

WORKERS WORLD



Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

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Study on poverty shows LGBTQ people need **JOB**S!

By Imani Henry and Johnnie Lewis

The societal myth that the vast majority of LGBTQ-identified people in the U.S. are white, affluent men who are disconnected from the day-to-day struggles of working-class people has been completely debunked by a recent economic study. The U.S. ruling class and the right wing use this myth to ostracize lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people and economically separate them from the rest of society.

This “gay affluence” myth is depicted daily in the corporate-run media, which produce TV shows and movies that render working-class and LGBTQ communities of color invisible or as rarities within mainstream society.

For example, the most successful gay-themed television show in U.S. history, “Will and Grace,” depicted a white gay male character, Jack McFarland, who had a nonmanagerial retail job, yet could still magically afford luxury housing in the affluent Upper West Side neighborhood of New York City.

M.V. Lee Badgett of the Williams Institute, a LGBTQ think tank based at the University of California, Los Angeles, said on a May 31 NBC news program that “this ‘myth of gay affluence’ has been around for a long time. It gets in the way of people even imagining that LGBT people can be poor.” (inplainsight.nbcnews.com)

The myth puts the blame on individual poor and working-class LGBTQ people for not measuring up to the rich white men on TV, when it’s actually the failure of the capitalist U.S. government to truly provide for the needs of the people.

While Hollywood and the ruling class continue to promote the “gay affluence” myth, the reality is that, just like the vast majority of people living in the U.S., LGBTQ people come from the multinational working class.

In fact, recent studies show that because of discrimination and stigma, LGBTQ people, especially LGBTQ people of color and women, earn less money and experience higher rates of poverty and homelessness than non-LGBTQ people in society.

Released this month, a Williams Institute study, “New Patterns of Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community,” reported that 7.6 percent of lesbian couples, compared to 5.7 percent of married different-sex couples, are in poverty. It also stated that one-third of lesbian couples and 20.1 percent of gay male couples without a high school diploma are in poverty, compared to 18.8 percent of different-sex married couples. (williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu)

Other key findings were that the poverty rate of same-sex Black families was “more than twice the rate of dif-

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CeCe McDonald

FREE
Pfc. B. Manning

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Surprise upsurge shakes Brazil

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

June 24 — When the Free Fare Movement (MPL) in Sao Paulo, Brazil, initiated a call on social media for a demonstration on June 6 to protest an increase of public transport fares in the city, no one imagined the enormous response it would elicit and its political repercussions.

Within a week, the 5,000 people who began a march to Paulista Avenue, the financial center of Sao Paulo, grew into a truly gigantic movement of more than a million people across the country. They not only embraced the demand rejecting the public transport fare hike, but added other demands.

Root of the protests

The MPL had emerged in 2005, advocating free fare on public transport for students. It then expanded the demand to include all people.

Confronted with the announcement that the city of Sao Paulo was going to increase the fare by the equivalent of 9 cents a ride, the MPL made a call on its website (saopaulo.mpl.org.br) and on Facebook. Initially, the demonstrators gathered outside the Municipal Theater and from there marched to the streets in the city center.

The military police responded with violence. However, repressing the protesters not only strengthened their determination to continue the struggle but awakened the solidarity of millions of people around the country.

The demonstrations multiplied spontaneously, convened primarily through social media like Facebook and Twitter. They had no clear direction. In addition to Sao Paulo, there were protests in about 100 cities, including major metropolitan centers such as Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia and Belo Horizonte.

The additional demands included, among others, more funds in the budget for health and education. Brazil is now hosting the FIFA Confederations Cup in preparation for the Soccer World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016. The demand voiced by most people is that the money invested in promotion of the games and in the construction of stadiums and surrounding facilities in various parts of the country be used instead to improve health services, housing, education and transportation for the people.

That these demands have resonated so deeply was shown in recent surveys that indicate 75 percent of peo-

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MICHIGAN

Struggle on to ban fracking

By Martha Grevatt

Hundreds of grassroots activists across Michigan are working to make this state the second, after Vermont, to ban horizontal hydraulic fracturing — “fracking.” Committee to Ban Fracking members are petitioning to place a fracking ban on the November ballot.

Horizontal fracturing technology is relatively new, despite industry assertions that it has been around for 60 years. Vertical fracturing — whereby pressurized water is used to drill straight down into the earth’s shale rock layers to release pockets of natural gas and force the methane up to the surface — has been used for decades.

Horizontal fracking differs in that the drilling is deeper and continues horizontally for one or two miles after reaching the shale. This requires millions of gallons of freshwater; vertical fracturing uses around 5,000 gallons.

While early hydraulic fracking used water with gasoline and napalm added, the water for horizontal fracking is laced with hundreds of toxic chemicals that make it unpurifiable for human use. The companies don’t have to inform the public about the chemicals; they are protected as “trade secrets.” Benzene, lead, mercury, uranium, toluene, arsenic, radioactivity, uncaptured methane and other health hazards have been found in frack wastewater. The used “slick water” stored in underground wells has caused earthquakes in Ohio. Frackers are depleting the world’s precious freshwater.

Widespread horizontal drilling in Pennsylvania’s Marcellus Shale and Ohio’s Utica Shale has led to lawsuits over sickened children and adults, livestock fatalities and contaminated water.

Energy companies claim that fracking can help solve the climate change crisis. Methane fuel is clean burning, unlike coal and petroleum. However, during fracking some methane escapes into the atmosphere, where its impact on global warming — its greenhouse effect — is many times worse than carbon-based fuels.

Why frack Michigan?

Michigan is the eleventh-largest state and the ninth most populous. Of the state’s 36 million acres, 7.7 million are public lands. State-owned lands comprise 4.5 million acres — 12 percent of the state’s territory. While Michigan’s Department of Natural Resources boasts of extensive miles of rivers and Great Lakes coastline, 11,000 inland lakes, 75,000 acres of sand dunes and 3.9 million acres of forest, it isn’t telling the whole story.

The DNR has leased 1 million acres of public lands to Encana and Chesapeake Energy. These companies are “among the biggest players nationwide,” reported Reuters on June 25, 2012. Michigan is the latest frontier in “the largest U.S. land grab since the Gold Rush of the 1850s.”

Encana is seeking a minimum of 500 fracking permits from the DNR and may seek up to 1,700. Energy monopolies are promising jobs so they can convince struggling Michiganians to ignore scientific evidence of fracking’s dangers.

These companies are eager to drill Michigan’s largely untapped Collingwood Shale. The biggest concentration of shale gas is located in Michigan’s Lower Peninsula’s northern part, but fracking permits have been applied for as far south as Oakland County, which abuts Detroit.

The Collingwood Shale is much deeper below the earth’s surface than the Marcellus Shale. While a typical fracking operation in the Marcellus Shale uses 5 million gallons of water per frack, Encana has set a world record in Michigan by using 23 million gallons.

This wouldn’t seem cost-effective, so why frack in Michigan? One answer is the state’s abundance of groundwater. Once a company wins a land lease bid, all water in the parcel is free. Bidding on public lands starts at only \$13 an acre. Recently, Encana and Chesapeake were exposed for illegally agreeing not to bid against one another. The state makes out on the royalties once operations begin.

That Ohio and Pennsylvania are running out of space for wastewater storage is another factor in Michigan’s frack land grab. A third motive is the push to reverse the U.S. ban on natural gas exports, which secretary of energy, Ernest Moniz, supports. This would resuscitate an industry in which capitalist overproduction has forced prices — and profits — to fall. Profits from exporting natural gas will be even more lucrative than its sale on the domestic market.

The people of Michigan will be the big losers. Their water resources will be stolen and their health endangered. The pristine dunes, lakes, rivers, forests and beautiful state parks cover much of the area above the Collingwood Shale. Michigan law defines minerals as the “dominant estate.” Frackers can drill under private residences if the homeowners only own surface rights and not the mineral rights to what lies below.

However, these facts are causing many people to become anti-corporate activists. Recently, Todd Bazzett told Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice members that he had thought Committee to Ban Fracking in Michigan leaders were “paranoid,” but, “the more I learned, the more I saw there was good reason to be paranoid.” Bazzett is the committee’s coordinator for Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties — Detroit and the adjacent suburbs.

Bazzett and many committee volunteers are filling up the petitions at community festivals, political rallies, farmers’ markets, LGBTQ Pride events and elsewhere. They are building a statewide movement to challenge the profit-hungry energy monopolies and demand that people and the environment come first. □

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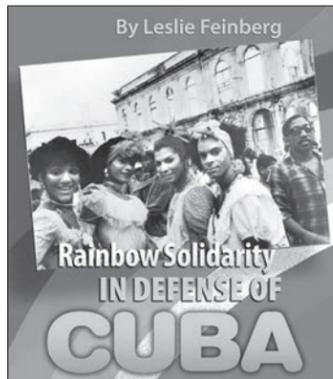


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Mass march commemorates

'Great Walk to Freedom'

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire
Detroit

June 22 represented a highpoint in Detroit when tens of thousands of people gathered on Woodward Avenue in midtown and marched downtown to Hart Plaza. The demonstration marked the 50th anniversary of the "Great Walk to Freedom" on June 23, 1963, when hundreds of thousands made a profound statement supporting the passage of a federal civil rights bill and the end to discrimination in employment and housing in the city.

The 1963 march was led by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Rev. C. L. Franklin, leader of the Detroit Council for Human Rights; Benjamin McFall, businessman and official at New Bethel Baptist Church where Franklin was pastor; Rev. Albert Cleage, pastor of Central Congregational Church; Walter Reuther, United Auto Workers president; and James Del Rio, educator and politician, among others. The march was the largest demonstration for civil rights in U.S. history until Aug. 28, 1963, when the March on Washington attracted 250,000 people.

At the conclusion of the Detroit march, during a rally at Cobo Hall, Dr. King delivered an earlier version of his "I Have a Dream" speech. King had developed the speech since at least 1962, but the address delivered in Washington has become the most widely known.

Motown Records released King's speech in Detroit later that year. Nonetheless, over the last 50 years, many people have not known that the Detroit speech, given two months before the March on Washington address, echoed similar themes.

Some organizers and family members of those involved in Detroit's "Great Walk to Freedom" have claimed that it was far larger than police estimates of 125,000. Del Rio, who was a key organizer of the march and was in a photograph showing him in leadership, said that 400,000 to 500,000 people participated.

Aretha Franklin, the "Queen of Soul" and Rev. Franklin's daughter, said in a Detroit Free Press interview on June 21, "You couldn't tell me there were not a million, million and a half people on Woodward that day. I'm accustomed to appraising numbers of people simply because of my concerts. I'm looking at the miles it covered. You had people everywhere in every corner and on every side and that went on for a very, very long way down Woodward. That was a lot more than 100,000 people."

Moratorium NOW! Coalition intervenes in commemorative march

The Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs organized a "Make the Banks Pay" contingent at the 50th anniversary demonstration. Their banner read, "Fight the Racist, Anti-Democratic, Union-Busting Bankers' EM, Cancel the Debt: Jobs, Pensions, City Services, the Banks Owe Us!"

Coalition members distributed 5,000 leaflets to the marchers, calling for cancellation of the bank debt supposedly owed by the people of Detroit. They also handed out signs reading, "Cancel the Debt!" "Stop Debt-Service Payments to the Banks!" and "No Emergency Manager, Make the Banks Pay!"

The Coalition has called demonstrations against Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr at several public venues. On June 29 at 1:00 p.m., the organization is convening a strategy meeting with numerous organizations committed to the struggle



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

Moratorium NOW! Coalition brings anti-austerity program for cancelling bank debt.

to overturn emergency management and to preserve pensions, healthcare benefits, jobs and city assets.

