

# WORKERS WORLD

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## After he blamed the bloodbath on bigotry Tea Party tries to oust Arizona sheriff

By Fred Goldstein

The Pima County Tea Party Patriots are holding a rally Jan. 28 in Tucson, Ariz., to launch a campaign to oust County Sheriff Clarence Dupnik. The Tea Party and right-wingers all over the country have opened a campaign of vilification against Dupnik because he pointed the finger at the ultraright in his press conference on the day of the attempted assassination of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, an attack that claimed six lives.

On Jan. 8 Dupnik said: "The anger, the hatred, the bigotry that goes on in this country is getting to be outrageous. And unfortunately, Arizona, I think, has become sort of the capital. We have become the mecca for prejudice and bigotry."

In addition to the Tea Party rally, an anti-immigrant racist from Salt Lake City, Utah, has filed with the Pima County elections director to initiate a petition to recall the sheriff. Dan Baltes, head of Americans Against Immigration Amnesty, was given permission to head up the Recall Pima County Sheriff Clarence Dupnik Committee, even though Baltes is not from Arizona. At least 91,000 signatures from Pima County are required by May 24 to get the recall measure on the ballot.

To show that the right-wing frenzy has not abated in Arizona, in addition to the recall petition, a law is now being considered to forbid the application of any international law in Arizona, shielding the state from international human rights agreements.

Another law is in the works requiring the advance registration of any federal agents in Arizona, which would prevent any on-the-spot inspection of violations of civil rights, environmental laws, labor laws, etc.

It is ironic that Sheriff Dupnik has become the lightning rod of this ultra-right-wing storm. He has been a cop for decades and has been no friend of undocumented workers. In 2009 he approved the screening of students in schools for documents giving their immigration status, even though this was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Dupnik said at the time, "It's wrong for taxpayers in this country to spend the millions and millions of dollars that

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### LABOR-COMMUNITY FIGHTBACK

In New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan 4-5



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### WW EDITORIAL

## Obama evades the crisis

The 25 million to 30 million unemployed and underemployed workers in the U.S. who might have listened to President Barack Obama's State of the Union address could not have found a single word in it to relieve them of their plight. The same can be said for the millions facing foreclosure as well as the 47 million people officially living in poverty.

What they did hear was a call for lowering the corporate tax rate for the first time in 25 years. Obama also proposed a five-year freeze on domestic spending in order to make "painful cuts." He alluded to cuts in Medicaid and Medicare to solve the deficit problem. He glorified the Race to the Top program, which is a blueprint for privatizing the educational system and undermining teachers' unions.

Obama dangled visions of future jobs based upon future plans to de-

velop high-speed railways, high-speed Internet, biomedical technology, and more research and development, but there was not one word about a concrete jobs program or any other form of relief for the masses whose suffering is growing.

The president conjured up the era after 1957, when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the world's first space satellite. The Eisenhower administration, the Pentagon and the ruling class went into a complete panic

over the prospect of falling behind the socialist USSR in technology. What followed was a massive investment in U.S. education, especially in the sciences and math. It was subsidized by the government and led to the beginning of the scientific-technological revolution.

Obama cited the present situation, pointing to China, which now has the world's longest high-speed rail network and the world's most powerful com-

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### BLACK HISTORY + CLASS STRUGGLE

- Honoring Dr. King
- Cookie Gilchrist: outspoken athlete 6-7



### Grand Jury repression protested in 45 cities

Rally at Federal Building in downtown New York is one of 45 actions around the country Jan. 25 protesting the Grand Jury-FBI subpoenas issued to anti-war and solidarity activists.



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

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# Lucasville prisoner Bomani Shakur: 'Power to the People'

**WORKERS WORLD**  
*this week...*

The following excerpted statement is from Brother Bomani Shakur (aka Keith LaMar), one of three prisoners who went on hunger strike at Ohio State Penitentiary to protest the conditions of their confinement. The three ended their strike on Jan. 14 when prison officials offered them more than they had demanded.

Although on a very small scale (which by no means diminishes the deed), we, the people, have wrought a revolution — “a sudden and momentous change in a situation” — and accomplished in 12 days what the powers that be have repeatedly told us would never happen. Indeed, for the first time in 16 years, I will be able to hug and kiss my family!

There are no words to express the profound gratitude I feel. The late, great, revolutionary leader Che Guevara once said, “A true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love!” It is a great feeling of love (for you, the people) that is guiding me right now. Even as I write this, tears of hope and determination are streaming down my face.

When one has been forced to live in a space no larger than a closet for 16 years, 23 hours a day, not only does one begin to feel extremely insignificant, but the very world begins to shrink; even the smallest thing seems impossible. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined the overwhelming outpouring of love and support that came flooding into my cell after I cried out for help. People from all over the country and the world — England, Ireland, Serbia, Amsterdam — reached out and joined with us to right an injustice. And we succeeded!

It would be great if I could say that the worst is over now and that, with victory in hand, I can live happily ever after. Unfortunately, I don't have the luxury of living in a fairy tale; the people who are trying to take my life are real. Not even a week after we embarked on the hunger strike, a federal district judge turned down my appeal, placing me even further in the balance.

It would be naïve of me to believe that this was just a coincidence. I said some very harsh things (all of them true) against the system, and I say them again: This system is bogus and sold to those with money. In other words, if you don't have the capital you get the punishment; and justice, like everything else in this capitalist nightmare, is nothing more than a commodity that is reserved for the highest bidder.

Friends, I beg you not to abandon me to this mockery; inasmuch as my life is not for them to take, I intend to fight them, and I (we) need your help. What they did to us cannot stand up under the bright light of scrutiny. Because of who we are, they felt that doing a thorough job wasn't necessary — after all, who's going to give a damn about a bunch of criminals? With this as their attitude, they charged several people with the same crimes, using different theories and, in some cases, allowing the actual perpetrators to point the finger elsewhere.

Simply put, what they did to us is a travesty of justice, and yet our convictions have remained intact through the lower courts of appeal and are quickly making their way



Sharon Danaan and Bomani Shakur at the Ohio State Penitentiary, Jan. 15, shortly before the victory rally.

through the federal courts. If we don't do something to get out in front of this thing, they are going to kill us soon.

It may be that, no matter what we do, they are going to kill us anyway. Well, okay. But if that be the case, let us at least make sure that they cannot call it justice. If they kill us, let us at least be able to call it what it really is: murder.

Friends, we don't have to accept this; we don't have to continue down the path of least resistance, allowing them to do with us whatever they please. If we stand together and speak truth to power, they will have no choice but to right this wrong. They did it in the current confrontation, and they will do it again, not because they want to but because they have to.

Whenever hypocrisy is confronted by the truth, it must capitulate. Therefore, the key to fighting these people is to expose the truth and hold it up next to what they claim to represent. If we can do this well enough, they will either have to practice what they preach or, as Malcolm X suggests, preach what they practice. Our job is to make sure they don't have it both ways.

Our friend, Staughton Lynd, has written a book about the uprising (“Lucasville: The Untold Story of a Prison Uprising”), and we need to encourage people to read it. In the coming days, weeks, and months, we need to formulate plans to reintroduce the play and launch the documentary, “Dirty Little Secrets,” all with the intended purpose of making as many people as possible aware of what actually happened during the uprising and its aftermath. Ultimately, the goal is to compose a petition to be presented to the governor with the demand that he either issue a general amnesty for all of the Lucasville cases or convene a panel of qualified experts to determine whether an amnesty is warranted.

I want to thank each and every one of you for coming forward as you did. I am both humbled and uplifted by the support. When I phoned my 8-year-old niece, Kayla, and informed her that “Uncle Keith will be able to touch her little hand soon,” she, with excitement brimming in her voice, said, “That's awesome!” And I couldn't agree with her more: What we did was awesome! We came together and spoke truth to power and won!

Power to the People!

— Bomani Shakur aka Keith LaMar  
January 2011

## MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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## At arraignment of anti-war activists

# Supporters say 'Free Ahlam Mohsen and Max Kantar!'

By Kris Hamel  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

The courtroom was packed with supporters when anti-war activists Ahlam Mohsen and Max Kantar were arraigned on Jan. 24 in front of U.S. Magistrate Judge Joseph G. Scoville. Both pleaded not guilty and were released on personal bond until trial.

Members of the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice in Detroit were there in solidarity with Mohsen and Kantar, as were student activists from the Coalition Against Sexual Violence at Michigan State University in East Lansing. Mohsen is a leading organizer in the coalition. Other supporters from Grand Rapids also attended.

The two face eight years in federal prison on felony charges for an anti-imperialist solidarity action on Aug. 16 in Big Rapids, Mich. There they confronted

U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee, for his complicity and participation in crimes against the peoples of Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and other victims of U.S. wars, including the poor and homeless in Detroit.

At the event Kantar read a detailed statement, backed up with five pages of substantiating documentation. (The statement and references can be found at [www.mecawi.org](http://www.mecawi.org).) After that Mohsen allegedly placed a de-cruised apple pie in the senator's face.

Mohsen and Kantar are both 23 years old. Mohsen is a senior at Michigan State University majoring in anthropology. Kantar graduated from Ferris State University in 2010. Both are anti-imperialists and staunch supporters of the Palestinian people's struggle against U.S.-backed Israeli occupation and war.

Mohsen spent more than a week locked up in the Mecosta County Jail for

her "crime." She was held on a quarter-million-dollar bond requiring \$50,000 in bail. While incarcerated, Mohsen, a Yemeni-American, was reportedly subjected to ethnic slurs and her vegetarian dietary requirements were disregarded by jail authorities.

MECAWI came immediately to Mohsen's defense and organized a protest Aug. 20 outside the federal building in Detroit where Sen. Levin has his offices. Levin's staff received calls and emails demanding the senator use his weighty influence and stature to get the bond reduced and charges dropped against the pair. He maintained it was out of his hands to do so.

Mohsen was released from Mecosta County Jail on Aug. 24 on a reduced bond, while the state "suspended" their case because the FBI took over the investigation. On Dec. 30 Mohsen and Kantar were indicted by a grand jury on two counts each of "forcible assault on a Federal Officer"



Ahlam Mohsen and Max Kantar  
WWW PHOTOS: KRIS HAMEL

and "assault on a Member of Congress." These outrageous charges include a reference to Section 1114 of U.S. Code Title 18, alleging the case of Mohsen and Kantar falls under the guidelines of "whoever kills or attempts to kill any officer or employee of the United States."

The Jan. 24 MECAWI release states: "This railroading of Mohsen and Kantar must cease immediately. It is an outrage that taxpayers' money is being spent investigating and prosecuting these young people for an act of free speech when there are right-wing thugs and murderers attempting to assassinate elected officials and carrying out massacres (Tucson), bombs are being placed at MLK Day marches (Spokane), the Tea Party and its racist vitriol are being cheered in the media, and trillions are spent on wars, military occupations and bailing out the banks while the needs of society are greatly unmet." □

## Die-in demands end to anti-LGBTQ bigotry

By Stephen White

*"We gather here to peacefully assert our love and our freedom, but also to remember our dead."*

A group of people, ranging in age from 15 to 60, banded together on Dec. 18 to stage a die-in for lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer liberation at the Westfarms Mall in Farmington, Conn. Thousands of shoppers were going about their business in the halls of the central Connecticut mall only to be taken by surprise when shouts rang out around them. The leaders of the Queer Liberation Front, Al Riccio and Aaron McAuliffe, began to read a speech aloud, bringing shoppers to a stunned halt.

As McAuliffe began her part of the speech, members of the organization fell to the floor and remained motionless for several minutes in commemoration of their fallen allies in the struggle for LGBTQ rights. Armed with nothing more than printed copies of their speeches and plastic cones substituting for megaphones, the message of peace, love and equality was carried throughout the mall to be heard by hundreds of people.

The speech was a reminder of the equality inherent in the definition of "human" and an effective commentary on the harassment and inequality that LGBTQ people face in their daily lives. "We are denied the right to exist. We are denied

the right to express our love for each other and to express our true gender identities. We are denied the right to be happy and healthy first-class citizens," read McAuliffe. LGBTQ youths are four to eight times more likely to commit suicide than their peers, as well as three times more likely to use drugs and alcohol.

