. He always had



a question, wanted to learn more, learn about the reasons, the basis of an affirmation. I had never met anyone like him.

Through his conversation with Dennis Banks we learned about the struggle to preserve the language and history of the Native peoples in the U.S. With Alice Walker the topic was Africa's lack of adequate development due to colonialism and her research for her book on girls' genital mutilation. With me, knowing that I am Boricua, the conversation was about the annihilation of our Taíno Indigenous people by Spanish colonialism and the current status of Puerto Rico under U.S. domination.

Fidel is now more alive than ever. He has become the bond uniting people all over the world. It is no accident that the quality usually studied first about Fidel is the concept of unity.

Viva Fidel! Long live the international socialist struggle!

Joubert-Ceci is editor of Mundo Obrero.

Upholding Marxism-Leninism

By Fred Goldstein

With the death of one of the greatest revolutionaries of modern times, many recollections will be penned: of the incredible revolutionary deeds he carried out with his comrades; stories illuminating his personality; political recollections, etc.

Collectively these will all add up to a rich picture of an indomitable revolutionary. It is also helpful to bring out the role of revolutionary theory in Fidel's historic achievements.

In a lengthy speech carried on television and radio throughout Cuba on Dec. 2, 1961, the fifth anniversary of the landing of the Granma, Fidel gave a background to the development of the Cuban Revolution. The transcript of the speech was published by Fair Play for Cuba in February 1962 and republished by Walter

rich. He always spoke truth to power.

And he had such rapport with his audiences! So many shouted-out replies to his questions, so much honest laughter at his well-aimed jokes. He spoke for and listened to the people to a degree few leaders ever achieve.

Fidel had a long and glorious life. We knew his body could not survive forever. But he truly lives on in the hearts and brains of hundreds of millions of people. We mourn his loss today, but we will invoke his name tomorrow and for future generations as we continue to fight for a socialist system to undo the terrible damage capitalism has inflicted on the workers and oppressed and on our entire planet.

Larry Holmes, First Secretary
National Committee
Workers World Party, USA

1960

Harlem welcomed Cubans

By Stephen Millies

When Cuba's delegation arrived in New York City in September 1960 to attend the United Nations General Assembly, the Eisenhower administration had already stopped Cuba's sugar exports to the U.S. This big economic blow was the real beginning of the U.S. blockade — which remains in effect as of this writing — against the Caribbean country.

The Cuban delegation was even confined to Manhattan during its stay, an extremely hostile act.

Fidel Castro and other Cubans initially stayed at the swanky Shelburne Hotel located near the United Nations. But after the Cubans arrived, the hotel manager demanded a \$20,000 security deposit, ostensibly because of threats from counterrevolutionaries. Capitalist newspapers were filled with racist anti-Cuban stories claiming delegation members had chickens in their rooms and had damaged ho-

tel property.

Fidel decided to leave the Shelburne immediately. He told U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld that the Cubans were going to set up tents on the grounds of the U.N.

Instead, the Cubans went to Harlem. Raúl Roa Kouri, whose father Raúl Roa was Cuban foreign minister, told Fidel, "I have a hotel."

"Which hotel?" asked Fidel.

"The Hotel Theresa," said Roa Kouri.

"Where is this hotel?" asked Fidel.

"It's in Harlem."

Fidel asked Raúl how he was sure he could book the hotel. "Through Malcolm X," replied Raúl.

"Go get Taber" [Ron Taber of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee], said Fidel, "and then go see Malcolm X. And book the Theresa Hotel."

The Cuban delegation arrived at the Hotel Theresa on 125th Street and Seventh Avenue (now Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard) after midnight on Sept. 20.

People had already gathered to greet Fidel. "When he stepped out of the car and was whisked quickly into the unpretentious, aging Theresa, smack in the middle of Harlem, a roar of welcome went up. 'We want Castro!' chanted the crowd." (New York Citizen-Call, Sept. 24, 1960)

Black people knew that the Cuban Revolution was committed to fighting racism. The revolution's first act was to desegregate the tourist beaches from which Black Cubans had been barred. The famous Black radical writer and poet Langston Hughes visited Fidel Castro.

Thousands of people lined the streets every night to greet the Cubans, who included Juan Almeida, a Black Cuban who had been a commander of the guerrilla army. Vince Copeland, editor of Workers World newspaper at the time, went there too.

The Cuban delegation organized a dinner to thank the workers at the Hotel Theresa. That's something U.S. imperialist diplomats would never think of doing.

Fidel meets with Malcolm X

Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev came to Harlem to meet with Fidel Castro. So did Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

But it was the important meeting Fidel Castro had with Mosque No. 7 Minister Malcolm X that symbolized the alliance between the Cuban Revolution and the Black Liberation Movement in the U.S.

Malcolm later wrote in his autobiography that Fidel "achieved a psychological coup over the U.S. State Department when it confined him to Manhattan, never dreaming he'd stay uptown in Harlem."

Source: "Fidel & Malcolm X: Memories of a Meeting" by Rosemary Mealy (Ocean Press).



Workers World Party salutes Cuban leader

Continued from page 1

vicious Cold War.

Who can forget Fidel's defiance at the Bay of Pigs, his great energy concentrated on winning both the military and political battles? It was on April 16, 1961, while U.S. mercenaries were invading Cuba and Fidel was leading the counter-attack, that he said for the first time, "The Yankee imperialists cannot forgive us for having made a socialist revolution under their very noses." The die was cast. Cuba would never go back to capitalist slavery.

Who can forget his ringing speeches to the Cuban people? He meticulously went over the concrete lessons of each new revolutionary initiative and demolished the lies of the parasites, those who had treated the island as nothing but a source of cheap labor and entertainment for the

Kaepernick defends Cuba's gains

By Monica Moorehead

Colin Kaepernick, the African-American quarterback with the National Football League's San Francisco 49ers, has arguably been the number one story intertwining sports and politics since late August. His sitting down, followed by taking a knee to protest the playing of the national anthem before NFL games, has helped to elevate mass consciousness on the systematic racism in the capitalist system, especially police violence heaped upon Black and Brown people. His courageous act of kneeling, week after week, has encouraged others, especially Black and Brown youth, many of them athletes in all kinds of sports, to also protest police brutality and other forms of racist violence.

Kaepernick sponsored a "Know Your Rights" conference in Oakland, Calif., on Sept. 29 for at least 100 Black and Brown youth. They discussed and issued a 10-point program, modeled on the Black Panther Party program, to help empower youth, including knowing their legal rights when confronted by police.

**Focus on main message:
'Fight police brutality'**

Kaepernick has expressed solidarity on Twitter with Indigenous nations leading the heroic struggle against the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline in Standing Rock, N.D., and for an Indigenous Peoples' Day, not "Thanksgiving."

While Kaepernick has gained millions of admirers, he has also been viciously attacked by neoliberals and right-wingers of every stripe for the form and content of protest he has taken. Some have even stated that the protest has gone on too long and that he should cease, which he has refused to do.

And now the vitriolic nature of attacks against Kaepernick has reached an even higher crescendo over recent remarks he made about former Cuban President Fidel Castro before and after his death.

In response to a shirt that Kaepernick wore in early September showing a meeting of Fidel Castro and Malcolm X in Harlem in 1960, a Cuban-American reporter



with the Miami Herald, Armando Salguero, asked Kaepernick during a Nov. 23 press conference before the 49ers played the Miami Dolphins why he wore the shirt.

Kaepernick first responded that Malcolm X is a hero of his and he supported his ideology. When Salguero stridently asked him why wear a shirt with Fidel, Kaepernick stated calmly that Malcolm was always a person open to new ideas, one of the traits he admired most about him. He also stated that "Castro did help create a highest literacy rate because [Cuba invests] more in their educational system than they do in their prison system, which we do not do here [United States] even though we're fully capable of doing that." When Salguero went on to say that Castro "divided Cuban families," Kaepernick retorted that mass incarceration in the U.S. divides families.