When Orr called a meeting with labor unions on June 20 at City Hall, the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, he didn't show up. His representatives presented an ultimatum to the unions that would force a cut in pensions and eliminate healthcare benefits for retirees, who would be forced into Medicare and Obamacare.

Orr also announced an investigation into the two pension funds — one for general employees and the other for the police and fire departments. The corporate media have run stories alleging bad investments and reckless spending on "perks" made by pension funds' trustees.

Bloomberg Municipal Market wrote on June 21, "Detroit workers not already vested in a city pension would be excluded and many retirees would be moved to federal health care programs under cost cuts the emergency manager outlined for union leaders. For those covered by a plan, benefits would be frozen and some would be switched to 401(k)-like defined-contribution savings accounts, under Orr's proposal."

The same article noted that Orr had not "determined how much to take from future or current retirees, pending an actuarial analysis. Automatic cost-of-living raises would be eliminated, and worker contributions into the system would rise."

The municipal pension systems have set aside \$5 million to fight Orr's proposed changes. Orr has threatened to take the city of Detroit into bankruptcy if the labor unions don't grant concessions. If that happens, the court could liquidate pensions, health care benefits, city assets and services. Moratorium NOW! Coalition activists have followed similar developments in Stockton and San Bernardino, Calif., where bankruptcy proceedings are pitting civil servants, pensioners and elected officials against the banks, bondholders and their insurers.

Coalition organizers are demanding that city workers' pensions and health care benefits remain untouched throughout the restructuring process. Orr and his corporate and financial institution backers have labeled the city's pension obligations "unsecured."

Orr declared a "moratorium" on \$2.5 billion in debt, which would theoretically encompass both debt-service and principal payments. The corporate media have reported that Orr is telling creditors that they may be forced to accept "pennies on the dollar" for their claims against the city.

Even Bloomberg reported, "The proposal, laid out at two sessions led by Orr's advisers on municipal restructuring, pro-

voked angry responses from some union leaders who said Orr was dictating unpalatable benefit cuts for workers to help erase deficits and avoid bankruptcy."

It will take a mass struggle led by workers and pensioners to reverse Orr's plans for massive benefit cuts to guarantee payments of fraudulent debts to the bankers and capitalist bondholders. The Moratorium NOW! Coalition has obtained more than 3,000 pages of documents concerning loans and bond issues for Detroit dating back nearly a decade. These documents indicate the disadvantageous situation the majority African-American municipality has been placed in due to job loss, predatory lending and the avaricious role of the banks.

The Moratorium NOW! Coalition is calling for an investigation of the banks and other financial institutions' roles in the city's economic ruin. A purported probe ordered by Orr is only designed to provide a rationale for a bank-led seizure of the more than \$5 billion pension system. For more information, see moratorium-mi.org and detroitdebtoratorium.org. □

Georgia prison tour verdict:

SHUT IT DOWN!

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Ocilla, Ga.

The Irwin County Detention Center sits just outside the town of Ocilla, population 3,400, in southern Georgia. With 200 workers, it is the largest private employer in Irwin County.

Fields of cotton, peanuts and tobacco fill the countryside around Ocilla. Drought, unemployment and poverty plague its residents.

The one-story, sprawling ICDC building has a turbulent history of financial crisis. Built as a privately owned jail, in the 1990s it housed U.S. Marshall Service prisoners and then was a boot camp for state juvenile offenders. For several years, it sat vacant until it was purchased by developer Terry O'Brien, of Municipal Corrections LLC, in 2004. Operations were turned over to Michael Croft, a former deputy sheriff, and the cells were filled with prisoners whose county lock-ups were full.

O'Brien and Croft had bigger ideas and convinced the local county commissioners in 2007 to raise \$55 million in tax-exempt bonds to fund expansion of the facility, nearly doubling its capacity, to make it attractive as an immigration detention center. The complex agreement had the county leasing the jail from Municipal Corrections in order to use public money for remodeling costs.

Re-opened in January 2009 with 1,200 beds, it remained largely empty and by that summer was behind in bond payments as well as city and county taxes. Croft left town suddenly, and Detention Management LLC, another company affiliated with Terry O'Brien, took over day-to-day operations that summer.

O'Brien soothed worried local leaders with assurances that the leadership team at Detention Management had the connections to turn things around. And indeed, several of their names were well-known in the corrections industry — for bribery and pay-for-play schemes, personal use of tax money, and charges of prisoner abuse, illegal detention and more. (April 10, The Nation)

Nevertheless, Georgia's two senators, Johnny Isakson and Saxby Chambliss and Rep. Jack Kingston went to bat for the Irwin County Detention Center with Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials. In 2010, a four-year contract was signed for the use of as many as 512 beds, at a cost of \$45 a day, which is much less than the going rate at other for-profit prisons in Georgia.

Housing both male and female immigrant detainees as well as male and female federal prisoners of the U.S. Marshalls Service, the prison immediately had problems with everything from bad food, abusive guards, lack of medical care to restricted attorney access.

Since ICDC is located some three and a half hours from Atlanta, it is difficult, if not impossible, for many prisoners to receive family visits and legal support. Language translation skills among the staff and guards are meager to nonexistent. Untrained detainees are often pressed into translating fellow detainees' medical or personal needs from Spanish to English. Translation of other languages, such as Vietnamese, Polish, Mayan dialects or Mandarin Chinese, have to be routed through a telephone service.

Civil and human rights violations

In January 2012, some detainees went on a hunger strike to bring attention to these problems. Their whole unit was put on lock-down. Others were sent to "the hole" or isolation cells.

A lot of these issues were detailed in a spring 2010 report by the American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia entitled "Prisoners of Profit: Immigrants and Detention in Georgia," which cited direct testimony from named immigrants. The report ends with numerous recommendations to alleviate these inhumane conditions.

Added to the civil and human rights violations to be found in all prisons, jails and detention centers, the ICDC is also mired in financial instability that impacts operations.

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Low wage workers on the move

A MARXIST APPROACH

By Fred Goldstein

The following is based on a talk to a Workers World Party meeting on June 14. Goldstein is a member of the WWP Secretariat and author of "Low-Wage Capitalism" and "Capitalism at a Dead End." The talk has been slightly edited for publication.

The greatest problem facing the labor movement, the political movement and all progressive movements fighting for the workers and oppressed in this period is how to help revive working-class resistance in this country.

The effort to promote workers' assemblies could potentially be an important contribution to beginning the process. The first real workers' assembly of this period — the Southern Workers Assembly held in Charlotte, N.C., in September 2012 — was largely the work of our allies, the Black Workers for Justice, and our comrades in North Carolina. This assembly was heavily based upon the unions. As such it has enormous potential.

Of course, such assemblies must become magnets not only for organized workers but for all the oppressed and exploited, the organized, unorganized, unemployed and everyone oppressed by capitalism. And we must continue to try to strike a balance between the political struggle and the economic struggle.

But my topic for tonight is to examine the recent walkouts and demonstrations of low-wage workers that have caught everyone's attention and to discuss the significance of these events.

Low-wage workers take to the streets

People are probably familiar with the OUR Walmart demonstrations, especially the 100 protests held on Nov. 23 last year and the one at the company's annual meeting this June 7 in Bentonville, Ark. These demonstrations spread from Walmart to fast food and other low-wage industries.

The following comes from reports about some of the other walkouts:

On Nov. 29, 2012, some 200 workers in New York carried out job actions at Burger King, Taco Bell, Wendy's, McDonald's and other fast-food restaurants. This was organized by Fast Food Forward, which is supported by the Service Employees Union and its New York chapter, Local 32BJ.

A worker who participated, Raymond Lopez, is an aspiring actor who worked at McDonald's for two and a half years. He said, "In this job, having a union would really be a dream come true," as \$8.75 an hour "is really living in poverty."

In Chicago on April 4 of this year, hundreds of fast food and retail workers walked out of McDonald's, Subway, Macy's, Sears and Victoria's Secret demanding a wage floor of \$15 an hour and the right to organize a union without retaliation.

"I think I'm doing more than what I should, and for \$8.25 it's not enough," said Esly Hernandez, a striking Dunkin' Donuts worker. "They don't even appreciate the work that I do. They don't even say

thank you. They treat you like a robot."

Hernandez, who has a four-year-old son with anemia, said he is sometimes forced to choose between buying medically recommended nutrition for his son or paying his electric bills. It is conditions like this that have led some to call the U.S. economy the "McJobs economy."

In May in Detroit, as many as 400 workers at more than 60 fast-food restaurants in the Detroit metro area walked off the job.

The strike shut down multiple establishments, including a McDonald's, Long John Silver's, Burger King, two Popeyes and a KFC. McDonald's management called in replacement workers, but they joined the picket line. The \$15-an-hour campaign as well as unionization were the demands.

It is important to note that there are now 50,000-plus fast-food employees in the Detroit Metro area, double the number of auto workers. These 50,000 workers, if they worked 40 hours a week, would make \$16,500 a year, which is near poverty level. But most of them work only 15 to 20 hours.

In St. Louis on May 8, over 100 workers from 30 establishments, including McDonald's, Jimmy John's, Wendy's and Domino's, walked out, with the backing of the SEIU, the Teamsters, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Union, the Food and Commercial Workers union and the AFL-CIO. A \$15-an-hour and union rights campaign in the city includes the slogan, "Can't survive on \$7.35," the Missouri minimum wage.

In Milwaukee, McDonald's, T.J. Maxx and other companies were hit by walkouts demanding \$15 an hour and unionization. Kenny Mack, a maintenance worker at McDonald's who makes \$10 an hour and has an 18-month-old daughter, had to move back in with his mother because he could not afford his rent.

In Milwaukee, the workers set up an ongoing committee in order to form their own union.

Between 100 and 400 workers in Seattle forced the closing of a Taco Bell and had stoppages at McDonald's, Chipotle, Subway and Burger King. The action was called by Good Jobs Seattle.

Much more organizing of low-wage workers is being carried out all over the country by UNITE HERE, the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, SEIU and other unions at airports, malls, universities, hotels, car washes, cafeterias and other businesses. Workers walked out at Giant Stadium in San Francisco. And for the first time in 20 years, casino workers sat down and blocked the Las Vegas strip.

Response to low-wage capitalism: a harbinger

These examples should not be taken to mean that there is a great strike wave, or that Wal-Mart Stores Inc., with its 4,000-plus stores in the U.S. and 1.2 million workers, or McDonald's with 14,000 stores and 400,000-plus workers, are going to be organized by these methods.



Workers in Times Square, New York, demanding \$15 an hour and the right to organize a union.

Many in unions that organize low-wage workers are justifiably skeptical about the motives of the SEIU top leadership in fostering these demonstrations, because of the negative role this leadership has played in the past. But the motives or role of the SEIU are not what is important for revolutionaries and militant trade unionists to focus on. The focus should be on the workers who participated. There has been a truly multinational outpouring that showed tremendous spirit and fight.

This organizing is both symptomatic of the willingness of low-wage workers to take great risks and a demonstration of the natural response of the growing low-wage working class that has been created by the scientific-technological revolution and the low-wage stage of capitalism and imperialism. It is a reminder to every working-class organization to pay close attention.

Low-wage capitalism requires higher forms of organization

Each new stage of capitalist development brings about unprecedented conditions for the workers. This is inevitable because capitalism continually revolutionizes the means of production. This has been the history of capitalism from simple cooperation in the earliest stages, to the manufacturing stage, to the industrial stage, to the mass production stage and now to the high-tech stage.

