



Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

workers.org

Dec. 5, 2013

Vol. 55, No. 48

\$1

Workers pack Boston hearing EXPOSE UNION BUSTERS

By Tony Murphy
Boston

If Veolia Transportation's union-busting crackdown on the United Steelworkers Local 8751 Boston school bus drivers' leadership was meant to intimidate the rank and file, it is having the opposite effect.

On Oct. 8, the company locked out the drivers after they held a legally protected protest of the company's many unfair labor practices. Since then, an escalating struggle between Veolia and the drivers' union has awakened the membership, whose majority Haitian and Cape Verdean workers have consistently turned out in the hundreds for raucous demonstrations, meetings and job actions.

The bosses at Veolia hoped that firing four of the union's leaders would put a chill on the union's militant activity. However, since the firings, the numbers at these actions have only gotten bigger.

This happened once again on Nov. 21 — when 300 drivers and their supporters packed Boston City Council chambers for a hearing called to investigate Veolia's breach of its vendor contract with the city.

Drivers sat in the aisles of the stadium-seating chamber and spilled into two overflow rooms. Boston City Councilor Charles Yancey, who called the hearing, commented that he had never seen so many people at a hearing.

The purpose of the hearing was to expose the fact that Veolia's contract with the city of Boston to manage the school bus system requires it to respect the terms and conditions of its contract with the school bus drivers' union and maintain "harmonious labor relations." Failure to do so means it is in breach of contract with the city.

Hearing recessed due to no-shows

The powerful turnout of the drivers stood in stark contrast to the absence of representatives of Veolia, Boston Public Schools and Boston's outgoing Mayor Thomas Menino. All of them were requested to be at the hearing by Councilor Yancey and Committee Chair Councilor Felix Arroyo, but they refused to attend.

These no-shows had, of course, been plenty involved in collaborating with Veolia to attack the union. The mayor held multiple press conferences saying the union's leaders should be fired, and BPS



Boston school bus drivers testify against Veolia's violations at Nov. 21 city council meeting.

WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE

made multiple rounds of robo-calls, day after day, falsely warning parents of an impending strike.

But they all evidently lost their nerve when faced with the prospect of sitting in a hearing across from hundreds of school bus drivers and their supporters from throughout the community.

Their absence did not go unnoticed by the elected officials who did attend the hearing — they included all Boston City Council members of color.

"I do not accept this letter," said Councilor Tito Jackson, gesturing to the mayor's letter explaining why he wasn't attending.

The failure of city officials and Veolia reps to attend added to the political momentum of the evening, which put the company and its city collaborators further on the defensive in the struggle to reinstate the fired leadership of the union.

In a show of support for the drivers, Yancey pointedly did not close the meeting, but recessed it. This signaled that the council's investigation into Veolia's contract with the city would continue — and so would pressure on the bosses, BPS and the mayor to show up at future meetings.

Union members and supporters speak out

Holding up large posters of Veolia executives locking the gates of the Freeport and Readville bus yards on Oct. 8, drivers used the hearing to ask key questions: Why was the notorious union-busting firm Veolia awarded the school bus contract by the

Continued on page 10

Honduras election bulletin

Nov. 25 — Following yesterday's national elections in Honduras, the Libre party's Xiomara Castro de Zelaya declared victory. Radio Globo and Globo TV, which have access to voting totals, confirmed that Libre won.

Nevertheless, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal announced that the National Party, which took over the government following the June 2009 coup, led the partial vote. The NP then claimed victory; the U.S. ambassador congratulated the NP.

Libre, the Liberal Party and the Anti-Corruption Party all called this result fraudulent. Former President Manuel Zelaya said today, "We [in Libre] will take every necessary step to secure the people's voice." (Telesur, Nov. 25)

Follow workers.org for updates.

See page 9

WORKERS' ASSEMBLIES & \$15 minimum wage struggle

2

NO JUSTICE! NO PEACE!

▶ Jesus Huerta

▶ Racist mascots must go

▶ Renisha McBride

▶ Protesting cops' racism

3

Free political prisoner

OSCAR LÓPEZ RIVERA

9

NO POLLUTION AGREEMENT at U.N. conference

10

WWP CONFERENCE TALKS

5-8

WW EDITORIAL

Significance of Nat'l Day of Mourning

The 44th commemoration of the National Day of Mourning on Nov. 28 in Plymouth, Mass., will mark 13,809 days of incarceration for Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier. The event will once again honor this heroic fighter for the rights of Indigenous and other oppressed peoples, unjustly imprisoned since 1976.

The so-called "Thanksgiving" holiday starkly reminds us of the centuries of atrocities committed against Native peoples, first by European colonizers and then by U.S. administrations. Indigenous lands stolen, cultures and languages under siege, bigotry, injustice and murderous violence

aimed at this country's original inhabitants: This is the real U.S. history, not the myths.