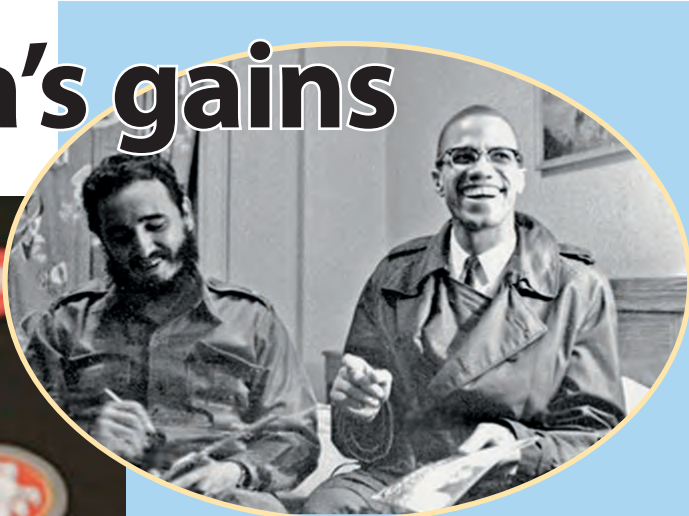
At a Nov. 27 press conference, the same reporter asked Kaepernick if he felt the same way about Castro upon his death. Kaepernick repeated some of the points he had made earlier: "What I said was I agree with the investment in education. I

also agree with the investment in free universal health care, as well as the involvement in helping end apartheid in South Africa. ... I said I support the investment in education..." (USA Today, Nov. 28)

Did Kaepernick utter the words "socialism" or "revolution" to praise Fidel Castro? No, and it didn't matter because even the mildest of positive or negative comments about Fidel Castro did not



Fidel Castro, Teófilo Stevenson and Muhammad Ali in Havana 1996.



Fidel Castro and Malcolm X at the Hotel Theresa.

I agree with the investment in education. I also agree with the investment in free universal health care, as well as the involvement in helping end apartheid in South Africa.

– Colin Kaepernick

stop the most contemptible, outrageous attacks on a professional football player who has dared to take on white supremacy in his own unique way.

It proves again that a high-profile athlete like Kaepernick has the influence to help bring about more awareness by connecting institutionalized racism at home to U.S. foreign policy abroad, which is a threat to the political stability of the capitalist class and its apologists.

Michael Smith, a co-host of ESPN's "His and Hers," stated on Nov. 28 that any attacks on Kaepernick's remarks on Fidel Castro should not be used to distract attention from his main message — fighting police brutality. □

'Under the noses of the imperialists'

Cuba turns back Bay of Pigs invasion

Fidel explained, how in that forgotten area of small, impoverished coastal villages, the revolution had brought education and dignity to the people for the first time. They were not going back.



By Deirdre Griswold

It was April 16, 1961. Cuba was about to be invaded by thousands of counterrevolutionaries organized, trained and armed into a military force by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Young men and women in berets were crowded into the New York office of the pro-Cuban Revolution group, the 26th of July Movement, on West 139th Street in Spanish Harlem. Static sputtered from a shortwave radio and everyone grew quiet. Fidel was about to speak.

My Spanish was barely adequate, but I got the thrust of his talk: A declaration of defiance aimed at those who were trying to undo the glorious Cuban Revolution, which had finally brought justice to the common people of Cuba.

Suddenly, everyone cheered. Berets were thrown in the air. There was hugging and jumping for joy.

"What did he say?" I asked.

One compañero took pity on me and translated: "He said we have made a socialist revolution right under the noses of the Yankee imperialists!"

He said it right as U.S.-supplied planes

were about to drop bombs and the mercenaries were poised to invade Cuba's sparsely populated southern coast. The plan was to grab a foothold there so they could declare a "Free Cuba," set up a "provisional government" and then call in open U.S. military support.

But the local militia, defenders of the revolution, was able to pin down the invaders long enough for Fidel and regular army troops to race south. Fidel explained it later, how in that forgotten area of small, impoverished coastal villages, the revolution had brought education and dignity to the people for the first time. They were not going back.

And the revolution was not going back. It was socialist and would never let the exploiters run the country again, not at the Bay of Pigs, not anywhere.

Griswold was secretary of the Francisco Molina Defense Committee, which in 1961 fought for the release of a young Cuban worker framed for murder in New York. Testifying against him were Cuban counterrevolutionaries later captured at the Bay of Pigs. He was released and returned to Cuba as part of the prisoner exchange after the defeat of the invasion.

Fidel's legacy and African liberation

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

No other political figure outside of Africa symbolized global solidarity with the aspirations of the people, from the northern regions to the subcontinent, more than Comandante President Fidel Castro Ruz of the Republic of Cuba.

Historical, political and cultural ties between the people of Africa and Cuba extend back over five centuries. Cuba was colonized by European empires utilizing the labor of enslaved Africans, whose super-exploitation laid the basis for the rise of world capitalism and imperialism.

In a speech delivered in Havana by President Castro on April 19, 1976, commemorating the 15th anniversary of the heroic victory over exiled mercenaries coordinated by CIA operatives at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs), the Cuban leader said, "We are a Latin African people — enemies of colonialism, neocolonialism, racism, apartheid, which Yankee imperialism aids and protects."

Castro was responding to U.S. propaganda castigating the role of the socialist state, which had deployed 55,000 of its own troops beginning in October 1975 at the request of Dr. Agostinho Neto, leader of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the Marxist-led independence front.

The MPLA had done most of the fighting against Portuguese colonialism since 1961. It was increasingly being surrounded by U.S.-backed reactionary forces of the Front for the National Liberation of Angola and the Union for the Total Independence of Angola.

Cuba's 1975-76 intervention proved decisive in the rapid consolidation of the MPLA as the ruling party in the oil-rich state of Angola. Cuban internationalists would remain in Angola until 1989, after the defeat of the racist South African forces and the independence of neighboring Namibia (South West Africa), which had been under the occupation of the apartheid regime.

Africans mourn death of Fidel

Numerous African political leaders have expressed condolences to the Cuban government and people.

The nation of Algeria in North Africa declared eight days of official mourning in honor of the revolutionary leader, who assisted in the defense of the country during the early years of national independence from France.

Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika saluted the late Cuban revolutionary as "an authentic defender of the values of peace, respect and national sovereignty, and of his uncompromising struggle for the rights of people to self-determination. ... This is also a great loss for the people of Algeria who have a special relationship with El Comandante, made of respect, admiration and mutual affection." (Xinhua News Agency, Nov. 27)

President José Eduardo dos Santos of the Republic of Angola called Castro "an extraordinary figure of transcendent historical importance." Approximately a total of 350,000 Cuban internationalists served in Angola during the war against the U.S.-supported forces of counterrevolution, including the well-armed and brutal South African army.

Others weighing in on the passing of Fidel Castro included Republic of Namibia President Hage Geingob of the South West Africa People's Organization, the national liberation movement turned ruling political party that has maintained power in the post-apartheid state since independence in March 1990. He said the



With Nelson Mandela, first post-apartheid president of South Africa.



The battle of Cuito Cuanavale, above.

"Castro led the Cuban revolution and dedicated his entire life not only to the freedom of the Cuban people and the right of the Cuban state to sovereignty and self-determination, but also the freedom of other oppressed people around the world."

— President Jacob Zuma, South Africa



Fidel Castro with Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde liberation leader Amílcar Cabral.



With Agostinho Neto, first president of Angola.



With Kwame Nkrumah, first president of Ghana.



With Ethiopian President Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam.

a great friend of Zimbabwe and Africa. U.S. imperialism has imposed sanctions on both Cuba and Zimbabwe for many years. (Nov. 27)

The Sunday Mail also noted how both President Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo, leader of the Zimbabwe African People's Union-Patriotic Front, were indebted to the support provided by Cuba in the African revolutionary process.