And each new stage poses new and, at first, overwhelming problems for the workers as they try to adjust to the new conditions of exploitation. And each new stage in the development of the productive forces requires a new and higher form of working-class organization.

To get some brief historical perspective, the previous phase of mass production — or Fordism as it is sometimes called because of the assembly line first introduced by Henry Ford in 1913 — destroyed innumerable skilled jobs and subjugated the workers to the assembly line. They had no industrial unions. Only craft workers were organized into the AFL trade unions. The new mass production proletariat was subject to arbitrary speedup, the brutal authority of supervisors, dismissal at will and so on.

When industrial workers tried to organize in steel, meatpacking and other industries, their union drives were smashed because of unemployment and because of a politically reactionary climate that allowed the bosses to win.

But as industry grew, so did mass production and the semiskilled industrial working class. The workers eventually overcame the problems of organizing unions. They carried out municipal general strikes in San Francisco, Toledo and Minneapolis. These were followed by a wave of sit-downs and plant occupations, culminating in the Flint sit-down strike at General Motors. These struggles led to the organizing of millions in the Congress of Industrial Organizations, despite resistance from the

conservative AFL leadership.

Much of the detail concerning this era is described in the book "Low-Wage Capitalism."

The present high-tech, low-pay stage of capitalism is engulfing the working class as never before. Sam Marcy, the late founder and chairperson of Workers World Party, foresaw this in his classic work, "High Tech, Low Pay," written in 1985.

Workers in slowly developing crisis for decades

It is important to say that the working class in the U.S. was in a slowly developing crisis long before the economic and financial collapse of 2008-2009. This collapse only accelerated and sharpened the crisis of the masses.

The bosses long ago set up a worldwide wage competition, pitting workers against one another all over the world and pitting workers in the U.S. against each other. Workers in Detroit had to compete with workers in Mexico and China as well as with auto workers in the nonunion, "right-to-work" South.

Millions of undocumented workers, fleeing U.S.-imposed poverty in their homelands, augmented the low-wage workforce and were vulnerable to extreme superexploitation by unscrupulous employers.

Many jobs were sent into the prison-industrial complex, forcing furniture workers, ticket booking agents and many other workers to compete with near slave prison labor. And so on.

The technological downsizing and offshoring in manufacturing allowed the capitalists to go from a relatively livable-wage manufacturing economy to a low-wage service economy — which at the present time is disproportionately Black, Latino/a, Asian and immigrant, with women at the lower end of the pay scale.

Real wages in the U.S. have been declining since 1979 and the single-earner family is ancient history, except for the rich and the upper middle class. Now two wages are necessary just to get by and thus one wage leaves families, usually women and children, in poverty.

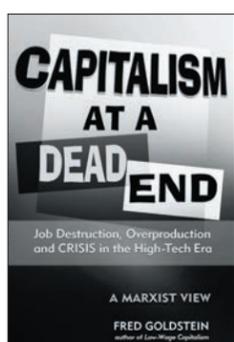
Going back to fundamentals: class organization

How do we approach this situation as Marxists?

First we must go back to fundamentals. We must remind ourselves of our fundamental task and the task of the working class and the oppressed — who today make up the bulk of the working class. In addition to superexploitation on the job, the oppressed suffer from racism, sexism and/or homophobia in all spheres of political, economic and social life under divide-and-conquer capitalism.

It is the historic task of the working class to emancipate itself and in the process destroy capitalism and liberate all of

Continued on page 5



CAPITALISM AT A DEAD END

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

Low-Wage Capitalism

What the new globalized high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle in the U.S.

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to www.LowWageCapitalism.com

Available at Amazon and other bookstores.

Stop harassing Muslims

The Council on American Islamic Relations-New York along with New York Police Department reform activists, American Muslims and concerned New Yorkers gathered together at 1 Police Plaza for a historic step in combatting anti-Muslim policing and profiling by the NYPD. At this action, the American Civil Liberties Union, the New York Civil Liberties Union and City University of New York CLEAR (Creating Law Enforcement Accountability & Responsibility) announced a lawsuit to challenge the unlawful spying on Muslim communities by the NYPD.

-- CAIR release, WW photo: Anne Pruden



On June 24, organizations opposing the racist "Stop and Frisk" actions by the New York Police Department held a morning rally at City Hall.

Report and photo by Michael Shallcross

Georgia prison tour verdict: Shut it down!

Continued from page 3

In January 2012, with ICDC owing the county and city some \$1.6 million in back taxes and with bondholders going unpaid, Ocilla moved to foreclose on the prison property and sell it at auction on the courthouse steps on March 6.

A bankruptcy action stopped that forced sale, and everything seems to be in the courts where the creditors are hashing out the details.

In the meanwhile, several hundred men and women are spending months, if not years in some cases, in a detention center far from family and friends. The cost of telephone calls is exorbitant and the service inadequate.

Lawyers are denied contact visits, meaning

their conversations are conducted over telephones that do not allow privacy.

Prisoners, both federal and immigrant detainees, complain of guards who constantly yell orders and of food that is rancid or inedible. Life-and-death issues include lack of timely and appropriate medical care for cancer patients and diabetics, detainees with broken limbs, and those suffering from depression and other mental health issues.

For these reasons and more, Irwin County Detention Center must be closed now.

On June 10, Mathiowetz and other immigrant rights activists toured the Irwin County Detention Center to see if any of the ACLU recommendations had been implemented.

Problems of the workers' movement

Continued from page 4

society. The working class in capitalist society is a revolutionary class because it makes everything go, it creates all wealth. It is now more deeply interconnected than ever — that is, socialized — by the interconnected processes of capitalist production, distribution and services. It is in a supremely strategic position to take over all of society and expropriate the exploiters and the oppressing capitalists. Karl Marx explained this 165 years ago, and it is still true today.

The very process of class exploitation and oppression will drive our class inevitably towards resistance. We must never forget that, no matter what the situation looks like at any given moment.

Having said that, we must look reality in the face and not deceive ourselves or the workers.

Right now, the workers as a whole in the United States have yet to reach the stage of militant defensive struggle, such as is taking place in parts of Europe. There are a few outstanding recent ex-

ceptions: the Republic Windows and Doors workers who seized their plant in Chicago in 2008; the Wisconsin workers who occupied the state Capitol for two weeks in 2012; the Chicago teachers' union, which this year organized a truly mass struggle based on an alliance with the community. These are just some examples, not meant to be an exhaustive list.

But by and large, the workers have been taking blow after blow and have been unable to mount any significant struggles, even of a defensive character. The next stage of the struggle must be to organize a defense.

And this really means for the working class to advance itself as a class. It means for the millions of low-wage workers to go beyond being privately angry, fed up and disgusted and move towards defense and class consciousness. In this respect, the low-wage workers' demonstrations must be regarded as a harbinger of things to come.

Next: *Rebuilding class solidarity and militant struggle.*

ON THE PICKET LINE

By Sue Davis

The purpose of "On the Picket Line" is to report positive, fight-back developments in the labor movement, which includes both organized and unorganized workers. But sometimes it's necessary to report events that do not bode well for a specific group of workers, and which may, over time, have an adverse effect on the entire labor movement. The following item is in that category.

UPS workers vote for concessionary contract

After a hard sell in three letters from Teamsters President Jimmy Hoffa to 250,000 rank-and-file members urging support for a concessionary five-year contract with United Parcel Service that directly affects 140,000 members, 33,405 voted Yes to the contract, while 25,448 voted No. That count, posted June 23 on teamster.org, is about 95 percent complete, so outstanding reports from six locals is unlikely to erase the 8,000-vote margin.

The rationale for voting to approve the contract is that the workers should be grateful for their jobs in bad economic times, according to a June 8 article posted on fightbacknews.org. Yet, the regressive contract offers a miniscule raise of \$3.90 in wages for full-timers and only 50 cents for part-timers over five years. Here's the really bad news: It moves the 140,000 workers out of the UPS health care plan into one with deductibles and co-pays, which for families can mushroom into hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars in additional expenses each year.

In stark contrast to its workers' wages, UPS racked up \$4.5 billion in profits last year, near its pre-recession 2007 record, and this year's first-quarter profits were \$1.04 billion, up from \$970 million last year. UPS CEO Scott Davis banked \$10 million in 2012. The article pointed out that profits increased "because of the hard work that the UPS workers have put in," which includes increased volume.

Despite Hoffa's go-along, get-along, strong-arming strategy, there was considerable opposition to the contract in some locals. The leadership of Local 89 in the Louisville, Ky., area, the largest UPS local and UPS's worldwide air hub known as Worldport, urged members to vote it down at a June 2 membership meeting. Leaders called it "highly concessionary" because it reduced wages by 7 percent, cut a week of vacation and could increase subcontracting. (teamster89.com, June 8) In another June 8 article, the leadership "strongly condemned" UPS management after it tried to influence the vote by sending letters to parents of Metro-College students to "encourage" the students to vote for the contract. Because management also offered Local 89 members a bonus of \$1,000 if they approved the contract, Local leaders said UPS management had "zero integrity" and would stop "at nothing to harass and deceive its workers."

On June 24 the vote posted on teamster.org was 34,037 for to 29,576 against. Local 89 members voted in the opposite direction, 3,388 to 483 against the main contract and decisively turning down two local riders.

Meanwhile, the fightbacknews.org article pointed out two additional problems with the contract. A huge one is that it allows only 2,350 part-timers to become full-timers over the course of five years. This is a real setback for part-timers, given that 10,000 full-time jobs for part-timers were stipulated in the 1997 and 2002 contracts. Part-timers' starting wage is now \$8.50. That's outrageously low, given that it was \$8 in 1982. According to Bureau of Labor Statistics, \$8 then would be worth \$19.82 today, when adjusted for inflation.

This regressive contract sets a dangerous precedent for the entire working class. Like other recent anti-worker contracts — the one imposed on highly skilled machinists after they stuck at a Caterpillar plant in Illinois in 2012 and the government bailout contracts that the United Auto Workers went along with in 2009 — this only emboldens the ruling class to keep escalating its war on the workers and poor.

Low-wages at Walmart cost taxpayers money

A report released the week of May 27 revealed once more that low wages paid to Walmart workers are subsidized by U.S. taxpayers. Based on calculations prepared by a congressional committee, the report zeroes in on Walmart practices in Wisconsin because that state counts how many workers are enrolled in its public health care program based on their employer. At the end of 2012, there were 3,216 Walmart employees enrolled — much more than any other employer. When all their dependents were added, the total jumped to 9,207. The report estimated that at one Walmart supercenter employing 300 workers, the cost to taxpayers is \$904,000 annually. (CNN Money, June 5) As of July 31, 2012, Walmart employed 2 million workers at 4,253 U.S. stores. You do the math on how many billions of U.S. tax dollars are going to subsidize anti-worker, anti-union, billion-dollar-profit Walmart. Talk about corporate welfare! That's why all workers need living wages now! □

STONE NEW WALL

Hominin origins and evolution

A BRIEF HISTORY OF 'MARRIAGE' PART 6

By Bob McCubbin

We turn now to speculation on the origins and evolution of humanity. In this section, we relied on a few recent publications, the motive being that archeological and primatological investigations, using ever more sophisticated technologies, have been able to produce ever more precise datings and ever more evidence-backed scenarios of and hypotheses regarding primate life and human prehistory. We'll also see, however, that signs of the anthropological counterrevolution discussed in a previous installment remain.

The datings for the initial appearance of "hominins" are clearly rough estimates but also a good reminder of the difficulty in pinpointing events over the incredibly long length of time our evolution unfolded. (Here we should note that while in many of the works we consulted the word "hominin" is used to refer to all the species of the family Hominidae, including all species in the genera *Australopithecus* and *Homo*, our use of it will be limited to references to the species predating the appearance of *Homo sapiens*.)