At the traditional National Day of Mourning ceremonies, Native speakers recount their true history, pay homage to their ancestors and tell of their efforts to survive under this oppressive system. They relate their struggles throughout the Americas.

They also celebrate their militant history, their continuing struggles for political, economic and social rights, and for recognition of their sovereignty and right to self-

Continued on page 10



Free Leonard Peltier!

SUBSCRIBE TO WORKERS WORLD

- 4 weeks trial \$4 1 year subscription \$30
- Sign me up for the WWP Supporter Program.

workers.org/articles/donate/supporters_/_

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Street _____

City / State / Zip _____

WORKERS WORLD

147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl, NY, NY 10011

workers.org

212.627.2994

\$15 minimum wage to class unity

Why build workers' assemblies

WORKERS WORLD
this week...

Talk given at the WWP conference by Sharon Black.

The new low-wage workers movement is really a movement in embryo form that is taking on the global problem of fighting low wages. In some parts of the world, like Bangladesh, the workers are way ahead. They have been engaging in revolts to raise the minimum wage.

There's a lot of debate going on about the Service Employees International Union and Fast Food Forward. Are they doing the right thing in their organizing drives? But I would submit that the biggest problem for the low-wage workers movement is arousing and engaging the entire working class, not just because it's so needed for its success but because a huge section of the working class is low wage.

The recent studies show that 50 percent of the working class makes less than \$15 an hour. People are poor! What Sam Marcy said in "High Tech, Low Pay," that capitalism has impoverished the working class, is now a full-blown global phenomenon.

The Workers' Assembly is a vehicle that can help us fight this phenomenon on an independent class basis. There were earlier forms. The Million Worker March was an example.

Uniting the working class as a class

Baltimore brought a wonderful delegation of people from the workers' assembly there.

We have a great delegation of American Federation of Government Employees workers. It's a myth that federal workers are well-paid and privileged. The truth is that a vast majority of them are poorly paid — they are mostly, Black, Latino/a and women. Why should they be fighting against government shutdowns and furloughs alone and isolated? Why shouldn't they stand together with the postal workers, who are fighting another form of austerity?

Look at the [Boston] school bus drivers. Why should a brave union like this stand alone against an international corporation with global tentacles around the world?

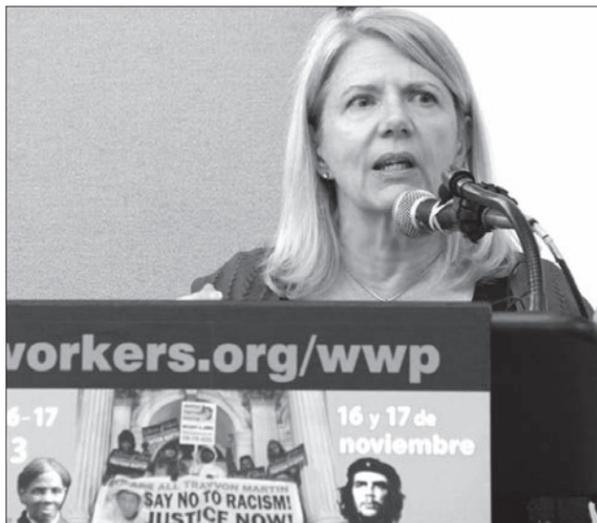
Why shouldn't the workers fight as an entire class on a global basis?

That is what a workers' assembly has the potential to do — to unite and elevate our demands on a political basis. We have not maximized this or fully succeeded, but it illuminates the potential for the assemblies.

Take the issue of police killings and mass incarceration. The union movement has finally begun to address this in small ways. A good resolution on mass incarceration was passed at the 2013 AFL-CIO convention [in Los Angeles]. This is something the working-class movement has to take on — not just the bread and butter issues, but also the important political and social issues like racism, mass incarceration and unemployment that affect the entire working class.

Organizing problems for this present period

I come from an older generation. When I was 18, I was able to get a job in a garment factory, later in an auto plant,



Sharon Black

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

and then for 17-plus years I worked at a food processing plant. The terrain which my generation struggled in, which could be described as the traditional union movement, was easier.

When I was younger, you could get up and shut the whole plant down. You could exercise working-class power. But it's much harder now for younger workers.

Capitalism at this stage has atomized workers in a way previously unheard of. Workers can be anywhere — in smaller workplaces, spread out. They could be in India or Los Angeles, in Burger King or hidden in a warehouse or working behind a computer. It makes it harder to organize.

It shows that you have to develop new tactics, new strategies and the workers' assembly can be one of them that enables the working class to come together and exert its power.

Jobless crisis

We are now in the greatest jobless capitalist recovery in history — a recovery that is for the bosses — and joblessness and misery for over 30 million people, most of them youth. This crisis is a departure from the past boom and bust cycles of capitalism, where workers returned to the economy when there was a recovery.

Young people are now facing a system where they may never work. It's not only true in this country — especially for the most oppressed youth — but for the entire world.