ZAPU-PF's military wing, the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) enjoyed the support of the Cuban government during the guerilla campaign fought against the Rhodesian and South African armies.

Former ZIPRA cadre Grace Noko said, "When we went for training in Cuba, we were well-received and were treated well during the course of our training. ... Castro was a warm man who hated racism and oppression. He hated people who despised blacks because of their color."

Noko added that "our leaders, the likes of Dr. Joshua Nkomo, were inspired by Castro. He counseled them along the lines of the right to independence, economic freedom and the need to fight inequality. The training was well-conducted, tough and of high standard. We were trained not

only to fight in the war, but also to economically liberate ourselves afterwards."

Enormous Cuban assistance in Ebola epidemic

In 2014, Cuban medical personnel were deployed to Liberia and Sierra Leone after the rapid spread of the Ebola pandemic. The outbreak, the worst in history, hit three West African states: Liberia, Guinea-Conakry and Sierra Leone.

Even the U.S. corporate media and government were forced to acknowledge Cuba's phenomenal contribution to the efforts to contain and eradicate the disease, which left over 11,000 people dead and thousands more gravely ill, including health care professionals in the three countries.

An article published by this author during the height of the Ebola pandemic on Nov. 4, 2014, was reprinted in August of this year by the Cuban leader's website, fidelcastro.cu. It stressed that "Cuban health care workers have played a leading role on the African continent for decades. The revolutionary government views its work in the fight against the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) as a manifestation of internationalism and solidarity with Africa." □

struggle in Angola "was the watershed moment in southern African liberation."

SWAPO's military units fought alongside the Angolan defense forces, Um Khonto we Sizwe, the guerilla army of the African National Congress and the Cuban internationalists in battles for the total independence of Angola.

President Jacob Zuma, current leader of the ANC ruling party of South Africa, recounted, "Castro led the Cuban revolution and dedicated his entire life not only to the freedom of the Cuban people and the right of the Cuban state to sovereignty and self-determination, but also the freedom of other oppressed people around the world."

South African Minister of Trade Rob Davies emphasized how "Castro was one of the giants of the revolution in the 20th century. He played a pivotal role in the liberation of Southern Africa, particularly in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale — the Stalingrad of apartheid. Castro showed incredible solidarity and ensured that our fighters prevailed, making the transition in South Africa unstoppable."

Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi stressed, "Through the Mandela-Castro initiative, Castro sent doctors to South Africa to work in rural hospitals. Cuban doctors are taught to work in primary health care, which is what the world needs, and in this way Castro was ahead of his time." (iol.co.za, Nov. 26)

The Zimbabwe Sunday Mail quoted President Robert Mugabe as saying on numerous occasions that Fidel was



Cuban doctors spared no effort in attempting to stop the spread of Ebola in West Africa. Now they have returned home to their families, mission accomplished.

PHOTO: RAMÓN BARRERAS VALDÉS

In wake of Fidel’s death, reflections on ‘MARIELA CASTRO’S MARCH:

CUBA’S LGBT REVOLUTION’

By Teresa Gutierrez

The documentary “Mariela Castro’s March: Cuba’s LGBT Revolution” aired on Nov. 28 on HBO.

It likely had a wider audience coming after the death of our beloved comrade Fidel Castro. Already the right-wing propaganda that attacks Cuba on the issue of LGBT rights has begun. This is nothing new.

The documentary should be seen within a particular context, however.

The Cuban Revolution is one of the greatest revolutions of all times. Fidel is a leader like no other; he will go down in history as a beloved revolutionary.

Yes, mistakes were made in the early years of the revolution on the LGBTQ issue. Yes, there is still work to be done today. But backward ideas on this or any social issue come not from the Revolution but from the legacy of colonialism and Catholicism. Centuries of colonialism cannot be eradicated in less than 60 years of revolution, much less antiquated ideas on the LGBTQ issue.

Revolutionary class lens needed

When people from the United States travel to Cuba for the first time, it is easy to see the Revolution through a subjective lens.

You can be somebody who does not “get it” and is hypercritical. Or you can get completely caught up in adoring the Revolution. I am one of those.

But in all fairness to its leaders and the heavy responsibilities required to build a revolution, the Cuban Revolution must be seen through a more objective lens.

The LGBTQ issue in Cuba should not be judged through the experience of living in the U.S. That is unfair and prejudicial. Nor should the LGBTQ issue in Cuba be put under a microscope, especially from the U.S. — the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today, as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stated.

The first time I traveled to Cuba years ago, an 88-year-old woman beckoned to me from her wheelchair to come talk with her. Her family was wealthy and had fled to Miami after the Revolution. My grandmother had just died and listening to this woman’s support for the Revolution brought me to tears.

During that visit, I was utterly filled with euphoria. All I could think about was how when my grandmother went to the hospital, she worried if her insurance covered everything. Because in Cuba not only is health care virtually free, but a doctor lives in almost every neighborhood.

As a person of color, a weight flies off your shoulders knowing there is absolutely no police terror in Cuba.

Many times over the years Cubans have warned us to shake off that euphoria. One Cuban leader said, “We are not the hell our enemies claim; nor are we the paradise our friends declare either.”

“Mariela Castro’s March,” directed by Emmy winner Jon Alpert, should be seen in that context.

The documentary focuses on the work of Mariela Castro, a member of Parliament and the director of CENESEX (National Center for Sex Education).

It is a frank and sobering account of conditions for LGBTQ people in Cuba today. It is a loving and genuine portrayal of the progress made in the Revolution for LGBTQ rights, as well as the challenges that still persist.

It has honest, in-depth interviews with elder gay men victimized by backward attitudes in the early days of the Revolution. These prejudices were rooted in the Spanish colonizers’ Roman Catholicism, the patriarchy of slavery and the sexual exploitation of LGBTQ people in prerevolutionary Cuba, a U.S. capitalist “playground.”

In 1965, when Cuba was preparing for the possibility of another U.S. invasion, gay men were not allowed to serve in the military. This was also true in the U.S. at

that time.

When Units to Aid Military Production (UMAP) work brigades were mobilized to help Cuba out of an economic crisis, gay men, along with religious conscientious objectors, were assigned to those units instead of military service. (Leslie Feinberg, “Lavender and Red”)

UMAP brigades were not internment camps, but there was prejudice and some serious ill-treatment of gay men. Because of this, about a hundred young men from the Communist Youth were sent undercover to investigate. After their report, the brigades were closed down. (Ernesto Cardenal, “In Cuba”)

In 2010, Fidel humbly acknowledged in an interview with La Jornada that these early acts were “a great injustice” to gay people and a mistake. He had earlier affirmed in 1992, “I am absolutely opposed to any form of repression, contempt, scorn or discrimination with regard to homosexuals. It is a natural tendency, a human [tendency], that must simply be respected.” (Feinberg)

The documentary contains painful accounts of beatings and hateful attitudes toward LGBTQ people. One transgender woman tells of losing an eye after a homophobic Cuban threw acid in her face. A lesbian tells how her supervisor refused to promote her because of her sexual orientation. The film points out that the supervisor was a member of the Cuban Communist Party.

I have to admit that my love for Cuba has been so one-sided that I was shocked. I was also fearful that the film would be used to further demonize my beloved Revolution.

Groundbreaking work by CENESEX

But have no fear. The work that Mariela Castro and CENESEX are doing is groundbreaking. It will strengthen the Revolution and be another pillar of socialism in this new period.

As director of CENESEX, Mariela took on a difficult issue. She did not abuse her position as the daughter of President Raul Castro or the niece of Fidel, but did the necessary hard work of educating and organizing, step by step.

Knowing the Cuban Revolution, I am confident that Mariela, who is straight,

works closely, hand-in-hand, with LGBTQ Cubans in defining the current work.

I am also aware that the work took on greater importance because it was Mariela, a revolutionary socialist in her own right, whose contribution should be recognized and commended.