Colin Renfrew, in his "Prehistory: The Making of the Human Mind" (New York: Modern Library, 2007), estimates that the hominin lineage began between 8 and 6 million years ago. (p. 48) Chris Scarre, editor of "The Human Past" (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2nd ed., 2009), puts the date of emergence of bipedal hominins in Africa at 6 million years ago. (p. 47)

As with the emergence of the first hominins, the important developments that eventually led to modern humans can only be roughly dated. Before the beginnings of hominin brain expansion (approximately 2.5 million years ago) or even before the first use of fire (estimated at somewhere between 1.5 million and 700,000 years ago), it's highly likely that hominin life mirrored closely some of the patterns of life of the great ape relatives.

Communal hominins

What anthropologists and archeologists have concerning the living patterns of ancient hominins are hypotheses — Chris Knight, a Marxist anthropologist, calls them "stories" — based in part on examination of the few uncovered hominin bones and teeth that have survived the millennia, pieces of flint and other stones that appear to have been worked by hominins, climatic and botanical residue

in ancient soils that would have impacted hominin life, and very sophisticated, radiometric techniques for dating these ancient materials.

Living patterns and beliefs of foraging and hunting groups still in existence during the most recent millennia — as described by observers as far back in time as Herodotus up to present-day archeologists and anthropologists — are also used to try to reconstruct the long process of hominin and human evolution.

The most commonly told story is that tree-dwelling, fruit-eating primates spent more and more time on the ground as the rainforests of East Africa slowly disappeared some 5 or so million years ago. The gradual disappearance of their former arboreal habitats forced dramatic adaptations, including bipedalism (standing and walking upright), plant foraging, scavenging and/or hunting animals, and a new emphasis on communalism and communication.

Group survival, it is said, necessitated cooperation, food sharing and organizing defense against predatory animals. An auspicious physiological change, the evolution of larger brains, may have been prompted by the challenges of this new physical environment, dramatic climate changes and the accompanying intensified sociality, which itself would have required a greater emphasis on communication.

But our increasingly large brains created problems for the fetus' intrauterine development. Brains are also metabolically "expensive," their increasing size heightening the need for high-energy nutrition.

Successful births had to come sooner, while the neonate's head was still small enough to pass through the narrower pelvis produced by bipedalism. The result was the birth of totally helpless infants, unlike the babies of our primate ancestors. Prolonged post-natal care was required for their survival, but it also offered new, lengthier opportunities for the transmission of culture.

The control of fire and the development of language were further important advances that occurred at some point or span of time over this vast period of prehistory.

Scientists debate the timing, significance and details of these and other changes in the various hominin species. But the central role of females as the producers of new life, as technological innovators, inventors of language, and organizing agents of social life, is acknowledged by most.

The pivotal role of mothers to hominin society would of itself have bestowed great authority on them. But, in addition, the foraging skills of women were undoubtedly crucial to the band's continuing existence. Whether scavenging, fishing or hunting provided meat for the band, foraging for plant food would have been the more reliable source of nutrition in most situations and under most conditions. Small, usually nomadic hominin groups based on matrilineality would be the inevitable result.

So originally, in the remote past were tree-dwelling primates, then hunting, fishing and foraging bands of hominins. These hominins evolved, most likely, with gradual anatomical and behavioral changes based on natural selection and occasionally with dramatic, qualitative leaps. Eventually, perhaps somewhat more than 100,000 years ago, *Homo sapiens* — modern humans — appeared.

Debate is fierce in professional circles

concerning when and how language and other nonmaterial or nondurable manifestations of human culture first appeared. In the most recent tens of thousands of years, though, these foraging, fishing and hunting groups, along with other modern humans engaged in early pastoralist and horticultural activities, are more clearly apparent in the archeological record.

Persistence of 'Malinowski' counterrevolution

Did "traditional marriage" appear at some point in the matrilineal hominin bands that had their origin and lived out their many generations in Africa? Or among the ones who, beginning more than 1 million years ago, began spreading out from Africa into Eurasia in several waves?

Many contemporary writers on the subject describe the hominin species' and the *Homo sapiens*' foraging and hunting bands that followed as composed of monogamous heterosexual pairs and their children. These writers accept as good science the view of monogamous pairing marriage as an eternal verity, more or less as articulated by Bronislaw Malinowski and other 20th-century anthropologists of his ilk.

In Chapter 3 of "The Human Past," paleoanthropologist Richard Klein writes that during the time span between 1.8 million and 600,000 to 500,000 years ago, brain volume was increasing rapidly "to an average firmly within the modern range. ... [And] the sexes did not exhibit any major dimorphism, differing no more in size than they do in living people. ... In ape species that exhibit a similar degree of sexual dimorphism, males compete intensely for sexually receptive females, and male-female relationships tend to be transitory and non-cooperative. The reduced size difference in *H[omo] ergaster* may signal the onset of a more typically human pattern, in which male-male competition was more muted and male-female relationships were more lasting and mutually supportive." (pp. 91-92)

Klein concludes, "The emergence of *Homo ergaster* 1.8-1.7 million years ago marked a watershed, for *H. ergaster* was the first hominin species whose anatomy and behavior fully justify the label human. ... The evidence suggests that *H. ergaster* was the first hominin species to resemble historic hunter-gatherers not only in a fully terrestrial lifestyle, but also in a social organization that featured economic cooperation between males and females and perhaps between semipermanent male-female units." (p. 121)

Frans de Waal, perhaps surprisingly given his fascination with ribald bonobos (see Part 5 of this series), is quite adamant on the question of an original and uninterrupted human pattern of a male-dominated, "nuclear" family: "Human social organization is characterized by a unique combination of (1) male bonding, (2) female bonding, and (3) nuclear families. We share the first with chimpanzees, the second with bonobos, and the third is ours alone. It's no accident that people everywhere fall in love, are sexually jealous, know shame, seek privacy, look for father-figures in addition to mother-figures, and value stable partnerships. The intimate male-female relationship implied in all of this, which zoologists have dubbed a 'pair-bond,' is bred into our bones."

"The size difference between the sexes," De Waal continues, "combined with excellent cooperation among males makes it likely that male dominance has always characterized our lineage, and so inheritance likely followed paternal lines." ("Our Inner Ape." New York: Riverhead Books, 2005, pp. 113-114)

Richard Leakey in "The Origin of Humankind" (New York: Basic Books, 1994), while not directly addressing the question of a male-dominated, "nuclear" family, does endorse the idea of original patrilineal descent: "Very probably, early *Homo* males remained in their natal groups with their brothers and half brothers, while the females transferred to other groups." (p. 54)

Jared Diamond traces a *Homo* social/sexual evolution, but with the males continuing to remain dominant through the transition from hunter-gatherer societies into the last few thousand years of societies divided into classes of rich and poor — societies that, in his well-known book, "Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies" (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), he imaginatively labels "kleptocracies": "At least officially, human pairing is more or less monogamous in most modern political states, but is 'mildly polygynous' [men having multiple wives] among most surviving hunter-gatherer bands, which are better models for how mankind lived over the last million years." (p. 71)

These authors, and many other contemporary writers, accept much of the tableau of patriarchal "nuclear" families painted by the dominant, bourgeois school of 20th-century anthropology that we discussed at the beginning of this series. In the next installment of this series, we'll focus in some detail on what some of the dissenters to "perpetual patriarchy" have to say. □

Study on poverty shows:

Continued from page 1

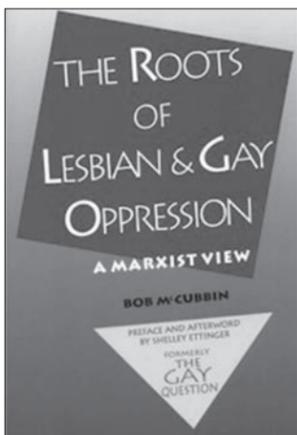
ferent-sex married African Americans." (williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu) The poverty rate for all families in the U.S. was 5.8 percent; for Black families alone, it was 9.7 percent. (2010 U.S. Census)

Pertaining to child poverty, "almost one in four children living with a male same-sex couple and 19.2 percent of children living with a female same-sex couple are in poverty, compared to 12.1 percent of children living in married different-sex couples." Furthermore, with a poverty rate of 53 percent, "African-American children in gay male households have the highest poverty rate ... of any children in

any household type." (williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu)

Racist bias compounds poverty

Much has been written on the rampant unemployment and job-related discrimination that happens to trans and gender non-conforming (TGNC) people. A 2011 study by the National Center on Transgender Equality reported that "the combination of anti-transgender bias and persistent structural racism was especially devastating." (transequality.org) For example, 36 percent of Native people, 32 percent of Black people and 30 percent of Latino/a trans people answered "Yes"



McCubbin is the author of "The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View," New York: World View Forum, 3rd ed., 1993. To order send \$10 to World View Forum, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor, NY, NY 10011, with name and address. Or order at Amazon.com.

MEANS FIGHT BACK!

THE NINTH ANNUAL

NYC Trans Day of Action for Social & Economic Justice POINTS OF UNITY

The following excerpted points of unity were initiated by *TransJustice of the Audre Lorde Project*, a lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit, trans and gender non-conforming people of color center for community organizing.

On Friday, June 28, 2013, TGNC [trans and gender non-conforming] People of Color and allies will take on the streets of New York City once again to demand justice and let the world know that the Stonewall rebellion is not over and we will continue fighting for justice and raising our voices until we are heard.

These are the **points of unity**, which hold together the purpose of this important march:

► **We demand an end to profiling, harassment and brutality at the hands of the police.** Like many other oppressed communities TGNC people are targeted, profiled and brutalized by the police. The New York Anti-Violence Project reports that trans women are 2.9 percent more likely to experience police violence than all other people reporting violence.

We are in solidarity with FIERCE and their campaign to counter the displacement and criminalization of LGBTQ youth of color. We support legislation that would stop police and prosecutors from using possession of condoms as evidence of “criminal activity.” We oppose Speaker Christine Quinn’s call for increased policing in Chelsea and the Village, recognizing that policing doesn’t end hate violence against LGBTSTGNC people. We demand an end to the discriminatory “Stop and Frisk” and other “Broken Windows” practices of the [New York Police Department].

► **We demand justice for the many TGNC POC who have been beaten, assaulted, raped and murdered.** These incidents continue to be silenced or misclassified. Instead of disrespecting the identities of TGNC POC, we call for media to address individuals by their preferred names and pronouns. The police and the media continue to criminalize us even when we try to defend ourselves.

We know through AVP’s Hate Crime Report that 53.8 percent of hate crime murder victims are trans women of color. Hate crime laws will not solve the problem but will give increased power to the state to put more people in jail. Instead we call for a unified effort for all of us to look deeper into the root causes of why these incidents happen. In striving for social justice we seek to find ways of holding people accountable and coming to a joint understanding of how we can make our communities safer.

► **We demand access to restrooms without fear of harassment or brutality.** Far too many TGNC POC have faced harassment, violence and denial of usage of restrooms across New York City. We call for access to restrooms that match our gender identity and gender expression, and the development of gen-

der-neutral restrooms, as well as accountability for staff and patrons of both private and public spaces when we face discrimination and abuse.

► **We demand the full legalization of all immigrants. We stand in solidarity with Indigenous-identified Two-Spirit people and the sovereignty of the First Nations,** on whose land we now see the U.S. attempt to enforce arbitrary borders.

TGNC POC people deserve the right to access competent and respectful immigration services. We demand that the consulates of all countries respect and honor our identities and issue passports and other documentation that accurately reflect who we are.

