

WORKERS WORLD

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Jan. 20, 2011 Vol. 53, No.2 50¢

Arizona shootings reflect racist, anti-immigrant terror

By Paul Teitelbaum
Tucson, Ariz.

The Jan. 8 shooting of Arizona Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in Tucson was a planned political assassination attempt. The murder attempt and massacre that followed took the lives of six people, including a 9-year-old child, and wounded at least 12 others. This slaughter takes place within the political climate of extreme racism, anti-immigrant terror and fear-mongering that the right wing, their politicians and pundits have been stoking for more than a decade.

The infamous Sheriff Joe Arpaio, racist legislation such as anti-immigrant law SB 1070 and anti-ethnic studies law HB 2281, coupled with escalating militarization of the border, increased presence of Border Patrol Agents in local communities and the escalating powers of local police departments — these are what created the basis for the events of Jan. 8.

“Hate radio” talk-show hosts, like Tucson’s Jon Justice, along with nationally known bigots like Rush Limbaugh, Michael Savage and Glenn Beck, in their on-air rants are continually using language encouraging violent acts. Often, as in Sarah Palin’s now infamous “target poster,” these bigots name individuals who should be “hit” or “removed.”

This right-wing rhetoric, which fans the flames of racism and blames all of society’s ills on immigrants, Black people, Muslims and other people of color, continues to become more venomous as the capitalist economic crisis deepens. Its purpose is to sow division and divert people’s attention from the real problems at hand: unemployment, deepening cuts to education and social services, attacks on public service workers and unions, continuing foreclosures and evictions, cruel and dehumanizing prisons filled to the brim, trillions spent on unnecessary wars abroad and hundreds of billions handed out to the big privately owned banks in so-called “bailouts.”

This divide-and-conquer technique protects the real culprits behind the deepening economic catastrophe and budget

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cuts facing the workers and the poor: Wall Street, the Pentagon and Washington.

Right wing puts Giffords in cross-hairs

When the Barack Obama administration introduced the health care reform bill in 2009, the political climate became particularly vicious. The billionaire-funded Tea Party emerged on the scene, disrupting health care town halls, threatening any candidate that supported the Obama plan and depicting Obama in the likeness of Adolph Hitler. Every movement of the Tea Party was given extensive media coverage. That emboldened members of the Tea Party to spit upon members of the Black Congressional Caucus as they entered the Capitol Building in Washington D.C. on their way to vote for the bill.

At a health care town hall meeting in Phoenix on Aug. 17, 2009, attended by President Obama, about a dozen people armed with guns gathered outside the event. A Giffords health care town hall meeting was disrupted by Tea Party bigots; a weapon dropped out of one man’s pants. The night after the health care vote in Congress, Giffords’ office was vandal-

ized by kicking and shooting out a glass door and window.

Giffords retained her seat last November by a narrow margin in a campaign against Tea Party candidate Jesse Kelly. Fundraising events were held by Kelly where he urged supporters to help remove Giffords from office by joining him to shoot a fully loaded M-16 rifle. He was pictured on his web site in military gear holding his automatic weapon and promoting the event.

Right-wingers plastered anti-Giffords signs throughout Tucson with demagogic slogans like “Gabby stole your health care” and other personal attacks. The most right-wing of potential Republican presidential candidates, Sarah Palin, listed Giffords among the 20 candidates targeted for removal in the last election. Palin depicted these targets on her website by placing the crosshairs of a gun sight over the congressional district of each target.

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PHOTO: MARLA PACHECO
Isabel Garcia of Derechos Humanos, Dr. Roberto Rodriguez, head of University of Arizona Mexican-American Studies and Paul Teitelbaum of the International Action Center speak at Jan. 11 press conference in Tucson.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. marching with striking Memphis sanitation workers, 1968.

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Women's right to choose Defend legal abortion on the 38th anniversary

By Sue Davis

Jan. 22 marks the 38th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. Tens of thousands of women have been saved from death and serious injury since abortion became legal in 1973. Women who chose to have safe, legal abortions ever since have felt enormous security and relief as they went about their lives.

However, the new Congress is ready to mount a frontal attack on legal abortion — the most serious in its history since the 1976 Hyde Amendment.

Joined by more than 50 new anti-choice representatives, Rep. John Boehner boasts of being the most anti-abortion House Speaker in history. The No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act seeks to codify the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits Medicaid-funded abortions for poor women.

It would also impose such stiff conditions on private health insurance companies that none would offer abortion coverage. Being forced to pay for abortions would be like a tax on the 62 million U.S. women of childbearing age.

Given that women earn only 77 cents for every dollar men earn and that women have been hit hard by the jobless recovery, many more women would share the financial desperation and emotional misery women on Medicaid have experienced for 34 years.

That anguish was portrayed in the 58-page study entitled "Whose Choice: How the Hyde Amendment Harms Poor Women," published last September by the Center for Reproductive Rights and the National Network of Abortion Funds. Fifty-eight percent of women on Medicaid reported "serious hardships" due to Hyde, including having had to deprive children of food, pawn wedding

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From Leslie Feinberg

Open letter to WW readers

The following letter was written on Jan. 6.

The reason readers haven't seen my byline in Workers World newspaper for several years is that I am ill and disabled from late-stage, long-untreated tick-borne infectious diseases.

Since I began working on the newspaper in 1974, I wrote, proofread, edited and did other labor on Workers World during more than 30-plus years of undiagnosed cyclical illnesses and disabilities. However, I became acutely ill and disabled in October 2007, and I have been unable to recover my health.

I am proud to remain on the masthead of Workers World newspaper as a Managing Editor; however I must add this fact: I am on protracted medical leave.

I regret that I am so seriously ill now, and so disabled as a result, that I am no longer able to answer online inquiries to the newspaper about previous articles.

A partial bibliography of articles that I wrote in Workers World from 1974 to 2002 was compiled by M. R. Cook, a working-class undergraduate student. Cook's enormous contribution of bibliographic labor can be found at transgenderwarrior.org/references.html

Bylined articles I wrote between 2002 and 2007 are accessible through keyword search at workers.org.

As I began to understand how ill I was becoming, I tried to reference information from my library and online research in the series "Lavender & Red." (workers.org)

The books I used are referenced in the series, and other facts can be found via online web research with keyword phrases.

I regret not having been able to endnote and develop a bibliography for more of the entire Lavender & Red series. As I was becoming increasingly ill, however, I was able — with a lot of comradely help — to apply book-standard referencing to about a quarter of the L&R series — the articles compiled into the book entitled "Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba." (leftbooks.com)

I believe the following four articles, which I wrote for Workers World, best flesh out the overall concluding political trajectory of the Lavender & Red series:

"What's behind anti-gay pogrom in Russia?" (June 2, 2006) www.workers.org/2006/world/russia-0608/

"LGBT liberation: An essential working-class struggle" (June 24, 2006) www.workers.org/2006/us/lfeinberg-0629/

"Struggle over Middle East reaches into world LGBT movements" (July 27, 2006) www.workers.org/2006/world/mideast-lgbt-0803/

"Death of trans immigrant in detention forges united protests" (Sept. 8, 2007) www.workers.org/2007/us/trans-0913/

All my writing has been strengthened by the labor of others, as I have contributed my labor to the writing of others. The strengths of my written work — as part of my adult lifetime of political activism — are based on collective labor and the lessons of collective struggle. The weaknesses and errors are my own as an individual.

Today, it is very painful, slow and difficult for me to read and write — and even to speak. But when I read, I make sure to read Workers World newspaper. □

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author of Stone Butch Blues

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With growing support

Prisoners' hunger strike enters second week

By Workers World Cleveland bureau

"So much energy coming is from all over. I'm just trying to hang on and ride the wave," wrote political prisoner Boman Shakur Jan. 6, the third day of his hunger strike at Ohio State Penitentiary. Convicted as Keith LaMar, Boman and two other death-sentenced prisoners started refusing food on Jan. 3 to demand that they be treated like other prisoners facing execution.

The other two hunger strikers are Sid-dique Abdullah Hasan and Jason Robb, both prisoner negotiators during the 1993 prisoner rebellion at the prison in Lucasville, Ohio. For their success in achieving a negotiated settlement, they received not only the death penalty, but the equivalent of more than 12 years of confinement in the "hole" — solitary confinement stripped of even rudimentary privileges.

Robb has pointed out that other death-row prisoners have been transferred out of the supermax prison or have had their security level relaxed. Along with Namir Abdul Mateen (James Were), these men are the only four prisoners who have been kept relentlessly on OSP's highest security level.

Bomani expressed his reasons for protesting the conditions of his confinement in a message of poetic eloquence, stating, "In a word, we have been tortured." (http://www.workers.org/2011/us/bomani_0113) He also stated his demands in a Jan. 3 letter on Facebook to OSP warden David Bobby: "1. Full recreation privileges. 2. Full commissary privileges. 3. Full access to Access SecurePac catalog. 4. Semi-contact visits. 5. Access to computer database so that I can assist in the furtherance of my appeals."

Desire for justice for the hunger strik-

ers is so widespread that emails within the Lucasville Uprising Freedom Network have been posted as articles on many websites, including many sites of the Anarchist Black Cross. Bomani's "If we must die" statement has been widely reprinted, including on the Black Left Unity listserve.

Many times a day, new people from all across the country and around the world are joining the Facebook page "In Solidarity with the Lucasville Uprising Prisoners on Hunger Strike." A large number of Irish people joined recently. The addition of voices from around Ohio, including the Lucasville area, is allowing the start of dialogue about the complex emotions and perspectives still harbored about the 1993 rebellion due to the death of a guard during the uprising. Posts include written, audio and video versions of interviews of the advisers of the prisoners: activist attorney Staughton Lynd and Denis O'Hearn, biographer of Irish hunger striker Bobby Sands.

Also posted on Facebook is a letter by Pádaic Mac Coitir sent to a newspaper in Belfast, in the north of Ireland. Calling for support for the hunger strikers in Ohio, he reminded the readers, "This year marks the 30th anniversary of the hunger strike in the H-blocks of Long Kesh. Ten men died and many others were prepared to die."

At meetings in the Cleveland area of the New Black Panther Party, Black on Black Crime Inc., and the Imam Al-Amin Defense Committee, outreach is being done for the rally to be held at the gates of OSP on Jan. 15 at 1 p.m. At the Jan. 8 protest against the inauguration of incoming Ohio Gov. John Kasich in Columbus, activists were abuzz with talk about the interview of Lynd by Amy Goodman on "Democracy Now."

"The response has been overwhelming. I have gotten calls and emails from Detroit, Columbus and Philadelphia about bringing carloads of people to the rally, and calls from Los Angeles, Denver and

Washington, D.C., wanting to help," exclaimed Sharon Danann, organizer with the Lucasville Uprising Freedom Network. "Ohio Prison Watch and Prison Watch International were posting information as fast as I could provide it to them, and the woman I was working with was in Europe. Updates are going out by Twitter. It feels like a new era in organizing."

Let key prison and congressional officials know that these prisoners need to be reclassified fairly according to their years of good behavior and released from the most restrictive security level by signing the petition at iacenter.org. Punishment for crimes they did not commit is surely punishment enough. Their present conditions of confinement are unconstitutional, illegal and immoral. Support the Lucasville hunger strikers! Free all political prisoners! For more information on the Jan. 15 protest, go to <http://tinyurl.com/4etc23w> or email lucasville-freedom@gmail.com. □

Protest of new right-wing governor



On Jan. 8 in Columbus, Ohio, more than 200 people came out to protest the inauguration of the incoming right-wing governor, John Kasich. The march and rally were called by the newly formed Defend Ohio Coalition. The Lucasville Uprising Freedom Network was well received by the mostly student and youth crowd, who are very much opposed to the death penalty and in support of the current hunger strike organized by leaders of the Lucasville prison uprising in 1993. Union members also participated, as Gov. Kasich seeks to make Ohio a so-called right-to-work state.