I am so glad that Larry Holmes raised the issue of a "Jobs, not jails" youth march. For a number of reasons, we didn't get a chance to raise a proposal like this to the national AFL-CIO convention. But it doesn't mean we can't revisit it. The unions have the resources, the buses and all that's needed to help the unemployed, underemployed and low wage youth.

While talking about the workers' assemblies, we need to take the union movement up on their call for inclusion with the community. We need to go to the state and city AFL-CIO councils and see where we can participate and where we can raise this proposal.

Sharon Black ended her remarks by calling on participants to not only build people's and workers' power, but explained the need to build Workers World Party. She also referred to the Cuban revolution's use of the thousands of workers' assemblies which provided working-class democracy to the workers. □

★ In the U.S.

- Workers pack Boston hearing, expose union busters. 1
- Why build workers' assemblies 2
- Latino youth dies in police custody 3
- More than 800 protest racist football team name 3
- Charges filed in killing of Renisha McBride 3
- Racist cops protested 3
- Right to abortion 4
- Saying no to low wages 4
- Detroit, Dec. 10: Stop the banksters 4
- 'No detentions, deportations of migrants' 4
- Larry Holmes on workers' movement in the making 5
- The Trayvon Generation: Youth speak truth to power 6
- The time is now to free Oscar López! 9
- A brief history of 'marriage,' part 24. 11

★ Around the world

- Honduras election bulletin. 1
- Defending Syria's right to sovereignty 8
- Messages to Workers World Party Conference 8
- Honduras military tries to intimidate int'l observers. 9
- Thousands in Haiti say: 'Martelly must go!' 9
- 'Lamonthe, Sean Penn don't speak for us' 9
- U.N. Conference fails to agree to reduce pollution 10

★ Editorials

- Significance of Nat'l Day of Mourning 1

★ Noticias en Español

- Estrategias para derribar el capitalismo. 12

Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 55, No. 48 • Dec. 5, 2013
Closing date: Nov. 25, 2013
Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Technical Editors: Lal Roohk, Andy Katz
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Kris Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
West Coast Editor: John Parker
Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, Jaimeson Champion, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac
Technical Staff: Sue Davis, Keith Fine, Bob McCubbin
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Michael Martínez, Carlos Vargas
Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

Copyright © 2013 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$30; institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org/email.php. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl. New York, N.Y. 10011.

On this page and pages 5 – 8 are somewhat abridged versions of talks given at the WWP National Conference on Nov. 16-17 in New York City. More speeches will appear in future issues. The talks in this issue are mainly from the Second Plenary, "The Trayvon Generation: What's next in the post-employment economy under the new Jim Crow." Video of the conference will be posted on the Workers World Party website, workers.org/wwp. □

JOIN US

Workers World Party (WWP) fights for socialism and engages in struggles on all the issues that face the working class & oppressed peoples — Black & white, Latino/a, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women & men, young & old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed, undocumented & students. If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

National Office
147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 5565
Atlanta, GA 30307
404.627.0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443.221.3775
baltimore@workers.org

Bay Area
1305 Franklin St. #411
Oakland, CA 94612
510.600.5800
bayarea@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.286.6574
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
chicago@workers.org
312.229.0161

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216.738.0320
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313.459.0777
detroit@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
804 Old Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27701
919.322.9970
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713.503.2633
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
5278 W Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323.306.6240

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610.931.2615
phila@workers.org

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585.436.6458
rochester@workers.org

Rockford, IL
rockford@workers.org

San Diego
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
619.692.0355
sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, DC 20037
dc@workers.org

Durham, N.C.

Latino youth dies in police custody

As we go to print, close to 300 hundred Latino/a and African-American youth rallied in downtown Durham Nov. 22 to protest police killings including the Nov. 19 fatal shooting of 17-year-old Jesus Huerta, in the back of squad car. The youth marched five blocks to police headquarters as 50 or more police surrounded them. Firecrackers and smoke bombs were thrown from the crowd. A police car's window was smashed. At least three people were arrested. Go to workers.org for updates.

By Lamont Lilly
Durham, N.C.

Another Durham resident has now died in a controversial encounter with the Durham Police Department. This time it was teenager and local Riverside High School student, Jesus Huerta.

Personally, I don't believe one word of what the Durham Police Department has stated. It seems to me, and many others throughout the city, that Durham police officers are simply covering their tracks with a concocted story that makes no

physical or logical sense whatsoever.

The official response of the Durham police chief, Jose Lopez, states that 17-year-old Jesus Huerta died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound while placed under arrest in the back seat of a police squad car. After Durham police Officer Samuel Duncan arrested Huerta, reports state that Officer Duncan heard a loud noise from the vehicle's rear seat and jumped out of his moving patrol cruiser. Duncan's squad car then slammed into a parked van, leaving Huerta shot and killed in the process. This incident occurred right outside of the Durham Police Department headquarters parking lot.