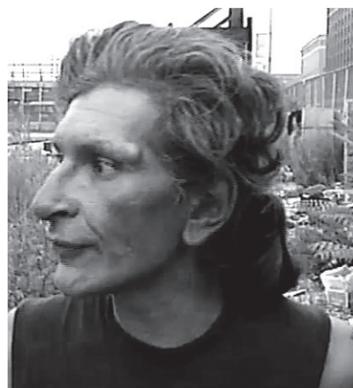
► **We oppose the Secure Communities program, the guest worker program, the Real ID Act,** enforcement provisions to build more walls and give greater powers to the Department of Homeland Security, increased barriers for asylum seekers, and other anti-immigrant policies.

► **We are in solidarity with all prisoners, especially the many TGNC POC people behind the walls.** We call attention to the under-reported accounts of violence and rape that our community faces at the hands of correction officers and other prisoners, in psychiatric facilities and group homes. We demand an end to the torture and discrimination TGNC POC prisoners face. We demand that all TGNC POC prisoners receive competent and respectful health care.

We oppose the continued growth of the prison-industrial complex that continues to target our communities, yet we recognize that TGNC POC people need access to services and facilities that lessen our vulnerability to violence within the present jails and prisons. We call attention to the criminal injustice system that increasingly puts POC, immigrants, people with disabilities, TGNC POC and poor people behind bars — criminalizing our communities and our lives.

► **We oppose the U.S. “War on Terrorism,”** an excuse to legitimize the expansion of the U.S. as an imperial superpower and to separate our communities by fostering feelings of hate, xenophobia and violence. We demand the immediate removal of all U.S. troops from all countries under occupation and demand an end to the use of U.S. dollars to cultivate and sponsor wars against people in the U.S. and abroad.

► **We demand accessible, respectful and comprehensive health care.** TGNC POC people deserve the right to access quality health care and be treated with dignity



Transgender activist, Sylvia Rivera.

and respect while receiving necessary care. We demand that health care providers and insurance providers acknowledge this right and provide this service without bias and discrimination.

► **We demand safety while utilizing public transportation.** We celebrate that due to a court ruling, TGNC POC are now protected while utilizing public transportation in NYC and can take action against the MTA (NYC’s public transportation system) if its employees use discriminatory language. TGNC POC utilize the MTA daily and should be addressed by their preferred pronoun, should not be targeted by employees or harassed by other customers. We call on the MTA to ensure the safety not only of TGNC POC but of women, children and all riders.

► **We demand that all people receiving public assistance be treated with respect and dignity.** We are in solidarity with all people living on public assistance. We celebrate that the Human Resources Administration, the NYC welfare agency, passed the procedure for serving TGNC clients and approved a community-developed training curriculum. But we call for full implementation of the procedure, including culturally competent trainings for all employees that does not put the burden of education on the TGNC POC community.

► **We demand access to respectful and safe housing.** A disproportionate number of TGNC POC have been or are currently homeless, and experience violence and discrimination when trying to access shelters and housing programs. We are in solidarity with Queers for Economic Justice in their demand that all [Department of Homeless Services] shelters provide adequate trans sensitivity trainings for all personnel and enforce clear non-discrimination policies that respect the dignity and safety of all homeless people.

► **We demand that TGNC POC people have equal access to employment and education opportunities.** We are outraged by the high numbers of TGNC POC who are unemployed. Few TGNC POC have access to opportunities for learning in a safe school environment. TGNC POC demand that all employers and educational institutions implement non-discrimination policies that respect the rights of all workers and students and that they comply with the NYC Human Rights Law that prohibits discrimination against gender identity and expression.

We commemorate the memory of Deja Kelis Edwards and the many brave souls we have lost, who have struggled and lived their lives fearlessly, being true to who they were. They keep the fire of struggle burning within all of us. □

LGBTQ people need JOBS!

when asked if they had ever lost a job due to bias by race.

In a 2012 study, the Center for American Progress reported that transgender people are twice as likely as the general population to make less than \$10,000 per year. (transequality.org) Additionally, a 2011 Williams Institute study showed that one in five TGNC people are homeless, and that one in 10 have been denied or evicted from housing due to their gender nonconformity. (williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu)

Most impacted by the economic crisis are LGBTQ young people, who experience not only ageism but anti-LGBTQ violence within their families, in school and

by the police. This makes it even more difficult for them to have the level of stability needed to finish school or secure jobs. According to the Williams Institute study, it is estimated that between 20 percent and 40 percent of the more than 1.6 million homeless youth in the U.S. are LGBTQ-identified.

Not only do these studies rip to shreds the “gay affluence myth,” but they also show how the fight against racism, sexism, ageism and LGBTQ oppression is intricately linked to the struggle for jobs, affordable housing, health care and education.

The decades of struggle led by LGBTQ

people and their supporters for the 1,138 economic rights that come with marriage equality, or for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, a federal law that would ban job discrimination against LGBTQ people, are just two examples of this. It was the years of struggle to build a movement that brought masses of LGBTQ people and their supporters into the streets that forced President Barack Obama and — with a ruling due this last week of June — the U.S. Supreme Court to finally make marriage equality rights a national issue.

This is a just one part of the long and proud history of LGBTQ peoples, who have been active and leaders in every

working-class and progressive struggle. This proud history led to the rebellions of poor and working-class trans and gay people, especially people of color, at Compton’s Cafeteria in San Francisco in 1966 and at the Stonewall Inn in New York in 1969. And these rebellions led to the building of LGBTQ Pride marches and the movements for social justice that we have today.

It is this same spirit of fightback that will liberate all working and poor people from all the injustices of capitalist greed and finally win the economic justice and social change that we truly need and want. □

WW COMMENTARY

Chokwe Lumumba victory: A blow against racism

By Larry Hales

Excerpted from a talk given at a June 14 Workers World Party forum in New York. Hales is a WW contributing editor and a People's Power Assembly Movement organizer. Read the entire article at workers.org.

Elections, or “universal suffrage is thus the gauge of the maturity of the working class.” Fredericks Engels wrote these words, which remain true today, in his 1884 groundbreaking book, “The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.” Engels states further, “It [universal suffrage] cannot and never will be anything more in the modern state; but that is enough,” and this, too, is true.

The recent Jackson, Miss., mayoral election victory of outgoing Black City Councilperson Chokwe Lumumba provides an opportunity for revolutionaries and progressive people not only to analyze what the victory means for Jackson, the Black Belt South, and all oppressed peoples in general, but also raises the specter of the need to defend Lumumba and the people of Jackson, a city that is 80 percent Black, from right-wing reaction.

Lumumba is a long-time revolutionary Black nationalist; an attorney for freedom fighter, Assata Shakur; the former second vice-president of the Republic of New Afrika; and the co-founder of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement.

Jackson, Miss., epitomizes the entire history of the U.S. and the seed for development of U.S. capital. This history includes the war against the Native people of the Mississippi area — Choctaw, Chickasaw, Tunica-Biloxi, Natchez and others — by the Spaniards, the French, the British, and then by the U.S. colonialists, to the brutality of forced removal and slavery followed by the crushed hopes of Black people due to the counterrevolutionary compromise. Soon afterwards came the removal of Union troops from the South, which brought an abrupt end to Radical Reconstruction in 1877, resulting in an incomplete bourgeois revolution. Black people in the former slave states saw their democratic rights violently denied by fascistic paramilitaries formed by former Confederate soldiers and officers who were allowed to return to the South with their weaponry.

The short period of Reconstruction saw many Black farmers procure land to develop, including in Mississippi. This development arose from the sharecropping system, a step above chattel slavery and

existed until the major battles of the Civil Rights era.

Sharecropping expanded even more after the depression of 1893, brought on by overproduction of farming in the South, because of the breakup of large plantations, and in the Midwest but also rapid capitalist growth of manufacturing primarily in the North.

Black and white farmers lost their farms, but in the South the political superstructure had enshrined racist Jim Crow as the law of the land with the infamous U.S. Supreme Court Plessy v. Ferguson ruling in 1898. Black people were not only disenfranchised from voting in the South by the use of literacy tests and poll taxes but were forced to live under apartheid conditions in the North and South.

The Black Codes that were adopted and written into the constitutions of all the former slave-holding states also declared that a Black person, arrested for not being able to prove employment, or for not having money in his/her pocket or other arbitrary reasons, could be sentenced to work for white landowners for free. It was slavery under another name. Not even Black children were exempt from the racist laws.

Lynchings forced migration

The white paramilitaries like the Klu Klux Klan, the Red Shirts and later the White Citizens Councils and the John Birch Society — co-founded by Fred Koch, of Koch Industries and father to Charles and David Koch, who helped bankroll the Tea Party movement and Americans for Prosperity — terrorized and murdered thousands of Black people. These lynchings deepened the disenfranchisement of Black people.

Official records say that 3,437 lynchings of Black people occurred between 1882 and 1951. In 1892 alone, there were 161 Black people lynched. Many have felt that the number was far too low because of the criteria set for determining if a person was lynched. One of the criteria was that three or more persons be found to be involved.

According to Ben Chaney, brother of slain Civil Rights organizer James Chaney, while investigators were looking for the bodies of his brother, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, nine other bodies were found in the same earthen dam.

Julius Eric Thompson wrote in “Lynchings in Mississippi: A history 1865-1965” that nearly one in 10 lynchings occurred in Mississippi and that there were more



Larry Hales

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

than 500 total. Most, he says, resulted in no convictions and in many there was not even a trial.

The effect of such a terrorist campaign, along with scant economic opportunities and social services, led to the first mass migration of Black people before World War I from the South to the North, not only to escape the violence and disenfranchisement but to secure jobs in the manufacturing sector in the North.

Twenty-six rebellions of enslaved Black people have been recorded to have occurred in Mississippi. Black people participated in the rebellion of Indigenous people led by the Natchez nation in 1731, and orchestrated slowdowns and work stoppages. There were some instances of slave masters being killed.

This kind of militant resistance was carried forth by the Deacons for Defense and Justice, which had chapters in Mississippi, during the 1960s, to the brilliant Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee organizer and Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party delegate, Fannie Lou Hamer, who went to the 1964 Democratic Party convention in Atlantic City demanding the right to representation for the Black masses in Mississippi.

The South, in relation to the Northern part of the U.S., is, overall, a superexploited region. Some Southern states, even in the Southwest, have right-to-work laws and workers there are generally paid significantly less and denied the right to collective bargaining.

Many auto manufacturers have located plants in the Black Belt region and in Mississippi specifically. Nissan and Toyota both have factories in Mississippi, including Nissan's Canton plant, which employs more than 3,000 workers.

According to a Mississippi State University 2010 report, more than 140,000 workers are employed in manufacturing in the state.

Other states in the Black Belt region have seen similar growth. Manufacturing has been greatly contracted in the former industrial belt, and the workers that felt it the sharpest were Black. This has caused a migration of Black workers back to the Southeastern region.

Even before the current capitalist crisis began in late 2007, the areas that saw the largest growth in Black population were in the South. This has been due not only to increased deindustrialization in areas that had and still have numerically predominant Black populations, but also because of gentrification, an intensification of police brutality and general repression in Black communities.

In 2012, eight of the 10 poorest states were in the Southeast and the poorest is Mississippi, where the per capita income is less than half of the national average. The state also ranks near the bottom in education, health care and has one of the



Chokwe Lumumba

highest unemployment rates in the country, especially amongst Black people. In Jackson, 36 percent live below poverty and 10 percent live below 50 percent of the poverty rate.

The state of Mississippi is ranked third from the bottom on the U.S. Human Development Index.