The speech went on for seven-and-a-half minutes without interruption. The shoppers looked on in confusion for the first few minutes. However, the entire

crowd broke into applause when a homemade banner listing the QLF's demands was dropped from a second floor railing. It read: "Dear Santa, Our holiday wishes: end trans/homophobia; safe schools; self-defense without penalty; CT gender identity nondiscrimination bill. Love, Queer Liberation Front." A second banner with LGBTQ suicide statistics was also displayed.

At the end of the speech a list of names was read to symbolize the grave cost of being queer in the U.S. Each name that

was read was a person who had been a victim of a hate crime or suicide. As the list was being read, security officers attempted to stop the protest. Two officers confiscated the speeches and artificial megaphones. The people who lay on the ground stood up, and McAuliffe and Riccio began to chant, "L-G-B-T, we demand equality." QLF members picked up the chant and marched out of the mall, as jeers and cheers, compliments and insults surrounded them. □

### WW ORGANIZER:

## Marching for housing in Philadelphia

By Joe Piette  
Philadelphia

They're already marching away from City Hall — members of the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign protesting residential foreclosures in Philadelphia on Jan. 17.

The light is red, and the demonstration is moving up the street. If I rush up to 16th Street, I'll be able to join them. Finding a parking spot makes me late, and then I mistake the many homeless in Love Park lined up for hot food as the housing protest.

"The banks get bailed out; the people get thrown out!" The turnout and energy

are good for such cold weather. Now we're turning back up 16th Street, and we stop at a Bank of America office. I take out my camera.

"Bank of America, the recipient of \$45 billion in taxpayer bailout money, continues to foreclose homes and evict families from their homes." I'm taking several photos, one of an infant in a pink coat being held by a man holding a pink "STOP FORECLOSURES!" sign.

As we take off back toward City Hall, one man says, "Is it time to use the rocks yet?" A couple of people quickly respond, "No!" "Just wondering," he replies. "We used them back in the day." Everyone laughs.

I take a picture of protesters in wheelchairs, one of whom has no gloves. My hands are cold, and I'm wearing gloves.

I move to the front of the protest to take a shot of the whole march. We begin to climb steps when shouts in the back make us stop — the wheelchairs can't follow us. We return and walk in the street to City Hall.

Back on the sidewalk, the marchers are led toward Broad Street. The chants are now directed against the sheriff's policy on foreclosure evictions. "Where's the sheriff's office?" I ask a marcher. He shrugs and goes to ask someone.

I stop. It's 1 p.m. I have to go to a rally against deportations with fliers against the FBI entrapment of Muslims on Jan. 25 and Workers World newspapers.

The marcher returns and tells me the sheriff's office is one block south of here. I tell him I've got to go. "See you next time," he responds. □

### After he blamed the bloodbath on bigotry

## Tea Party tries to oust Arizona sheriff

Continued from page 1

we do catering to illegals," including free education for their children. When Rep. Raul Grijalva and 10 others demanded an apology, Dupnik refused.

But simply for pointing the finger at the ultraright, Dupnik has now become the target of a racist, anti-immigrant witch hunt. Rush Limbaugh, Fox News' Bill O'Reilly, the Washington Times and other right-wing media and politicians have used Dupnik to accelerate their attacks since the massacre took place.

While the right wing raves, the Obama administration, as well as the big business media and political establishment, have done all in their power to personalize the massacre and reduce it to the act of an individual, without regard to the growing political ultraright-wing tide.

This only enables the racist, sexist, anti-LGBTQ, anti-labor, anti-immigrant, fascist and ultraright currents in U.S. capitalist society while also serving the interests of big business, which seeks to divide everyone during this economic crisis. □



WWW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

## PENNSYLVANIA

# Gas Truth rally challenges gov

By **Betsey Piette**  
Harrisburg, Pa.

Hundreds of anti-drilling activists braved icy weather to demonstrate in Harrisburg at the Jan. 18 inauguration of Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett. Loud chants of “Tom Corporate, No Way! No Fracking in PA!” drowned out the pro-drilling governor’s speech and could be heard during televised coverage of the event.

Corbett, a Republican and former state attorney general, took his oath of office on the state’s Capitol steps, as anti-fracking protesters from around the state rallied within sight on Soldiers’ Grove a few hundred yards away. The ice storm forced cancellation of a bus of protesters from the northeastern part of the state, the area hardest hit by Marcellus Shale drilling.

Gas Truth of Central PA, which aims to obtain a statewide drilling moratorium, organized the rally. The group held a large banner calling the governor “Tom Corporate,” referring to major election campaign contributions Corbett received from the natural gas industry. Other signs called him “Toxic Tom.”

The natural gas industry has rushed into states like Pennsylvania, with little or no environmental regulation, to take advantage of recently discovered shale formations like Marcellus and Utica, thought to contain massive natural gas reserves worth billions of dollars.

Corbett opposes new taxes on natural gas drilling, leaving Pennsylvania the only state with significant, yet untaxed, natural gas production. He plans to repeal a moratorium on further leasing of state forest lands for drilling, which outgoing Gov. Ed Rendell decreed in October.

Harrisburg activist Gene Stilip described Corbett as “totally beholden to the natural gas corporations.” He raised concerns that Corbett will open the way for the industry’s use of eminent domain to take over properties across the state. “If they ruin the water in this state, we are finished,” Stilip concluded.

When Pittsburgh City Councilperson Douglas Shields asked, “Are we going to stand by while our state and townships are laid waste by corporate greed,” the crowd answered with a resounding “No!” In November, Pittsburgh’s city council voted 9-0 to ban natural gas drilling. Other Marcellus Shale region cities, including Buffalo, N.Y., want to pass similar bans.

“We are not here to be slaves of corporations or colonies of Harrisburg,” Shields said. “As a [councilperson], I took an oath to uphold Commonwealth law that people have the right to clean air, pure water and preservation of environment. Pennsylvania’s natural resources are common property, not corporate property.”

Virginia Cody told the gathering, “This talk is for Corbett as he sits in his ivory tower counting the money donated to him by the natural gas industry. Tom, it’s not the gas industry, but the people who will determine your success or failure. In taking your oath today, you are swearing to protect us, not the natural gas industry.”

Cody, an anti-drilling activist from Wyoming County in northeastern Pennsylvania, was the whistle-blower who exposed Pennsylvania Homeland Security’s spying on activists. “We are not terrorists, and we don’t deserve to have our demonstrations for clean air and water labeled as ‘ dangers to national security,’” Cody said.

Jefferson County farmer Steve Cleghorn described how gas wells are beginning to surround his 50-acre goat farm. “The gas industry has undertaken a huge gamble.

They call it the Marcellus ‘play.’ They have no study that shows fracking is safe or that they aren’t going to despoil the landscape.”

After the rally, demonstrators gathered to plan ways to broaden the anti-drilling movement. Activists from the Marcellus and Utica Shale regions will discuss strategies to ban hydraulic fracturing at a Jan. 29 conference on “No Drilling, No Compromise!” in Williamsport, Pa. □



Jan. 18 protest at Gov. Tom Corbett's inauguration.

WW PHOTO: BETSEY PIETTE

## Health insurance for working poor under attack in Pa.

By **Betsey Piette**  
Philadelphia

Tom Corbett, Pennsylvania’s new governor, wasted no time in carrying out his pro-corporate, anti-working-class campaign promises to cut state services. On Jan. 11, a transition team official announced that adultBasic, the state’s subsidized health insurance for low-income workers, will likely end in February, impacting 42,000 enrollees and more than 479,000 on a waiting list.

David F. Simon, transition team chairperson for insurance matters, says the team negotiated an agreement with Blue Cross companies to waive their pre-existing condition restrictions so people can move from adultBasic to the Blues’ Special Care plans for those with low incomes. (Philadelphia Inquirer, Jan. 12)

The Special Care plans, however, charge premiums that are 400 percent higher than adultBasic, or \$140 per month as opposed to \$36, provide far fewer benefits and limit doctor’s office visits to four times a year.

Gene Bishop, a physician consultant to the Pennsylvania Health Law Project, which opposes the move, said, “Special Care is horrible insurance.” (Phila. Inquirer, Jan. 12).

Opponents of the proposal to eliminate adultBasic say that it would take less than 3 percent of the combined surpluses of the state’s four Blue Cross plans — which stood at \$5.6 billion as of 2009 — to fully fund the plan without any state funds. They are calling on the Blues to continue adultBasic until 2014, when provisions of the federal health care overhaul that would replace programs like this go into effect.

As Pennsylvania’s attorney general, Corbett boosted his standing with conservatives by joining their national campaign to repeal President Barack Obama’s health care plan. As governor, he continues to support that effort.

Gov. Tom Ridge established adultBasic in 2002, using funds from Pennsylvania’s share of a national settlement with big tobacco companies. In 2005, the state’s Blue Cross/Blue Shield plans, under fire for their growing surpluses, agreed to contribute to adultBasic to satisfy the charitable obligation required to maintain their tax-exempt status. Incorporated as “non-profit hospital plans,” these companies are not subject to Pennsylvania’s insurance premiums tax.

From 2002 to 2009, the four state Blues’ cumulative surpluses grew from \$3.5 billion to \$5.6 billion, an increase of 61.4 percent. Their combined contributions to support adultBasic were around \$500 million a year, hardly making a dent in their profits. Their agreement to fund adultBasic expired on Dec. 31.

AdultBasic provides health insurance to Pennsylvanians between the ages of 19 and 64 who are not eligible for Medicaid or Medicare. Their incomes cannot exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level, or \$21,660 for a single person, and \$44,100 for a family of four. The plan covers hospital visits, preventive care, physician services, and treatment of illnesses and injuries.

The Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center’s July report said that the waiting list for adultBasic has grown by more than 300,000 people since the recession

began in December 2007. More than 85 percent of adultBasic enrollees have incomes below \$30,000. Two-thirds are women. While one-third of enrollees are between 46 and 55 years of age, the largest buildup on the waiting list is of people between 19 and 26 as more young people lose their jobs and go without insurance.

The PBPC study says that the number of Pennsylvanians without health insurance had grown from 1 million in 2001 to 1.2 million by 2008, ranking second in the nation for the number of individuals who had lost employment-based coverage. □

## General Electric, the

By **Stephen Millies**

Dracula shouldn’t be put in charge of the blood bank. Yet President Barack Obama named General Electric CEO Jeffrey Immelt to chair a new Council on Jobs and Competitiveness.

GE is one of the biggest job killers in U.S. history. Just in Schenectady, N.Y. — where Obama announced Immelt’s appointment on Jan. 21 — GE has axed 22,000 jobs since 1978. That’s according to Thomas F. O’Boyle, author of “At Any Cost: Jack Welch, General Electric, and the Pursuit of Profit.”

The United Electrical Workers union reports that GE shut 29 U.S. plants and one Canadian plant in the last two years. This was GE’s thank-you note after the Federal Reserve rescued it with a \$16.1 billion handout in 2008. A big player in the military-industrial complex, GE got over \$967 million in Pentagon contracts in 2010. (militaryindustrialcomplex.com) Immelt was paid \$14.2 million by GE in 2007. That’s what 942 minimum-wage workers make — if they’re lucky enough to work 40-hour weeks for a full year.

Immelt replaces former Federal Reserve Board chair, Paul Volcker. Under Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, Volcker drove up the prime rate to 21 percent as part of a job-killing, union-busting strategy.

**Neutron Jack Welch**

Jack Welch, Jeffrey Immelt’s predecessor as GE’s CEO, was called “Neutron Jack” by GE workers. Like a neutron bomb, Welch destroyed people’s jobs while leaving the plants intact.

Welch got rid of 112,000 jobs at GE. He argued that, “Ideally you’d have every plant you own on a barge” — so it could move to wherever the lowest wages were. Welch broke a strike of 2,800 NBC technicians in 1987. In Massachusetts alone, according to O’Boyle, GE fired 7,000 workers in Lynn and 8,000 in

Pittsfield. Erie, Pa., saw 6,000 GE jobs evaporate while Fort Wayne, Ind., lost 4,000. Twelve thousand people in Evan Dale, Ohio, were thrown out of work.