The Cuban government has prioritized doing the necessary work to change attitudes in society on the LGBTQ issue. They have done more than the capitalist government in the U.S. will ever do. The Cuban government defends and fights for all its people. There is no Wall Street there to dictate policy.

The government allowed the documentary to show the errors made, even by Communist Party members. This belies the myth that there is no free speech in Cuba.

Things are not perfect in Cuba; it’s not a paradise. But there are no trans murders in Cuba, which are rampant in the U.S.

While progress is being made in Cuba, the LGBTQ community in the U.S. is likely to face setbacks now that a gay-conversionist advocate will be vice president and a known sexual predator will be president.

Homosexuality was decriminalized in Cuba in 1979. In 2008, the Cuban government began offering free gender-reassignment surgery to transgender Cubans. Every May an annual “March against Homophobia” is held in Havana and LGBTQ activists visit rural areas to promote diversity.

In a short 57 years great progress has been made. But the first steps in the liberation of our Cuban LGBTQ sisters, brothers and family were made in 1959, with the triumph of the Revolution, and in 1961 when Fidel declared Cuba a socialist society. With that declaration, LGBTQ Cubans and all society could begin the long march toward full liberation. Thank you, Fidel.

Please check out “Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba” for a groundbreaking must-read on the LGBTQ issue and Cuba. In the meantime, “Mariela Castro’s March: Cuba’s LGBT Revolution” proves that the Revolution continues moving forward and will survive.

Viva Fidel! Love and solidarity to our LGBTQ Cuban comrades!

See workers.org/lavender-red/LavenderRed_Cubabook.pdf. □

Thousands march in Seattle against racism

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

At least 3,000 demonstrators marched in Seattle this year on the second anniversary of the 2014 Black Friday protests against the infamous grand jury decision not to indict the cops for the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo.

Black Lives Matter activists led the multinational marchers through downtown for four hours, blocking off streets. This limited the business of the rich re-

tailers, and an army of cops didn’t help them.

Demonstrators chanted, “Black lives matter, not Black Friday!” and “Refugees are welcome here!” They also chanted, “Mni Wiconi, Water is Life,” in solidarity with the great Native-American convergence with the Oceti Sakowin at Standing Rock, N.D.


There were also many signs and T-shirts which read, “Block the Bunker,” opposing the city’s plan to build a massive police precinct costing \$160 million. □



Chanting “Boycott Black Friday, stop racist police!” hundreds of demonstrators blocked store entrances Nov. 25 on Chicago’s upscale Michigan Avenue to demand enactment of CPAC, a pending ordinance that would provide for an in-

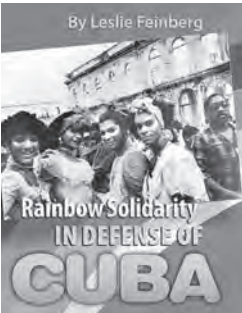
dependent and elected review board to ensure that police terrorists are held accountable. The action was organized by the Chicago Alliance against Racist and Political Repression.

— Report and photo by Jeff Sorel



Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

By Leslie Feinberg author of ‘Stone Butch Blues’
Lavender & Red series, online at workers.org
Book is available at major booksellers online



CHICAGO

Youth light up Cuba meeting

By Cheryl LaBash
Chicago

The annual meeting of the National Network on Cuba included a public event at the University of Illinois in Chicago on Nov. 19-20. Arriving guests viewed images of Cuba’s historic leader Fidel Castro taken by Roberto Chile for Fidel’s 90th birthday. The speakers, cultural presentations and audience itself showed the depth of support in the U.S. for the Cuban Revolution. New generations showed their strength, involvement and leadership.

With the recent easing of U.S. government restrictions that had long blocked Cuban representatives from traveling outside New York City and Washington, D.C., this meeting opened broader dialogue in the U.S.

First Secretary of the Cuban Embassy Miguel Fraga, director of the North American Division of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) Sandra Ramirez and Leima Martinez, also representing ICAP, shared the podium with Jose López, brother of Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera; Aislinn Pulley, of the Black Lives Matter movement; and Harold Rogers, of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

Not realizing that a week later Fidel Castro would die, 35-year-old Cuban Martinez answered questions about what would happen in Cuba without Fidel. She replied, “The young people in Cuba are there to continue his work and ideas. Young people in Cuba feel identified with the objectives of the revolution. ... Every policy that has been implemented in Cuba during all the years by the revolution, but mainly during the last five years, has been supported by the young people in Cuba.

In fact, the young people are involved in every aspect of the updates of the social and economic model in Cuba.

“Those who have visited Cuba know much about what the youth are doing in the university, in the research centers. They are leading the most important aspects of the dialogue between the U.S. and Cuba, because we have identified health care exchanges and so on. We are also proud to say that young people all over the world celebrated the 90th birthday of Fidel, as well as in Cuba.”

Chicago anti-racists look to Cuba

In a city infamous for racism, police outrages and economic hardship, Aislinn Pulley, co-founder and lead organizer with Black Lives Matter Chicago, came to the meeting from the funeral of yet another victim of police killings. She rejected the “duopoly” of the Democratic and Republican parties, pointing out that Chicago’s mayor is a Democrat, but the police killings continue. The elected officials in Ferguson, Mo., are also Democrats.

She asked, “What does justice look like? What is an alternative to the present misery so many people are living in? When we struggle we can win. When we fight we do win. That is the lesson of Cuba. Despite being a tiny country of 10 million-plus people and only 90 miles from the shore of the largest superpower the world has known, the Cuban Revolution is alive and thrives.”

Noting that she had been to Cuba three times, Pulley said, “The example of Cuba, particularly in the work I have been involved in, is really important because of the mothers whose children were murdered by the [Batista] dictatorship. They took the streets in Havana and they led



PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

marches. And it is the mothers who are leading the marches here in Chicago and across this country. It is the example of that resistance that we emulate, that can teach us to look beyond the mythology of the duopoly in this country, to create a system that is actually provided for and governed by the majority of the populace. The possibility of Cuba is not a mythology. It is a reality.”

Jessie Fuentes asked the audience to sign petitions to free Puerto Rican independence fighter Oscar López Rivera before presenting her spoken word composition “New Puerto Rico.” Andrea Meza delivered spoken word titled “Struggle across borders.”

AbEEKU Ricks, a 2016 graduate of Cuba’s Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM), shared his gratitude to Cuba and explained how different education is

in Cuba. “My generation is the health care activists in the world. In the 60s Cuba sent soldiers, now they are sending doctors. Fidel Castro called it one of his greatest accomplishments, the army of white coats.”

Ricks shared that he has friends and family members who have been killed by police here: “Our lives do matter. Cuba put it into perspective how Black people can replicate the Cuban revolution. Cuba has a place in my heart.”

Earlier in the day, in a series of panel discussions, Ricks and fellow ELAM graduate Dr. Erlyne Hyppolite discussed Cuba’s health care model.

Four Venceremos Brigadistas crafted an interactive discussion to look at anti-oppression and anti-racism as a priority in Cuba solidarity work.

The Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization and the National Lawyers Guild alerted the meeting to two serious attacks on the Cuba solidarity movement. U.S. government agencies are attempting to punish IFCO for its Friendship Caravans by stripping the parent organization of its tax-exempt status, and they are attempting to fine Floridian Albert Fox \$100,000 for traveling to Cuba. IFCO outlined its plans to organize against the U.S. blockade of Cuba with caravans in April and a travel challenge in July.

A fourth panel examined the definition of ethical travel to Cuba, describing a new organization of travel providers called RESPECT, whose stated principles encourage respect for Cuba’s laws, regulations and sovereignty when planning travel there.