— Report and photo by Susan Schnur

San Diego

Activists demand justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal

By Starr
San Diego, Calif.

Civil rights and community activists met in San Diego in December to watch "Justice on Trial," a film about the tragic story of the injustices committed against death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Space@Bar Coffeehouse graciously hosted the event organized by the San Diego International Action Center. Gloria Verdieu from the IAC hosted a discussion after the film to strategize on how to respond to the Nov. 9 Third Circuit of Appeals hearing in Philadelphia that could reinstate the death penalty on Mumia. Mumia has spent more than 28 years on Pennsylvania's death row.

At this hearing, activists streamed in

from all over the world to support Mumia and now await news of whether Mumia will face a date for the death warrant or if he will serve a life sentence without the possibility of parole. Neither alternative is acceptable.

Detractors, primarily the corrupt and biased Fraternal Order of Police in Pennsylvania, have requested that Mumia's death sentence be reinstated.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the Black Panther Party was targeted and terrorized by police day in and day out. Mumia joined the BPP in Philadelphia as a teenager.

During his adult years, Mumia became an award-winning journalist; using his talents to document injustice, especially police brutality against the MOVE organization. While racism protects some writers from domestic terrorism at the



San Diego activists honor Mumia on his birthday, April 2010.

WWW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

hands of law enforcement and the courts, nothing stood between the Philadelphia police and finding a way to lock up — and attempt to silence — Mumia.

On Dec. 9, 1981, a police officer was killed in Philadelphia. Mumia was arrested for his murder. Evidence during the trial was weak, at best. People were coerced to testify against him, and have since recanted. A court stenographer overheard the trial judge make racist remarks about Mumia, using the "N" word in the process! Independent experts have stated that the 1982 trial that convicted Mumia of first degree murder was unfair.

The IAC-led discussion culminated in the decision that activists will contact U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to demand a civil rights investigation on behalf of

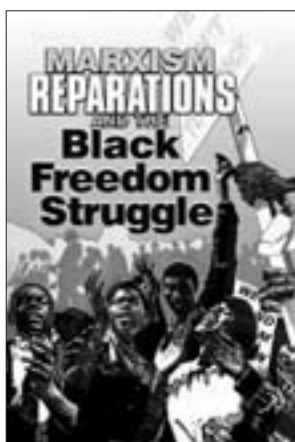
Mumia. Some volunteered to write letters, while others want to call Holder's office. While Holder cannot intervene legally in Mumia's case, he has the authority to review this miscarriage of justice and publicly recommend a new trial for Mumia.

During the discussion Mumia's case was compared to that of Lena Baker — a Black woman put to death by electrocution in 1945 in Georgia after a one-day, all-white, male jury convicted her for defending herself against the sexual and physical abuse of her white employer whom she fatally shot. She was exonerated 60 years later.

Community activist Adafrika said it best during the discussion: "Let's not let Mumia's family suffer the way Lena Baker's has, all these years." □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

• **Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination** Larry Holmes • **Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy • **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell • **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead • **Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad • **Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation** Consuela Lee • **Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal • **Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? 40th Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion** John Parker • **Racism & Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales • **Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions** Pat Chin



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Commission report on Gulf disaster

BP gets a slap on the wrist

By Gene Clancy

On Jan. 6, a presidential commission released excerpts of a report on the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. This was good news for BP and one of its subcontractors, Transocean: The prices for their shares rose as investors bet that the report meant that the firms would avoid the massive costs of a gross negligence charge. (Reuters, Jan. 6)

It was bad news for working and poor people who are employed and/or live in the Gulf region, and for all who are concerned about the environment.

On April 20, an explosion aboard BP's Deepwater Horizon oil rig killed 11 men and injured 17 others. Attempts to staunch the gusher failed, until a cap was finally deployed over the undersea well on July 15. By that time, 4.4 million barrels of oil had spilled into the Gulf of Mexico.

The oil spill, which now ranks as the largest offshore oil disaster in U.S. history, destroyed huge areas of sensitive wildlife and habitat, and paralyzed important segments of the Gulf Coast's economy, including the seafood industry and tourism. The area still has one of the highest

unemployment rates in the country.

The report's 48-page excerpt says that "poor decisions" by BP; Transocean Ltd., the rig's owner; and Halliburton Corp., a contractor on the rig, led to technical problems that contributed to the disaster. It stated that individual decisions made by each of those parties, while saving significant time and money, upped the risk that a catastrophic blowout would occur. (AP, Jan 6)

The report also warned that such a disaster could happen again, due to systemic problems within the offshore oil and gas industry, and among government regulators who oversee it.

Shortly after the catastrophe, President Barack Obama promised to hold BP completely accountable for all damages arising from the spill. He declared a six-month moratorium on deep sea drilling in the Gulf of Mexico until the reasons for the spill were investigated and determined. He appointed the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, which was to come up with its findings by Jan. 11. Unsurprisingly, the moratorium, although considered very short by environmental

experts, was quickly aborted as the administration backed down in response to angry rants from the oil industry.

The Oil Pollution Act was passed, and a \$20 billion fund was set up to compensate victims of the corporate-made disaster. Although \$20 billion may appear large, it is a drop in the bucket when it comes to paying for the actual damages. On Jan. 9, Louisiana officials reported that large sections of the state's coastline are still "highly oiled." (CNN, Jan. 9) Huge plumes of oil remain far below the surface, while entire industries have been abandoned.

The government and BP have moved to limit big business liability in two ways. First, in direct violation of the Oil Pollution Act, the rules under which compensation is being paid greatly limit the amount that can be collected. "It will be difficult, if not impossible for claimants to get full compensation for their damages unless they have a crystal ball," says Richard Shore, who worked hard to collect damages from the Exxon Valdez oil spill. (Huffington Post, Aug. 3)

The second method is more devious, and involves the recently released com-

mission report. The study rightly concludes that BP's misdeeds are not limited to them alone: "The blowout was not the product of a series of aberrational decisions made by a rogue industry or government officials that could not have been anticipated or expected to occur again. Rather, the root causes are systemic." (AP, Jan.6)

However, the oil drillers are confident that they will never be held truly accountable as an industry. By blaming the oil drilling industry, the government has effectively taken the heat off BP, which the capitalist markets immediately recognized. Thus, the rise in BP stock.

The capitalist class is confident that their ruse to protect BP and other big polluters will work because they believe that they are invincible and that the government will never hold them accountable for their countless crimes against humanity and the planet itself. They can keep on raking in megaprofits and putting safety and concern for the environment last, with relative impunity, unless there is a struggle waged by working people, environmentalists and other progressive people to push them back. □

Pennsylvania

Marcellus wastewater dumped into waterways

By Betsey Piette

Natural gas industry giant Cabot Oil & Gas Co. is at it again. In January it was reported that the company had illegally discharged 1.8 million gallons of wastewater into the Neshaminy Creek, part of the Delaware River watershed. This watershed is a source of drinking water for more than 300,000 residents in 17 communities outside Philadelphia.

In December Cabot agreed to set up a \$4.1 million escrow account for rural Pennsylvanians who suffered health problems in areas where the company earlier had carried out hydraulic fracturing or "fracking" operations.

In other areas of the U.S. toxic wastewater from fracking is usually disposed of by injecting it down deep well shafts. Pennsylvania, which has become the center of the gas rush, remains the only state that allows fracking companies to use waterways as the primary disposal site for huge volumes of fluids.

Contaminated with chemicals, wastewater from fracking operations was being trucked from gas well sites in the northeastern part of the state to a private industrial treatment facility in Hatfield Township, a Philadelphia suburb,

where some solids were removed before the wastewater was discharged into the creek. The wastewater was polluted with strontium and barium, which can cause high blood pressure if ingested. Fracking wastewater also contains radium, a naturally occurring radioactive substance.

In late 2010 the Delaware River Basin Commission ordered the facility to cease accepting the fluids. This acceptance constituted a blatant violation of DRBC's rules and regulations. No fines, however, were levied against Cabot or PSC Environmental Services, the company that discharged the wastewater into the sewer system.

The Delaware River Basin supplies water for 15 million people in four states. Regulations that should have kept fracking wastewater out of the watershed were circumvented for months.

An Associated Press examination of the Department of Environmental Protection's first annual report of waste produced by drilling in Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale found that statewide "at least 150 million barrels of the waste were sent to treatment plants that empty into rivers during the 12 months ending June 30, 2010 — enough to cover a square mile with more than 8 1/2 inches of brine. More than 50 million gallons, about one-

fifth of the total waste fluid, was unaccounted for because of a 'weakness' in the state's reporting system." (Jan. 3)

People in impacted towns were repeatedly told that the watershed was free of gas waste, even though their water contained contaminants known as trihalomethanes. While not found in drilling wastewater, trihalomethanes are created when chlorine used to purify drinking water reacts with bromide, which is found in the wastewater that is several times saltier than sea water.

The Environmental Protection Agency says people who drink water with elevated levels of trihalomethanes for many years have increased risks of cancer as well as potential problems with their liver, kidney and central nervous system.

Water in a municipal authority water treatment plant in Beaver Falls, 27 miles northwest of Pittsburgh, began flunking tests for trihalomethanes regularly in 2009. "Abnormally high salt levels in the Monongahela River in 2008 corroded machinery at a steel mill and a power plant that were drawing water from the river. The DEP suspected that drilling wastewater was the cause and ordered upstream treatment plants to reduce their output." (ProPublica, Jan. 5)

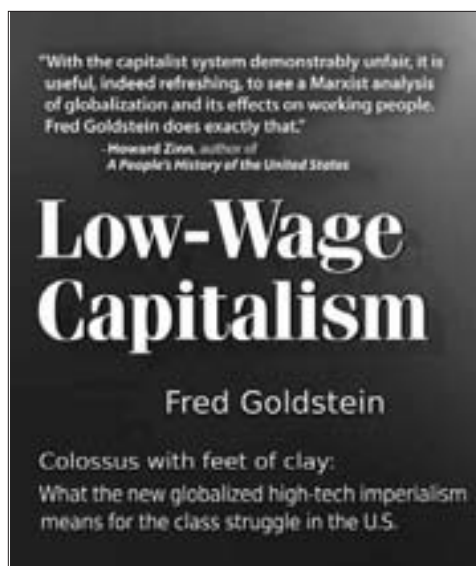
Protest against Toxic Tom

Gas Truth-PA, which is organizing a statewide protest in Harrisburg on Jan. 18 at the inauguration of incoming governor Tom Corbett, stated that Corbett is so pro-drilling "he is failing to protect the Delaware River watershed or any other watershed from drilling."

Natural gas companies in Pennsylvania contributed more than a million dollars to Corbett's campaign. Corbett promised to rescind a recent gubernatorial executive order against leasing 800,000 more acres of state forest for drilling. He also opposes a tax on gas and backs legislation allowing companies to drill even when landowners refuse to sign leases.

Shortly after his election, "Toxic" Tom reassured the gas industry that he will protect their interests by appointing Christine Toretta, owner of SW Jack Drilling, to his transitional team.