Welch also wanted to evade environmental laws. GE fought for decades against any Environmental Protection Agency-imposed cleanup after dumping more than 1.3 million pounds of cancer-causing chemicals into the Hudson River. (cleanup.org) GE poisoned Connecticut’s Housatonic River and the Coosa River Basin in Georgia. While running the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington state, GE started in 1949 to release radioactive material to see how far it would travel. In 1963, GE began radiating 64 prisoners in Walla Walla, Wash., to test the effect on their reproductive organs. (corpwatch.org)

Welch is a sexist pig. According to O’Boyle, a former Wall Street Journal reporter, Welch asked a woman being interviewed for a job at GE Plastics in 1973, “Would you f— k a customer for a million-dollar order?” Instead of being prosecuted, Welch has a fortune of \$720 million.

**Light bulbs and loan sharks**

GE is the oldest member of the Dow-Jones industrial average. In 1893, it became the first manufacturing corporation organized by Wall Street’s biggest banker, J.P. Morgan.

This was an important step for finance capital, which began dominating the economy. Big industrialists like steel baron Andrew Carnegie used to finance themselves out of their own profits instead of turning towards Wall Street.

GE made nearly 100,000 products, including 30,000 types of light bulbs. But it turned itself into a bank. In recent years, close to half its profits came from GE Capital.

This morphing of industrial capital into finance capital almost sank GE. Its stock valuation plunged from \$400 billion in 2007 to \$210 billion today.

## Community, unions plan fightback as

# Governor, mayor lead banks' assault on New York's workers



By **Gavrielle Gemma**  
New York

New York state Gov. Andrew Cuomo and New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg have opened war on the millions in order to benefit the few. In response, elected union and rank-and-file leaders, community members, students, youths and immigrants will unite at a roundtable people's war council to make plans to build a militant movement to defend the working class against this attack.

The Freedom Party and the South Bronx Community Congress are hosting this meeting at Hostos Community College in the Bronx on Jan. 29.

Federal, state and city governments, Democrats and Republicans alike, have nakedly taken aim at public jobs, pensions, unions, services and education. They are acting as security guards for the biggest banks and military profiteers.

The state budget of \$111 billion and the city's \$63 billion come solely from the workers and belong to the people. These budgets should be adequate to fund every need. Cuomo and Bloomberg proclaim a budget deficit emergency, blaming public workers, retirees and unions; and cutting

## job killer

### Racism and union busting

Long ago, GE actually had a liberal sheen. GE towns like Schenectady and Bridgeport, Conn., had socialist mayors.

GE research labs employed the electrical wizard Charles Steinmetz, a militant socialist who left Germany because of political persecution. Steinmetz was planning to help electrify the Soviet Union before he died in 1923.

But after World War II, GE used red-baiting to try to destroy UE, the electrical workers union. Ronald Reagan became GE's spokesperson. It took a 102-day strike in 1970 to bring GE to the bargaining table.

In the 1970s, Workers World Party members fought to get a union in GE's Portsmouth, Va., factory. GE defeated this union drive by threatening to move the plant to Taiwan — which it did anyway, a few years later.

The electrical industry lagged behind steel mills and auto plants in hiring Black workers. African Americans accounted for only 3 percent of the electrical jobs in 1960. ("The Electrical Workers" by Ronald W. Schatz)

GE built "Appliance Park" in Louisville, Ky., in the 1950s as a "runaway shop" operation. Thousands of jobs moved there from Northern union strongholds. The National Negro Labor Council, led by future Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, fought to get jobs at Appliance Park. Between 1973 and 1998, GE axed 16,000 jobs in Louisville. (Time, Nov. 9, 1998) Thousands of Black workers must have been fired.

Meanwhile, GE built a complex employing thousands to make CT scan, x-ray and magnetic resonance machines in Waukesha, Wis. Less than 1 percent of Waukesha County's population is African American. Waukesha is home to immigrant-bashing congressperson, James Sensenbrenner.

As head of GE's Medical Systems Division — now called GE Healthcare — Jeffrey Immelt ran this apartheid operation before becoming GE's CEO in 2001. □

Medicaid, education and child care.

Their recent addresses omitted any mention of the real emergency: the need for a jobs program. Instead, they propose thousands of layoffs. There are 800,000 unemployed in New York state, of whom 360,000 live in the city, three quarters of whom are Black or Latino/a. About double that number would include all the underemployed and discouraged workers.

They also said nothing about the other emergencies: 100,000 evictions a year in the city, ongoing foreclosures, children in shelters and bare food banks.

Through their agents in the capitalist government, banks, real estate developers and insurance companies control the public treasuries. Banks paid scandalous bonuses to their officers from their record profits. But some \$12.3 trillion from the Federal Reserve Bank was used to bail out those banks.

New York City and the state together owe \$163.5 billion to banks. The state this year will pay banks \$10 billion in triple tax-exempt interest, and the city will cough up \$7 billion — 11 percent of the budget. The Board of Education, Metropolitan Transit Authority and Health and Hospitals Corporation will pay billions more.

Cuomo and Bloomberg flaunt their alliances with the Committee to Save New York and the Partnership for New York City (a merger with the Chamber of Commerce), which set policy. They are led by investment banker Felix Rohatyn and former President Bill Clinton's secretary of the treasury, Robert Rubin. Rohatyn is on the board of Lockheed Martin. Rubin, formerly of Goldman Sachs, was director of strategy for Citigroup, the largest investor in city bonds.

Rohatyn was the architect of the banks' complete takeover of New York City in 1975, when city officials said they couldn't pay interest to the banks. Under Rohatyn's direction, control of every penny and every decision was placed under the dictatorship of the Emergency Financial Control Board and the Municipal Assistance Corporation. Rohatyn laid off 65,000 workers, doubled transit fares and instituted tuition at the City University of New York. Unions fought back but were ultimately overwhelmed, and \$2.7 billion in union pension funds were turned over to pay the banks.

### First, the banks get paid

State and city politicians passed laws conceding many budget decisions to these organizations. Before paying for other services, all state and city sales tax and personal income tax must, by law, go first to paying interest to the banks. A charter says the city must make interest payments before paying for a child's education.

Another law hands all money from rent or sales of city property — \$1 billion a year — directly to the real estate barons running the Economic Development Corporation. Since 1983 \$1 billion a year in a sales tax on stock trades is returned to Wall Street. There's much more.

Banks hoard trillions in their vaults but don't invest in production or hiring because doing so doesn't yield the rate of profit they demand. The capitalist crisis was due to overproduction. Workers are so productive they could provide prosperity for all — if they owned the means of production socially, and production weren't for profit.

In private hands, production only oc-

curs if the few owners can profit from it. There is nowhere to sell these goods for profit when hundreds of millions of people are unemployed. So the banks look to robbing the public coffers with a vengeance.

In his 1975 pamphlet, "The Crisis of the Cities and the System," the late Workers World Party Chairperson Sam Marcy wrote:

"The banks are the central nervous system of the economic structure of the capitalist system. The ruling class is impelled more and more to overcome the crisis by shifting it onto the shoulders of the workers, Black, Latino, white — especially the poorest. The banks are in the vanguard of this offensive. That is what has to be realized and clearly understood. They are looking for the weakest link, where to aim an assault.

"The banks have naturally seized upon the finances of the large cities [and now small as well — GG] as their primary target. This is not hard to understand, a considerable number of IOUs in the vaults of the biggest banks are from municipal corporations ... with high interest on city bonds, and tax exempt.

"Any danger of depreciation in the value of these bonds ... immediately makes the city a target of attack. Through the city officialdom, the bankers can strike a blow at the living standards of those who work for the city and all who live in the city, particularly the mass of the workers and unemployed."



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

## Mich. activists protest new gov

Activists gathered at the state capitol in Lansing on Jan. 19 to protest newly elected Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder's State of the State address. Members of Workers World Party; the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice; the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs; and several students from Michigan State University were present. Holding banners and signs, they expressed their outrage at the continued attacks on workers, students, the unemployed and the homeless.

The protesters chanted against Snyder's attacks on public services and proposed tax cuts for the rich and demanded that resources be spent on creating jobs and providing education and health care for the people, rather than on lining the pockets of bankers and perpetrating violence against the poor and marginalized in the U.S. Conveying a strong anti-imperialist message, they chanted in solidarity with people in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Palestine.

— Megan Spencer

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BRONX, N.Y.

Larry Holmes at Jan. 17 march for Band of Brothers cemetery workers.

WWW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

## After Dr. King

# The global class struggle

BLACK

Following are excerpts from a talk given by Larry Holmes, Workers World Party secretariat member, at a Jan. 14 forum in New York City. The podcast of the entire talk can be watched on [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org).

It is important for revolutionaries to study [Martin Luther] King because he plays a unique role in the struggle against racism.

It is quite easy to reference King at the beginning of 2011 in the wake of everything we are going through. Quite profoundly, in a way, you can analyze King's struggle since the 1963 march and the famous "I have a dream" speech. When he died, he was in Memphis fighting for pub-

lic workers — predominantly Black men — fighting for union rights.

The first thing that he was fighting for was to end Jim Crow. What was the second thing?

King was constantly begging the capitalist ruling class to reform the system before it is too late. Do you want to save capitalism? Do you want to make it relevant? Do you want to avoid being hated by the workers and oppressed around the planet — from Asia to Africa to the Middle East to right here in the belly of the beast?

[King urged the capitalists to] give the workers and oppressed a break; give them something to believe in; raise them up; give them some rights. He died for this in many ways.

And almost 43 years since his murder — the capitalist economy is that much more technologically advanced, so much more wealth is created, and the productive forces of society are so much greater. What have we learned?

Workers — and all sorts of well-meaning people — have been trying to reform capitalism for the better part of 150 years: [by fighting for] the eight-hour day, getting unions, any rights they could get, any recognition, the welfare state.

Much of the past 150 years since [Karl] Marx wrote "Capital," people have been trying to reform it and here we are in 2011. We have the answer — you can't reform it.

It is not just that capitalism doesn't meet the needs of the workers and doesn't meet their social needs — it is taking everything away that the workers have won. Not just here — everywhere.

In many respects, that is what 2011 is going to be about. We don't know what the next phase of this endless capitalist crisis will be or rather what will be the catalyst for the next phase of it.

Some things we know. The efforts to divide the working class will continue.

Actually Forbes New Year's edition listed 11 or 12 things that could be the catalyst for the next crisis. High up there is contagion from the European debt crisis [and] housing, which is still a big crisis for the banks and mostly for the millions of people who have lost their homes — that's many millions of people, families. There is also the U.S. federal, state and municipal debt crisis. Or a bank could fail like Lehman Brothers a few years ago.

We don't know which one of these things it will be or when it will come. What we do know is that it is all intertwined. And as important as the catalyst is, you don't get it unless you connect it to the overall world capitalist crisis of overproduction. That is underneath it.

I watched the memorial service in Tucson, and it was difficult because it was hypocritical. It was striking to me that on the first anniversary of this terrible event in Haiti — that no one, not even Obama,

## On MLK holiday activists plan fightback

Bill Bateman  
Providence, R.I.

The annual Rhode Island Martin Luther King All Peoples' Assembly was held on Jan. 22.

Grassroots organizers and activists, including African Americans, Latinos/as, Asians and Native Americans from Rhode Island and other areas of New England, joined this energetic gathering. Plans, ideas and strategies were adopted for building a united fightback movement, which can challenge the rising tide of attacks on the living standards and struggles of working and poor people in this state and across the country.

Mary Kay Harris, lead organizer of Direct Action for Rights and Equality, chaired the event. Keynote speaker Larry Holmes, national organizer of the Bail Out the People Movement, analyzed the regional and national socioeconomic crisis.

The crisis is one of unemployment, wage and benefit cuts for workers, while unions are under attack, said Holmes. There are increasing cuts in state and city budgets for social services and human



RHODE ISLAND

PHOTO: SAM SMITH

needs, such as medical care and public education, while federal programs are threatened. Hunger, homelessness and all-out poverty are hitting millions of people. Attacks against immigrants and other acts of racism are going on around the country, continued Holmes. The lesbian/gay/bi/transgender communities face harassment. Meanwhile, civil liberties and

civil rights are endangered.

Holmes asked everyone to consider whether the time is right for a general strike, a one-day work stoppage and declaration calling for the abolition of capitalism. Harris closed the program with a call to everyone to stay united, to build upon the meeting's positive energy and to move our movement forward. □

## Outspoken against racism

# Cookie Gilchrist, a great running back

Following is an abridged version of "I'm a Negro who speak up": Remembering Football Great Cookie Gilchrist" written by Dave Zirin. Go to <http://tiny.cc/cwdlp> to read the entire article.