Video of these panels and the public meeting are available at Facebook.com/CubaNetwork, and will be posted soon to NNOC.info. □

Fidel on the U.S. blockade of Cuba

By Cheryl LaBash

Last year, despite some improvements in bilateral relations, the still-existing U.S. blockade cost Cuba more than \$4 billion, while hampering every aspect of Cuban life. The U.S. continues to levy fines against banks and businesses. U.S. organizations like the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization and individuals like Floridian Albert Fox are still being targeted and harassed for opposing the U.S. blockade.

U.S. plans to blockade the Cuban economy began with an internal State Department memo dated April 6, 1960, with the title “The Decline and Fall of Castro.” Now public, the memo’s first point is that “the majority of Cubans support Castro.” Its second is that “there is no effective political opposition.” (tinyurl.com/h6tm8e5)

The memo recognizes that “the only foreseeable means of alienating internal support is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship. ... It follows that every possible means should be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life of Cuba ... to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of government.”

Eleven presidents and 56 years later, Washington, after failing to “overthrow” the Cuban government, still employs the old U.S. playbook of economic warfare. The blockade is obscured because now there are direct flights from the U.S. to Cuba, corresponding embassies and bilateral, mutually respectful talks

with agreements. And President Barack Obama visited Cuba in March.

Unlike most U.S. trading partners, however, Cuba is still blocked from using dollars, must still pay cash in advance to buy from the U.S. and cannot export to the U.S. Washington still tries to subvert Cuba with U.S. Agency for International Development destabilization programs, radio and TV broadcasts and special financial inducements to urge irregular immigration. U.S. agents even try to lure Cuban doctors away from aiding poor countries and providing disaster relief.

Fidel’s take on Cuba’s strengths

On May 1, 2003, Fidel Castro, then Cuba’s president, spoke at the Martí Monument in Revolution Square in Havana more than a decade after Cuba suffered, and then overcame, the shock of losing its main trading partners:

“After the demise of the USSR and the socialist bloc, nobody would have bet a dime on the survival of the Cuban Revolution. The United States tightened the blockade. The Torricelli Act [1992, signed by President George H.W. Bush] and the Helms-Burton Act [1996, signed by President Bill Clinton] were adopted, both extraterritorial in nature.

“We abruptly lost our main markets and supplies sources. The population’s average calorie and protein consumption was reduced by almost half. But our country withstood the pressures and even advanced considerably in the social field.

“Today, it has largely recovered with regard to nutritional requirements and is

rapidly progressing in other fields. Even in these conditions, the work undertaken and the consciousness built throughout the years succeeded in working miracles.

“Why have we endured? Because the Revolution has always had, as it still does and always will to an ever-greater degree, the support of the people, an intelligent people, increasingly united, educated and combative.” (tinyurl.com/hh5lbwv)

In 2016, for the 25th consecutive year, the United Nations General Assembly called on the U.S. to end the economic,

commercial and financial blockade of Cuba. When this call was introduced for the first time in 1992, 59 countries supported Cuba, 71 abstained and 3 voted against Cuba — the U.S., Israel and Romania. This year of 193 countries, 191 voted for Cuba, and none voted against. Only two — the U.S. and Israel — abstained.

In 1960, Washington began an attack on a popular government and it continues this attack in 2016. The Cuban government still has the support of its people. It’s time the blockade ended. □

Chilean women march for rights

By Lucha Rodriguez and Janet Miller
Santiago, Chile

Thousands of women and their supporters took to the streets in Valparaíso and Santiago, Chile, on Nov. 25 to demand an end to violence against women and children in their country. Every sector of women participated in the large marches, including trade unionists, members of lesbian organizations, Indigenous women and students.

Organized by the Chilean Network Against Violence Toward Women, the loud, militant protest occupied almost 20 blocks of a large boulevard here in the capital. Protesters chanted along the way, while paste-up teams plastered the sidewalk with information as the march went by.

Demonstrators demanded a response by the government to the frequent violence victimizing women. Although this



PHOTO: LUCHA RODRIGUEZ

was the march’s main theme, there were contingents demanding abortion rights, lesbian/bi rights, equal pay for women and an end to male chauvinism.

Chants were loud and forceful. One demanded women get out of the kitchen, and another criticized the Catholic church: “Get your rosary out of my vagina.” Many of the main organizers were from the universities. □

WORKERS WORLD editorial

Reaction breeds resistance

A wave of terrible hate has surged through the U.S. since Donald Trump's election. This has been confirmed by the Southern Poverty Law Center through statistics that track and expose hate acts and crimes.

Three days after the election, every Black first-year student at the elite University of Pennsylvania received an email with racist language and explicit images of lynchings. Such threats have proliferated throughout the United States at worksites, schools and on the streets through verbal abuse, chants of "Build the wall," dangling ropes or Black dolls hung in effigy, and other racist acts.

These threats foreshadowed horrific lynchings-by-gun. On Nov. 12, African-American musician William Sims was targeted and killed by white supremacists in El Sobrante, Calif. On Nov. 22, James Means, a 15-year-old African-American youth, was shot while sitting on a friend's porch in Charleston, W.Va. His murderer was a 62-year-old white man who remorselessly justified his action with racist language.

The Ku Klux Klan announced a victory march in North Carolina on Dec. 3 to celebrate Trump's win. A Michigan police officer drove his Confederate flag-flying pickup truck on Nov. 11 to a rally protesting Trump's election. This "battle flag," widely adopted by white supremacist and neo-Nazi hate groups, was proudly hoisted by Trump backers at a post-election "unity rally" in Delaware and elsewhere.

According to the SPLC, anti-immigrant hate incidents are now the most frequently reported, including assaults, bombings, threats and property destruction. The FBI documented a 67 percent increase in attacks on Muslims in 2015, with a sharp rise in attacks on trans people. Forty percent of all recent incidents occur in educational settings, from kindergarten through college.

This post-election hate has targeted all oppressed groups and has been virulently anti-immigrant, anti-Black, anti-LGBTQ, anti-Muslim, anti-Jewish and anti-woman. The vandalism and violence have been so dramatic that even corporate media like People and Time magazines have had to condemn them. But that condemnation only reflects the alarm of the ruling-class wing that lost the presidency to loose-cannon Trump.

Jan. 20 counter-inaugural protests

The real and powerful resistance to these acts of terror is coming from working-class and oppressed people everywhere in the country. On election night, mass marches under the slogan "Not My President" erupted and continued for days, coast to coast. Individuals are posting real-time, how-to-resist examples on social media showing courageous one-on-one confrontations with hate-spewing strangers. One resistance video shows a self-defense instructor and a hijab-wearing Muslim woman demonstrating how she will stop an attacker attempting to rip off her scarf.

Defense of immigrant people is echoing 19th-century activist actions against

the Fugitive Slave Act, which authorized federal marshals to seize free African-American people and force them back into slavery. Support for "sanctuary" cities and schools is growing nationally. The movement's aim is to stop cops and federal immigration officials from arresting undocumented immigrants and deporting them.

The challenge is to continue to have people's deep outrage flow in the most forward direction — to fighting the capitalist system itself. The way forward is not to flee back into the corporate arms of the Democratic Party. The way forward is not to embrace a Bernie Sanders approach that pits "identity politics" against "class politics." That is an abysmal failure. It must be understood that oppressed people are working people who suffer disproportionately because of their oppression — whether from racism, migrant status and deportations, anti-LGBTQ and anti-woman hatred, Islamophobia or prejudice toward people with disabilities.

On Jan. 20 we have a chance for a huge People's Referendum on Trump, which will challenge the climate of hate and capitalist greed against the common good.

When protesters gather on J20 in Washington, D.C., at counter-inaugural protests, they will say in a loud, united voice: "No! We resist!" They will announce their resolve to make the U.S. ungovernable under a president and an administration intent on destroying the present and future for workers and oppressed people.

Resistance is not futile. Resistance is the only way. Resistance is the path to meaningful work at livable wages, the path to education and health care for all, the path to liberation and smashing oppression, the path toward a future where human beings have all they need for their development and enjoyment. This is the path to a socialist revolution and a socialist future for working and oppressed peoples.