In a press release calling for the Jan. 18 rally, Gas Truth-PA wrote, "People with few resources are left on their own to sue giant corporations, and our beautiful natural treasures are being stolen. We need to make it clear: Pennsylvanians don't want gas drilling. Arrogant corporations should not be running this show. We want clean water and air — and we want it now!" □



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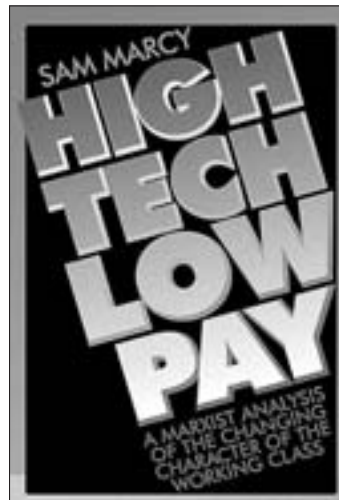
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'No to bankruptcy! Make the banks pay!'

More than 150 community residents packed a town hall meeting at People's Community Services in Hamtramck, Mich., on Jan. 6 to tell the mayor, the city manager and the city council that bankruptcy is not an option for the city. Due to the banks robbing the city's residents through extravagant interest rates on bonds and other financial instruments, devastating the city through foreclosures, and local corporations such as American Axle and General Motors either not paying taxes to the city at all or otherwise paying just a pittance, Hamtramck has a supposed \$3 million deficit for this fiscal year.

The city manager claims that the city will not be able to pay its bills by March and is thus requesting of the state to file for bankruptcy which, if granted, could possibly void the city's labor contracts, which would, in turn, put current and retired union workers' pensions (deferred wages) and other benefits at risk.

If Hamtramck was allowed to file for bankruptcy, this could most likely set in motion a slew of other cities attempting the same under pressure by the banks to seize workers' pensions with the ultimate goal of busting public-sector unions. Articles in the capitalist media such as the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times in December and early January pointed this out. Another option by the city manager is that loans to the city from the same banks who've pillaged the city, could also come with high interest rates.

Hamtramck, a city of 22,000 in the middle of Detroit, is one of the most ethnically diverse U.S. cities with at least 22 languages being spoken and also one of the poorest cities in the U.S. Residents of the city also have a rich history of struggle against the banks and corporations. This was evident at the town hall meeting on Jan. 6 as residents, along with members



Hamtramck, Mich., Jan. 6

of the Moratorium NOW! Coalition, held signs reading, "Bankruptcy was never an option," and instead demanding, "Make The Banks Pay."

The leaflets being distributed by organizers declaring "Make The Banks Pay" also invited the city's residents to a Jan. 10 Moratorium NOW! organizing meeting, and this received a hearty response from poor and working people attending the city hall meeting, as did some of the solutions being offered by organizers. These include making residents of the city and public-sector workers primary creditors; researching the tax abatements and tax incremental financing monies received, and promises made by corporations based in Hamtramck, in particular American Axle and General Motors; and making the banks pay.

— Report and photo Bryan G. Pfeifer

Wisconsin protest 'Jobs Now!'



PHOTO: SUE RUGGLES, AFT LOCAL 212

Special to Workers World

On Jan. 3, hundreds of people met at the site of the Talgo manufacturing plant in Milwaukee, Wis., and traveled by bus to Madison, Wis., to protest Scott Walker's inauguration as governor at the State Capitol. The protesters included union members, community activists, students, unemployed workers, members of the faith community, immigrant rights ac-

tivists and many more. They were joined in Madison by labor, student and peace groups.

The protesters rallied on the steps of the Capitol, with a program featuring labor and community leaders and testimony from unemployed workers. The unemployment rate in Wisconsin, in particular for African Americans, is at the highest levels in decades, a direct result of more than 100 manufacturing plant closings since 2008 alone. After the rally, protesters encircled the Capitol while Walker's inaugural took place inside the rotunda.

Walker, a right-wing, racist politician and former Milwaukee county executive, is anti-union, with his attacks at every turn especially attempting to bust public-sector unions. He is pushing to lower or stop taxes on corporations amid numerous other attacks on poor and working people.

The Madison action was sponsored by a coalition including MICAHA, Good Jobs and Livable Neighborhoods, the League of Young Voters Education Fund, the Milwaukee Area Labor Council, and Voces de la Frontera. Also in attendance were the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice, Peace Action Wisconsin and local union affiliates of U.S. Labor Against the War. □



Women's right to choose

Defend legal abortion on the 38th anniversary

Continued from page 2

rings and take out high-interest loans to pay for needed health care. As of 2001, 18 percent to 35 percent of Medicaid-eligible women reported having to carry unintended pregnancies to term because of Hyde.

However, the Hyde Amendment wasn't implemented without a struggle in the streets and in the courts. The fight to stop Hyde in the 1970s is instructive with regard to defending legal abortion now.

Eighty groups of progressive pro-choice women, many who called themselves socialist-feminists, organized nationally as the Hyde Amendment was set to take effect. As they spoke out, wrote, marched and rallied to stop Hyde, they also theorized about women's rights.

In order for women to be able to control whether, when and with whom to have children, the activists compiled a list of rights that included — in addition to legal abortion — access to birth control, sex education, daycare, health care, jobs and housing; and freedom from sexist, racist and anti-lesbian oppression; sterilization abuse; sexual harassment; incest; and domestic violence.

To describe these prerequisites for women's liberation, they coined the term "reproductive rights" and discussed "reproductive freedom." This now includes the call for "reproductive justice."

Meanwhile, women lawyers at the Center for Constitutional Rights, led by the world-renowned legal activist for women's rights, Rhonda Copelon (1944-2010), filed a nationwide class action lawsuit that stopped Hyde from taking effect in 1976.

Defeat Hyde in the streets

After the Supreme Court overturned the injunction in 1977, Federal District Court Judge John F. Dooling Jr. heard testimony from doctors, theologians and poor women, and received more than 500 exhibits on the medical and religious aspects of the case.

After 13 months of deliberation, Judge Dooling invalidated the Hyde Amendment in 1980 as violating the First and Fifth Amendments. CCR stated: "His decision documented the health impact of denying poor women abortions; the major religious traditions which support the conscientious choice of abortion; and the pervasively religious character of the

anti-abortion position that the fertilized egg is equivalent to a person." (Past Cases at ccrjustice.org)

Later that year the Supreme Court, in a highly contested 5-4 vote on Harris v. McRae, reversed that decision, "ignoring [Dooling's] comprehensive findings of fact as well as the principle that the state must respect the constitutional rights of the poor in distributing or limiting welfare benefits."

The majority opinion stated that a woman's freedom of choice does not include "a constitutional entitlement to the financial resources to avail herself of the full range of protected choices" and "poverty does not qualify as a 'suspect classification' protected by the Fifth Amendment.

Justice Thurgood Marshall defended poor women's rights in his eloquent dissent: "The denial of Medicaid benefits to individuals who meet all the statutory criteria for eligibility, solely because the treatment that is medically necessary involves the exercise of the fundamental right to choose abortion, is a form of discrimination repugnant to the protection of the laws guaranteed by the Constitution. The Court's decision today marks a

retreat from Roe v. Wade and represents a cruel blow to the most powerless members of our society."

The Hyde-30 Years Is Enough! Campaign, an NNAF project, says, "For more than 30 years, the Hyde Amendment and other funding restrictions have affected the poorest and most vulnerable of low-income Americans, with a disproportionate impact on women of color and immigrant women. The Hyde Amendment denies abortion access to the 7 million women of reproductive age who are currently enrolled in Medicaid. These funding restrictions are the most detrimental of all attacks on safe, legal abortion care, and represent a clear violation of low-income women's human rights."

It is crucial that the federal government guarantee equal, comprehensive health care to all women, and provide funding for those who need it.

Pro-choice activists and their supporters must rally to stop the "cruel blows" that today threaten all but rich women. Only a widespread, united fightback, in the streets and the courts, can defend women's right to legal abortion and advance the struggle for reproductive justice. □

Solidarity & resistance:

Only answer to attack on public workers' unions

By Edward Yudelovich
New York

On Jan. 7 New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg handed the Municipal Labor Committee, which includes all public sector workers and is headed by sanitation workers' union President Harry Nespoli, a 23-point document that advocates gutting many protections for municipal workers now included in union collective bargaining agreements and New York State civil service law.

Accompanying this general attack on public workers, federal prosecutors, the New York City Department of Investigation and the City Council are all pursuing investigations of alleged slowdowns by sanitation workers. The attempt to scapegoat sanitation workers for the debacle during the Dec. 26-27 blizzard has stimulated a witch-hunt atmosphere reminiscent of McCarthyism in the 1950s.

What are the facts? First of all, the delay in snow removal was caused by reckless management decisions by Bloomberg. This includes his failure to declare a snow emergency, his failure to order the major highways be salted before the snow started falling, his reductions in snow removal personnel and equipment, and his refusal to purchase and deploy GPS technology for all snow removal operations. In short, miser billionaire Bloomberg tried to fight a blizzard on the cheap.

Sanitation workers have been working 12-14 hours shifts for two weeks to fight the blizzard and pick up uncollected garbage. The job is not only exhausting and stressful; it is also the country's second most dangerous occupation next to lumberjack.

The attack on public workers — and now targeting sanitation workers — is a vicious, organized, anti-labor, right-wing campaign echoed by the ruling class' liberal establishment. Wall Street banking magnates and their corporate allies are the organizers and beneficiaries of this anti-union campaign.

Similar attacks are taking place nationally to ensure that states and municipali-

ties, which are drowning in debt, sharply reduce budgets and rip apart contracts and laws that serve the interests of the workers and the poor. Additional pressure comes from the humongous \$14 trillion-plus U.S. national debt.

Though the banks are sitting on huge reserves of cash, they refuse to make further loans unless local governments and states drastically reduce budget deficits. The banks demand that interest on outstanding municipal, county and state loans be paid before all else.

The banks' demands mirror the attacks by banks and governments in the Euro zone and Britain on European labor unions and the social contract there. Wall Street has been emboldened by the Congressional extension of outrageous tax breaks to the wealthy and Democratic President Barack Obama's executive order for a one-year freeze of federal workers' wages.

In the 1950s, 35 percent of all workers in the U.S. were union members. This shrunk to 25 percent in the 1970s and to only 12 percent today. Now 36 percent of public workers are union members, compared to only 7 percent of private sector workers. The majority of public sector workers are African-American, Latino/a and other oppressed people, particularly women. Attacking public workers is racist. This strategic sector of the working class has fought and won battles for all workers. It is an attack on all.

Wall Street targets key unions

In New York City the two public sector unions that have been absolutely key to the struggles for workers' rights have been Transit Workers Union Local 100 and the sanitation workers, Teamsters Local 831. If these two unions were ever to strike at the same time, life in New York would grind to a halt. This is why they are targeted.

In December 2005 for two and a half days, 33,000 members of TWU Local 100 — 70 percent of whom are Black, Latino/a or Asian — challenged Wall Street, the

governor and the mayor of New York, as well as the courts and the hostile capitalist media. The workers courageously voted to strike despite the severe retaliatory provisions of New York State's Taylor Law: fines for each worker of two day's pay for each day on strike, possible fines for the union of a million dollars a day, and loss of dues check-off rights.

During New York's mid-1970s fiscal crisis, the city laid off 50,000 workers. When the mayor asked the federal government for emergency economic assistance, President Gerald Ford refused it. Or as the Oct. 30, 1975, Daily News front page put it: "Ford to City: Drop Dead." On June 4, 1975, 10,000 union members marched on Wall Street demanding that the city not balance the budget on the backs of the workers. In this spirit the sanitation workers conducted a wildcat strike on July 1, 1975.

Seven years earlier, 7,000 sanitation workers had gathered in New York's City Hall Park and voted to go on strike to get a decent contract. For years the city had an unfair official policy: Sanitation worker salaries had to be lower than police and firefighters' salaries, and sanitation workers had to contribute more from their paychecks, but got lower pensions, compared to police and firefighters. The 1968 strike continued from Feb. 2 to 10, despite the media's demonization of the sanitation workers, which was similar to today's slanders.