With the passage of time, there are two establishment responses to the great political rebels in sports. You either see them commodified and defanged — think Muhammad Ali — or they are simply erased from history. Count Carlton Chester "Cookie" Gilchrist as among the erased. Gilchrist, a former Buffalo Bills running back, died of cancer on Jan. 10 at the age of 75. His legacy as both a player and athletic rebel are well worth restoring.

Gilchrist, the 1962 American Football League [Most Valuable Player], died the day before a remarkable anniversary not exactly celebrated by the world of professional football. On Jan. 11, 1965, Gilchrist led an African-American boycott of the AFL All-Star game, which was to be played in New Orleans. In 1965, an informal Jim Crow system ruled the Crescent city and African-American players talked openly among themselves about their inability to get cabs, be served in restaurants, or stay at certain hotels.

Gilchrist organized all 22 African-American All-Pros to approach AFL commissioner Joe Foss and make clear that unless the game was moved, they wouldn't be playing. White players also announced that they would stand in support of their Black teammates. Foss acceded to their demands, and moved the game to Houston's Jeppesen Stadium.

The actions of Gilchrist and his fellow All-Pros inspired Dr. Harry Edwards, Tommie Smith and Lee Evans to launch the Olympic Project for Human Rights, calling for an African-American boycott of the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. Gilchrist's courageous organizing also echoes today as Latino baseball stars like Adrian Gonzalez and Yovani Gallardo have indicated that they won't play at the 2011 All-Star Game in Phoenix because of the harsh anti-immigration legislation signed into law by Governor Jan Brewer.

Gilchrist later said that his role lead-

ing the boycott was "better than anything I did playing football." That's quite the statement because we are talking about one of the great[est] players to ever put on cleats.

Gilchrist was signed, in violation of [National Football League] rules, by Cleveland Browns' owner Paul Brown, right out of high school. The NFL voided the signing, and Gilchrist, who was now also ineligible to play in college, had to trek up north and ply his trade in the Canadian Football League. Gilchrist made six consecutive all-pro teams before moving to the AFL. There he dominated, becoming the first 1,000-yard rusher in league history, and setting



the record for rushing touchdowns in a season. In one 1963 game against the New York Jets, Gilchrist rushed for 243 yards and five touchdowns.

But Cookie wasn't seen as a leader just because he could play. As he said to Sports Illustrated in 1964, "People think

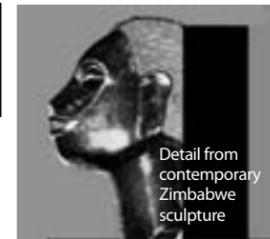
I'm an oddball because I'm a Negro who speak up. But I have a lot on my mind. It's an internal disease, and it'll eat me alive if I don't get it out of my system what I think about things."

Cookie took his anti-racist tenacity and applied [it] to his dealings with management. He sent an open letter to the club owner Ralph Wilson before one season that read, "Gentlemen, it unfortunately becomes necessary again for me to formally request that you make efforts to trade me to some other football club." He received his raise. But he wanted more.

As he said in an interview with the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, "I wanted a percentage of the hot dog sales, the popcorn, the parking and the ticket sales," Gilchrist said. "[Coach Saban] said that would make me part owner of the team. I was a marked man after that."

Gilchrist spent his retirement utterly unapologetic about his outspoken ways. He was offered enshrinement in the Canadian Football Hall of Fame, and Gilchrist became the first person to simply say no. He said that the racism and financial exploitation he suffered in the CFL could not simply be forgotten. □

# HISTORY MEANS HEROIC FIGHTBACK



Detail from contemporary Zimbabwe sculpture

## today

would mention it. One would have thought that would be common sense.

There is the fascism, the neofascism and the violence they inevitably create in Arizona, the epicenter of all this. The other question is how the ruling class — particularly Obama but a wider section of the ruling class — is using this.

There is a sense that it has favored the Democrats and pushed back the most reactionary elements. That is true on a certain level. But there is something deeper.

This is about the capitalist crisis and what is coming [and] the ruling class and whether they will succeed. Or if [the ruling class effort] will fall apart next week is another question. The contradictions are there in terms of unity in the ruling class.

I saw Obama with others in the ruling class using Arizona as an opportunity to remind [the entire ruling class] of something they knew all too well in 2008. And that was: Remember why you supported me. Not the people, the ruling class. Remember why you wanted me in office because you knew what you were going to have to do to the workers.

Before you got all nuts with the Tea Party, you wanted me to put a nice face on repression and the attacks and the program that we have to carry out against the workers. And what is that program?

### Unions, budget cuts & gov't restructuring

That program is many-fold. But I can give you the big picture. [The capitalists' program is:] Crush the labor movement. They have been trying to do it, but this year they are going to accelerate it. Not just public workers; the whole labor movement. Public workers are the largest segment of the organized labor movement, more than 50 percent. They are the strongest pillar. The other parts of the economy are outsourced. They are done in India or someplace else.

It is the public workers and to some extent the service workers who have been able to organize. But the public workers are politically stronger. Their unions are older and they have won more. They are the strongest pillar of the entire labor movement, private sector and public sector. You have the transit workers, [the Service Employees union], hospital workers; the Teamsters even have public workers. I don't know how large the American Federation of Government Workers is.

Take the American Federation of Teachers, the [National] Education Association and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and you have more than 6 million of the 14 million organized workers. Those unions are the ones they are after; almost half of the orga-

nized labor force is considered the most politically powerful.

We have to make some good propaganda about this. Have a picture of the bankers — Citibank, Bank of America, Goldman Sachs — rich white men on one side and on the other side predominantly African Americans and women. That is who the public workers are: workers who make an average of \$40,000 to \$45,000 a year, nearing retirement after being at their jobs for 30 or 40 years. What is the average pension they are taking away? \$19,000. These are the workers who are being demonized.

Why is the ruling class doing this?

It is not just about the budget cuts. Yes, the federal government and the states and the cities have huge budget deficits. As soon as possible they want to cut the federal workforce by 10 percent. Goldman Sachs recently released something that said states and municipalities had to be cut by 20 percent — 1.6 million workers.

But it is not just how much they can cut in 2011. It is more political and strategic than that. They want to smash the unions because they have a bigger project in mind. They want to restructure government, which is part and parcel of the capitalist economy. Long ago it became a business. If you are not making money in the stock market, the rich go in the bond market. These days they make money by cutting if they can't invest or find new markets. It is about downsizing; it is about privatizing in the long term. It is about privatizing public education — taking it away as a right.

It is about hitting Social Security hard — everything else we have won and especially those pensions that are worth trillions of dollars. The capitalists want it back. But they can't do it without crushing the labor movement.

It is the reason why some of the states are trying to revoke collective bargaining rights for public workers. Some states are trying to revoke the [unions'] dues check-off, which means that public workers can't sustain themselves.

What will the fightback look like? Organized labor appears very weak and very demoralized. It is not used to fighting. It is used to going into a room and making a deal and getting the best deal they can get with a bourgeois politician. That is becoming harder and harder because the Democrats are betraying them like [New York Gov. Andrew] Cuomo and [California Gov. Jerry] Brown.

The unions seem demoralized. But in an uneven way they will begin to fight. We as communists must agitate for a class-wide, militant response to this attack. It doesn't matter whether it is not going to happen next week or unlikely that it will happen in a few months. What are we if

we don't advocate for it? Organized labor, community, students and all the oppressed must come out together.

Usually these struggles against budget cuts develop locally. Our job is to agitate for a broader reaction to it that is both national and even international.

At this stage of the capitalist crisis, which is fully global, fully centralized, our class enemy is global, conscious and against us. How can we just think locally? It is OK for a while, but ultimately it won't work. It won't raise the political or class-consciousness level of our class, [which] won't be able to fight back.

### Generalize the struggle

We will face another problem that is all too prevalent — fragmentation. The ruling class wants to have a thousand guerilla battles with the workers. They want every struggle to be separate, to be localized, because, with some exceptions, they can chew you up and digest you. They know that the more national and international [the struggle] becomes, even if it is only symbolic in the early stages, the harder it is [to divide and conquer].

As communists, it is incumbent upon us to find ways to struggle against that. We want to be with the workers everywhere. We are not against local struggles. We have an obligation to generalize and synthesize the class struggle to a higher level, especially now with the unique character of this global crisis. We have to be concerned with the entire working class.

The students in this country are trying to organize a fightback from California to New York and everywhere else. We are fortunate that our comrades in FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) have some influence there. They have called

the month of March a month of student protest against the cuts and tuition hikes. Some of them are talking about a strike. And we should see if there is a basis for building support around them that can last beyond their activities — sort of a student-worker-community alliance.

We have International Women's Day — the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. Women are meeting on how to make defense of public workers — predominantly women and people of color — central [in that].

There is April 9, a big, important anti-war demonstration also in solidarity against repression of Muslims here and the oppressed. What relationship will that have to the class struggle?

There is May Day, International Workers Day, which, most notably in this country, has become over the past five years central to the struggle with immigrant rights. And it will remain so and necessarily so.

I want to harken back to our party's conference last November, where we discussed the need, wisdom and timeliness of opening up an ideological struggle on the need to abolish capitalism. All these struggles, whatever happens, need that too.

We could help [the overall struggle by] drafting a declaration calling for the abolition of capitalism, get it around and get support for it. Maybe at some point tie it to an event that has the objective of unifying forces. This is to bring it to our entire class so that their perspective will have an anti-capitalist, pro-socialist current pushing it forward. □

## Former SNCC leader speaks on revolution



Willie Mukasa Ricks

Detroit held its 8th Annual MLK Day Rally & March, which began at Central United Methodist Church on Jan. 17 under the theme of renewing the fight for "Jobs, Peace and Justice." The keynote speaker was Willie "Mukasa" Ricks, a former field secretary for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Ricks was a civil rights worker in Alabama and Tennessee during the 1960s.

Ricks raised the slogan "Black Power" in Mississippi in June 1966.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. described Ricks as the fieriest orator in SNCC. Ricks played a significant role in the Selma to Montgomery march in March 1965, when he organized students at Alabama State to defy the state troopers who were under the command of then Gov. George Wallace.

Later Ricks would be one of the early members of the Black Panther Party in Alabama in 1965-66, which influenced Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale to form the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in Oakland, Calif.

Ricks was also a founding member and leader of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party along with Kwame Ture.

At the Jan. 17 rally, Mukasa said that he did not want to be viewed as a revolutionary from the 1960s but "someone who is still committed to revolution today." After a rousing speech to a standing-room-only crowd inside the church, where Dr. King delivered annual sermons for 10 consecutive years, Muskasa led the march through downtown, passing the Detroit Auto Show at Cobo Conference Center, and through the city's financial district.

The march in Detroit was initiated by the Michigan Emergency Committee Against

## Dr. King spoke against war, too



NEWARK, N.J.

PHOTO: JON LEVINE

Veterans of the Vietnam War, the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and Gulf War I unite in struggle by attending a march and rally on Jan. 15 in Newark, N.J., organized by

the People's Organization for Progress to celebrate the birthday and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

— Michael Kramer

War & Injustice in 2004 in order to reclaim the anti-war and social justice legacy of Dr. King. MECAWI immediately expanded participation in the event by establishing the Detroit MLK Committee, which plans the event every year. Co-sponsors and endorsers of the rally and march included the Moratorium NOW! Coalition and Mosaic Design Group, the Justice for Cuba Coalition, the Palestine Office, among others.

Two Detroit MLK Spirit of Detroit awards were given to Warriors on Wheels, the people-living-with-disabilities rights organization, and the Detroit Local Organizing Committee for the 2010 U.S. Social Forum held in Detroit.

A special tribute to the late Rev. Dr. Lucius Walker, the founder of the Inter-religious Foundation for Community Organizations, featured City Council member JoAnn Watson and Ellen Bernstein, Acting Co-Director of IFCO and Pastors for Peace.

Both women also spoke Jan. 18 at the University of Michigan about the program established by IFCO, the Congressional Black Caucus and the Cuban government that provides scholarships to students from oppressed communities interested in studying medicine at the Latin American School of Medicine in Cuba. Ricks also spoke about his son, who is a student there.