Judging from the buzz of conversations around Durham, many residents believe Officer Duncan was directly responsible for Huerta's death.

It is also quite disturbing how the first



PHOTO: HUERTA FAMILY

Jesus Huerta

thing Durham police chose to highlight in this controversy was Huerta's past juvenile offenses. Trespassing and misdemeanor possession of cannabis were not the causes of Jesus Huerta's death. Such sheer lack of accountability on the part of the Durham Police Department is not only disrespectful, it's outright despicable.

Entertaining such a ploy is merely a distraction from gathering the truth of what actually happened here. Maybe someone should pull up the Durham Police Department's criminal record. Fact is, a 17-year-old boy who was allegedly handcuffed, mysteriously died in police custody. Many residents are pointing to police brutality and excessive use of force.

Unfortunately, Jesus Huerta became the third Durham resident killed by Durham police or while in their custody over the last five months. Thirty-three-

year-old Jose Ocampo was killed July 27, shot four times in the chest for possessing a knife. Twenty-six-year-old Derek Deandre Walker was executed Sept. 17 by a Durham police sniper for publicly threatening to commit suicide.

Personally, I'm not worried about the "Bloods and Crips" in Durham. I'm worried about our local thugs in pressed blue uniforms. I'm worried about gang members who carry badges, tasers, steel batons and handguns. These "law enforcers" are paid with public tax money to terrorize people.

Jesus Huerta deserves more than blanket apologies from city officials. Phony condolences are of no use here. Huerta's family members deserve justice; local Durham residents deserve the truth. A child has been killed, and we need answers. We need answers and Officer Samuel Duncan arrested. Now!

Lamont Lilly is a contributing editor with the Triangle Free Press, Human Rights Delegate with Witness for Peace and an organizer with Workers World Party.

More than 800 protest racist Washington football team name

By Chris Getowicz
Minneapolis

Over 800 people gathered here, Nov. 7, to demand the Washington Redskins change their racist name. Marching from the Minneapolis American Indian Center on Franklin Avenue south of downtown to the Vikings stadium, the protesters rallied in front of the Metrodome chanting, "Hey hey, ho ho, little red Sambo's got to go!"

Joining people from around the country to condemn the "R-word," protesters recalled similar demonstrations in Minneapolis in 1991, when the Twins played the Atlanta Braves in the World Series, and the 1992 Super Bowl, when the Washington team played the Buffalo Bills.

The rally, led by American Indian Movement (AIM) co-founder Clyde Bellecourt, also featured the voices of many youth speaking out as well as local Congressman Betty McCollum, 1964 Olympic Gold Medalist Billy Mills,

former Viking Pro-Bowl standout Joey Browner and former Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura. Speaking to the crowd of hundreds weathering the cold, Bellecourt highlighted the historic work of AIM to revive Native culture and tradition in addition and their past protests of racist sports mascots. He noted the international media attention and efforts that have included condemnation of the name from the city councils of Minneapolis, Saint Paul and Washington, D.C.

The diverse composition of the protest highlighted the widespread demand from all segments of society to challenge Washington team owner Dan Snyder's refusal to change the team's name. Organizations including AIM and the National Coalition on Racism in Sports and Media committed themselves to continue the fight until the demands of the masses are met and the racist name is changed.

Reprinted from *Fightback! News* Nov. 8 issue at fightbacknews.org.



Charges filed in killing of Renisha McBride

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire
Detroit



Renisha McBride

A Dearborn Heights, Mich., homeowner, Theodore P. Wafer, has been charged with second-degree murder in the Nov. 2 shooting death of Renisha McBride, a 19-year-old African-American woman who was recently employed by the Ford Motor Company. McBride had been in a traffic accident in the suburb west of Detroit and was seeking assistance when she walked onto Wafer's porch and was shot in the face with a shotgun.

The case has drawn the attention of people in metropolitan Detroit as well as around the United States and indeed the world. Wafer is white, and many have accused the shooter of being motivated by racism and racial profiling.

The killing of McBride sparked demonstrations outside Wafer's home and at the Dearborn Heights police station.

At a press conference held in Southfield, Mich., on Nov. 15, the parents of McBride thanked the county prosecutor for filing charges. Walter Ray Simmons, the father of McBride, referred to Wafer as "a monster that killed my daughter," and said, "I hope he spends the rest of his life in jail." Monica McBride, the victim's mother, added, "You took a life, and you took a beautiful life that was starting to

blossom, and for that I hope you stay in jail for the rest of your life, because I have to go on with my life, and her father, without our daughter." (thegrio.com, Nov. 15)

Although McBride's death has been viewed by demonstrators and observers as a manifestation of racial profiling and violence that is all too common in the U.S., prosecutor Kym Worthy has stated that she will not pursue the case as one stemming from racism. McBride's parents echoed this same sentiment as well.