Union President John Delury was jailed. New York City Mayor John Lindsay asked the city's largest worker union, District Council 37, to take over the duties of the sanitation workers and break the strike. When DC37 refused to scab, Lindsay asked New York State Gov. Nelson Rockefeller to send in the National Guard to pick up New York's garbage. DC37 and the other unions threatened a general strike of all public city workers, and possibly all private sector workers in the city, if the National Guard was brought in.

On Feb. 10, 1968, the New York Times begged Rockefeller not to call in the guard

to avoid "insuring a general strike by all municipal civil service employees, and perhaps by all New York labor." Only then did Rockefeller flinch. He declined Lindsay's request and the strike was settled.

Two days after New York's 1968 strike ended, the sanitation workers of Memphis, Tenn., also went on strike. In April Martin Luther King Jr. went to Memphis to support the sanitation workers' strike and was assassinated there on April 4. In response to the murder of this great African-American leader, more than 100 oppressed communities nationwide erupted in rebellion.

Jessie Epps is a veteran labor organizer who was personally involved with the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers' "I Am a Man" strike. Epps was with Dr. King that April 4. At a 2008 New York City sanitation workers' union celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday becoming a holiday, Epps said, "It was you who gave [the Memphis Sanitation Workers] the courage to act. It was these men from New York, if I may use the colloquialism, that fired the shot and made America stand up and its conscience be pricked and compelled Dr. King and others like him to come into the fray."

This kind of spirit of solidarity and resistance is desperately needed today. In many European countries labor, youth and the oppressed communities are fighting back with general strikes and mass demonstrations. In the U.S., however, these forces have not yet mobilized with the same numbers and energy. And two U.S. imperialist wars are raging against the people of Iraq and Afghanistan, with saber-rattling threats launched every day against the peoples of north Korea and Iran.

What is needed here is to mobilize unions from the public and private sectors, workers, youth, and progressive and anti-war movements, joining with the unemployed and oppressed communities. We must confront the banks, the billionaires and their surrogates like New York State Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bloomberg, today's successors of Rockefeller and Lindsay of the 1960s. □

Autoworkers at Detroit auto show

'A job is a right— Fight, fight, fight'

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

For the third consecutive year, rank-and-file autoworkers picketed the North American International Auto Show in Detroit Jan. 9. Workers maintained a spirited picket line in sub-freezing temperatures, chanting "A job is a right, we're gonna fight, fight, fight" and "Say it loud and clear, no two-tier."



Detroit, Jan. 9.

WW PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

NAIAS bills itself as "the auto industry's indispensable North American event" where "attention turns to Detroit for global unveilings and news from an optimistic industry." (www.naias.com) Many autoworkers on the shop floor, however, don't share the enthusiasm of "the industry" — meaning the executives, stockholders and moneylenders.

The billions in profits General Motors and Ford are raking in — and that Chrysler expects to start accumulating this year — have come at the workers' expense. The Jan. 10 Detroit Free Press reported that these three companies have eliminated nearly 80,000 union jobs in Michigan in the past two years. Now, with an upturn in vehicle sales and an increase in the Detroit Three automakers' market share, the Free Press stated that 28,000 new job openings will be filled this year.

The catch is that under a two-tier wage structure demanded by the U.S. Treasury in 2009, the pay of these new hires will be frozen at \$14 an hour until 2015 — half of what higher seniority production workers currently

earn. Many will be hired as temporary workers and remain on temporary status indefinitely.

The Rally for Jobs was initiated by the Autoworkers Caravan and supported by Factory Rats United; Warriors of Labor; Coalition of Concerned Citizens; Windsor Workers Action Center; Moratorium Now! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs; and Supporters of Gary Walkowicz.

Walkowicz challenged the two-tier pay structure last year at the United Auto Workers Constitutional Convention as an opposition candidate for International president.

The rally addressed a number of issues. Frank Hammer, former president of UAW Local 909, explained that the current version of the Free Trade Agreement between South Korea and the U.S. would eliminate thousands of jobs in both countries. The only change from the original 2007 agreement is that the new FTA delays the lifting of trade barriers.

Wendy Thompson, former president of UAW Local 235, raised the demand that the many closed auto plants be reopened and retooled to produce the buses and trains — which the auto companies once built — needed to revitalize mass transit

to reduce carbon emissions and combat global warming.

Walkowicz addressed the upcoming UAW National Bargaining Convention, calling on union members to fight to get back everything they gave up in the 2007 contracts with the Detroit Three and the additional modifications during the 2009 GM and Chrysler bankruptcies.

Abayomi Azikiwe, representing Moratorium Now!, stated that Michigan public sector workers were facing an attack similar to that directed at the UAW and called on those present to demonstrate against layoffs and service cuts during the State of the State address of newly elected Gov. Rick Snyder.

Greg Clark, Shop Chair of UAW Local 23, talked about the struggle of GM workers in Indianapolis against company plans to sell their plant to a supplier that would have cut their wages in half and taken away benefits. Solidarity statements were read from autoworkers in Canada and Brazil.

The demonstration was an important challenge to the capitalist position — unfortunately embraced by the UAW officialdom — that workers in the plants need to make whatever concessions deemed necessary to make the companies profitable and competitive. □

MLK's legacy & renewed assaults on the workers & oppressed

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the civil rights, social justice and peace activist who was martyred on April 4, 1968, was born 82 years ago on Jan. 15. Since 1986 Dr. King's birthday has been commemorated by a federal holiday on the third Monday of January. This year the holiday falls on Jan. 17.

The recognition of Dr. King's birthday as a federal holiday was the result of a nearly two-decade struggle waged by African-American political leaders and artists. They held mass demonstrations on this day every year and sponsored legislation in the U.S. Congress that eventually was passed, even under the right-wing administration of Ronald Reagan. Today federal, state and local offices as well as banks and many educational institutions are closed, and literally thousands of commemorations are held throughout the United States.

In 2011 the MLK federal holiday comes at a time when everything Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement fought for during the 1950s and 1960s is under attack by Wall Street and its surrogates in the administration and Congress. Ruling-class propaganda that is relayed daily through the corporate and government-sanctioned media is specifically designed to reinforce the existing conditions of exploitation and oppression against the working class in general.

A renewed round of attacks is taking place that seeks to blame the growing budget deficits facing numerous states and cities on the hard-won benefits of public sector employees, the unemployed and the poor. The 2010 elections were ideologically rigged to make a reactionary social agenda the first order of business for the current Congress and state legislatures throughout the country.

For at least two and a half decades, massive layoffs, wage cuts and slashing of employee benefits have ravaged workers in the private sector. Utilizing the same methodology, the ruling class has now targeted the public sector. Leading spokespeople for the ruling class, both inside and outside of government, are openly calling for the elimination of the right to strike for school teachers and other public employees, drastic reductions in salaries and benefits, the seizure of municipal and state pension funds by Wall Street, and the complete eradication of collective bargaining rights for civil servants, where they still exist.

The working class must face this challenge politically and build broader alliances to advance its own program for jobs, job security and employee benefits; moratoriums on foreclosures, evictions and utility shutoffs; and an end to the Pentagon budget and the bailout of the banks, which together drain trillions of dollars from the national treasury every year.

Lessons of 1968: King & the struggle against poverty, war, racism

Every year the corporate media deliberately overlook or distort the pivotal role of the civil rights and Black power movements during the period leading up to and after the assassination of Dr. King. Although King and other charismatic leaders were important in the struggles to break down legalized segregation and win universal suffrage and affirmative action programs, it was the involvement of millions of African Americans, Latinos/as,

women, youth and workers of conscience that constituted the decisive factor in winning the gains of that period.

In the spring of 1967, Dr. King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference came out decisively against the U.S. military occupation of Vietnam. In taking this anti-war position, the SCLC linked the war in Vietnam with the failure of the U.S. to adequately address the problems of poverty, unemployment, national discrimination and oppression.

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee had taken a clear position against the Vietnam War in January of 1966. In June, during the "March Against Fear" through Mississippi, the "Black Power" slogan was advanced. These developments coincided with growing rebellions in African-American and Puerto Rican communities throughout the country.

King's position on the war in Vietnam provided the basis for even greater unity among the Black power, civil rights and anti-war movements of the period. In addition to King's anti-war stance, the SCLC had identified the necessity of eradicating poverty in the United States as prerequisite for the creation of a genuinely democratic and egalitarian society.

In February of 1968, the Memphis, Tenn., sanitation workers, who were almost all Black, went on strike to demand recognition and collective bargaining rights through the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. The racist city administration of Mayor Henry Loeb refused to negotiate with the workers, and a citywide strike support committee was established, headed by James Lawson, a long-time civil rights organizer.

King was invited to Memphis to address a community rally on March 18, where 13,000 people gathered to hear him speak. He called for a general strike in Memphis to force the city administration to recognize the sanitation workers.

On March 28, the day of the general strike, the police rioted and attacked a mass demonstration in downtown Memphis. The city administration shot dead a 14-year-old African-American youth and declared an emergency, calling in the National Guard to suppress the demonstrations and the sanitation strike.

Three days later, on March 31, Dr. King delivered a major address at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. He said: "There can be no gainsaying of the fact that a great revolution is taking place in the world today. In a sense it is a triple revolution: that is, a technological revolution, with the impact of automation and cybernation; then there is a revolution in

weaponry, with the emergence of atomic and nuclear weapons of warfare." ("Testament of Hope," 1991)

King continued: "Then there is a human rights revolution, with the freedom explosion that is taking place all over the world. Yes, we do live in a period where changes are taking place and there is still the voice crying through the vista of time saying, 'Behold, I make all things new, former things are passed away.'"

King then stressed the need for a global view of developments during the period: "First, we are challenged to develop a world perspective. No individual can live alone, no nation can live alone, and anyone who feels that he can live alone is sleeping through a revolution. The world in which we live is geographically one. The challenge that we face today is to make it one in terms of brotherhood." To which we would add today "and sisterhood."

After the assassination of Dr. King, rebellions and mass demonstrations erupted throughout the United States. In Washington, D.C., thousands of federal troops were dispatched to guard the White House and the Capitol.

Although the Poor People's Campaign launched by the SCLC did take place a few weeks later and hundreds of marginalized workers of all nationalities camped out in Washington demanding immediate relief from the U.S. Congress, the effort was thwarted and eventually smashed by the federal government.

Rebellions continued in the cities and on the campuses during the summer and fall of 1968. In Detroit, African-American workers formed the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement which engaged in wildcat strikes against the racist bosses, over and above the union bureaucrats.

At San Francisco State College and other campuses around the country, African-American students and their allies shut them down, demanding Black Studies programs and other efforts to make higher education relevant to the plight of oppressed peoples in the United States. At Wayne State University in Detroit, African-American students took control of the South End campus newspaper, making it a revolutionary organ that was distributed to people in the community, at high schools and plant gates.

Challenges for working class & oppressed today

The ruling class took advantage of the economic crisis caused by capitalist overproduction, which has led to massive unemployment and growing poverty, to escalate political repression and attacks



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich., on March 14, 1968, a few weeks before his assassination. King was targeted by a racist gang opposed to open housing in that affluent suburb of Detroit.

on workers' wages and benefits. The strategic position of African-American workers within industry and the urban areas has been weakened with the further globalization of capital and the systematic lowering of wages and living standards among the oppressed and the working class in general.