— Report & photo by Abayomi Azikiwe

## Tunisian workers, youth rise up demanding fundamental changes

# Regional rebellions worry imperialists and their clients

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

Jan. 24 — Tunisia's workers and youth have continued mass demonstrations and strikes aimed at removing the neocolonial regime and replacing it with a representative government of national unity.

The teachers' union, which is affiliated with the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT), struck on Jan. 24. That same day the government sought to re-open schools closed since Jan. 10 following more than three weeks of mass demonstrations, strikes and rebellions. These struggles forced the Western-backed former president, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, into exile and prevented his RCD party from forming a successor coalition regime.

As teachers struck, other demonstrators fought running battles with the police, hurling stones and smashing windows at the Ministry of Finance building in the capital.

The teachers' main demand was to abolish the existing regime, which is still dominated by the discredited and repressive party of the former president. In defiance of the RCD-led government's curfew, demonstrators set up outside Prime Minister Mohammed Ghannouchi's offices, saying they will not leave until the current regime resigns.

"We will stay here until the government resigns and runs away like Ben Ali," a student named Othemene told the French press agency (Jan. 24). Small business owners have largely remained sympathetic to the strike or afraid to open up and challenge the protesters.

In efforts to assuage the masses, the new government detained some leading figures who were cronies of former President Ben Ali. State television reported on Jan. 24 that a political adviser, Abdelaziz bin Dhia, and former interior minister and leader of the upper parliamentary house Abdallah Qalal — as well as the head of a private media network — were placed under house arrest for attempting to hamper political reforms. These reforms are still minimal.

The United States and France have been cautious in their statements. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton telephoned Ghannouchi and told him that the Obama administration was encouraged by moves to bring about an inclusive government in Tunisia. French President Nicolas Sarkozy announced his government's willingness to extend financial emergency aid to the regime in Tunisia, a former colony. Both imperialist powers had backed Ben Ali until the end.

### Liberation Caravan travels to capital

Hundreds of Tunisians from the south-

ern city of Menzel Bouzaiane marched 30 miles, then boarded buses to Tunis, the capital, where they joined protesters on Jan. 23 outside the prime ministry. They tore down a barbed wire barricade and then "completely overwhelmed" the security forces outside Ghannouchi's office. (Al-Jazeera, Jan. 23)

"They're chanting the same slogan that has echoed across the country — Down with the regime, down with the former party, down with the interim president and with the prime minister. They're saying that the fight will continue for as long as it takes, until they see a radical change in Tunisia." (Al-Jazeera, Jan. 23)

Ghannouchi has promised to leave politics and has publicly resigned from his leadership position in the ruling RCD party, but he has announced no specific date for national elections.

Some leading banned political parties have issued statements rejecting the RCD's attempt to maintain power through the appointment of selected ministers without any fundamental change in the division of power inside the state.

The exiled leader of the al-Nahda or Renaissance Party, Rachid al-Ghannouchi (not related to the prime minister), who is still banned from Tunisia, said that his organization "is a moderate Islamic movement, a democratic movement based on

democratic ideals in ... Islamic culture. Some people pull Khomeini's robe over me, while I am no Khomeini nor a Shia." (Al-Jazeera, Jan. 23)

The al-Nahda party called for a "Constitutional Council which represents all political tendencies and civil society institutions such as trade unions, the Association of Lawyers, and representative bodies of unemployed graduates who played an important role in the revolution, with the aim of building a democratic constitution for a parliamentary system that distributes and decentralizes power on the widest scale possible and puts an end to the corrupt era of one party and its pharaonic leader." (Monthly Review, Jan. 19)

The RCD government has also announced the release of some 1,800 political prisoners, although some members of the Muslim Brotherhood may still be jailed. (Al-Jazeera, Jan. 20)

Also on Jan. 20, demonstrators attacked the ruling RCD headquarters with a large steel cable that ripped down the name of the organization from the building. The crowd carried placards reading, "We are no longer afraid of you, traitors" and "RCD out!"

During the first few weeks of the uprising, security forces, especially from the 130,000-strong police organization, shot down scores of protestors. The army,

## U.S., Israel use tribunal to intervene

# Hezbollah defends Lebanese sovereignty in Parliament

By **John Catalinotto**

As of Jan. 24, the Lebanese Parliament is holding discussions to form a new government. A year-old "unity government" containing all political factions fell on Jan. 12, when Hezbollah pulled its people out of cabinet posts.

Hezbollah is both a popular political organization representing the Shiite Muslim community — about 40 percent of the Lebanese — and is the best-organized national liberation organization defending the people of Lebanon against imperialist and Israeli attack.

The current political crisis broke out after an international body called the Special Tribunal on Lebanon leaked reports that it would indict Hezbollah members for the 2005 assassination of Rafik Hariri, a former prime minister and the richest person in Lebanon. Hariri was killed by a truck bomb, his attackers unknown.

It would be an error, however, to believe that the STL is an objective investigative body. Like many of the other special tribunals — on Yugoslavia or Rwanda, for example — it is a tool the imperialist powers use to intervene under cover of the "international community." In the Hariri case, the U.S. and Israeli governments for years have attempted to use the STL to deprive Lebanon of its sovereignty.

Concerning motive, the U.S. and Israel had most to gain from assassinating Hariri in 2005, since that opened an internal struggle within Lebanon. Hezbollah has not only denied it killed Hariri, its Secretary General Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah says it has video evidence that Israeli planes observed Hariri's auto route the day he was killed, evidence the STL re-

fuses to look at.

Thus, the STL's task is not to seriously investigate Hariri's murder, but to use the event as a political weapon. In turn, this article will examine its political consequences.

First the Syrian government, which had troops stationed in Lebanon in 2005, was accused of the killing. Israel and the U.S. wanted Syria's troops out. The Lebanese right wing was able to mobilize protest demonstrations that forced the Syrians to leave.

In July of 2006 — with all the Syrian troops gone — the Israeli military invaded Lebanon. The only effective resistance came from popular organizations, mainly Hezbollah with the assistance of units from the Communist Party of Lebanon, the Amal organization and some others. Israel did enormous human and property damage, but the resistance was able to punish and in effect drive out the Israelis.

Hezbollah also carried out much of the rebuilding that took place and delivered most of the social services to the communities hurt by Israeli aggression. Even the corporate media recognize and report Hezbollah's popular role, doing so as they also report that the U.S. government has classified the group as "terrorist." What this really means is that Hezbollah is an effective anti-imperialist organization. So too was Nelson Mandela's African National Congress in South Africa, which Washington also called "terrorist."

Rafik Hariri's son, Saad Hariri, was prime minister in the year-old unity government that collapsed on Jan. 12. Last September Hariri admitted that the charges against Syria were political: "At a certain stage we made mistakes and ac-



Detroit Martin Luther King march, Jan. 17.

WW PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

cusced Syria of assassinating the martyred premier. This was a political accusation, and this political accusation has finished." (Reuters, Sept. 6)

Based on testimony to the STL that later on was shown to be false, four Lebanese generals in the security apparatus were sentenced to prison for their alleged role in the assassination. Progressive forces, including Hezbollah, demand that the lying witnesses be tried.

Still dealing with the political nature of the charges, Saad Hariri was participating in negotiations along with Syria and Saudi Arabia to try to resolve the question of the STL and the assassination charges. While visiting in Washington, he suddenly broke off these talks — which were reported to be on the verge of coordinating a political compromise that would limit the interference of the STL in Lebanese politics.

In a Jan. 16 public speech, Nasrallah said the following to explain his party's loss of confidence in Hariri's role: "Either Hariri and his team did not want to proceed with the deal but had to under Saudi pressure, and eventually went to the

[U.S.] Americans and others to pressure the Saudis to stop the effort, or they were supporting the king but the American will was against it." (Al Manar, Jan. 16)

The Communist Party of Lebanon, in a Jan. 18 statement, warned of the U.S. and Israeli attempt to use the STL to incite a battle between the different communities in Lebanon with the goal of ending the Lebanese people's resistance, of preventing a spread of this resistance in the Arab world and of using religious differences to facilitate NATO and the Pentagon's intervention in Lebanon and Sudan.

Although it is the strongest single organized force in Lebanon, Hezbollah has up to now made no attempt to seize control of the government, believing it can better avoid isolation and a civil war that might allow Israeli and U.S. intervention. Regarding the parliamentary struggle, Hezbollah has nominated a compromise figure for prime minister to replace Saad Hariri. There is no guarantee, however, that this will provide more than a short-term solution, given the continued interference by the U.S. and Israel. □

# VIVA CUBA

By Cheryl LaBash

which only numbers 45,000 troops, has been more restrained in their approach to the unrest. On Jan. 20 outside the RCD headquarters, an army captain told the crowd, "I am with you. We are not going to shoot you." (Al-Jazeera, Jan. 20)

Other political parties have issued statements calling for the resignation of the RCD.

The Communist Workers' Party (PCOT) noted, "All forces which played an effective and crucial role in toppling the dictator, whether political, trade unionist, human rights, or cultural, whatever organized or otherwise, are, alongside the masses, to be involved in drawing Tunisia's future and cannot be represented by any other figure or body in any negotiations or communications with the government." (Monthly Review, Jan. 19)

At the same time, the Congress for the Republic party criticized the political maneuvering of the RCD government, calling it "an attempt to abort the revolution and return to the very same old state on the basis of the laws and constitution of dictatorship, and to take us back to the same state, but with a new façade." (Monthly Review, Jan. 19)

## Impact on the region

Demonstrations have also continued in neighboring Algeria, where similar conditions of high unemployment and rising food prices have sparked anger. On Jan. 22, police clashed with protesters in Algiers, where multiple casualties were reported. (Deutsche Welle, Jan. 22)

In Aden and in Sana'a, Yemen's capital, students at the university held demonstrations on Jan. 22 and 23 calling for the resignation of the U.S.-backed regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. On Jan. 23 thousands of students entered the streets in protest against the arrest of Tawakul Karman, a woman student leader and a member of the Islah Party, who has called for support of the Tunisia uprising. (Al-Jazeera, Jan. 23)

In Egypt, a coalition of opposition groups including the Karama, the April 6th Movement, the National Association for Change, the Popular Democratic Movement for Change, the Justice and Freedom Youth Movement and the Revolutionary Socialists, called for national demonstrations against the U.S.-backed regime of Hosni Mubarak on Jan. 25. (Al-Ahram, Jan. 24)

Egypt, which is the second largest recipient of U.S. aid next to Israel, is reported to have between 5,000 and 10,000 political prisoners. The regime of Mubarak has violently suppressed mass protests and strikes over the last several years.

## What role for anti-imperialists in the U.S.

These developments in North Africa and throughout the Middle East region have prompted the concerns of U.S. and French imperialism. These states usually defend their foreign policy concerns in terms of a so-called "war on terrorism" against "Islamic fundamentalism." The secular character of these latest demonstrations, rebellions and uprisings makes them more easily understood by progressive forces inside the Western states.

The economic crisis of capitalism — its failure to provide jobs, food and services — is worldwide. The demands put forward by the workers and youth in Tunisia, Algeria, Yemen and Egypt have significance for the proletariat and the oppressed nations inside the U.S.

Coalitions opposing the U.S. imperialist wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan should extend their support to the popular uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East. Workers and the oppressed inside the U.S. and other Western capitalist states can learn from the efforts of their counterparts in these regions. □

## Cuba Five admission at trial of anti-Cuba terrorist

A stunning example of the historic U.S. covert war against Cuba continues to unfold in El Paso, Texas, where convicted and self-admitted bomber Luis Posada Carriles is charged with lying to federal immigration officials.

Attorney José Pertierra, who is attending the trial, reported that Department of Homeland Security attorney Gina Garrett-Jackson testified on Jan. 18, "The U.S. Attorney who prosecuted the Cuban Five in Miami, Caroline Heck Miller, refused to press criminal charges against Luis Posada Carriles despite a request to do so from the Department of Homeland Security. ... Heck Miller is the Miami prosecutor who insisted on bringing the case of the Five to trial, refused to move the case out of Miami, and was instrumental in seeing that they would be given unjustly long sentences." (counterpunch.org)

Pertierra, a Washington, D.C.-based attorney, represents Venezuela in its request to extradite Posada Carriles to stand trial for the murder of 73 people in the midair bombing of Cubana Flight 455 en route from Barbados to Cuba on Oct. 6, 1976.