Lumumba election: call for people's power

The conditions for a movement in Mississippi have grown overripe and putrid. Though there might not necessarily yet be throngs in the streets in Mississippi, the Lumumba election is an indication of the maturity of the oppressed Black working class in Jackson. It also shows the consistency of the political work done there by the organizational and political forms that guided the popular program of Lumumba.

The Jackson People's Assembly grew out of the struggle for justice for the victims of the prevailing conditions before and after hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Lumumba's political history did not scare away voters, nor did the bold and progressive Jackson Plan, which is reminiscent of the Republic of New Afrika's program of the 1960s, calling for the establishment of an independent Black-led government in six former confederate states.

Though Lumumba came under vicious attack by the right wing for his history and militancy, it had little sway as he was elected with 87 percent of the vote in the general election.

Upon his win, Mayor-elect Lumumba questioned the validity of the anti-Indigenous Columbus Day holiday, gave an interview in support of Assata Shakur and highlighted the **Jackson Plan: A Struggle for Self-Determination, Participatory Democracy and Economic Justice**. The plan's primary features include:

- Building People's Assemblies
- Building a Network of Progressive Political Candidates
- Building a broad-based Solidarity Economy

It is difficult to know how things will develop. There are many factors to contend with, but the people of Jackson have made their choice. The bold initiatives laid out by the Jackson People's Assemblies come from the historical experience of Black people in this country and in particular in Mississippi.

It is the duty of progressives and revolutionaries to defend the process unfolding in Jackson and anywhere else it might spread. It signifies that there are sectors that are ready to struggle and fight in their own interest and are using the electoral arena to choose people who represent their aspirations.

This is not revolution but part of the struggle to empower oppressed and working people and combat the dominance of the twin capitalist parties, Democrats and Republicans, that have a virtual monopoly over the electoral arena.

The assembly movement is growing. The win by Chokwe Lumumba is evidence of the significance and the power it has and can have. □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead.

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes

Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance Leilani Dowell

The Struggle for Socialism Is Key Monica Moorehead

Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights

Imani Henry

Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice! Saladin Muhammad

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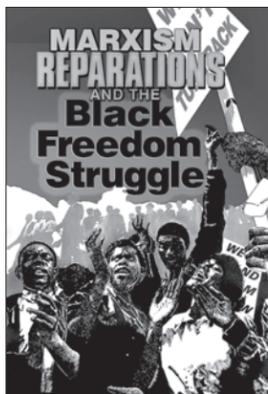
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Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions Pat Chin

Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping and Segregation Consuela Lee



GRAPHIC BY SAHU BARRON

Available at Amazon and other bookstores around the country.

Surprise mass upsurge shakes up Brazil

Continued from page 1

ple support the protests. The strength of the protests already led to the cancellation of the planned rate hikes in Sao Paulo and other cities. This concession led, however, not to the suspension of the protests, but to their intensification and the addition of other demands. The knowledge that the people demonstrating in the streets together can achieve the changes they want, need and deserve supported this growth in confidence.

Most leftist political parties, trade unions and social movements such as the Landless Movement (MST), those representing Afro-Brazilians, LGBTQ, women, youth, Via Campesina and many others have joined the mobilizations called by MPL and other spontaneous demonstrations. All these movements in turn have increased demands for a more democratic Brazil, more just, equal and leading to socialism — something that was not on the Workers' Party (PT) government's agenda.

An important statement of the majority in the movements in struggle is that they are not against current President Dilma Rousseff, but they want this government to respond to the needs of the people and not to the interests of the oligarchs and corporations.

Right wing butts in

Globo Network is one of the largest and most powerful media companies in Latin America. It is allied with the right-wing opposition to the Workers' Party government of former President Ignacio Lula da Silva and current President Rousseff. It and other corporate media outlets have begun to intervene in the demonstrations, imposing slogans and demands against Rousseff and the PT government.

Although the PT government has not proclaimed socialism as a goal — as have the countries in the ALBA alliance (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America) — it has carried out some reforms to improve the conditions of the poor in Brazil; however, these have been insufficient. And while this government is not as neoliberal — that is, committed to privatization and cutting government programs, etc. — as the prior rightist governments were, its reforms have not changed the class basis of economic power in Brazil. Now the PT is at a crossroad between ruling "against the people or for the people," as many in the movements put it.

The rightist forces, seeing the success of the calls to action and without a prospect of winning in the 2014 presidential election against the PT and restoring full neoliberal politics — which would include revoking benefits for the very poor, expanding privatization and having closer cooperation with U.S. imperialism — began to intervene in the demonstrations. The Confederation of Workers of Brazil (CTB) has explained this in a widely circulated statement:

"Certainly, it was not for the sake of democracy or love for the people that the pro-coup media, led by the Globo Network, have been helping to convene the demonstrations and at the same time instigating popular hatred against political parties, politics in general, social movement organizations, governments and institutions. The neoliberal right, repeatedly defeated at the polls, wants to fish in murky waters, manipulating the spontaneous movement of the masses at a time when this has neither a clear path nor direction." (Portalctb.org.br)

For this reason, a part of the move-



Police attacked Brazil's opening Cup match protests leaving 39 people injured.



Brazil makes up almost half of South America in area and population, now nearly 200 million. Brazilians demonstrated in cities all over this vast country.

ment, including the MPL, chose not to call any demonstrations for several days in order to establish clearly the basis for subsequent calls and the best way to proceed.

Response of Rousseff gov't

President Rousseff has responded to the demonstrations with the aim of engaging the movements in struggle in dialogue. She has pledged to continue to meet their demands and to improve public services.

She called for a "Great Covenant," including the state governors, mayors and demonstration leaders. This "covenant" would be based on three pillars: the development of a national plan for urban mobility that favors public transport, the allocation of all oil royalties toward education, and recruitment of foreign doctors to expand the healthcare system — which would include doctors from Cuba.

To move toward this goal she convened meetings for the afternoon of June 24 and the morning of June 25. She plans to meet first with the MPL, then with governors and mayors, and on June 25 with the labor union federations.

The struggle continues

Meanwhile, beyond any doubt, the struggle continues. Workers World-Mun-

do Obrero was able to talk with two leaders of the CTB on the afternoon of June 24 to get a better idea of the situation: Humberto Martins, adviser to the president of the CTB, who was in Sao Paulo, and Joao Batista, from the Department of International Relations, who had just arrived in Rio de Janeiro. The CTB is part of the broad group of organizations and unions that joined the calls from the start.

It is important to note that sectors of the left have continued mobilizing, despite the call of the MPL and other groups to suspend mobilizations for a few days due to infiltration by the right, people who in many cases were neo-fascists. In this regard, the CTB issued a declaration, mentioned above, entitled "Right-wing infiltration seeks to manipulate popular demonstrations." The last two paragraphs read:

"Social problems in Brazil, some of them secular, are gigantic, and despite the progress made in the last 10 years, they demand an urgent solution. This is the reading we must make of the sentiment of this popular revolt. The trade union movement must not leave the streets nor abdicate from the struggle, because only through mobilization and struggle will we be able to move toward a

new national project of development with sovereignty, democracy and recognition of the value of work. But we must not be accomplices or play the game of the pro-coup media.

"It is our obligation to alert the working class to the risk of a retreat and fight to expose and defeat the forces of the right that are dedicated to manipulating and undermining the spontaneous movement of our people for a better Brazil, with more democracy, equality and justice." (portalctb.org.br)

Both leaders stated to WW-MO the importance of the meeting of leftist organizations on June 21, in which the CTB took part. This meeting established the unity of action of important sectors of the Brazilian left. At that meeting, 76 organizations, including the categories mentioned above that represent a wide range of Brazilian progressive forces, assessed the situation of the demonstrations and their role within them.

Batista added that there have been various calls for demonstrations around the country this week, yet the most important fact is the unity of action accomplished at the June 21 meeting.

Details of the interviews will be covered in a later article. □

Solidarity with Manning, Snowden

Special to Workers World

Progressives and anti-imperialists in Berlin, Germany, demonstrated while U.S. President Barack Obama was visiting there June 17, carrying a big banner: "Against war, repression and racism." The following is an excerpt from a statement read to the audience:

"On the occasion of President Barack Obama's visit to Berlin, our demonstration protesting U.S. government policies approved the following declaration of solidarity with Bradley Manning, Edward Snowden and all whistleblowers:

"Manning and Snowden took on enormous personal risks to inform world public opinion of the abuse of power and



CREDIT: UWE HIKSCH

the crimes of the U.S. government. They brought to light what the U.S. government had sought to keep secret and cover

up. We would like to express to them our deepest gratitude and our full solidarity." □

WW salutes LGBTQ heroes B. Manning & CeCe McDonald

Pride annually honors and commemorates the 1969 Stonewall rebellion, when lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, primarily people of color, fought back against police brutality and harassment of LGBT communities. When police attempted to raid the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in the Greenwich Village area of Manhattan in New York City, bar patrons and people on the streets refused to comply and fought back, forcing the cops to barricade themselves in the bar itself. The rebellion continued for several nights and later, along with earlier struggles of LGBTQ people throughout the country, fostered a militant movement that demanded LGBTQ rights.

This year, Workers World salutes two LGBTQ heroes who have continued in the legacy of the rebellions against sexual and gender oppression by standing proud and fighting attacks against our class. Pfc. B. Manning released documents and videos that exposed U.S. imperialism's war crimes and the U.S. government's support of corrupt regimes around the world. For Manning's efforts — in combating real terrorism committed under the guise of the “war on terror” — the Pentagon imprisoned this hero. Manning has suffered horrific conditions of torture and solitary confinement within the prison walls.

Our support of Manning this year is also in solidarity with those who protest

the San Francisco Pride Board's decision to reject Manning's prior selection as grand marshal of this year's Pride parade there (see workers.org for fuller coverage of this struggle). Despite this rejection, a contingent will march at San Francisco Pride to salute Manning. And marching with them will be Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers in 1971 in order to expose the false pretext for escalating the U.S. war against Vietnam.

Our other hero is CeCe McDonald, a young African-American transwoman who defended herself and her friends from a racist, bigoted attack by a group of white thugs in Minneapolis. One of her attackers, who had a swastika tattooed on his body, ended up dead in the melee. Yet rather than charging the racists for initiating a despicable attack against LGBTQ people of color, the U.S. “justice” system instead imprisoned McDonald for the killing.

Workers World always asserts the right of any oppressed people to defend themselves, but a recent increase in violence against LGBTQ people makes the right to self-defense all the more urgent and necessary. People like CeCe McDonald, who not only defended herself but also the loved ones around her, are truly freedom fighters.

We say: Free CeCe McDonald! Free B. Manning! Stonewall Means Fight Back! □

SUPPORT WW:

A voice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer rights

Ever since the Stonewall Rebellion erupted on June 28, 1969, Workers World has covered the global struggle to end bigotry against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities and all forms of anti-LGBTQ discrimination, persecution and violence.

WW has defended the rights of LGBTQ people in the U.S. by protesting Anita Bryant's vicious campaign against equal legal protection in the 1970s; by heralding the struggle for comprehensive medical treatment and care for people with HIV/AIDS in the 1980s; by promoting the movement to end state laws banning gay sex and against the Defense of Marriage Act in the 1990s; and by demanding equal marriage and family rights in the 21st century.

In the month of May, for instance, WW reported on the huge outpouring of protest on May 20 in New York City after the vicious murder of Mark Carson, a proud gay African-American man, on a Greenwich Village street not far from the Stonewall Rebellion. And in the May 30 issue, WW reported on the hate-crime murders of three African-American transwomen in Baltimore; Oak Ridge, Fla.; and Cleveland. Our coverage of Cemia “CeCe” Dove's murder exposed the disrespect and insensitivity of the Cleveland press.