Today the oppressed peoples and workers have been placed on the defensive. Further attacks are underway against all sectors of the working class, especially where workers were able to win public sector jobs, educational rights and other social benefits. The further restructuring of capital by the ruling class, absent of a monumental fightback, will inevitably lead to millions more being thrust into joblessness and poverty.

The workers and the oppressed have no choice but to form broader alliances to fight the system of low-wage capitalism. This is a critical period and the issue of low-wage workers must be specifically addressed to counter the ruling class propaganda that they have nothing in common with sectors of the proletariat who have health insurance, a few vacation days and pensions — all of which are threatened and up for seizure by the banks.

If the public sector unions were to be smashed, it would provide even greater openings for the ruling class to further exploit and repress all the workers and the oppressed. If the wars of occupation against the peoples of the world are allowed to continue, the ranks of working class and oppressed youth will be further condemned to the ravages of the Pentagon and the prison/industrial complex. □

Socialism: a world without oppression

Following are excerpts from a talk that was given by Caleb T. Maupin on Nov. 13 at the national Workers World Party conference in New York City. He is a member of the WWP Cleveland branch and Fight Imperialism, Stand Together.

Karl Marx was not the first socialist. He was not the first person to envision a communist future, one without the oppression and degradation people face.

However, Marx was the first to understand that socialism could only come about as a result of class struggle. The capitalist class, which owns the banks, factories and vast wealth of society, is constantly in struggle with the working

class, those with nothing to sell but their labor.

Karl Marx also pointed out that "the ruling ideology of every epoch is the ideology of the ruling class." Just as the ideas that dominated in the time of feudalism were the ideas of kings and nobles, the ideas that dominate the world now, through private ownership of the media, are the ideas of capitalists and bankers.

Because of this, blatant falsehoods become passed off as reality.

One lie that has been commonly ac-



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK
Caleb T. Maupin

cepted is that socialism is a good idea, but it has failed everywhere it's ever been tried. In reality, it's the exact opposite. Everywhere socialism has been implemented the results have meant great victories and advances for the people.

In the Soviet Union, where our class first held power, illiteracy was abolished. Unemployment was obliterated. Workers were guaranteed several weeks paid vacation every year. The first spacecrafts to orbit the earth were launched, making the people of

Continued on page 9

Reflections by Comrade Fidel

'An atrocious act'

Jan. 8 — Sad news was broadcast this afternoon from the United States: Gabrielle Giffords, Democratic congresswoman for Arizona, was the victim of a criminal attempt while taking part in a political meeting at her electoral district in Tucson. On the other side of the border lies Mexico, the Latin American country to which that territory used to belong when, in an unjust war, more than one half of its area was seized from it.

Along its arid surface, many of those who emigrate from Mexico, Central America and other Latin American countries try to escape hunger, poverty and the underdevelopment to which those countries have been led by the United States. Money and goods can freely cross the border; human beings cannot. Without mentioning the drugs and weapons that cross that line in either direction.

Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans who work in that country doing the toughest and worst paid jobs are captured each year and sent back to their points of departure, many times

separated from their closest kin. They were hoping that the new administration would correct that criminal and inhuman policy.

According to just-arrived news, 18 people were shot and six died, among them a 9-year-old girl and Federal Judge John Roll.

The congresswoman was seriously wounded by a bullet in the head. Doctors were fighting to save her life.

She is married to NASA astronaut Mark Kelly. She was first elected to Congress in 2006 at the age of 36. "She is a supporter of migrant reform, stem cell research and alternative energy," measures that are hated by the far right.

She was re-elected as the Democratic representative in the past elections.

When her father was asked whether she had any enemies, he replied: "The entire Tea Party".

It is known that the former U.S. vice-presidential candidate in the 2008 elections and Tea Party leader Sarah Palin published on her website, as the aim for supporters of her party, a map of the

congressional districts of 20 of the Representatives who had backed President Obama's proposed health reform bill and she had them marked with the viewfinder of a rifle.

Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords' political opponent was a former Marine who appeared in the electoral campaign with an M-16 in a message which apparently stated: "Help get rid of Gabrielle Giffords ... shoot the entire ammo chamber of an M-16 with Jesse Kelly."

In March 2010, Gabrielle's district office was attacked. She stated that when people do that they were going to have to be aware of the consequences; political leaders should get together and set limits.

Any sensible person could well wonder whether such an act happened in Afghanistan or in an electoral district in Arizona.

Obama stated: "... an unspeakable tragedy, a number of Americans were shot. ..."

"And while we are continuing to receive information, we know that some have passed away, and that Representa-

tive Giffords is gravely wounded. ..."

"We do not yet have all the answers. What we do know is that such a senseless and terrible act of violence has no place in a free society. ..."

"I ask all Americans to join me and Michelle in keeping Representative Giffords, the victims of this tragedy, and their families in our prayers."

His appeal is quite dramatic and very sad. Even those of us who don't share his political or philosophical ideas in the least sincerely hope that no children, judges, congressmen or any U.S. citizen should die in such an absurd and unjustifiable way.

It is sad to remember that in the world every year many millions of people are dying as the consequence of absurd wars, poverty, growing famines and the deterioration of the environment promoted by the wealthiest and most developed nations on the planet.

We would like Obama and the United States Congress to share those concerns with all the other peoples.

**Signed,
Fidel Castro Ruz**

Meeting launches campaign against anti-Muslim bigotry, war

By Heather Cottin
Westbury, N.Y.

More than 300 people met at the Islamic Center of Long Island in Westbury, N.Y., on Jan. 8. Muslims, Protestants, Jewish people, Catholics and political activists gathered there to denounce the rising bigotry against Muslims, the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and especially the hearings that Long Island Congressperson Peter King has called that target Islamic communities.

The meeting, organized by the Muslim Peace Coalition, Majlis Ash-Shura of Metropolitan New York, was also their kickoff to mobilize for the United National Anti-war Committee Rally and March against War and Islamophobia in New York City set for April 9.

Peter King has called for hearings on what he called "the radicalization of the

American Muslim community." (Newsday, Dec 27) King was co-author of the anti-immigrant Sensenbrenner bill of 2006, is an ardent supporter of the wars against Iraq and Afghanistan and of U.S. incursions into Pakistan. King once said President George W. Bush "deserves a medal" for authorizing the form of torture known as waterboarding. (Wall Street Journal, Jan. 1)

The New York Daily News recently compared King, now chair of the House Committee on Homeland Security, to the 1950s rightist demagogue, Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy. King has said that "there are too many mosques" in the U.S. and that "85 percent of American Muslim community leaders are an enemy living amongst us." (The American Muslim, Jan. 8) This bigoted rhetoric has become part of the culture of divisiveness and violence that has encouraged attacks on mosques and

Muslims in Huntington, Smithtown and other localities on Long Island.

Joe Lombardo, UNAC organizer from Albany, N.Y., noted that attacks on Muslims were a means to divide and conquer workers. Lombardo said taxes from people in New York state in the amount of \$15 billion a year are used to help pay for the wars and occupation of Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Meanwhile an \$8 billion budget cut cost state jobs and destroyed public services.

Angela Lampe, representing the Salvadoran Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of Long Island, compared the racism she and other Latinos/as face on Long Island to the experiences of the Muslim community. She noted that all immigrants have been forced to migrate because of U.S. economic and military policies which made it impossible to stay in their homelands. "They exploit us at

home and they oppress us here, and we have got to remain united. It is very hard to destroy people who are united," she said.

Sara Flounders of the International Action Center spoke of the campaign of hatred that produced the terrible murders in Arizona. "Unity is the one force to fight this atmosphere of fear," she said. The economic crisis was spurring the cuts of social services and pushing reactionary forces to "sow division and fear, marked by attacks on Muslims."

Flounders, who had just returned from a visit with the people of Gaza 24 hours before the meeting, said, "Gaza is an example of the resilience of resistance. And the attacks on Muslims here are used as a justification for wars against Muslim people in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Palestine and Lebanon, and a threat to Iran. Our best protection is solidarity." □

Arizona shootings reflect racist, anti-immigrant terror

Continued from page 1

She underscored the message with the words: "Don't retreat, RELOAD!"

Arizona's Latino Congressman, Raul Grijalva, who also survived a campaign against a Tea Party candidate, had the windows to his office shot out and received numerous death threats after announcing his support for the Boycott Arizona campaign in the wake of the SB 1070 signing.

Shooter was encouraged to commit this act

Jared Loughner, arrested for the shooting, is described as a loner — a 22-year-old psychiatrically unstable youth who had a fascination with right-wing rhetoric. Posts on Loughner's web site used language and terminology found on the web sites of fascist groups. Federal investigators say they found a note inside his home where Loughner stated his intention to assassinate Giffords.

No information has been published indicating that Loughner acted in collusion

with anyone else or with an organization. Nevertheless, right-wing forces in Arizona and throughout the U.S. have given the signal that these kinds of violent and deadly attacks are needed and they have pointed to targets. The political environment in which Loughner lived encouraged him to act as he did.

The military buildup along the border and the state condoning racist Minutemen border patrols all convey the same bigoted message. The state has also done nothing to stop North American Nazi J. T. Ready, who organizes "Mexican Hunting" trips — that is, excursions to hunt down immigrants trying to cross the border areas of Pinal County. The fascist Ready has even produced a video in which he says, "We will kill them." (guanabee.com)

The assassination attempt is directly related to the policy of border militarization. "These senseless deaths are the result of a border policy that has been

building since 1994," Isabel Garcia told Workers World. Garcia is an immigrant rights activist and community leader with Coalición de Derechos Humanos in Tucson. "This has propelled the growth of fear, hate and violence. Over 5,000 migrant deaths, shootings and continuing violence are a direct result of this policy."

Racist, anti-immigrant forces have been steadily escalating their war against the immigrant and Latino/a communities in Arizona, while the banks, private prison companies and military contractors are raking in millions.

Pima County sheriff attacked for comments

Arizona has been the epicenter of this racist, right-wing reaction. When he first addressed the media in his Jan. 8 press conference, even the sheriff of Pima County, Clarence Dupnik, said that Arizona had become a magnet for bigotry and hate and that some "people in the radio business and some people in the TV busi-

ness" are responsible for fomenting the divisive political climate in Arizona. (latimes.com, Jan. 8)

On Jan. 9 Arizona's racist and militarist Sen. Jon Kyl said on CBS-TV's "Face the Nation" that Dupnick's remarks had no place in a law enforcement briefing. Tucson's right-wing radio station KQTH-FM called for Dupnick's resignation. Dupnick has also faced an inquisition from various FOX News pundits about his comments.

Tucson prepares to fight back

On Jan. 11 several Tucson groups, including the Coalición de Derechos Humanos, the International Action Center of Tucson, the Alliance for Global Justice and the Student Justice Education Project, held a press conference to denounce the racist political climate in Arizona. The event was originally called when the state legislature was about to convene and representatives planned to attack the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The

How does Cuba do it?

By Cheryl LaBash

“Cuba has the lowest [infant] mortality rate in the Americas, in spite of the economic blockade imposed against it by the U.S. for more than five decades,” announced Granma newspaper on Jan. 3.

Before Cuba’s 1959 revolution ousted the racist, corrupt, U.S.-puppet Batista regime, infant deaths, when recorded, exceeded 60 per 1,000 live births. In 2010, the rate of infant mortality was only 4.5 per 1,000 live births — overall a better and more equally distributed outcome than in the much wealthier U.S.

This is a stark contrast to the huge disparities in infant mortality rates in the U.S.; for example, there are 14.7 deaths per 1,000 live births among African Americans in Mississippi, as reported in the “2010 Mississippi Infant Mortality Report.” (msdh.ms.gov)

According to Granma, some contributing factors to Cuba’s success are “the political will of the revolutionary government, the high education levels of its population, the vaccination program against 13 diseases, and a free universal health system for everyone.”