Wafer said he thought McBride was an intruder and felt threatened. But evidence in the case suggests that there was no basis for shooting McBride because she had merely knocked on the door and had not attempted to forcefully enter the property.

The shooting death of McBride follows numerous other racially charged cases throughout the U.S., the most notable of which is the acquittal in July of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin. Martin, an unarmed teenager, was killed by Zimmerman, a so-called neighborhood watch volunteer, in Sanford, Fla.

Martin's death and the initial release of Zimmerman sparked protests across the U.S. After Zimmerman was indicted, put on trial and acquitted, hundreds more demonstrations were held across the country. □

Racist cops protested

By Kris Hamel
Grosse Pointe Park, Mich.

Vile racism is on the rise in metropolitan Detroit. First, there was the seemingly cold-blooded shooting death of young motorist Renisha McBride in the westside suburb of Dearborn Heights, Mich. Now, it's reared its ugly head on the eastside in the Grosse Pointes, a series of small wealthy suburbs adjacent to Detroit. In both situations, widespread anger has ensued and protests for justice have been sparked.

At noon on Nov. 20, protesters gathered outside the Police Department at the municipal complex of Grosse Pointe Park, Mich., to demand an end to racism and racial profiling by the GPP police. Videos



WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL
Gabrielle Melton at Nov. 20 protest.

have come to light depicting racist cops harassing, humiliating and degrading a cognitively challenged African-American man by ordering him to sing "like a chimp" and other outrages.

Gabrielle Melton, 24, was coming out of the GPP library and came over to join the protest. She told Workers World: "On Saturday night [Nov. 16] I had seven Grosse Pointe squad cars at my house. Somehow they got inside. They made me

take a breathalyzer test in my own home!" Melton is a cashier at a grocery store in Grosse Pointe. She described the racism she experiences in these eastside suburbs as "never ending." □

Right to abortion: denied in Texas, affirmed in Albuquerque

WW Commentary

By Sue Davis

Two polar opposite events affecting women's right to choose abortion took place on Nov. 19.

One was a 5 to 4 Supreme Court ruling that upheld implementation of a Texas law, which has the potential to profoundly affect millions of women and their families because it closed about a third of the 36 women's health clinics in the state.

In the other, voters in Albuquerque, N.M., the largest city in that state with some 555,000 people, turned down a city ban, 55 percent to 45 percent, that would have prohibited abortions after 20 weeks.

In the first case, five male justices used their power to deny private health care and personal choice to millions of women. In the other, thousands of voters publicly affirmed women's right to make their own decisions about their lives.

Such a dichotomy reveals how glaringly undemocratic the U.S. legal system is and why the U.S. medical delivery system should not be a political pawn.

The Texas law, which mandates that physicians doing abortions in the state must have admitting privileges in nearby hospitals, is not based on medical necessity. On Oct. 28, U.S. District Judge Lee Yeakel ruled that the law was unconstitutional because it serves no medical purpose and infringes on women's reproductive rights. However, that was quickly overturned by three judges in the Fifth Circuit Court. A case appealing the law, where its constitutional merits will be decided, will come before that

court in January.

The Nov. 21 New York Times noted: "The [Supreme Court] justices should have blocked the law as the appeal proceeds. The court's 1992 decision in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* forbids state regulations that have 'the purpose or effect of placing a substantial obstacle in the path of a woman seeking an abortion of a nonviable fetus' — a principle this provision clearly violates."

Conservative Supreme Court justices show anti-poor bias

However, this is not the first time that this Supreme Court has split 5 to 4 on reactionary rulings. Though the court is inherently undemocratic because justices are appointed for life by the president and are not subject to election or mandatory retirement, the court became even more conservative — openly pro-big business and anti-working and poor people — after President George W. Bush appointed Chief Justice John Roberts in 2005 and Samuel Alito in 2006.

Take the *Citizen United* decision in 2010 that ruled corporations have the same rights as people. Or the two cases decided 5 to 4 last spring that attacked Title VII and dismissed long-standing employment law that will make it harder for workers to protect themselves from sex and race discrimination. Even though Chief Justice Roberts split from the others to vote for the Affordable Care Act in 2012, that was effectively eviscerated when states were allowed to opt out of expanding Medicaid, as 25 of them have as of Nov. 21, denying

millions of workers and the oppressed access to affordable health care.

As Associate Justice Stephen Breyer, writing for the four justices who dissented on the Nov. 19 ruling, noted, "The longer a given [women's health care] facility remains closed, the less likely it is ever to reopen even if the admitting privileges requirement is ultimately held unconstitutional."

Dr. Lester Minto, who owns and runs a women's health care clinic in Texas, told *Slate Magazine* on Nov. 20: "If [women] have a passport and enough money, they go over the border to Mexico and ... buy misoprostol at a pharmacy. It is an ulcer drug, but it works as an abortifacient. ... Of course if you are undocumented this isn't an option at all."