For more on counter-inauguration plans, visit J20resist.org.



Oligarch to head (mis)education

By Gene Clancy

Trump's naming Betsy DeVos to be secretary of education has been touted by some so-called analysts as proof that the new administration is attempting to balance its earlier appointments of ultra-right figures with a "moderate" or less offensive "establishment" choice.

The truth is that all such statements are a smoke screen devised to hide from the general public the poisonous world of big-business politics.

Betsy DeVos is the daughter of a billionaire. She is married to a billionaire. Most recently she was the chairperson of the Michigan Republican Party. Through her career, she has been most active try-

ing to privatize and destroy public education through charter schools and vouchers that directly support private schools.

DeVos and her spouse played a role in getting Michigan's charter school law passed in 1993. Ever since, they have worked to protect charters from additional regulation. When Michigan lawmakers this year were considering a measure that would have added oversight of charter schools in Detroit, members of the DeVos family poured \$1.45 million into legislators' campaign coffers — an average of \$29,600 a day for seven weeks. Oversight was excluded from the final legislation.

DeVos was one of the main architects of Detroit's charter school system, which

From Virginia to Wisconsin Broad front against Trump

By Workers World Staff

Over 1,000 protesters answered a call by young activists on social media and took to the streets of Cleveland on Nov. 18 to tell the incoming administration that "Trump is not my president!" Many of the marchers were on their first protest and brought signs they had made themselves. Another demonstration has been set for Dec. 3.

Called together in only a few days from throughout Southwest Virginia, dozens of poor and working people came out to the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. memorial statue on Nov. 19 in Roanoke to continue the fight against the pro-Wall Street Donald Trump and Mike Pence administration.

The multinational participants arrived from Floyd County, Lynchburg, Radford and other locations, many driving over 100 miles round trip to join the protest, which kicked off with a loud, militant chant of "No Trump! No KKK! No racist USA!"

Participants in a speakout honored Dr. King, noting that he was murdered while standing in solidarity with Memphis' striking sanitation workers and that he also stood up to racist anti-worker politicians. Speakers included union organizers, supporters of Planned Parenthood, anti-fascist activists, longtime LGBTQ community fighters, anti-police brutality activists, Fight For \$15 organizers and many more.

Speakers noted that it wasn't people of color, immigrants or Muslims who shut down coal, textile and other manufacturing plants or harmed the environment in Southwest Virginia. It was Virginia-based and Wall Street capitalists and their political servants who closed the plants.

The mostly youth and students present pledged to assist and defend Muslims, refugees, women, the LGBTQ community, people with disabilities, and workers and the poor under attack by the Trump-Pence administration.

During the speakout, Roanoke police threatened participants with arrest for "unlawful assembly" for having an activity without a permit. The protesters stood up to this outrageous threat, marching into downtown Roanoke and back. The cops backed down.

"We stand against Trump-Pence and any capitalist politician who perpetuates racism, sexism, xenophobia, ob-



WW PHOTO: SUSAN SCHNUR

scene wealth for the few via exploitation of workers and plundering of public resources, the poisoning of our waters, airs and lands, wars and police terror," said Jason Lambert of 15 Now Roanoke.

People's actions are scheduled in the coming weeks and months in Southwest Virginia, including a Dec. 10 Justice For Kionte Spencer rally and Dr. King community marches in Lexington on Jan. 14 and in Roanoke on Jan. 17. More information is at facebook.com/15NowRoanoke.

Wisconsin activists pledge resistance



PHOTO: MILWAUKEE COALITION AGAINST TRUMP

Upon learning that Trump won the election, community members hit the streets Nov. 8 in Milwaukee and Madison, Wis., and stayed there with a series of protests. Plans are in motion for resistance actions on the Jan. 20 inaugural date and beyond.

"Since Trump's victory, we have seen a huge increase nationally and in Wisconsin in bullying and attacks against Latinxs, Muslims, African Americans, immigrants, women, Asians, LGBT people and others," wrote Christine Neumann-Ortiz, executive director of Voces de la Frontera in a Nov. 14 media release.

"We call on religious communities to commit to offer sanctuary to people targeted for deportation. In Wisconsin, we are holding forums across the state and organizing for work stoppages and mass protest in the event that Trump moves forward with his plans. We pledge resistance and we encourage others to do likewise."

Voces de la Frontera held mass meetings in Milwaukee and Racine on Nov. 13. At both meetings community members voted to strike and mobilize massive protest actions to stop the coming attacks.

The newly formed Milwaukee Coalition Against Donald Trump sponsored a march of 3,000 in downtown Milwaukee on Nov. 10, followed by a meeting of over 200 at All People's Church on Nov. 20. There speakers announced there would be a mass rally and march Jan. 20 in Milwaukee that would kick off "100 days of resistance" paralleling Trump's first 100 days in office. (See facebook.com/MilwaukeeCoalitionAgainstTrump.)

For updates and more information on anti-Trump protests in Wisconsin: wibailoutpeople.org, facebook.com/wibailoutpeople.org or workersworldpartywisconsin.org.

department

education activist Douglas N. Harris, a professor of economics at Tulane University and a nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, called the “biggest school reform disaster in the country.” (New York Times op-ed, Nov. 25)

But DeVos’s real goal is to promote, on a national basis, school vouchers like those already in place in some states, including Indiana and Wisconsin. Vouchers directly transfer money from the public schools to private schools, many of them religious.

“Charter schools take a while to start up and get operating,” DeVos told the Philanthropy Roundtable in Spring 2013. “Meanwhile, there are very good non-public schools, hanging on by a shoestring, that can begin taking students today.”

‘Family values’

Right-wing politics has been the main beneficiary, not only of Betsy DeVos herself, but most of her immediate family. Her spouse, Dick DeVos, is the heir and CEO of Amway Corp., which has been called a “Multi-Billion-Dollar Scam.” (cracked.com, May 18, 2015) Estimated to be worth about \$5.5 billion, Amway instructs its employees not to mention its name — perhaps because it has so often been sued for being a giant pyramid

scheme. Based in Michigan, it currently does 90 percent of its business outside the United States.

Erik Prince, DeVos’ brother, founded the infamous Blackwater Worldwide mercenary organization with his own money. Thanks to over \$2 billion in federal contracts, Blackwater became one of the premier contractors for world imperialism. It has committed war crimes around the world, including Baghdad’s Nisour Square massacre of 17 Iraqi civilians and wounding of 20 more in 2007. Although three guards were eventually convicted of manslaughter and murder, Blackwater and its founder never faced any charges.

Betsy DeVos’ father Edgar Prince became a billionaire by owning a large auto parts manufacturing company in Holland, Mich. He and spouse Elsa Prince Broekhuizen were notorious for pushing creationism in Michigan public schools. In 2008, Broekhuizen donated \$450,000 to a California ballot initiative which attempted to outlaw same-sex marriage. In 2004 she was the top individual contributor to the campaign to outlaw same-sex marriage in Michigan.

With a background and “credentials” such as these, there is little doubt that Betsy DeVos will help the Trump administration pursue its reactionary and anti-working class goals. □

Gracias, Fidel

Continúa de página 12

a los 50 años de edad, pero siendo Fidel, Fidel, su cuerpo decidió la fecha de su partida.

En 1977, me encontraba encarcelado en una prisión yanqui en Estados Unidos cuando mataron a mi padre. Gracias a la presión del pueblo, el gobierno yanqui se vio obligado a autorizar mi traslado a Puerto Rico por 7 horas para asistir al entierro. Los periodistas me preguntaron cómo me sentía ante la muerte repentina de mi padre. Yo les respondí que no había venido a llorar su muerte, sino a celebrar su vida, que fue la de un patriota. Lo mismo digo de Fidel.