Ray Suarez reported on PBS Newshour that Cuba’s health achievement also includes a higher life expectancy than the U.S. and costs less — a lot less! “According to the World Health Organization ... the average Cuban lives to the age of 78. That’s slightly longer than the life span of the average [U.S. resident]. The cost of health care in Cuba is less than \$400 a year per person. In the U.S., the annual tab is almost 20 times higher.” (Dec. 21)

According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, U.S. health care spending amounts to \$8,086 per person or 17.6 percent of its Gross Domestic Product. (www.cms.gov)

The PBS report points to Cuba’s large number of doctors, its emphasis on preventive care, the growing biotech industry that develops new vaccines and medicines, and free universal education including medical school. But there is more.

Cuba’s socialist economic system eliminates the profit motive that shapes and distorts every aspect of health care in the capitalist U.S. The education of doctors and the distribution of health facilities are

planned and organized to meet human needs, not left to the “invisible hand of the market.”

Confronted with \$200,000 to \$300,000 in education debt, many U.S. medical students must steer toward higher income specialties, making career decisions that — subtly or not — avoid treating uninsured, poor or rural patients

where doctors earn less.

Decisions over every aspect of capitalist health care from direct patient care, insurance and hospitals to pharmaceuticals, lab work, research and high-tech tests are all geared to maximizing profits, even increasing the use of these goods or services, whether warranted or not. Medication, surgeries and procedures are

even advertised directly to the public to promote sales.

Yet 50 million U.S. residents have no insurance and even insurance doesn’t guarantee affordable, quality or preventive care. (The Kaiser Family Foundation, Sept. 2010)

The U.S. health care cost and outcome crisis can be solved. Cuba has proved it. □

Luis Posada and Cuban Five— Double standard of justice

While the media are focused on the Jan. 8 right-wing massacre in Tucson, Ariz., the trial of Luis Posada Carriles opened only hours away in El Paso, Texas, on Jan. 10. Although Posada has admitted involvement in the first midair bombing of a passenger flight, in hotel bombings and in other terrorist attacks on Cuba, he is charged with merely lying to federal officials in an immigration case.

On Oct. 6, 1976, Cubana Flight 455 exploded, killing — not six people like in Tucson — but all 73 people aboard the airplane, including the whole Cuban youth fencing team. On Sept. 4, 1997, Favio Di Celmo died when a bomb exploded in Ho-

FREE THE CUBAN 5:
Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, René González Sehwerert, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez & Fernando González Llort.



tel Copacabana in Havana.

Both Posada Carriles — on the CIA payroll as long ago as the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in April 1961 — and Orlando Bosch, another admitted terrorist, enjoy freedom in Miami. But the Cuban Five, who monitored the anti-Cuba paramilitary operations on U.S. territory to protect lives, are unjustly imprisoned in the

U.S. for long terms, including a double life plus 15 years for Gerardo Hernández. The stunning assassination attempt and killings in Tucson, Ariz., did not materialize from thin air, but rather from an aggressive and bloody imperialist U.S. history that uses terror for political and economic domination.

— Cheryl LaBash

Haitians protest at Clinton’s office

About a hundred people gathered in front of Bill Clinton’s office on 125th Street in Harlem, N.Y., on Jan. 8 to demand that the United States and the United Nations, which Clinton represents in Haiti as a special envoy, release the funds that the people of the world so generously donated to Haiti following the devastating earthquake on Jan. 12, 2010. The issues of housing, water, sanitation and employment were strongly raised.

The demonstration was called by the Haiti Solidarity Network of the North East and supported by a number of other progressive groups, such as the Peoples’ Organization for Progress, Madre and the International Action Center.

— Report and photo by G. Dunkel



Continued from page 8

organizers planned to condemn this racist attack, which is an attempt to deny citizenship to children born in the U.S. who have undocumented parents.

But then the press conference was also able to address the Jan. 8 shootings. Speakers laid the blame squarely on the racist, anti-immigrant forces and the millionaires and billionaires who finance them.

James Jordan of the Alliance for Global Justice summed up the press conference by saying, “We live in a war zone. It is a war against both U.S. and Mexican workers and farmers. It’s a war of economic policies, and it’s a war for cheap labor just like the first U.S.-Mexican War was about extending slave territory.

“Because of NAFTA,” Jordan continued, “hundreds of thousands of jobs were

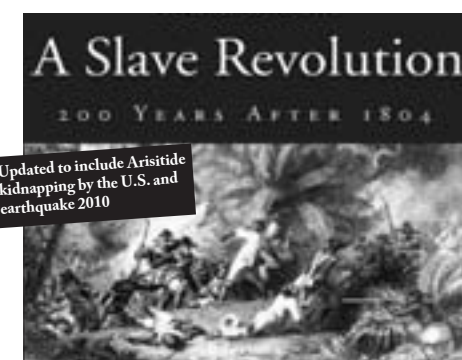
lost on both sides of the border, and millions of rural Mexicans lost their farms and saw their communities destroyed. Because of border militarization, thousands of undocumented migrants have perished crossing the desert looking for work in the U.S. Those who survive become criminalized or demonized as super-exploited workers paid low wages, with no rights. But we can end this war. We can end it by tearing down the border wall, repealing NAFTA and adopting real immigration reform that doesn’t act as a cover for more militarization and criminalization.”

The groups that participated in the press conference are working to build a broad coalition in Tucson and to extend it throughout the state and the country. They want to mobilize the forces needed to stop this right-wing reaction. They can be turned back. Now is the time. □

HAITI: A Slave Revolution 200 Years after 1804

Second edition updates book with new material covering 2004-2010. First published in 2004 as a joint project of the International Action Center and the Haiti Support Network. This is not a traditional history textbook, but a people’s history that debunks racist indoctrination and propaganda about the Haitian Revolution.

Available at www.leftbooks.com



Socialism: a world without oppression

Continued from page 7

the USSR the first to “conquer the heavens,” as some would call it.

All this was accomplished, despite the fact that the imperialists never gave the USSR a moment of peace. Whether it was the forces sent immediately afterwards to put down the revolution, the Nazi invasion or the threat of nuclear annihilation from former President Ronald Reagan, the Soviet people accomplished all they did while under extreme threat from the ruling classes of the world.

Today, Cuba stands tall as an example of a socialist society. Cuba has the highest life expectancy in Latin America and a lower infant mortality rate than the United States.

In January Cuba will be celebrating its 50th year without illiteracy, because after the revolution the Cuban government sent the youth into the countryside to educate the people. [In April 1961, Cuba launched the National Literacy Campaign.] The goal was to arm the people with the ability to read and be educated, so they could rule society, not an exploiting capitalist class or a bureaucracy.

Where’s the failure in this?

Another lie they tell us is that imperialism is helping the world. We have just heard about the crimes that imperialism is committing against women around the world.

When you compare the various coun-

tries where imperialism holds power, you see brutal oppression. In Nigeria, where Shell Oil owns the government, the result is massive unemployment, malnutrition and lack of basic necessities.

However, the highest life expectancy in Africa is in Libya, where the nationalist government has taken control of the oil and used it for the good of the people. I agree with Vince Copeland, a founder of our party, that it is time we do the same thing because oil belongs to the people!

Another lie they tell us is that this is the greatest country in the world and that workers in the U.S. are better off than workers anywhere else. This is false.

In countries with strong trade unions and strong socialist and communist parties, many workers have won countless more concessions for themselves. National healthcare, better wages and free college education are enjoyed by workers in other imperialist countries, the results being longer life expectancy, lower infant mortality rates and a better quality of life.

The great revolutionary Frederick Douglas said, “Power concedes nothing without struggle.”

We, as a revolutionary party, have to be involved in every struggle for basic rights and justice. In addition, we must bring to the people our revolutionary message that workers can rise up, seize control of society and build the future that everyone deserves. □

Workers World statement:

Unite to defeat the bigots

Jan. 10 — Twenty people were shot, and six of them died, while attending a political rally for Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in Tucson, Ariz., on Jan. 8. The authorities are now saying they have evidence that the shootings were an attempted assassination of the Democratic Congresswoman, who is in critical condition.

The shooter, 22-year-old Jared Lee Loughner, was captured on the spot by people attending the rally in a supermarket parking lot and turned over to police. He is reported to be a psychiatrically disabled person with a recent history of fascination with right-wing rhetoric.

At this point, no evidence has surfaced in the media or from the authorities that Loughner had accomplices in the massacre of so many people. However, evidence of a conspiracy may turn up later. Let's not forget: All information is in the hands of the FBI and the Arizona authorities — the capitalist state.

But whether Loughner acted alone or with accomplices, this was a political act. It was not another Columbine. Its target was a politician who had already been verbally attacked and threatened by the far right. It must be seen in the context of the poisonous anti-worker, anti-immigrant, sexist, racist, anti-Muslim, anti-gay, anti-Semitic and anti-Obama offensive of the Republican right, working through the Tea Party, that has allowed a neo-fascist movement, even further to the right, to ride on its coat-tails.

Arizona has been the epicenter of this movement. Even the sheriff of Pima County, Clarence Dupnik, said that Arizona had become "the capital for prejudice and bigotry." John McCain, the Arizona senator who ran for president in 2008 with Sarah Palin, is a war hawk for the Pentagon, which practically owns the state. However, McCain isn't right-wing enough for Palin, who on her website during the 2010 elections showed a map with Representative Giffords' district behind the crosshairs of a rifle accompanied by the words, "Don't retreat, RELOAD!"

But this appeal to violent reaction is not just an Arizona phenomenon. Dozens of states are planning to model their immigration laws on Arizona's infamous SB 1070, signifying that powerful forces in the ruling class are getting behind this anti-immigrant racism.

The right and far-right — and often the "middle," too — have been using the capitalist economic crisis to scapegoat immigrants, Muslims, unions — anyone but the super-rich who have milked not only workers' wages and benefits but government social funds to keep their profits coming in despite the crisis.

The ultimate responsibility for this bloody act lies with the millionaires and billionaires who have heavily financed the right in the recent period. Through right-wing former Texas Congressman Dick Armey and his well-financed foundation, FreedomWorks, the ultra-right organized racist attacks on town hall meetings during the debate over

the weak health care bill. They financed the phony "grass roots" rallies which became the basis of the Tea Party. And the corporations poured hundreds of millions of dollars into the last election to promote Tea Party candidates and the right wing in general.

At a time of economic crisis and mass unemployment that has lasted for more than three years, this kind of divisive, scapegoating politics serves the interests of the entire ruling class, all the way up to the summits of finance capital.

The FBI has now taken over custody of Loughner and the case. This is the same FBI that has been lawlessly raiding the anti-war movement and persecuting solidarity activists.

The FBI stood passively by when armed vigilantes, calling themselves the Minuteman Project, formed what amounted to a fascist militia along the Arizona-Mexico border and openly hunted down undocumented workers. The capitalist state was totally complicit in this crass violation of bourgeois legality. The response of the Obama administration was to send more U.S. troops to the border to do what the Minutemen were doing. And on Jan. 6 a member of the Border Patrol fatally shot an unarmed Mexican youth, 17-year-old Ramsés Barrón Torres.

The FBI, Homeland Security and other government agencies spy on and monitor groups and individuals all over the U.S. Reportedly, the killer mentioned the American Renaissance Party, a known fascist group, on his MySpace page. This together with his behavior and other signs, such as recommending Hitler's "Mein Kampf," would have made him a suspect to be watched — if that's what the capitalist state was looking for. But they close their eyes to the activities of ultra-right and fascist groups.