The admission shows another instance of bias in the prosecution and trial of the Cuban Five, heroic men who attempted to stop the attacks on Cuba and save lives by monitoring U.S.-based paramilitaries. President Barack Obama must act to release Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González, and immediately return them to their loved ones in Cuba.

The Five are in their 13th year of unjust imprisonment in the U.S., convicted in a trial that even three U.S. circuit court judges called "a perfect storm of prejudice." Hernández, who was convicted of conspiracy to commit murder — a charge the prosecutors themselves admitted they could not prove — is serving two life terms.

## U.S. eases travel restrictions

Cuba remains the only place on Earth to which a U.S. passport holder cannot freely travel. Although a Jan. 14 announcement by the Obama ad-

ministration eases travel restrictions, it doesn't end them. Nor does it end a criminal and genocidal U.S. blockade against Cuba. The new rules — impacting religious, cultural and educational travel, remittances to nonfamily members and permits for flights from additional U.S. airports — are to take effect within two weeks. Details will be formally published in the Congressional Record. ([www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov))

Cuba's Foreign Ministry recognized the power of the broad movement inside the U.S. that has demanded the right to travel and an end to the blockade, but pointed out, "The measures benefit only certain categories of [U.S. citizens] and do not restore the right to travel to Cuba of all [U.S.] citizens, who will remain the only ones in the world who cannot visit our country freely.

"These measures confirm that there is no will to change the policy of blockade and destabilization against Cuba. When announcing them, United States Government officials made it clear that the blockade will remain intact and that they intend to use the new measures to strengthen the instruments of subversion and interference in Cuba's internal affairs." (<http://www.cubaminrex.cu>)

The full White House statement openly declares the changes intend to "help promote [the Cuban people's] independence from Cuban authorities," bearing out Cuba's view that the U.S. "is looking for new ways to achieve its historical goals of domination of our people."

## Detroit meeting promotes Latin American School of Medicine

Willie Mukasa Ricks, keynote speaker at Detroit's Martin Luther King Day Rally and Freedom March, is also the especially proud father of a son studying medicine in Cuba at the Latin American School of Medicine. On Jan. 18 Ricks publicized Cuba's full medical school scholarships in a Doctors for Detroit outreach meeting at the University of Michigan's Detroit Center. Ellen Bernstein, acting co-director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization/Pastors for Peace — the U.S. coordinating agency for scholarships

— discussed the application process, education requirements and status of current students and graduates.

Ricks passionately held up LASM as an important alternative for young African Americans and their parents. Ricks said he never worries about his son's safety while studying in Cuba — unlike in the U.S., where he was never sure his son would return home alive, be victimized by police terror or street violence, or be ensnared by the U.S. prison-industrial complex. He also explained the case of the Cuban Five anti-terrorists held unjustly in U.S. prisons.

Two videos on the scholarships program — an excerpt from IFCO's "People to People" and PBS NewsHour's Dec. 22 "Debt-Free Doctors" — opened the program. Parents of the three young Detroit women currently studying in Havana attended, as did Detroit City Councilperson JoAnn Watson. Watson launched the Doctors for Detroit effort in 2006 with IFCO founder, the late Rev. Dr. Lucius Walker.

In return for the free scholarship, Cuba only asks that the new doctors from the U.S. and around the world return to practice in their medically underserved communities. In contrast, since 2006 the U.S. has openly attempted to lure Cuban doctors away from international service with a special "Parole for Cuban Medical Personnel in Third Countries." ([www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov))

The Doctors for Detroit program was sponsored by the African-American Studies Program at University of Michigan-Dearborn, the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice, the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, the Justice for Cuba Coalition, Judge Claudia Morcom, professor Gloria House, Abayomi Azikiwe and Dorothy Aldridge. The Michigan Citizen newspaper provided prepublicity and a follow-up article. Earlier in the day Ricks and Bernstein reached a wider audience through the "Craig Fahle Show" on local public radio station WDET.

For more information in Detroit, go to [Doctors4Detroit.blogspot.com](http://Doctors4Detroit.blogspot.com) or call 313-355-8566. Find LASM information at [www.pastorsforpeace.org](http://www.pastorsforpeace.org). □



WW PHOTO: LEILANI DOWELL

## Special to Workers World

An inspiring meeting on the vibrant and militant struggles throughout the Americas was held at the Solidarity Center in New York City on Jan. 22. The newly formed Latin America-Caribbean Solidarity Committee of the International Action Center ([www.iacenter.org/lacsc/id/](http://www.iacenter.org/lacsc/id/)) hosted the event, which featured live video and phone presentations from Honduras and Puerto Rico.

Gerardo Torres, Secretary General of the Honduran political youth organization Los Necios, spoke to the meeting via phone. Los Necios is a member of the National Front of Popular Resistance (FNRP), which has brought together all sectors of the Honduran working class in the wake of the 2009 U.S.-backed coup against President Manuel Zelaya. Torres

discussed plans for a FNRP-organized national assembly to be held on Feb. 26 in the capital city Tegucigalpa, with delegates from around the country who will deliberate and strategize on the course and goals of the struggle.

Giovanni Roberto, a student at the University of Puerto Rico, spoke via a Skype video conference about the struggle to prevent the privatization of the school's 11 campuses. Since April students have engaged in strikes that have shut down campuses. Roberto described how the students are now employing more mobile tactics and appealed for the broadest support, encouraging the audience to engage in solidarity actions and post coverage on the Internet. Noting the political motivation of the school administration, Roberto mentioned that he and several other students — all of whom identify as

socialists — have been expelled.

Haitian activist Ray Laforest described the ongoing resistance of the Haitian people, even in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake a year ago and in response to the sham election process in which Fanmi Lavalas, the party of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was not allowed to participate. Laforest affirmed that given the unity of the various struggles discussed at the meeting, people's victory is inevitable.

Jaime Mendieta of Casa de las Americas discussed solidarity with Cuba. Speakers from the LACSC included Teresa Gutierrez, who gave a report-back from the seventh Cuba/Venezuela/Mexico/North America Labor Conference in Tijuana, Mexico; LeiLani Dowell, who spoke on the case of the Cuban Five; and co-chairs Donna Lazarus and Wellington Echegaray. □

## Weighing Hu's visit

The visit of the president of the People's Republic of China, Hu Jintao, to Washington has been played up as marking a shift in U.S.-Chinese relations in the direction of new cooperation. On the one hand, it is reported that President Barack Obama played tough and got concessions on trade and on the question of Korea; on the other hand that President Hu gained recognition on the world stage for China as an equal with the U.S.

From a historical point of view, it is a measure of the development of People's China, economically and technologically, that the chief executive of U.S. imperialism agreed to a state visit with high honors to its president. After all, Washington tried mightily to destroy the Chinese Revolution before and after it triumphed in 1949. It kept People's China, representing one-fifth of humanity, from its rightful seat in the United Nations for almost a quarter of a century.

But from a more recent perspective, what transpired in Washington was basically the granting of \$45 billion in contracts by China to U.S. big business in return for U.S. technology transfers to China. As a concession to U.S. companies, Hu indicated China would allow foreign business to bid on Chinese state contracts to supply technology. China's present "indigenous innovation" law requires Chinese state enterprises to grant technology contracts only to Chinese companies.

One of the principal strategies of U.S. big business at present is to export its way out of the domestic economic crisis. This means, among other things, getting more access to the vast Chinese markets. It is reported that President Obama's new chief of staff, William Daley — a former executive at JPMorgan Chase bank and a director of both Boeing Aircraft and Abbott Laboratories — wanted to make the summit into a trade session for the top corporations.

A special meeting was held between President Hu and 14 executives of the biggest U.S. corporations, including Lloyd Blankfein of Goldman Sachs, Steve Ballmer of Microsoft, Jeffrey Immelt of General Electric (Obama's new top economic advisor), and other CEOs of DuPont, Westinghouse Electric, agribusiness giant Cargill, Intel, the Carlyle Group, Dow Chemical, Coca-Cola and HSBC Holdings.

Boeing, Daley's former firm, got a \$19 billion contract for 200 airplanes. Immelt's GE got contracts to develop rail and energy projects in return for technology sharing. In addition, over the past few weeks China signed \$25 billion in contracts with other large firms in 12 states.

The trip culminated with a joint statement filled with generalities and ambiguous phrases about the two governments working together to improve regional and global peace and stability; non-interference in each other's affairs; provisions for contacts between the two military commands; scientific cooperation; and so forth.

One issue discussed at the summit was Chinese military development. China has recently developed a missile with a 900-mile range that is alleged to be able to hit a moving aircraft carrier. It has also developed a stealth fighter plane similar to one employed by the Pentagon. Adm. Michael Mullen, chair of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, and William Gates, Secretary of Defense, have sharply criticized China for improving its defensive forces and have threatened to develop new

weapons systems aimed at China.

At the summit President Hu emphasized that China was not a threat to the U.S. That is certainly true. China has no warships off the Atlantic or Pacific coasts of the U.S. or in the Caribbean. China's military is one-thirtieth the size of the Pentagon.

In contrast China is permanently menaced by U.S. aircraft carriers, attendant warships and submarines. The USS George Washington sailed within striking distance of China during the last crisis on the Korean peninsula. The U.S. Seventh Fleet of the Pacific command has 50 to 60 ships, 600 aircraft and 60,000 Navy and Marine forces aimed at China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Pentagon regards the Pacific as a U.S. lake.

So while China is no threat to the U.S., the U.S. is definitely a threat to China.

As for a "new era" flowing out of President Hu's visit, there was no mention of any agreement for the U.S. to pull back its naval and air armada from the region. There was no pulling back by the Pentagon in developing a Tokyo-Seoul-Washington axis aimed at the DPRK and the PRC. Nor did Washington agree to stop supplying its Taiwan puppet with advanced missiles.

There was no pledge by the Obama administration to cease backing the serf-owning feudal god-king, the Dalai Lama, whose historic goal is to break Tibet away from China. Washington pushed "human rights" for the counterrevolutionary Nobel Peace Prize winner, Liu Xiaobo, author of Charter 08, which calls for privatizing all of China's economy and dissolving the People's Republic.

One harmful concession made by President Hu must be mentioned. He agreed to put in the joint statement a phrase about "mutual concern regarding the DPRK's claimed nuclear enrichment program." Hopefully this break in solidarity will remain restricted to phrases in joint statements and will not extend to action.

In this connection it is worthy of note that at a state dinner given by the White House for President Hu, pianist Lang Lang played a famous Chinese song, "My Motherland." It was the theme song of a 1956 Chinese movie called "Battle on Shangganling Mountain" (Triangle Mountain) and is universally recognized in China. It is about the bravery during the Korean War of troops from the Chinese People's Volunteer Army, who fought U.S. "jackals" alongside their Korean brothers and won the battle for the mountain.

Hopefully, the historic relationship depicted in the song and forged in blood between the Chinese and Korean people will prevail, joint statements notwithstanding. □

★

## Dave Axelrod, ipresente!

Dave Axelrod, a member of the New York branch of Workers World Party, passed away on Jan. 22 at the age of 72. He had been battling very aggressive prostate cancer that had metastasized. Dave was a longtime fighter in the struggle against "crapitalism" (a word that he popularized). A comprehensive obituary will be published in a future issue.

# Fascism: What it is and how to fight it

## The Arizona massacre, the Tea Party and the capitalist state

By Fred Goldstein

*The following is the first of a series of articles loosely based on a talk given at a Workers World Party membership meeting on Jan. 21.*

The Arizona massacre and attempted assassination of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords by Jared Loughner has raised questions on the role of the ultra-right, Sarah Palin, the Tea Party and fascism in U.S. politics.

The public discussion of this subject arose quickly in the hours after the massacre. It was particularly sharpened when the sheriff of Pima County, Clarence Dupnik, declared Arizona to be the "mecca of prejudice and bigotry."

What happened next is of considerable importance to the working class and the oppressed. It is quite telling.