Gracias a Fidel y al Gobierno Revolucionario de Cuba, así como a la campaña internacional por la liberación de los cinco nacionalistas, salimos de prisión el 10 de septiembre de 1979. Fidel y el Gobi-

erno Revolucionario cubano negociaron un canje de prisioneros, entre los que se encontraba Lawrence Lunt, un agente de la Cía preso en Cuba.

Un reportero me preguntó si iría a Cuba, pero como tú sabes, Fidel, yo nunca he aceptado la ciudadanía estadounidense impuesta a los puertorriqueños por el congreso yanqui, y por lo tanto tampoco acepto su pasaporte, requisito impuesto para salir de Puerto Rico al exterior. No podré estar allí físicamente, pero mental y emocionalmente estaré contigo y con el heroico pueblo de Cuba.

Es mucho lo que podría decir de ti, pero por el momento solo quiero decirte, en nombre de Puerto Rico y de todos los que tu ejemplo seguirá inspirando en la lucha por un mundo mejor ¡Gracias, Fidel!

Dondequiera que estés, ipa’lante siempre, compañero! ¡Venceremos! □

Pelotón femenino Mariana Grajales, 1959. Fidel consideró que las mujeres guerrilleras podían realmente empuñar las armas.

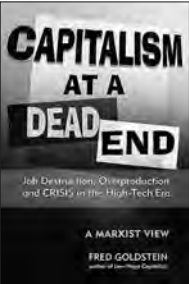


Vietnam, 1973.



El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

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



For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com Available at all major online booksellers.

El legado de Fidel y la liberación africana

Continúa de página 12

Liberación Nacional de Angola y la Unión para la Independencia Total de Angola.

La intervención de Cuba en 1975-76 resultó decisiva para la rápida consolidación del MPLA como partido gobernante de Angola, país rico en petróleo. Los internacionalistas cubanos permanecerían en Angola hasta 1989, tras la derrota de las fuerzas racistas sudafricanas y la independencia de la vecina Namibia (Sudáfrica occidental), que había estado bajo la ocupación del régimen del apartheid.

Africanas/os lamentan muerte de Fidel

Numerosos líderes políticos africanos han expresado sus condolencias al gobierno y al pueblo cubano.

La nación de Argelia en el norte de África declaró ocho días de duelo oficial en honor al líder revolucionario, quien ayudó en la defensa del país durante los primeros años de lucha por independizarse de Francia.

El presidente argelino Abdelaziz Bouteflika saludó al fallecido revolucionario cubano como “auténtico defensor de los valores de la paz, el respeto y la soberanía nacional, y de su inquebrantable lucha por los derechos de las personas a la libre determinación. ... Esta es también una gran pérdida para el pueblo de Argelia que tiene una relación especial con El Comandante, forjada de respeto, admiración y afecto mutuo”. (Agencia de noticias Xinhua, 27 de noviembre)

El presidente José Eduardo dos Santos de la República de Angola llamó a Castro “una figura extraordinaria de trascendente importancia histórica”. Aproximadamente un total de 350.000 cubanos

internacionalistas sirvieron en Angola durante la guerra contra las fuerzas de contrarrevolución apoyadas por EUA, incluyendo al brutal ejército sudafricano.

El presidente de la República de Namibia, Hage Geingob, de la Organización del Pueblo de Sudáfrica Occidental (SWAPO), el movimiento de liberación nacional que luego se convirtiera en partido político gobernante que ha mantenido el poder en el estado post-apartheid desde su independencia en marzo de 1990, dijo que la lucha en Angola “fue el momento decisivo en la liberación del África meridional”.

Las unidades militares de SWAPO lucharon junto a las fuerzas de defensa angoleñas, las Um Khonto we Sizwe - el ejército guerrillero del Congreso Nacional Africano - y los internacionalistas cubanos en batallas por la total independencia de Angola.

El presidente Jacob Zuma, actual líder del partido gobernante de Sudáfrica, dijo: “Castro lideró la revolución cubana y dedicó toda su vida no sólo a la libertad del pueblo cubano y el derecho del Estado cubano a su soberanía y autodeterminación, sino también por la libertad de otros pueblos oprimidos en todo el mundo”.

El ministro de comercio de Sudáfrica, Rob Davies, enfatizó cómo “Castro fue uno de los gigantes de la revolución en el siglo XX. El desempeño un papel fundamental en la liberación de África meridional, particularmente en la batalla de Cuito Cuanavale – el Stalingrado del apartheid. Castro mostró una increíble solidaridad y aseguró que nuestros combatientes prevalecieron, haciendo que la

transición en Sudáfrica fuera imparable”.

El ministro de salud Aaron Motsoaledi subrayó: “A través de la iniciativa Mandela-Castro, Castro envió médicos a Sudáfrica para trabajar en hospitales rurales. A los médicos cubanos se les enseña a trabajar en la atención primaria de la salud, que es lo que el mundo necesita, y de esta manera Castro fue un hombre que se adelantó a sus tiempos”. (Iol.co.za, 26 de noviembre)

El Zimbabwe Sunday Mail citó al presidente Robert Mugabe diciendo en numerosas ocasiones que Fidel era un gran amigo de Zimbabue y África. El imperialismo estadounidense ha impuesto sanciones tanto a Cuba como a Zimbabue durante muchos años. (27 de nov.)

El Sunday Mail también señaló cómo tanto el Presidente Mugabe como Joshua Nkomo, líder de la Unión del Pueblo Africano de Zimbabue-Frente Patriótico (ZAPU-PF), estaban en deuda con el apoyo proporcionado por Cuba en el proceso revolucionario africano.

El ala militar del ZAPU-PF, el Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo de Zimbabue (ZIPRA), contó con el apoyo del gobierno cubano durante la campaña de guerrilla contra los ejércitos de Rhodesia y Sudáfrica.

El ex cuadro de ZIPRA Grace Noko dijo: “Cuando fuimos a entrenar en Cuba, fuimos bien recibidos y recibimos un buen tratamiento durante el curso de nuestro entrenamiento. ... Castro era un hombre cálido que odiaba el racismo y la opresión. Odiaba a las personas que despreciaban a los negros por su color.

Noko agregó que “nuestros líderes,

como el Dr. Joshua Nkomo, fueron inspirados por Castro. Los aconsejó sobre el derecho a la independencia, la libertad económica y la necesidad de luchar contra la desigualdad. El entrenamiento fue bien conducido, duro y de alto nivel. Estábamos entrenados no sólo para luchar en la guerra, sino también para luego liberarnos económicamente”.

Enorme asistencia cubana por epidemia de Ébola

En 2014, el personal médico cubano fue desplegado a Liberia y Sierra Leona después de la rápida propagación de la pandemia del Ébola. El brote, el peor de la historia, afectó a tres estados de África Occidental: Liberia, Guinea-Conakry y Sierra Leona.

Hasta los medios corporativos y el gobierno de EUA se vieron obligados a reconocer la contribución fenomenal de Cuba a los esfuerzos para contener y erradicar la enfermedad, que dejó más de 11.000 muertos y miles más gravemente enfermos, incluyendo profesionales de la salud en los tres países.

Un artículo publicado por este autor durante la epidemia de la pandemia del Ébola el 4 de noviembre de 2014 fue re-publicado en agosto de este año por el sitio web del líder cubano, fidelcastro.cu. Hizo hincapié en que “los trabajadores cubanos de la salud han desempeñado un papel primordial en el continente africano durante décadas. El gobierno revolucionario ve su trabajo en la lucha contra la enfermedad del virus Ébola (EVD) como una manifestación del internacionalismo y solidaridad con África”. □



Mensaje del Partido Workers World- Mundo Obrero al Partido Comunista de Cuba

Camarada Raúl Castro
Comité Central
Partido Comunista de Cuba
La Habana, Cuba
Queridos/as camaradas:

Nuestros corazones se dirigen al pueblo cubano y a todas/os quienes amaron a Fidel Castro. Cambió la historia de mil maneras diferentes, todo para beneficiar a los millones que han sufrido hambre y abuso bajo el colonialismo y el imperialismo.