In connection with Loughner's praise of "Mein Kampf," it is worth noting that Giffords was the first Jewish woman congressional representative from Arizona and openly identified as Jewish during the election campaign.

The Obama administration has responded weakly to this massacre, trying to reduce it to a nonpolitical event — in the same way that Washington stood by while the semi-fascist Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Arizona's Maricopa County was creating a police state for undocumented workers. While this resurgence of reaction is pushed mostly by Republicans, it also feeds on the weakness of the Democratic leaders, who have compromised and retreated on every issue, from health care to Social Security to workers' rights.

This atrocious act is a wake-up call. The people cannot rely on the capitalist government to protect them from the ultra-right and the fascists. Progressive organizations, community groups, unions and all fair-minded people need to unite in a massive response to the hate and prejudice spewed forth every day by the political establishment and the media. They can be turned back. Now is the time. □

ALGERIA, TUNISIA

High unemployment, food prices spark unrest

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Unrest over the impact of the global economic crisis has struck another North African state: this time Algeria, a former French colony that won its independence after a protracted armed and mass struggle during the 1950s and early 1960s. After winning state power under the leadership of the National Liberation Front, the country became a major producer of oil and natural gas.

Despite these tremendous reserves, the Algerian state has not been able to keep apace with the growth in demands for jobs, housing and affordable foods. Since December there have been mass demonstrations and rebellions in various parts of the country in response to the escalating price of food and the shortage of housing. The cost of flour and salad oil has doubled in the last few months while unemployment is officially acknowledged to be at 10 percent.

The Algerian government reported that two people had been killed in the disturbances and some 400 injured. According to Interior Minister Dahou Oul Kablia, "More than 300 police and gendarmes have been wounded, while on the other side there are fewer than 100 hurt." (worldtribune.com, Jan. 10)

Another report released by the Algerian Press Service and published by the Xinhua News Agency, also on Jan. 10, put the death toll at four with 736 policemen and 53 civilians wounded. This report claimed that unrest was continuing in the Annaba province, some 600 km east of the capital of Algiers.

The government of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has announced in response to the demonstrations and violence that measures would be put in place to reduce the prices for staples by the middle of January. Trade Minister Mustafa Bin Bاده stated, "Those behind the rise in basic food items have been greedy merchants."

In another government statement, the Bouteflika administration emphasized, "Nothing can cast doubt on the resolute will of the state, under the direction of the president of the republic, to intervene whenever necessary to preserve the purchasing power of citizens in the face of any price increase." During the recent unrest people have attacked government buildings, police stations, banks and foreign-owned firms, including a franchise for Renault automobiles.

The most violent clashes between youth and the police have occurred in the capital of Algiers, where more than 100 people were reported injured. Police were said to have used tear gas and batons against crowds across the country in demonstrations which erupted again in the western city of Wahran on Jan. 5.

Some of the earliest accounts of unrest in the recent period were reported on Dec. 30, when it was revealed that dozens of people had been injured and arrested in unrest over inadequate housing in Les Palmiers, a suburb of Algiers. The injured

included 52 security officers and one civilian, according to the Algerian Press Service. (Al Jazeera)

Economic crisis spreads to Tunisia

These demonstrations and rebellions are taking place at the same time as protests in neighboring Tunisia, where unemployment is also high and inflation has driven up the price of food and other consumer goods.

In renewed clashes between workers, youth and the police in Tunisia, some 14 people were reported killed over a three-day period, according to an Associated Press report on Jan. 10. In Tunisia, where official unemployment stands at 14 percent, the Western-backed government has been shaken by the demonstrations.

Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali has called the demonstrators "terrorists." In a statement made over national television on Jan. 10, Ben Ali said, "I am clearly telling all those who seek to harm our country's interests that the law will prevail." (Associated Press)

The Western imperialist states that have substantial economic ties with both Tunisia and Algeria are following the political situation in the region very closely. Tunisia had been celebrated for its market-friendly approach to relations with European countries and the U.S.

Recently the World Economic Forum based in Davos, Switzerland, named Tunisia as Africa's most competitive state. Nonetheless, this relatively small nation, in comparison to Algeria — the second-largest geographically in Africa with a population of 34 million — has not been able to create enough jobs for its people nor maintain stable food prices.

Algeria's substantial mineral wealth in oil and natural gas continues to maintain the interests of the U.S. and European Union countries. The country is reported to possess the 14th largest reserves of petroleum in the world and the 8th largest in natural gas deposits.

In a recent commentary written by Roula Khalaf and published in the Financial Times of London, the concerns over developments in North Africa are deepening with the growing unrest. Khalaf notes, "The dramatic events in North Africa should be a warning to others in the region, particularly countries where the number of young graduates is rising much faster than jobs are being created." (Financial Times, Jan. 10)

Khalaf also points out that events in Tunisia and Algeria have implications for the staunchest ally of the U.S. in the region, the regime of Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. The Financial Times article states that "Egypt, where economic reforms have yet to trickle down to a needy population, should take notice, especially as it has seen its own wave of small but regular strikes over the past year."

This same article then points out that "in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, young people have been showing solidarity with Tunisians and Algerians, spreading their message of discontent across the internet."

Consequently, the imperialist countries may be forced to make some serious decisions about their alliance with certain regimes in the region if they prove incapable of curbing unrest in response to the global economic crisis. Under the so-called "war on terrorism" the U.S. and France are escalating their military involvement in various regions of the African continent. □

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NYC, San Diego:

Solidarity with Gaza

Hundreds of people rallied in the Herald Square shopping center in downtown Manhattan on Jan. 9 and then marched more than a mile to the Israeli Consulate to commemorate and protest the vicious Israeli assault on Gaza two years ago and the ongoing blockade of the small region's 1.5 million people. Al-Awda, The Palestine Right to Return Coalition initiated the march, which many other organizations co-sponsored. During the weeks of bombing and invasion that the Israeli military began on Dec. 27, 2008, more than 1,400 Palestinians died, including more than 350 children.

At the opening rally that lasted more than an hour, speakers from many of the anti-imperialist groups in the New York metropolitan area spoke and called attention to the growth of the worldwide movement in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. This growth has accelerated since the assault on Gaza and the Israeli attack on the aid ship Mavi Marmara last spring, which awakened many youth to the criminal nature of the Israeli state and its occupation of Palestine.

Student organizations from Hunter and Brooklyn Colleges had representatives at the rally, as did Jewish organizations in

solidarity with Palestine. Speakers also denounced U.S. complicity with Israel in all these crimes, as shown by the Pentagon providing most of Israel's weapons and U.S. diplomacy supporting Israel in every United Nations vote.

Among the speakers were representatives of BAYAN and the Korean group Nodutdol. Sara Flounders, a co-director of the International Action Center, also spoke. Flounders had just participated in a solidarity trip to Gaza in a delegation that included human rights leader Ramsey Clark. Clark and Flounders are scheduled to speak at a report-back meeting on Jan. 19 at the IAC office. Larry Holmes also spoke from the IAC. Workers World Party had a strong delegation at the demonstration, where Workers World newspaper was distributed.

— Report and photo by
John Catalinotto

Organized by the San Diego chapter of Al-Awda, several hundred pro-Palestine activists assembled in the city's central park on Jan. 9 to mark the second anniversary of the Israeli attack on Gaza, an atrocity which resulted in the slaughter of more than 1,400 Gazans, overwhelm-



New York, Jan. 9.

ingly civilians.

Challenged by a larger Zionist mobilization, the Gaza supporters held their ground, later conducting a march through the large park to reach out to Sunday visitors. They then reassembled at the park's fountain for a reading of the names of the hundreds of Palestinian children martyrs who have been killed by the Israelis during and since that attack on Gaza.

Following the reading of each name and the child's age, the crowd shouted, "Pre-

sente!" Al-Awda leader Zahi Damuni reminded the crowd that the Israeli slaughter of Gazans is an ongoing massacre and we all have a responsibility to find ways to challenge Israeli aggression and the support it receives from the U.S. government.

Bob McCubbin, representing the San Diego International Action Center and Workers World Party, announced the presence in Gaza of a U.S. solidarity delegation led by IAC founder Ramsey Clark.

— Workers World San Diego bureau

'Revolutionary defeatism' and the anti-war movement

Excerpts from the Nov. 13 talk to the Workers World Party National Conference by John Catalinotto, a managing editor of Workers World newspaper.

My favorite pamphlet by Workers World Party founder Sam Marcy is "The Bolsheviks and War." I recommend it for all comrades to read and study, especially for anyone working within the anti-war movement.

If capitalism has no normal, cyclical way out of the crisis, what then can we expect? Imperialism's setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan don't allow us to rule out an even larger war against Iran. A ruling class frantic about threats to its system will try to agitate the workers against an enemy abroad, such as China. We Marxist-Leninists can't exclude what appears to be the most irrational reaction of the masters of an irrational system.

Look at Afghanistan. A year ago, President Barack Obama made a compromise with the Pentagon generals. He sent another 30,000 troops in return for a withdrawal date of July 2011. Now the withdrawal is off until at least 2014.

The lesson: Presidents come and presidents go; the military-industrial complex remains.

Though there has been no really massive national anti-war demonstration in

five years, a strong anti-war movement is more important than ever. Filling the vacuum, a new coalition called the United National Anti-War Committee has called for mass protests next April 9 in New York and San Francisco. Our article in Workers World newspaper shows that we could support the current slogans of this demonstration. They oppose all the U.S. wars, they oppose U.S. support for Israel, and they defend the Muslim community within the U.S. They call for solidarity with immigrants, and back the anti-racist struggle and the workers' struggle at home.

I won't try to make now an analysis of the character of that coalition. It is clear that these demonstrations have some potential. The party is committed to making them as successful as possible. Even a simple mass gathering behind these slogans would be a big step forward in the face of imperialist propaganda.

However, as a party of revolutionary communists, we must behave as revolutionaries within the anti-war movement. Let's look at what the Russian communist leader Lenin wrote about fighting the imperialist First World War.

"During a reactionary war a revolutionary class cannot but desire the defeat of its government." In addition, there is an "inseparable link between revolutionary agitation against the government and

helping bring about its defeat." We are for those actions that can bring about a defeat for the imperialists.

Comrade Sam Marcy also wanted to go beyond symbolic protest. He wrote, "As long as the war machine is permitted to function smoothly, a little dissent and mass protest kept within bounds may even make the capitalist government operate more effectively and smooth the machinery of war."

During the war against Vietnam, in an atmosphere of anti-imperialist sentiment among the youth, the party was able to surpass symbolic protest. We sometimes led street struggles that clashed with the state apparatus. Within the military, we organized GIs to oppose the war and prepared them to refuse orders to fight



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

John Catalinotto

against the Vietnamese, working within the American Servicemen's Union to break the chain of command.

Within the liberal/pacifist-led coalitions that existed then we always pushed the envelope in an anti-imperialist direction. For example, in 1967 we opposed Israeli aggression when this issue was even more isolating than now. We became a revolutionary

pole of attraction.

In our anti-war work, too, we must be conscious of and stand up against the enormous weight of bourgeois public opinion — ruling class opinion — dragging everyone to the right. We must once again stand out as a revolutionary pole even as we function to build the strongest protests against the imperialist wars. □

Another Afghan surge?

In late fall of 2009, the Barack Obama administration, under heavy pressure from the Pentagon, agreed to increase U.S. troop strength in Afghanistan by another 30,000 troops. According to the deal between Obama and the generals, the troops were to start withdrawing in July 2011. It was supposed to be a "surge" leading to a quick victory.