If women can't afford a passport, Dr. Minto said women are able to buy the drug at a flea market. "This is bad and sad and wrong. ... You don't even know if you are getting the real thing. ... Women are forced to [furtively] crawl around. ... So I am here to help them." He explained that once a woman begins to bleed vaginally, Texas law allows him to do "miscarriage management." He couldn't get admitting privileges at his local hospital because it is "religiously affiliated."

Discriminatory Texas law makes abortion a privilege, not a right

The Texas law has created a blatantly discriminatory system of reproductive health care based on class. The rich, who are disproportionately white, can afford to travel to Mexico for pills or anywhere in

Texas for abortions, while poor and working women, who are more often women of color, young and rural, have to sneak around if they are lucky enough to find a compassionate doctor to advise them.

Choosing to have a safe, legal abortion is now a privilege in Texas, rather than a right, which violates the Constitution and the very premise of *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in 1973.

In contrast, due to a hard-fought campaign by pro-choice activists in the Respect ABQ Women coalition, voters in Albuquerque ensured that the right to abortion prevails for all women. In fact every time the right to abortion has been put to a vote — twice in Colorado and South Dakota and once in Mississippi — it has been upheld by a significant margin.

"Today's election makes it crystal-clear that Albuquerque voters understand that the complex, extremely personal decision about abortion needs to remain between a woman and her doctor," said Micaela Cadena with the Respect ABQ Women campaign. "Albuquerque families sent a powerful message today — they do not want the government interfering in their private medical decisions. Dangerous, unconstitutional laws like the one we rejected today have no place in Albuquerque, no place in New Mexico, no place anywhere in our nation." (RABQW press release reprinted by Truthout, Nov. 22)

It's independent mass organizing in the streets that will ultimately push back the right-wing's attacks in the courts or the legislatures. □

Saying no to low wages



Activists from the People's Power Assembly, Occu-Evolve and the Labor Outreach committee of Occupy Wall Street organized a speakout and tabling in front of a Bed, Bath and Beyond store in lower Manhattan, N.Y., on Nov. 23. The speakers and literature supported workers' rights to a living wage of at least \$15 an hour, full-time work and union representation.

—Report and photo by G. Dunkel

Detroit, Dec. 10: Stop the banksters

By Kris Hamel
Detroit

A major demonstration in downtown Detroit is in the works for Tuesday, Dec. 10, starting at 9 a.m. in front of the federal courthouse at 231 W. Lafayette St.

Called by the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions & Utility Shutoffs, the protest coincides with the start of a trial in U.S. Bankruptcy Court on a deal proposed by Detroit's emergency manager, Kevyn Orr, and Gov.

Rick Snyder to remove interest rate swaps from the municipal bankruptcy and allow a huge payoff to two banks to go forward.

According to a leaflet issued by Moratorium NOW!, Orr and Snyder "have cut a deal to give approximately \$250 million of our tax dollars to two banks, Bank of America (Jones Day's [Orr's "former" employer] client) and UBS [United Bank of Switzerland], to pay off their interest rate swap swindle.

"On Dec. 10-12, there will be a trial to determine if 20 percent of city income

tax dollars will be pledged for the first six years after bankruptcy to make good on this gift to the banks. This trial will determine if Detroit is to remain permanently enslaved by the criminal banks."

The protest will demand that Judge Steven Rhodes stop Snyder and Orr's giveaway to the banks. Other demands include "Cancel Detroit's debt — the banks owe us," "Hands off our pensions — No to 16 cents on the dollar," "Save city services and assets," "Stop union busting" and "Make the banks fund a jobs program." □

'No detentions, deportations of migrants'

On Nov. 19, in a bold action directed at the detention and deportation practices of the Obama administration, 15 undocumented immigrants and citizen supporters chained themselves to the fence surrounding the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) headquarters in Atlanta.

Sponsored by the Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights, Southerners on New Ground (SONG) and Project South, this direct action was part of a national "Not One More" campaign, which has conducted dramatic protests across the country. In Chicago, activists chained themselves to a deportation bus preventing it from carrying detainees away.

The immigrant rights movement is refusing to accept the lack of congressional progress in passing comprehensive, fair immigration reform while hundreds of thousands of people continue to be detained and deported. The campaign demands presidential action now to stop the separation of families.

To read the statements of those who were arrested in Atlanta and accounts of actions in other cities, please go to notonemoredeportation.com

—Dianne Mathiowetz



PHOTO: GLAHR
Chained to fence with bicycle lock around his neck, immigrant youth is arrested.



Larry Holmes

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

A new global revolutionary workers' movement in the making

Our long-run objective is the complete emancipation of the working class from capitalist exploitation and oppression.

With capitalism so dysfunctional, so violently in crisis, it becomes clear that this system is no longer able to provide people's social needs. It must be replaced by another system that is genuinely social. The movement to do this is actually coming together before our eyes.