Su enorme confianza en las masas luchadoras y su victoria final - expresada en su heroico discurso ante la corte de Batista - “La Historia me Absolverá” - apasionó a jóvenes luchadoras/es por la justicia en Cuba y en todo el mundo, desde América Latina y el Caribe hasta África, Asia y los propios Estados Unidos.

Armó al pueblo cubano con internacionalismo, solidaridad, unidad y una voluntad de hierro para defender su independencia y soberanía. Así que cuando África llamó, Cuba respondió y ayudó a derrotar el flagelo del apartheid.

Fidel asaltó las fortalezas de los servidores brutales del imperio en un momento en la historia en que el imperialismo de EUA estaba en pleno auge. Los plutócratas se indignaron al Fidel ofrecer nuevas esperanzas para un futuro socialista justo cuando se regodeaban por la victoria anticipada del capitalismo en la viciosa Guerra Fría.

¿Quién puede olvidar el desafío de Fidel en Playa Girón, su gran energía concentrada en ganar batallas tanto militares como políticas? Fue el 16 de

abril de 1961, mientras los mercenarios estadounidenses invadían Cuba y Fidel dirigía el contraataque, que dijo por primera vez: “Los imperialistas yanquis no pueden perdonarnos por haber hecho una revolución socialista bajo sus propias narices”. La suerte estaba echada. Cuba nunca volvería a la esclavitud capitalista.

¿Quién puede olvidar sus extraordinarios discursos al pueblo cubano? Meticulosamente repasaba las lecciones concretas de cada nueva iniciativa revolucionaria y derribaba las mentiras de los parásitos, los que habían tratado a la isla como nada más que una fuente de mano de obra barata y entretenimiento para los ricos. Siempre hablaba la verdad.

¡Y tenía tal afinidad con su pueblo! Tantas respuestas gritadas a sus preguntas, tanta risa honesta ante sus bromas bien dirigidas. Habló y escuchó a su pueblo a un grado que pocos líderes alguna vez consiguen.

Fidel tuvo una vida larga y gloriosa. Sabíamos que su cuerpo no podría sobrevivir para siempre. Pero él realmente vive en los corazones y en la mente de cientos de millones de personas. Lamentamos su pérdida hoy, pero invocaremos su nombre mañana y siempre para futuras generaciones mientras seguimos luchando por un sistema socialista para deshacer el terrible daño que el capitalismo ha infligido a las/os trabajadoras y oprimidas/os y a todo nuestro planeta.

Larry Holmes, Primer Secretario
Comité Nacional
Partido Workers World-Mundo Obrero



Con jóvenes cubanos/as, celebrando el inicio del año escolar.

Mensaje de condolencias de la Red de Mujeres en Lucha del Centro de Acción Internacional

Las y los miembros del Centro de Acción Internacional y de su organización hermana, la Red de Mujeres en Lucha, nos unimos al dolor de nuestras queridas compañeras de la Federación de Mujeres Cubanas y de la Federación Democrática Internacional de Mujeres por el fallecimiento del siempre presente Comandante Fidel. Extendemos también estas condolencias a todo el pueblo de Cuba.

El legado de Fidel no es solo histórico. Sus enseñanzas están vivas y son materia de diario estudio y ejecución en la lucha por un mundo con justicia social. Particularmente ahora que vivimos en un tiempo de tanto peligro a la humanidad.

Fidel, el Fidel sabio, el humilde, el generoso, el Fidel ameno y conversador, el interesado por todos los aspectos de la vida y del ser humano. ¡Cuánto se crece al estudiar a Fidel, al escuchar sus profundos discursos o leer sus análisis!

¡Qué fortuna haber vivido en tiempos de Fidel! Un hombre que soñó con una revolución para transformar la miseria que su pueblo vivía bajo la terrible dictadura de Batista, en una sociedad humana, generosa, igualitaria. Que luego junto a sus camaradas de lucha logró hacer la revolución y después desarrollarla en rev-

olución socialista. Y cuando su condición física no se lo permitía más estar al frente, se retiró, no de ser revolucionario, eso nunca dejó de serlo. Entonces se dedicó al análisis político. A cementar las experiencias. ¿Cuántos seres en la historia de nuestros pueblos han tenido esa dicha de haber podido realizar tantas funciones durante su vida?

El imperio quiso eliminarlo, pero con cada acción hostil estadounidense, Fidel se crecía, se agigantaba.

Su sueño de una Cuba justa para su pueblo se extendió hacia todas las latitudes. La salud, la educación, el apoyo a las luchas por la independencia, contra la explotación, tuvieron a nivel internacional el apoyo siempre activo y solidario de Cuba y de su pueblo.

En Estados Unidos, el pueblo consciente que conoce a Cuba, jóvenes pobres estadounidenses que han podido llegar a ser médicos gracias a la generosidad del pueblo cubano al estudiar en la Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina, personas y activistas progresistas que ven a la Revolución Cubana como un Norte, recuerdan y lloran la partida física del Comandante.

Fidel, ¡siempre estarás presente! ¡Gracias por todo Fidel! □

El legado de Fidel y la liberación africana

Por Abayomi Azikiwe

28 de noviembre de 2016

Ninguna otra figura política fuera de África simbolizó la solidaridad global con las aspiraciones del pueblo, desde las regiones del norte hasta el subcontinente, más que el Comandante Presidente Fidel Castro Ruz, de la República de Cuba.

Los lazos históricos, políticos y culturales entre el pueblo de África y Cuba se remontan a más de cinco siglos. Cuba fue colonizada por imperios europeos utilizando el trabajo de africanos esclavizados, cuya súper-explotación sentó las bases para el surgimiento del capitalismo mundial y el imperialismo.

En un discurso pronunciado en La Habana el 19 de abril de 1976, en conmemoración del décimo quinto aniversario de

la heroica victoria sobre los mercenarios exiliados coordinados por los agentes de la CIA en Playa Girón, el dirigente cubano dijo: “Somos un pueblo latinoamericano enemigo del colonialismo, el neocolonialismo, el racismo y el apartheid a los que protege y apaña el imperialismo yanqui”.

Castro estaba respondiendo a la propaganda estadounidense que castigaba el papel del Estado socialista que había desplegado 55.000 de sus propias tropas a partir de octubre de 1975 a petición del Dr. Agostinho Neto, líder del Movimiento Popular para la Liberación de Angola (MPLA), el frente independentista liderado por marxistas.

El MPLA había luchado contra el colonialismo portugués desde 1961. Cada vez estaba más rodeado por fuerzas reaccionarias respaldadas por EUA: el Frente para la

Continúa a página 11



Con Hugo Chávez, leyendo el periódico Granma.



Con Sam Nujoma, el primer presidente de Namibia independiente.



Gracias, Fidel

RAFAEL CANCEL MIRANDA

Gracias, Fidel
Gracias le doy a la vida
por mi cielo ser boricua,
mi alma, nacionalista
y mi credo, Fidelista.
Gracias le doy a la vida
por atreverme a luchar,
por atreverme a confrontar
la bestia imperialista.
Gracias le doy a la vida
por doña Isabel y Albizu
y por aquellos amigos
que me sirvieron de guía.
Gracias le doy a la vida
por mi pueblo valeroso,
que ha sabido con decoro
mantener su alma viva.
Gracias le doy a la vida
por la luz en mi camino,
y por marcar mi destino
con el de la patria mía.



Recién terminado este poema, me enteré del fallecimiento físico del compañero Fidel. Con la intención de honrar a quien tanto nos honró, le puse el título “Gracias, Fidel” y en su honor cambié una palabra en el poema. Esta mañana me entrevistó un periodista acerca de la muerte de Fidel, quien para mí no ha muerto. Hay Fidel para buen rato. La mafia imperialista trató de que no llegara ni

Continúa a página 11