A year later, the administration started saying that troops will remain in Afghanistan until at least 2014. And on Jan. 6 the administration raised the stakes once more when Defense Secretary Robert Gates approved sending an additional 1,400 Marines to the Afghan front. Now there are more than 98,000 U.S. troops in the country, not to mention NATO troops and thousands more mercenaries and contractors performing both logistical and combat tasks.

There are few voices promising a quick victory from the surge any more. But it did bring with it a big surge in casualties, with more than 5,500 U.S. troops hit by

enemy fire in 2010, more than twice the number in 2009. Of these, more than 430 killed. It brought a similar increase in Afghan civilian casualties, with thousands of the wounded dying.

A Jan. 8 article in the Wall Street Journal indicates that the Pentagon is trying to keep its combat strength high in Afghanistan by hiring more mercenaries to carry out noncombat roles. "Some military officials believe many jobs could be replaced with civilian contractors or civilian government employees. Military intelligence analysts, especially those assigned to higher-level headquarters, can be replaced with officials from civilian agencies or even contractors."

This strategy means that the U.S. is not really getting out of Afghanistan — not to speak of Iraq. It is instead keeping up the combat forces while pretending to wind down the war. For the Afghans it is continuing disaster. For U.S. rank-and-file troops, it continues their deaths and injuries.

— John Catalinotto



GAZA: Symbol of Resistance

WW compilation, edited by Joyce Chediak.

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Declaración del Partido WW/Mundo Obrero:

Las fuerzas detrás de la masacre de Tucson en Arizona

El 8 de enero, veinte personas fueron víctimas de disparos y seis de ellas murieron mientras asistían a un mitin político para la representante Gabrielle Giffords en Tucson, Arizona. Las autoridades ahora dicen que tienen evidencia de que los disparos fueron un intento de asesinato de la congresista demócrata, quien se encuentra en estado crítico.

El pistolero de 22 años de edad, Jared Lee Loughner, fue capturado en el acto por los asistentes a la manifestación en el estacionamiento de un supermercado y entregado a la policía. Según los informes, es una persona con discapacidad mental y con una historia reciente de fascinación con la retórica de la extrema derecha.

En este momento no hay evidencia en los medios de comunicación burguesa o por las autoridades, de que Loughner tenía cómplices en la masacre de tantas personas. Sin embargo, podría aparecer más adelante evidencia de una conspiración. No olvidemos que toda la información está en manos del FBI y las autoridades de Arizona — el estado capitalista.

Pero independientemente de que si Loughner actuara solo o con cómplices, lo cierto es que este fue un acto político. No fue otro Columbine. Su objetivo era una persona política que ya había sido agredida verbalmente y amenazada por la extrema derecha. Debe considerarse en el contexto de la venenosa ofensiva anti laboral, anti inmigrante, sexista, racista, anti-musulmán, anti-gay y anti-Obama de la derecha republicana a través del Partido del Té, que ha permitido la alineación de un movimiento neo fascista, aún más a la derecha.

Arizona ha sido el epicentro de este movimiento. Hasta el alguacil del Con-

dado de Pima, Clarence Dupnik, dijo que Arizona se había convertido en “la capital de los prejuicios y la intolerancia”. John McCain, el senador de Arizona que se postuló para presidente en el 2008 con Sarah Palin, es un promotor de guerra a beneficio del Pentágono el cual es prácticamente dueño del estado. Sin embargo, McCain no es lo suficientemente derechista para Palin, quien en su sitio web durante las elecciones del 2010 mostró un mapa con el distrito de la Representante Giffords detrás de la mira de un rifle acompañado de las palabras “¡No se retiren, recarguen!”

Sin embargo, esta apelación a reacciones violentas no es sólo un fenómeno de Arizona. Decenas de estados están planeando modelar sus leyes de inmigración en base a la infame ley SB 1070 de Arizona, lo que significa que hay poderosas fuerzas de la clase dominante aliándose a este racismo anti-inmigrante.

La derecha y la extrema derecha — y con frecuencia la “media” también — han estado usando la crisis económica capitalista para culpar a inmigrantes, musulmanes, sindicatos — a todos y todas menos a los súper-ricos quienes se han robado no sólo los salarios y beneficios de los/as trabajadores, sino los recursos sociales del gobierno, para mantener la entrada de sus ganancias a pesar de la crisis.

La responsabilidad final de este hecho sangriento es de los millonarios y multimillonarios que han financiado fuertemente a la derecha en el período reciente. A través del derechista ex congresista de Texas Dick Armey, y su bien financiada fundación Freedom Works, la ultra derecha organizó ataques racistas contra las reuniones públicas durante el debate del débil proyecto de ley sobre el cuidado

de salud. Financiaron las falsas “reuniones del pueblo” que formaron la base del Partido del Té. Y las corporaciones vertieron cientos de millones de dólares en las últimas elecciones para promover candidatos/as del Partido del Té y de la derecha en general.

En un tiempo de crisis económica y desempleo masivo que ha durado más de tres años, este tipo de política divisoria de búsqueda de chivos expiatorios, sirve a los intereses de toda la clase dominante, llegando hasta la misma cima del capital financiero.

El FBI se ha hecho cargo del caso y de la custodia de Loughner. Este es el mismo FBI que ha ido desenfadada e ilegalmente arremetiendo contra el movimiento anti guerra y persiguiendo activistas solidarios/as.

El FBI pasivamente observó cuando los vigilantes armados del autodenominado Proyecto Minuteman formaron lo que equivalía a una milicia fascista a lo largo de la frontera Arizona-México y abiertamente perseguían a los/as trabajadores/as indocumentados/as. El Estado capitalista fue totalmente cómplice de esta crasa violación de legalidad burguesa. La respuesta de la administración de Obama fue enviar más tropas estadounidenses a la frontera para hacer lo que hacían los Minutemen. Y el 6 de enero, un miembro de la Patrulla Fronteriza disparó fatalmente a un joven mexicano desarmado de 17 años de edad, Ramsés Barrón Torres.

El FBI, el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional y otros organismos del gobierno espían y monitorean a grupos e individuos en todo EEUU. Según reportes, el asesino mencionó al Partido del Renacimiento Americano, un conocido grupo fascista, en su página de MySpace. Esto,

junto a su conducta y señales como la recomendación del libro de Hitler “Mein Kampf”, lo habrían hecho ser un sospechoso digno de vigilancia — si eso es lo que el estado capitalista estaba buscando. Pero cierran los ojos a las actividades de los grupos de la ultraderecha y de corte fascista.

Con respecto a la alabanza de Loughner de “Mein Kampf,” vale la pena observar que Giffords era la primera mujer judía representante del congreso por Arizona e identificada abiertamente como judía durante la campaña electoral.

El gobierno de Obama ha respondido débilmente a esta masacre, tratando de reducirla a un evento de carácter no político — de la misma manera que Washington se mantuvo al margen mientras el alguacil semi-fascista Joe Arpaio del condado de Maricopa estuvo creando un estado policial en contra de los/as trabajadores/as indocumentados/as. Mientras que este resurgimiento reaccionario está empujado sobre todo por los/as republicanos/as, también se alimenta de la debilidad de los/as líderes demócratas que han hecho concesiones y se han retirado de todas las cuestiones de interés a la clase trabajadora, desde el cuidado de salud y la Seguridad Social, hasta los derechos de los/as trabajadores/as.

Este acto atroz es una alerta. El pueblo no puede confiar en el gobierno capitalista para protegerle de la ultra-derecha y los/as fascistas. Las organizaciones progresistas, grupos comunitarios, sindicatos y todas las personas amantes de la justicia deben unirse en una respuesta masiva al odio y al prejuicio arrojado todos los días por la clase política y los medios de comunicación del establecimiento. Es posible detenerles. Ahora es el momento. □

Mumia Abu-Jamal desde el corredor de la muerte:

La guerra contra nosotros/as mismos/as

Tomado de una columna de audio del 24 de noviembre en www.prisonradio.org. Para información al día sobre el caso de Mumia, vea www.millions-4mumia.org.

Mientras pasa el vigésimo año desde que el Oeste declaró la guerra contra el ahora fallecido Saddam Hussein, y el estado de guerra fomenta aún más violencia en Irak y Afganistán, hay otra guerra que está siendo librada hoy en día, una guerra que recibe poca cobertura en la televisión, en la radio y/o en los periódicos.

Esa guerra tiene su propia carnicería psíquica y física, sus pérdidas, sus perdedores — y, sí, sus ganadores.

Los/as perdedores han sido forzados/as fuera de sus casas. Han sido forzados/as fuera de sus empleos. Algunos/as han sido llevados/as al borde de la locura y más. Y sí, ha habido muertes; pero dicho otra vez, esto ha sido ocultado de la vista pública.

Eso es porque esta guerra ha sido

esencialmente una guerra de clase — una guerra contra la clase pobre y trabajadora para beneficiar a la clase dominante y a la industria financiera.

Las armas de esta guerra han sido el desempleo, las ejecuciones hipotecarias y los ajustes a las líneas de crédito. Y mientras que se ha retirado dinero de las carteras y de los bolsillos de millones, el erario público ha sido usado para llenar los cofres de los bancos, pero también para financiar locas guerras en otras partes del mundo — como los casi \$3 billones (3 millones de millones) para financiar las incursiones en Irak y Afganistán, frecuentemente para asegurar los gobiernos corruptos y narco-cleptócratas en el poder.

Hay que repetirlo: Trillones del erario público están siendo gastados para financiar guerras totalmente innecesarias, y cientos de miles de millones se regalan a bancos privados e instituciones financieras mientras que el desempleo, la falta de vivienda y la desesperación crecen a

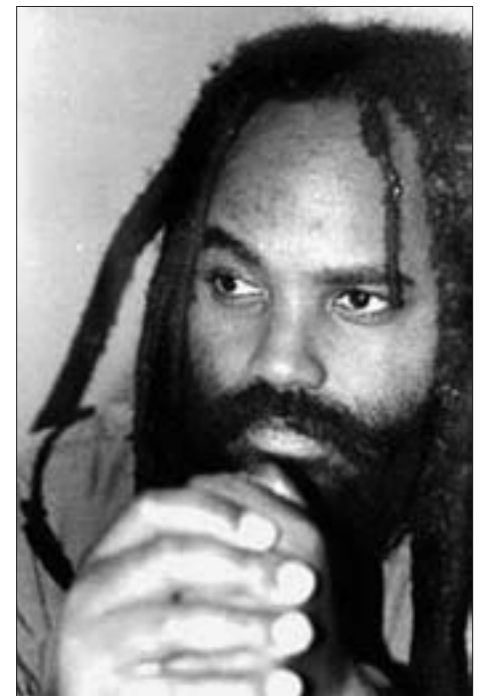
niveles verdaderamente epidémicos que no se han visto por generaciones.

Las escuelas se están desmoronando, cuando funcionan, lo cual es raro; las bibliotecas están cerradas; los servicios públicos merman y desaparecen como lluvia en los ladrillos en un día caliente de verano. Y las prisiones están abarrotadas hasta las costuras.

Las guerras son siempre contra los dos lados — los vencedores y los perdedores. Y en la era del complejo militar-industrial, la guerra se hace el combustible de la riqueza para un pequeño puñado de negocios.

Pero tiene costos mucho más allá que los ataúdes cubiertos con la bandera, las extremidades hechas añicos, el viento aullando por las mentes dañadas, y algo tan banal como el número de bajas de algún “enemigo” imaginado.

Trae consigo las mismas aflicciones de la instantánea recesión: desempleo, embargos, carencia de hogar y, sí, desesperanza. Es una guerra contra nosotros mismos. □



LIBERTAD PARA MUMIA ABU-JAMAL