This movement started in a real way in this country with the rebellion of migrant workers in 2006. Migrant workers were key to this development and as Teresa Gutierrez said earlier, "Migrant labor is a global phenomenon."

Migrant workers are the cutting edge of this new workers' movement. And then we saw Occupy Wall Street. And now we're seeing the low-wage workers in a number of industries — fast food, big-box retailers, and other industries, with tens of millions of low-wage workers. Walmart has more than 2 million alone. McDonalds has another 2 million. Add all the fast-food chains and it's something like 3 or 4 million. And then there's the retailers — Cosco and Target.

And the low-wage workers in offices, in restaurants, trapped in hot kitchens, who don't get off work until 1 a.m., who work two shifts, and janitors, security guards, those who work in hotels, cleaning people's shit, hospital workers. Tens of millions of workers are waking up.

Their own organizations

This movement is migrant, it's largely women, it's black and brown, it's multicultural and multilingual. Some have their own organizations that are not traditional unions. The workers don't have a contract, they're not recognized. Whether it's the day laborers, the domestic workers or the taxi drivers, these are important workers' organizations in every way, just as important as the traditional unions.

These organizations can't collect dues, can't sustain an office, can't hire staff. What the bigger, more traditional unions have to do is give them the resources. They are in movement. The trade unions have been static. People feel they are not going anywhere; they're shrinking. Their culture has to change.

You could see a sign of this change at the AFL-CIO convention. Last night, I went on the AFL-CIO convention page. Almost every public resolution says: "We've got to be inclusive."

I'd like to warn the labor leaders that they must reach out to larger sections of our class, that are not in unions, young people, those who see jails more than they see jobs, those who have no future. Because the capitalists will try to use

these dispossessed workers against the unions when workers are fighting to hold onto their pensions, when they're in a union-busting situation.

And the capitalists will tell the young people who have no jobs and no future, so why be for the unions? Where's your pension? And more and more they do this. As poverty deepens on a global basis, to the extent they can get away with it, capital will try to pit worker against worker.

Our question is, why doesn't the AFL-CIO help organize a massive jobs march?

You can find leaders, visionary leaders among the young people. They're everywhere. They don't need leadership, they need some buses. We'll help. Maybe, in some small but significant way, all those young people who march for jobs will get into the labor movement.

What distinguishes this new movement is the potential for ideological transformation and militant tactics.

Low-wage workers in fast food have already attempted several strikes, first on a local basis about a year ago. And at the end of the summer they tried a nationwide strike, I think in 60 cities. Tens of thousands of workers were involved. It's a small percentage of the total workers. However, they raised hell. People paid attention to them.

What they did was give us another example of what our migrant sisters and brothers did in 2006: they held a political strike. This strike, for a right to a union and a \$15 minimum wage, was a strike against the employers, it was a strike against government at every level, it was a strike against Congress. It was a national political strike. And you don't have to bring out 50 percent of the working class or even 10 percent — 5 percent would look incredible.

If our class called a strike to demand "single payer," we'd be discussing the new health-care law in a completely different way.

As a revolutionary working-class organization, we have opponents in the working-class movement. We call them social democrats, which more and more today means they see the Democratic Party as the beginning and end of everything. And they have political influence. But this new movement has the potential to transcend the political and ideological limitations of the social democrats.

To do that, it needs revolutionaries who have nothing invested in the pillars of capitalist exploitation and oppression, including the government, from the city councils to the state legislatures to the U.S. Congress.

Regarding the New York election, even more than Obama's, De Blasio's election may have raised expectations. I think that the job of the assembly movement

and the job of the workers' assembly is to deliberately create not just a left pole, but a revolutionary pole inside this new workers' movement to counter those whose orientation is to the Democratic Party.

This is a challenge for us. It's not going to be easy. It will take work. The beginning of that work is getting into the movement, getting down in the trenches.

Calling another general strike

Unlike some of the workers, the low-wage workers are concentrated, the stores are everywhere, they are across the street from each other. They're in the community. They're downtown, or by a school, thousands of them. Workers all go to these stores.

Logistically it is easy for a mass movement to support these workers' right to organize and get \$15 an hour. For so long the capitalist offensive on a globalized basis has been atomizing the workers. But as Goldstein said, the conditions of production pull the low-wage workers together and make them accessible. Also, wherever their struggle is, it will affect millions of people who are not working at these retail stores that are everywhere.

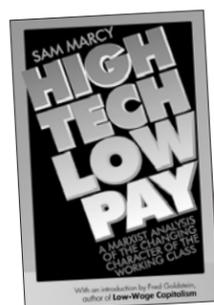
They're again calling a general strike for \$15 an hour and a union. Black Friday, the day after the racist holiday, it's a big shopping day and workers are shutting down some Walmarts. That's the first step. December 5 is supposed to be the big day for a nationwide strike for low-wage workers.

At our last Assembly Movement meeting in New York, we decided to try to organize serious strike support for this action. We hope it reverberates on a national level wherever possible.