The event was so horrendous that it immediately drew the attention of the capitalist media and then all classes in society. The masses were, of course, horrified and intensely curious to find an answer as to what led to such an assassination attempt and killing spree. Without any specific information, and even knowing that Loughner was probably mentally disturbed, the natural instinct would be to connect the event with the political climate in Arizona, or the rise of the Tea Party, or the right-wing media, or all of them. Any one of these assumptions would be not only reasonable but expected, given the political situation.

Consider just the background in Arizona. Giffords had just gone through an election campaign during which her Tea Party-backed opponent invited his followers to participate with him in firing off rounds from an M16. This was in addition to the fact that Sarah Palin showed Giffords' district in the crosshairs of a gun sight on her web page.

Anti-immigrant racism is at a fever pitch in Arizona, where the new law SB1070 declared open season on immigrants and undocumented workers. Ethnic studies are being declared subversive by the racist authorities. A move to deny citizenship to the children of immigrants born in the U.S. has been put forward, a denial of their Fourteenth Amendment rights.

Sheffiff Joe Arpaio of Maricopa County set up a virtual police state over the years for African-American prisoners and for Latinas and Latinos. He introduced chain gangs and other brutal methods of humiliating prisoners.

The Minutemen are extremely active in Arizona. This is a fascist-style group of vigilantes who mobilize to inflict terror on undocumented immigrants coming across the border and those who are in the U.S. as well. They are one of the most vicious expressions of racism in the Southwest as a whole.

Arizona has long been a breeding ground of racism and reaction. This is primarily based upon the fact that it is a settler state. The ruling classes have had to carry out the most extreme oppression in order to secure and hold the land stolen from both Mexico and the Indigenous peoples and to exploit their labor. It is officially 20 percent Latino/a and has 14 Native tribes numbering more than 200,000 people. From the 1860s to the 1880s, Geronimo and Cochise, Apache warriors, fought legendary heroic battles to ward off the genocidal white settlers in the north of the state.

It has a smaller African-American pop-

ulation, which is downtrodden and subjected to ferocious racism.

The senior senator from Arizona, John McCain III, has both a racist and militarist tradition. McCain was in the vanguard of the racist resistance when the state refused to approve Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a holiday. The resistance lasted from 1983, when the federal King holiday was signed into law by Ronald Reagan, until 1992, when it was finally passed in Arizona under the pressure of a national boycott. McCain was forced to reverse his position.

Both his grandfather and his father were four-star admirals in the Pacific Command over a period covering World War II and the Vietnam War. His father was the head of the Pacific Command during Vietnam. Sen. McCain is close to the military and to the military-industrial complex, which has enormous economic influence in Arizona and is extremely reactionary politically.

William Rehnquist, the right-wing former chief justice of the Supreme Court, became infamous in his early years in Arizona as a bully who engaged in intimidation of Black and Latino/a voters at the polls. As a lawyer for the Republican Party, he organized and led "Operation Eagle" in southern Phoenix, where flying squads of lawyers invaded African-American and Latino/a neighborhoods to stop people from voting. He had to be physically thrown out of the polling places in 1962 in order to stop him. In 1964 Rehnquist opposed a Phoenix ordinance that allowed Black and Latino/a people to enter segregated stores and restaurants. Rehnquist and significant sections of the Arizona ruling class were as intransigent as the Klan and the segregationists in Mississippi and Alabama.

McCain follows in the tradition of Barry Goldwater, the Arizona senator who was the leader of the extreme right wing of the capitalist establishment in the 1950s and 1960s. Goldwater's program included abolishing welfare and threatening nuclear war with the USSR. His following included the John Birch Society and other fascist organizations.

Given both the immediate and historical background of Arizona, all generations would naturally gravitate to the theory that the ultra-right had some connection to the assassination attempt.

But what happened after Sheriff Dupnik unexpectedly made a broadside accusation against the extreme right? All organs of the ruling class — the media, the politicians and talk radio — went on a massive campaign to erase any political connection to the right wing from the minds of the people.

This campaign culminated in the memorial ceremony at Arizona State University, where President Barack Obama gave a major talk.

*To be continued.*

*The writer is author of the book "Low-Wage Capitalism," a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on the U.S. working class. He has also written numerous articles and spoken on the present economic crisis. For further information, visit [www.lowwagecapitalism.com](http://www.lowwagecapitalism.com).*

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## As Washington sues Beijing over green subsidies

# U.S. climate scientist calls China 'hope of the world'

By Deirdre Griswold

A leading U.S. scientist who deals with global warming and climate change is calling the People's Republic of China "the best hope" for turning around a looming disaster for the world and "stopping rule by fossil fuel interests."

Dr. James Hansen, head of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York, also wrote in the South China Morning Post on Nov. 3, "Fossil fuel interests reign in Washington and other capitals. Big money forces legislatures to hatch ineffectual schemes such as 'cap-and-trade-with-offsets,' a system designed by big banks and fossil fuel interests that assures continued fossil fuel addiction." The South China Morning Post is an English-language daily published in Hong Kong.

China last year became the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases on an annual basis, exceeding the U.S. for the first time. So why is it the world's "best hope"? Hansen says, "China leads the world in clean energy investments — nuclear, wind and solar power."

China is also forging ahead with new technology to improve energy efficiency during the generation and transmission of electricity.

China's biggest energy source — and biggest problem — is coal, which generates 80 percent of its electricity. Its abundance has fueled China's industrial revolution. It has also contributed to air pollution inside China and to greenhouse gases in the world's atmosphere.

However, since 2006 it has closed down many inefficient and dangerous small coal mines, cutting annual coal consumption by about 82 million tons and annual carbon dioxide emissions by some 165 million tons.

### Most CO2 came from Britain

It takes many years for the impact of greenhouse gases to be felt. The blanket of CO2 and other greenhouse gases now warming Earth has been accumulating since the 19th century. Hansen says the largest portion of these gases was generated by Britain, where the industrial revolution in the West started. Germany is second. It is followed by the U.S., with responsibility for 27 percent, and China,

with only 9.5 percent of the total.

Even looking just at current emissions, China, with its very large population, produces far fewer emissions per capita than any other industrialized country, even though it has now become the "factory to the world."

Hansen first testified before Congress on global warming in 1988. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1996 and has received many prestigious awards for his scientific work. He first gained fame for having figured out which gases are in the atmosphere around Venus and creating a model based on that which correctly predicted the temperatures on the surface of that extremely hot planet. He then began using the same methods to study the composition of Earth's atmosphere and its effects on global temperatures here.

Being a scientist with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Hansen has the benefit of examining data from all over the world collected by NASA's satellites, including detailed information on the state of the polar ice caps and the mile-deep ice sheet covering Greenland, all of which are melting at an accelerating speed.

### Dire predictions ignored

Hansen warned in his article for the South China Morning Post that, if all the fossil fuels now underground were to be consumed, sea levels would rise by about 75 feet, inundating whole countries and forcing the migration of hundreds of millions, if not billions, of people away from coastal areas.

He has been stymied by succeeding U.S. governments in his efforts to get a global agreement, like the one that President Barack Obama shot down in Copenhagen in 2009. Therefore, he is urging the Chinese leaders to do more about weaning their economy away from coal and is applauding the steps they have already taken in that direction.

Hansen is on a collision course with big capital and its politicians, who have gone from denying that global warming exists to coming up with schemes like "cap and trade." This supposed solution, pushed by Al Gore, does nothing but shift around the responsibility for atmospheric pollu-

tion while creating a profitable market for the traders. By the way, the Gore family fortune, which got him into the Senate in the first place, comes from Occidental Petroleum.

### China spends heavily on green infrastructure

After world markets dramatically imploded in 2008, China worked out a stimulus package of hundreds of billions of dollars to be spent mainly on upgrading its infrastructure. This was while the U.S. was spending its stimulus money mainly on propping up financial institutions and corporations that had been making big profits before the crash.

Since then, China has poured a lot of that money into incorporating green technologies in its development plans. For example, at the end of 2009, China budgeted \$600 billion to upgrade its electricity grid, using sophisticated ultrahigh-voltage transmission, which substantially reduces energy loss. Today there is a labor shortage in much of China as these big projects transform the landscape.

China has shown that it takes global warming seriously by putting its money where its mouth is. That is why scientists like Hansen are encouraged.

Here's the kicker: What is the U.S. government doing about all this?

In December, Washington filed a complaint against China with the World Trade Organization — for subsidizing its wind-power industry. Washington says that is a violation of "free trade." By the end of 2010, China had the wind-power capacity to produce 31 gigawatts of elec-

tricity — three times its nuclear power capacity.

### U.S. sues China

Come again? Yes, the U.S. is suing the Chinese government for putting money into its green industries. Moreover, even worse, this suit is supported by the Steelworkers union, on the ill-advised notion that forcing China to stop its subsidies will somehow create jobs here.

Is joining Washington in its rancorous anti-China campaign really going to convince the capitalist politicians, who have authorized trillions of dollars to rescue Wall Street firms and wage wars overseas for the oil companies, that this money should instead be going for a jobs program here?

While capitalism has been allowed to grow in China, widening the gap between rich and poor, the government and the Communist Party, both born out of revolution, still retain control over the economic levers that make large-scale, long-term planning possible. What has proven impossible in the corporate-ridden United States — the development of a plan, any plan, to move away from fossil fuels — is a reality in China today.

Workers' organizations should focus on militantly combating the bosses, bankers and their politicians here and force them to create green jobs that could solve two daunting problems at the same time: the widespread unemployment that is grinding down workers of all ages and the environmental catastrophe that looms over the next generation.

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## MUNDO OBRERO

# Hambrientas y desempleadas, las masas populares tunecinas se rebelan

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tendrán que oponerse a la intervención imperialista. El resultado de estos acontecimientos en la región significa mucho para la lucha internacional de la clase obrera contra la creciente crisis económica a través del mundo.

A lo largo del año pasado los/as trabajadores/as europeos/as han llevado a cabo manifestaciones masivas y huelgas generales para protestar contra programas de austeridad relacionados con el empeoramiento de la crisis económica mundial. En Portugal, Italia, Francia, España, Irlanda e incluso Grecia, donde las manifestaciones y rebeliones han sido más masivas y militantes, las acciones de los/as trabajadores/as y los/as jóvenes aún no han detenido los programas de austeridad, y mucho menos obligado a derrocar gobiernos.

Los sucesos en Túnez en el último mes han ido más lejos que cualquier otra serie de manifestaciones y rebeliones contra la crisis del capitalismo mundial en los países de Europa. Si bien la situación en África del norte es más severa, los/as trabajadores/as y la juventud en todos los estados capitalistas del mundo también se enfrentan a un alto nivel de desempleo y creciente costo de vida.

El potencial de una toma del poder por los/as trabajadores/as o una coalición de fuerzas progresistas con la participación fuerte y decidida del proletariado, sería un monumental acontecimiento político con implicaciones internacionales. Tal demostración de organización revolu-

cionaria y dirección política sentaría un precedente para una respuesta general de la clase obrera internacional a la actual crisis económica mundial.

### Lecciones históricas

Como escribió el revolucionario ruso V.I. Lenin en una carta al Comité Central del Partido Obrero Socialdemócrata de Rusia en septiembre de 1917, antes de la exitosa toma del poder por los bolcheviques, "Para poder triunfar, la insurrección debe apoyarse no en una conjuración, no en un partido, sino en la clase más avanzada. Esto en primer lugar".

Lenin continúa diciendo que "La insurrección debe apoyarse en el auge revolucionario del pueblo. Esto en segundo lugar. La insurrección debe apoyarse en aquel momento de viraje en la historia de la revolución ascensional en que la actividad de la vanguardia del pueblo sea mayor, en que mayores sean las vacilaciones en las filas de los enemigos y en las filas de los amigos débiles, a medias, indecisos, de la revolución. Esto en tercer lugar".

Él entonces destaca que "Estas tres condiciones, previas al planteamiento del problema de la insurrección, son las que precisamente diferencian el marxismo del blanquismo [refiriéndose al revolucionario francés que enfocaba la insurrección por un pequeño grupo]. Pero, si se dan estas condiciones, negarse a tratar la insurrección como un arte equivale a traicionar el marxismo y a traicionar la revolución". (Lenin, "El Marxismo y la insurrección") □

## WW EDITORIAL

# Obama evades the crisis

Continued from page 1

puter, and other countries that have also adapted to the new technological era, to the detriment of the U.S. He basically blamed China, India and other countries for the jobs crisis here. He called this "our Sputnik moment" and put forward visions of a new scientific-technological revolution to meet the challenge to U.S. business and to create jobs. He wants to "make America the best place on Earth to do business."