WW has consistently backed up our activist coverage with a Marxist analysis of LGBTQ oppression. In the early 1970s, WW ran a series of articles with the first modern-day Marxist analysis of gay oppression, written by WW contributor, Bob McCubbin. That soon led to publication of his book, “The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist Analy-

sis.” In anticipation of Supreme Court decisions in June, McCubbin has started a new series, entitled, “A Brief History of ‘Marriage.’”

Then in the 1990s, WW managing editor and globally recognized transgender warrior, Leslie Feinberg, wrote a series of 25 articles in WW, which were then published as “Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba,” followed by the series “Lavender & Red,” about socialism and the LGBTQ struggle.

In 1993, WW articles were serialized into a pamphlet, “Armed & dangerous: Why the Pentagon declared war on lesbians and gays.” In it, writer Rebeca Toledo described how the military brass try to prevent that solidarity between LGBTQ and straight people that “can pose the ultimate threat to capitalism.”

In 2012, Feinberg wrote another series of articles in defense of African-American transgender woman, CeCe McDonald, who was charged with manslaughter after she defended herself from a racist, brutal, bigoted attack.

When it comes to reporting on LGBTQ issues and struggles, Workers World newspaper is light-years removed from the big-business press. That's because we don't have to toady to big-business advertising or pander to the backward ideology of the 1%. We rely on support from our readers like you to bring working-class truth into the streets to build the struggles:

- To challenge racist police terror and mass incarceration targeting people of color — Black, Latino/a, Indigenous, Arab, Muslim, Asian and the undocumented
- To fight for the rights of women and lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer communities — from reproductive justice to same-sex marriage
- To save and expand our schools, hospitals, post offices, libraries, public services and facilities for people with disabilities
- To demand a federal program to create jobs or income for all, with a vitally needed pay increase for low-wage workers
- To oppose imperialist wars and occupations
- To save the environment and block destructive capitalist ventures like fracking
- To support the People's Power Assembly movement
- To fight for a socialist future to meet people's needs

We're looking forward to the challenges ahead. But we need your help. We moved our office at the beginning of the year, and we're still recovering from that strain on our resources. Please give as generously as you can.

Contribute to Workers World because you care about the struggle to end capitalism. Give because you want to help build a workers' world.

You can become a member of the Supporter Program by contributing a lump sum of \$75, \$100, \$300 or more. Or send a monthly donation starting with as little as \$6, \$10 or \$25.

Send your check made out to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Include your address, email and phone number, and let us know if we can include you in our 2013 Supporter Program.

Forum addresses war threat to Syria and Iran

By Joyce Chediak
New York

An extraordinary anti-war forum entitled “Syria & Iran: The Next War?” was held here June 10 at the Solidarity Center. It featured anti-war veterans from the Iranian, Israeli and U.S. militaries, and was organized by United for Peace and Justice, Veterans For Peace and the U.S. Peace Council. The International Action Center hosted the meeting and IAC co-founder Sara Flounders chaired. All the speakers were members of the VFP Iran Working Group.

Michael Kramer, secretary of VFP Chapter 021-Northern New Jersey, was in the Israeli Defense Forces during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. His personal experiences as a settler and combatant led him to reassess his views on Zionism and the role of the U.S. in the Middle East. He is now a supporter of Palestinian self-determination, the right of return of all Palestinians to their homeland and the Arab cause for independence and self-determination, and an IAC volunteer.

Kramer explained that while the U.S. government and the establishment media paint Iran as a threat, the reality is that the Pentagon is threatening Iran. He detailed U.S. military deployments surrounding Iran, including nuclear-armed U.S. aircraft carrier groups in the Per-

sian Gulf, the U.S. Navy 5th Fleet based in Bahrain, and Camp Doha, a U.S. base in Kuwait about 100 miles from Iran's oil producing areas.

He described Israel as an “unsinkable aircraft carrier” for the Pentagon and an enforcer of U.S. interests in the Middle East.

Faraz Azad, an American-Iranian living in the U.S., served in the Iranian Air Force from 1971 to 1973. Faraz's activism dates to his 1973 arrival in the U.S., first as a student activist and then as a member of the National Board of the U.S. Peace Council. He is the chair of VFP's Iran Working Group, organizational secretary of the U.S. Peace Council, co-chair of Iran Pledge of Resistance, and nongovernmental organization representative of the World Peace Council at the United Nations.

Faraz urged the political movement in the U.S. to reach beyond itself to educate others on the nature of imperialism, on how and why the U.S. is threatening Syria and Iran, and on how U.S. wars abroad hurt people in the U.S. He challenged groups and individuals to leave their comfort zones and find ways to work together to stop this war drive.

Michael T. McPhearson, who is African-American and originally from Fayetteville, N.C., was a field artillery officer in the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division during the 1991 Gulf War. He is the na-

tional coordinator for United For Peace and Justice and a national board member as well as a former executive director of Veterans For Peace. He is a member of Military Families Speak Out, works closely with the Newark, N.J., based People's Organization for Progress and publishes the www.mcphearsonreport.com, expressing his views on war and peace, politics, human rights, race and other things.

McPhearson addressed obstacles the political movement must surmount in order to reach the public. He exposed some of the underlying myths that obscure the Pentagon's predatory role abroad. These include the notion that the U.S. government is abroad to spread democracy and to protect people in the U.S. from terrorist attacks. He proposed fighting the demonization of the leaders and people of the Middle East through multinational presentations that include and present Arab and Iranian people as co-thinkers and neighbors.

A serious discussion followed on ways to expand and deepen anti-war sentiment. For example, a trade unionist raised ideas on how to bring an anti-war perspective to his constituency. Veterans discussed reaching out to military-age youth to stop enlistments.

The VFP Iran Working Group is available to speak. Contact faraz@vfp-iwg.org. □

Veterans of Kenya's liberation battles reject British offer as incomplete

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

Although the British government offered a formal apology and modest compensation for the crimes committed against the people of Kenya during the war of independence between 1952 and 1960, many of the veterans of the struggle say that the existing list of victims is not complete.

Former members of the Kenyan Land and Freedom Army, popularly known as the Mau Mau, along with others who were imprisoned and tortured beginning in 1952, filed legal action in British courts demanding compensation for their suffering.

Nonetheless, 7,000 veterans are demanding that the current settlement plans be halted and a new headcount be conducted. The rejection of the British offer is based upon the fact that local lawyers, representatives of the Kenyan Human Rights Commission and British officials agreed to the settlement on June 1 at the Panafric Hotel in Nairobi without consulting veterans from at least one region of this East African state.

Veterans from Nyeri County said they were not included in the settlement and held a press conference on June 9 at Ruring'u, near Nyeri town. These claims illustrate the complications that the British government may face in their attempts to settle this case and prevent it from moving forward in the courts.

KLFA veteran Captain Nderitu Wambugu stated, "I doubt whether we freedom fighters from Nyeri County have been included. The Githu Kahengeri-led group did not represent the interests of genuine freedom fighters." (Kenyan Star, June 10)

Wambugu said that the money offered by the British was not nearly enough. His position seems to be supported by two Kenyan Members of Parliament, Mathira constituency Peter Weru and his Kieni colleague, James Mathenge Keini Kega.

These legislators emphasized that the offer was a big joke and that the veterans and victims should be paid 100 times more than what has been offered. They say that 20 million Kenyans have been impacted by British atrocities which imposed suffering on thousands of families and all their descendants.

"Some families are still living in colonial villages. They should be recognized and be given land to live a decent life," said Weru in the same article.

Politics of the settlement offer

British Foreign Secretary William Hague on June 6 expressed "deep regret" at what the colonial government did to suppress the revolt that erupted in 1952. That resulted in the killing of thousands of Kenyans and the imprisonment of about 160,000 others in detention camps. Kenya was eventually granted independence from Britain in 1963.

The British foreign office said in a May 2013 statement that "there should be a debate about the past. It is an enduring feature of our democracy that we are willing to learn from our history. ... We understand the pain and grievance felt by those, on all sides, who were involved in the divisive and bloody events of the Emergency period in Kenya."

Such a statement attempts to minimize the deliberate role by London during this period to crush an anti-colonial revolt that was sparked by the exploitative and oppressive conditions the Kenyan people were subjected to for decades.

The announcement of the settlement offer indicated that some \$US30.8 million would be paid to more than 5,200 victims. The lawyers for the claimants said that an agreement had been reached without disclosing the sum.

Divided among the designated victims, the sums paid to individuals would be less than \$US6,000 per person. These atrocities were committed beginning more than 60 years ago, and many of those involved are already deceased.

"[The negotiations] have included everybody with sufficient evidence of torture. And that number is about 5,200," Kenyan lawyer Paul Muite said. (newstimesafrica.com, June 10)

This settlement grew out of negotiations that began after an October British High Court decision that three victims of the colonial atrocities would be allowed

to pursue their claims in the courts. They demanded compensation for false imprisonment, beatings, torture, rape and castration.

The claimants, Paulo Muoka Nzili, Wambugu Wa Nyingi and Jane Muthoni, initiated the case, which gained international attention. The British government has never paid any compensation for their centuries-long subjugation of millions of peoples throughout the world through slavery and colonialism. A fourth claimant, Susan Ngondi, died before the settlement was announced.

The Kenyan Human Rights Commission said that at least 90,000 Africans died during the suppression of the anti-colonial revolt in the 1950s. The KHRC also says that some 160,000 were detained, where they were victims of torture resulting in many deaths.

These developments, involving the purported settlement of this chapter in Kenyan, African and British history, reveal the contradictions in such efforts. Whether the majority of Kenyans impacted by this horrendous episode in their history accept the legitimacy of the settlement remains to be seen.

Africans have a legitimate right to pursue reparations for their centuries of pain and suffering through European, African, North and South American slavery and colonialism. The imperialists should not be allowed to dismiss claims for reparations both inside and outside the legal system. □

GREECE

Protest hits closing of gov't radio, TV

By **G. Dunkel**

In the name of austerity and efficiency, the Greek government pulled the plug on its public radio and television service June 11 by cutting power to its antennas.

This abrupt and harsh measure cuts service, not only to millions of people in Greece, but also to the millions of Greek speakers abroad.

The reaction was almost immediate. Two days later unions called a one-day general strike and thousands of protesters came out to protest the closing at Hellenic Radio Television (ERT) headquartered in Athens. (inter.kke.gr) According to the BBC monitoring service, there were also major demonstrations in Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city, elsewhere in northern Greece, and

also in the Peloponnese.

ERT fills the same role in Greece as National Public Radio and Public Broadcasting Service do in the United States, or the British Broadcasting Company does in Britain.

The European Broadcasting Union, an association of all public broadcasting operations in Europe, points out that shutting down ERT is going to increase the Greek deficit, since ERT runs at a profit. L'Humanité, the newspaper of the French Communist Party, even published ERT's financial report.

Every time the radio-television service of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), called "902," runs a strike bulletin from the ERT workers, the Greek government kills the power to 902 transmitters.

The EBU, reacting to the Greek govern-

ment's charge of waste and corruption, points out that the 30 "consultants" the government ordered ERT to hire after that government came to power in June 2012 draw yearly salaries about the same as the total of all the rest of ERT's 2,656 employees. (L'Humanité, June 18)

Need for change in economy

During the past five years in Greece, austerity plans have cut wages and pensions 35 to 40 percent, increased taxes 25 percent and removed all sorts of worker protections, annulled union contracts, closed hospitals and turned off heat in schools. Overall unemployment is more than 27 percent; for those under 30, it is 62 percent. Thirty percent of the Greek people no longer have medical care, and a third of all Greeks live below the poverty line.

The Greek government of Prime Minister Antonis Samaras, the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank have imposed this situation so that country can make its debt payments. For these institutions, this is no catastrophe. They have what they want.

This attack on the ERT, given Greece's economic catastrophe and the abrupt, brutal fashion in which it was carried out, has strained the governing coalition which consists of New Democracy — whose leader Antonis Samaras is prime minister — the Panhellenic Socialist Party and the Democratic Left.

The Constitutional Court on June 18 ordered the government to restore power to ERT's antenna. As of June 22, the power was still off. □

Workers World Party launches workers.org/wwp

Workers World Party is pleased to unveil its new website, workers.org/wwp. This site features a variety of interesting and engaging materials, all from the perspective of a fighting, Marxist-Leninist, internationalist, working-class party that defends self-determination for oppressed peoples.

Articles on the site include the history of Workers World Party and its role in the fight against racism and national oppression; against sexism and women's oppression; against homophobia and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer oppression; workers' rights; against imperialist war and intervention; and more.

There is a section dedicated to political educational materials that contains videos and presentations on subjects ranging from Marxism and the environment to a commemoration of the Vietnamese struggle for liberation and their historic victory over U.S. imperialism, as well as selections from the party's own Marxist School of Theory and Struggle.

Each of the many Workers World Party branches throughout the country is available at the time of this initial launch. It will include historical Party documents, pamphlets and publications, many of which will be available in eBook form for downloading to eReader devices like smartphones, Nooks and

Kindles. A historical picture gallery spanning the party's 50+ years is also planned.

If you want to know more about how Workers World is building a workers' party that is dedicated to global solidarity and unity, organizing militant resistance in the many struggles, and does not hesitate to work with others to build the broadest mass actions possible, independent from the Democrats and Republicans, while promoting the struggle for socialism, visit the new site at workers.org/wwp. You can also learn how to join Workers World Party on this website.

— Paul Teitelbaum

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países uníos!

Qué pasa en Brasil?

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

24 de junio — Cuando el Movimiento Pase Libre (MPL) de Sao Paulo en Brasil inició la convocatoria por los medios sociales a una manifestación el jueves 6 de junio en repudio al alza del transporte público en esa ciudad, ni se imaginaba la fenomenal acogida y las repercusiones que tendría.

Las cinco mil personas que comenzaron la marcha hacia la Avenida Paulista, el centro financiero de Sao Paulo, se convirtió una semana después en una verdadera masa gigantesca de más de un millón de personas por todo el país que no solo acogieron la bandera del repudio a la subida del transporte público, sino que agregaron otras demandas.

Inicio de movilizaciones

El MPL surgió en el 2005 abogando por una tarifa gratis en el transporte público para los/as estudiantes, pero luego amplió su plataforma para incluir a todas las personas.

Ante el anuncio de que la ciudad de Sao Paulo aumentaría en 0,20 reales (aproximadamente 9 centavos USD) la tarifa, hicieron una convocatoria en su página de internet 'saopaulo.mpl.org.br' y por Facebook. Inicialmente se congregaron frente al Teatro Municipal y de allí marcharon a las calles del centro de la ciudad.

Fueron recibidas con violencia por la Policía Militar quien reprimiendo a los/as manifestantes no solo reforzaron la determinación de éstos/as a proseguir la lucha, sino que despertaron la solidaridad de millones de personas alrededor del país.

Las manifestaciones se multiplicaron de manera espontánea principalmente convocadas a través de los medios sociales como Facebook y Twitter. Sin una clara dirección. Aparte de Sao Paulo, cerca de 100 ciudades, incluyendo importantes ciudades como Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia y Belo Horizonte, realizaron protestas.

Las demandas añadidas eran entre otras, más presupuesto para la salud y la educación. Brasil ahora es la anfitriona de la Copa FIFA Confederaciones en preparación para el Mundial de Fútbol en 2014 y las Olimpiadas en el 2016. Las exigencias de gran parte del pueblo es que el dinero que se invierte en la promoción de los juegos y en la construcción de estadios y facilidades aledañas en diversas partes del país, debían utilizarse para mejorar los servicios de salud, vivienda, educación y transporte para el pueblo.

Estas demandas han resonado tanto, que encuestas realizadas en los últimos días señalan que un 75 por ciento del pueblo apoya las manifestaciones. La fuerza de estas manifestaciones llevó a la cancelación de la subida de la tarifa en Sao Paulo, así como también en otras ciudades que contemplaban un aumento. Esto ha llevado, no a la suspensión de las protestas, sino a una intensificación de ellas para lograr otras demandas, apoyadas por la certeza de que el pueblo unido manifestándose en las calles puede lograr los cambios que quiere, necesita y merece.

Al MPL y a las convocatorias espontáneas, se han sumado la mayoría de los partidos políticos de izquierda, sindicatos, movimientos sociales que incluyen



Rio de Janeiro

entre muchos otros al Movimiento Sin Tierra (MST), de afrobrasileños/as, LGBT, de mujeres, jóvenes, Vía Campesina, y muchos más. Todos estos movimientos a su vez han ampliado las demandas para un Brasil más democrático, más justo, igualitario e incluso hacia el camino al socialismo, algo que no estaba en la agenda del gobierno del PT.

Una importante declaración de la mayoría del movimiento en pie de lucha, es que no están en contra de la actual presidenta Dilma Rouseff; sino que quieren que su gobierno responda a las necesidades del pueblo y no a los intereses de los oligarcas y de las corporaciones.

La derecha interviene

Los medios corporativos, en particular la líder Red Globo, una de las empresas mediáticas más grandes y poderosas de Latinoamérica, aliada a la derecha opositora al gobierno del Partido del Trabajo del ex presidente Ignacio Lula da Silva, y ahora de Dilma Rouseff, en la última semana comenzó a intervenir en las manifestaciones, imponiendo consignas y demandas en contra de Rouseff y el gobierno del PT.

Pese a que el gobierno del PT no ha proclamado al socialismo como una meta como lo han hecho los países del ALBA, sí ha hecho algunas reformas, insuficientes claro está, para mejorar las condiciones del pueblo pobre brasileño. Y aunque no es netamente neoliberal —privatizaciones a granel, gobierno pequeño, etc.—, sin embargo, no ha afectado la base estructural del poder económico del Brasil. Ahora el PT está entre gobernar 'contra el pueblo o para el pueblo', como dicen muchos de los movimientos.

Al ver el éxito de las convocatorias, y porque la derecha siente que en las elecciones presidenciales del 2014 no tiene una real posibilidad de triunfar frente al PT para restablecer de pleno la política neoliberal— incluyendo la revocación de beneficios para los/as más pobres, ampliando la privatización y teniendo una cooperación más estrecha con el imperialismo estadounidense — comenzó esa intervención en las manifestaciones. Así lo declara la CTB, la Confederación de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras de Brasil en un comunicado ampliamente circulado: "Ciertamente no resulta por amor a la



Belo Horizonte

Brasil es una nación de casi 200 millones de habitantes. Más de 1,3 millones se manifiestan en decenas de ciudades de este grande país.



Rio de Janeiro

democracia o al pueblo que, los medios de comunicación golpistas, liderados por la Red Globo, han venido ayudando a convocar las manifestaciones al mismo tiempo en que instiga al odio popular contra los partidos políticos, la política en general, las organizaciones de los movimientos sociales, gobiernos e instituciones. La derecha neoliberal, reiteradamente derrotada en las urnas, quiere pescar en aguas turbias, manipulando al movimiento espontáneo de las masas en un momento en que este se encuentra sin rumbo ni dirección". (portalctb.org.br)

Por esta razón, una parte del movimiento, incluyendo al MPL, optó por no convocar movilizaciones por varios días para poder establecer cuáles serán las bases de las próximas convocatorias y el mejor camino a seguir.

Respuesta del gobierno de Dilma

La presidenta Dilma Rouseff ha respondido a las manifestaciones con ánimos de involucrar a los movimientos en lucha en un diálogo y se comprometió a continuar atendiendo sus demandas y a la mejora de los servicios públicos.

Convocó a un "Gran Pacto" a los gobernadores, alcaldes y a los/as líderes de las manifestaciones. Este "Pacto" estaría basado en 3 ejes: la elaboración de un plan nacional de movilidad urbana que privilegie el transporte colectivo, la asignación de la totalidad de las regalías petroleras a la educación y la contratación de médicos extranjeros para ampliar la atención del Sistema de Salud (incluyendo médicos de Cuba).

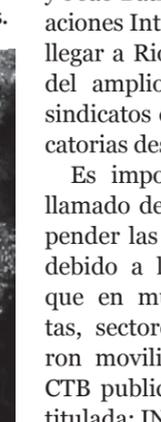
Hacia esta meta ha convocado reuniones para la tarde del lunes, 24 de junio y la mañana del martes 25. Primero se reunirá con el MPL, luego con los gobernadores y alcaldes, y el martes con las centrales obreras.



Belo Horizonte



Salvador



Rio de Janeiro

La lucha continúa

Mientras, la lucha verdaderamente continúa. Workers World-Mundo Obrero pudo conversar con dos dirigentes de la CTB en la tarde del lunes 24 de junio para tener una mejor idea de la situación. Humberto Martins, asesor de la Presidencia de la CTB quien se encontraba en Sao Paulo

y Joao Batista, del Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales quien acababa de llegar a Rio de Janeiro. La CTB es parte del amplio grupo de organizaciones y sindicatos que se adhirió a las convocatorias desde el inicio.

Es importante destacar que pese al llamado del MPL y otros grupos de suspender las movilizaciones por unos días debido a la infiltración de la derecha, que en muchos casos, eran neofascistas, sectores de la izquierda continuaron movilizándose. A este respecto, la CTB publicó la declaración antes citada titulada: INFILTRACIÓN de la DERECHA BUSCA MANIPULAR MANIFESTACIONES POPULARES que en sus últimos dos párrafos lee:

"Los problemas sociales en Brasil, algunos de ellos seculares, son gigantes y, a pesar de los avances registrados en los últimos 10 años, demandan una solución urgente. Esta es la lectura que debemos hacer del sentimiento de revuelta popular. El movimiento sindical no debe salir de las calles ni tampoco abdicar de la lucha, pues solo a través de la movilización y la lucha conseguiremos avanzar en dirección a un nuevo proyecto nacional de desarrollo con soberanía, democracia y valorización del trabajo. Pero no debemos ser cómplices ni jugar el juego de los medios de comunicación golpistas.

Es nuestra obligación alertar a la clase trabajadora de los riesgos del retroceso y luchar para desenmascarar y derrotar a las fuerzas de derecha que se dedican a manipular y desvirtuar el movimiento espontáneo de nuestro pueblo por un Brasil mejor, con más democracia, igualdad y justicia". (op cit: portalctb.org.br)

Ambos dirigentes le manifestaron a WW-MO la importancia de la reunión de organizaciones de izquierda, de la cual la CTB formó parte, celebrada el pasado viernes 21, donde se estableció la unidad de acción de importantes sectores de la izquierda brasileña. En esa reunión, 76 organizaciones, incluyendo las antes mencionadas que representan una amplia gama de las fuerzas progresistas brasileñas, evaluaron la situación de las movilizaciones y su actuación dentro de éstas.

Batista agregó que ha habido diversas convocatorias de movilizaciones alrededor del país para esta semana, siendo lo más importante la unidad de acción lograda por la antedicha reunión.

Los detalles de las entrevistas se dejarán para un artículo posterior.