But early in his speech he inadvertently contradicted his fundamental argument. He reminded the audience that once upon a time workers here could get good jobs with good benefits for life. Then he brutally reminded the workers that "the rules have changed." Technology has transformed the situation. "Steel mills that once needed 1,000 workers can now do the same work with 100."

In other words, the scientific-technological revolution of the past has led

to a vast speedup in productivity and a similar reduction in the needs of capital for labor. This is what is behind the present jobless recovery, the massive unemployment and the economic crisis of capitalism.

Obama's plans to invest in high-speed rail, high-speed Internet, green energy, etc., are all technology-intensive industries that cannot put the tens of millions back to work. The advance of technology is what is leading capitalism toward an impasse and further crises.

The bosses are still sitting on \$2 trillion in cash because of capitalist overproduction, money they refuse to invest in production because they can't make profit without a market for their goods. Neither Obama nor the ruling class has any answer to this fundamental contradiction. Only the struggle of the working class to get rid of capitalism can overcome this long-term crisis for the workers. □

## ¿Cómo lo hace Cuba?

Por Cheryl LaBash

“Cuba tiene el índice de mortalidad [infantil] más bajo en las Américas, a pesar del bloqueo económico impuesto contra ella por los EEUU por más de cinco décadas”, anunció el periódico Granma el 3 de enero.

Antes de que la revolución cubana de 1959 expulsara al racista y corrupto régimen del monigote estadounidense Batista, las muertes infantiles, cuando se registraban, excedían un 60 por 1.000 nacidos vivos. En 2010, el índice de la mortalidad infantil era solamente de 4,5 — en general, mucho mejor que en el mucho más rico EEUU.

Esto es un marcado contraste con las enormes disparidades en las tasas de mortalidad infantil en EEUU; por ejemplo, hay 14,7 muertes por cada 1.000 nacidos vivos entre los/as afroamericanos/as en Mississippi, como se informó en el “Reporte de 2010 sobre mortalidad infan-

til en Mississippi”. (msdh.ms.gov)

Según Granma, algunos factores que contribuyen al éxito de Cuba son “la voluntad política del gobierno revolucionario, los altos niveles de educación de su población, el programa de vacunación contra 13 enfermedades y un sistema gratuito de salud universal para todos”.

Ray Suárez, reportó en el programa NewsHour de PBS que el logro de salud de Cuba incluye también una esperanza de vida mayor que EEUU y cuesta menos — ¡mucho menos! “Según la Organización Mundial de la Salud ... el cubano promedio vive 78 años. Eso es ligeramente mayor que el estadounidense promedio. El costo del cuidado de la salud en Cuba es menos de \$400 por persona al año. En EEUU, el costo anual es de casi 20 veces más”. (21 de diciembre)

Según los centros para los servicios de Medicare y Medicaid, el gasto del cuidado médico en EEUU asciende a \$8.086 por

persona ó 17,6 por ciento de su producto interno bruto. (www.cms.gov)

El informe de PBS señala el gran número de médicos, su énfasis en el cuidado preventivo, la creciente industria de biotecnología que desarrolla nuevas vacunas y medicinas, y la educación gratuita y universal incluyendo la escuela de medicina. Pero hay más.

El sistema económico socialista de Cuba elimina el motivo de ganancias que deforma cada aspecto del cuidado médico en el capitalista EEUU. La educación de médicos y la distribución de facilidades de salud están planificadas para resolver las necesidades humanas, de modo que no quedan a merced de la “mano invisible del mercado”.

Enfrentados a \$200.000 ó \$300.000 en deuda por educación, muchos/as estudiantes de medicina estadounidenses deben dirigirse hacia especialidades que devengan más, tomando así decisiones de

su carrera que — sutilmente o no — evitan tratar a pacientes sin seguro, pobres o rurales donde los/as médicos ganan menos.

Las decisiones sobre cada aspecto del cuidado médico capitalista, desde el cuidado directo al paciente, seguro y hospitales, hasta los productos farmacéuticos, los exámenes de laboratorio, investigación y pruebas de alta tecnología, se dirigen a maximizar las ganancias, incluso aumentando el uso de estas mercancías o servicios, hagan falta o no. Los medicamentos, las cirugías y los procedimientos hasta se anuncian directamente al público para promover ventas.

Sin embargo, 50 millones de residentes estadounidenses no tienen ningún seguro e incluso el seguro no garantiza el cuidado preventivo o de calidad. (The Kaiser Family Foundation, septiembre 2010)

La crisis del cuidado médico y su costo en EEUU puede ser solucionada. Cuba lo ha probado. □

## Hambrientas y desempleadas, las masas populares tunecinas se rebelan

Por Abayomi Azikiwe  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Un levantamiento popular en el nortero estado africano de Túnez desde mediados de diciembre ha forzado al exilio al presidente Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, quien había dirigido el gobierno aliado del oeste durante 23 años. Ben Ali huyó el 14 de enero después de que decenas de miles de trabajadores/as y jóvenes atacaran el Ministerio del Interior y otros edificios gubernamentales en la capital de Túnez y en la ciudad de Cartago.

Cuando un vendedor ambulante que fue atacado por la policía se inmoló el 17 de diciembre, desató esta enorme lucha. Desafiando gases lacrimógenos e incluso el fuego directo de las fuerzas de seguridad que mató entre 50 y 100 personas, miles también se manifestaron en decenas de ciudades provinciales de Túnez hasta derribar un jefe de estado represivo.

La valentía del pueblo tunecino y su éxito en el primer paso de una lucha continua ha despertado solidaridad y esperanza en todo el mundo. Esto ha provocado protestas en países vecinos como Argelia y Egipto, donde los altos precios y el desempleo han golpeado duro. También ha despertado interés en Europa, donde un año de huelgas y protestas aún no ha detenido los programas de “austeridad” destinados a privar a la clase obrera de sus derechos.

Inicialmente, el primer ministro Mohamed Ghannouchi fue designado para suceder a Ben Ali. Al día siguiente, sin embargo, el 15 de enero, el portavoz del Parlamento sustituyó al ex jefe de Estado de este país de 10,4 millones de personas. Ese mismo día el Ejército tomó el aeropuerto cerca de Túnez (capital) y luego se trasladó a la capital en un intento por restaurar el control estatal en las calles.

Milicias sospechosas de estar vinculadas a Ben Ali han abierto fuego contra la población y han peleado contra el ejército regular, según algunos informes. Se han formado grupos populares de autodefensa para proteger sus comunidades.

### Nuevo gobierno inestable

Como el partido político de Ben Ali, la Asamblea Constitucional Democrática (ACD) todavía estaba representado en el nuevo liderazgo, esto inmediatamente generó críticas y protestas de las masas. Este nuevo grupo anunció el 16 de enero que formaría un gobierno de unidad nacional que incluiría la participación de representantes de partidos de oposición, grupos profesionales y dirigentes sindicales.

Los funcionarios de la ACD invitaron a partidos moderados de oposición al gobierno de coalición. Estos son el Partido Democrático Progresista y el Foro Democrático por el Trabajo y las Libertades. Ayman Mohyeldin periodista de Al-Jazeera informó el 16 de enero “Sabemos que el nuevo gobierno de unidad nacional contará con tres miembros de la oposición. Se incluyen algunos tecnócratas, independientes y economistas y algunos miembros del movimiento laboral y sindical. Algunos de ellos están aún por acordar”.

Para el 18 de enero, los partidos políticos prohibidos por el régimen de Ben Ali — los más fuertes en la oposición — estaban excluidos del propuesto gobierno de unidad nacional.

Estos partidos incluyen el Hizb ut-Tahrir, una organización pan-islámica formada en 1953 en Palestina y que tiene filiales en toda la región; otro partido islámico, el Hizb al-Nahda o el Partido del Renacimiento, que tiene cierto apoyo electoral dentro del país; y una organización de izquierda, el Partido Comunista Obrero de Túnez (PCOT), que surgió del movimiento estudiantil y se formó en 1986.

En una entrevista con Al Jazeera el 17 de enero, el líder del PCOT Hamma Hammami, que había sido liberado de la cárcel el 14 de enero durante el levantamiento popular, dijo: “Este es un gobierno nacional que no tiene nada de nacional. Tiene la intención de conservar el antiguo régimen en el poder con todas sus instituciones autoritarias. Por eso el pueblo está tomando las calles con una nueva consigna ‘no queremos la ACD’”.

La Unión General de Trabajadores de Túnez (UGTT) ha sido reprimida durante las últimas dos décadas por el partido de la ACD. Sin embargo, en los últimos tres años ha habido actividad sindical independiente, especialmente en la cuenca minera de Gafsa, donde acciones industriales han tenido lugar desde 2008.

Para el 18 de enero, tres líderes de partidos de la oposición en la UGTT que habían aceptado puestos en el gobierno, renunciaron. Dos miembros del gabinete que fueron dirigentes de la ACD renunciaron a ese partido. La situación seguía siendo fluida.

### Se dividen las fuerzas militares y de seguridad

Desde que comenzó la rebelión en Túnez, parece haber una división entre los líderes dentro de las fuerzas de seguridad presumiblemente más leales al derrocado presidente Ben Ali y el ejército, encabezado por el general Rachid Ammar. El jefe de las fuerzas de seguridad, Ali Seriati, fue detenido el 15 de enero al tratar de huir por la frontera con Libia.

Hubo reportes al día siguiente de enfrentamientos armados frente al palacio presidencial de Cartago entre los elementos aún leales a Ben Ali por un lado, y el ejército regular en el otro. El ministro del interior, Rafik Belhaj, que había sido relevado de sus funciones por Ben Ali a principios de semana en un esfuerzo por calmar las protestas, se informó que fue detenido.

Con el aumento de las tensiones entre militares y fuerzas de seguridad, el pueblo se está armando para protegerse contra la violencia del Estado. James Bay, corresponsal de Al-Jazeera informó que “Entre los barricadas, encontramos grandes grupos de personas que tenían sus propias armas de fabricación casera como hachas y barras de acero”.

### ¿Hacia dónde va Túnez y África del Norte?

Los manifestantes dijeron el 17 de enero que querían más que la salida de Ben Ali. Las demandas de los/as jóvenes y los/as trabajadores/as se han centrado en la

necesidad de empleos y el control de la inflación causada por la crisis económica mundial. Ayesha Sabavala, editor adjunto de The Economist Intelligence Unit en Londres, le dijo a Al-Jazeera: “Si el gobierno interino no implementa rápidamente medidas para reducir el nivel de desempleo y aumentar el nivel de vida, vamos a ver más de estas protestas”.

Las manifestaciones del 14 y 15 de enero se centraron en el odiado Ministerio del Interior y otros edificios gubernamentales. El nuevo gobierno provisional, que sigue controlado por el partido gobernante ACD no estará dispuesto a ceder el control de la policía y el ejército — el estado. Tampoco los funcionarios en liderazgo del establecimiento político renunciarán a sus puestos a menos que, como Ben Ali, no vean otra alternativa cuando se enfrentan a una fuerza concertada, las masas populares organizadas.

En la vecina Argelia, también han estado ocurriendo demostraciones desde finales de diciembre. Cuatro jóvenes argelinos intentaron inmolarse en llamas, al igual que una persona en Egipto y otra en Mauritania. Estos acontecimientos en el África del norte repercuten en el imperialismo estadounidense y francés, que han extendido su involucramiento militar y económico en la región en los últimos años.

El resultado de estos acontecimientos en Túnez y en la región dependerá del grado de la organización y de la determinación política de los/as trabajadores/as y de la juventud. ¿Rejuvenecerán las masas tunecinas la revolución democrática nacional dentro del país con una orientación antiimperialista? La historia anticolonial y neocolonial tanto de Túnez como de Argelia han abarcado tendencias izquierdistas que han operado dentro del movimiento sindical y entre la juventud.

Washington se ha centrado en el norte de África en su llamada “guerra contra el terrorismo”. Avances revolucionarios allí pueden conducir a nuevas intervenciones militares y los/as activistas antiimperialistas y en contra de la guerra aquí

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