We are going to come up with a meaningful way to support this strike. These brave workers can get fired. They are getting fired and sometimes they are struggling back and getting rehired. It's an intriguing and fluid dynamic and we should help them.

Also, the Saturday before Dec. 5, which is Nov. 30, in our office at 147 West 24th Street here in Manhattan, we will convene a "Solidarity with Low-Wage Workers Assembly" to organize support for Dec. 5. We hope to bring together people from OWS and the "Stop and Frisk" movement to sit down with us and figure out how we can all support this courageous strike of low-wage workers in New York. And I hope you take this back to your cities and try to do it yourself.

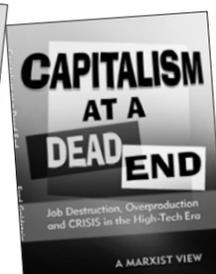
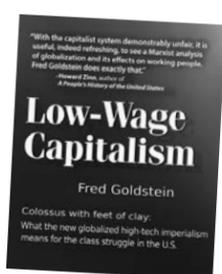
If we're in these struggles, and we are able to erect this revolutionary pole, it will help workers everywhere no matter what their circumstances are. Workers of the world, unite! □



High Tech, Low Pay
A Marxist Analysis
of the Changing Character of the Working Class
By Sam Marcy

with an updated introduction
by Fred Goldstein,
author of

Low-Wage Capitalism.



Capitalism at a Dead End
Job destruction, overproduction and crisis in the high-tech era

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

All books available at Amazon.com and other bookstores.



THE TRAVYON GENERATION:



Youth sing International at WWP conference.



Caleb Maupin

WW PHOTOS: BRENDA RYAN

Talk given at WWP conference by Caleb Maupin.

I'm proud to know that, a generation ago, many of the people in this room weren't blindly waving the flag and saying "my country right or wrong" as the government slaughtered thousands of innocent people in Vietnam. I'm even prouder that, unlike many people who were active in the 1960s and 1970s, they never stopped marching and fighting back. They kept with the revolutionary struggle, even in the difficult periods of right-wing reaction, and that is very admirable.

The ruling class of this country would like you to think that we communists are violent. Well, we know who the bomb throwers are. They are the people who send the drones. It is they who killed millions of people in Vietnam and Korea. It is the biggest military in the world, and it is always plotting another war, whether in Iran, Syria or elsewhere.

It is we, the communists, who oppose these wars and organize resistance. Members of our party were protesting with hundreds of Syrian Americans in front of the White House as Obama was threatening to bomb Syria.

We don't advocate adventurism or individual acts of violence. We know that the revolution that is needed in this country is going to involve millions of people in motion.

But one thing we are always very clear about is that we support oppressed people defending themselves.

When the Black Panther Party patrolled the streets of Oakland, "picking up the gun" and following the racist cops around, this was revolutionary self-defense. The Black Panther Party was one of the most important developments in the class struggle in the history of this country. It organized breakfast programs and classes teaching revolutionary politics to the youth.

The Black Panther Party was ruthlessly suppressed. Fred Hampton, Mark Clark and Bobby Hutton, as well as countless others, were killed.

While the U.S. government was hunting down and killing leaders of the Panthers, there was one country that welcomed the Black Panthers with a big parade and called them heroes. That was the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Korean people have suffered from colonialism and oppression for too long. In the southern half of the country, the U.S. has propped up military dictators like Park Chung Hee and Syngman Rhee. Today in south Korea, there is a young man serving years in prison. His crime? He made pro-DPRK statements on his Twitter page.

That's the "democracy" that the U.S. is propping up in south Korea, with thousands of troops. But the U.S. imperialists won't be getting into north Korea any time soon.

The Workers' Party of Korea is dedicated to fighting for peaceful reunification, and to building socialism on the peninsula. In order to protect themselves, and keep

the U.S. imperialists out, they have developed nuclear weapons, and we support their right to do so. Why? Because whenever workers and oppressed people are fighting back against imperialism, Workers World Party supports them.

Not just another political party

There is a whole generation of young people who are really suffering right now. "We can't survive on \$7.25!" isn't just a good chant, it's reality. There are millions of young people with nothing to look forward to but low wages, prisons, cops and unemployment.

When I go out and sell Workers World newspaper, sometimes people are hostile. But they aren't hostile because I'm a communist, or because I'm calling for a revolution. They say, "You're talking about bills, laws and rallies, stuff like that. You sound like a politician."

Young people, like all working people, are hostile to politicians, because they have been betrayed so many times. Many were very hopeful when Obama took office, thinking things would get better. Many were saying "just wait until his second term." Many here in New York City are extremely hopeful about Bill de Blasio, the newly elected mayor.

If we want to win the youth, we need to make clear we aren't just another political party.

This system started with slave ships, and now there are 2.5 million people in prison. We aren't going to waste our time trying to fix it. We seek to overturn and destroy this system.

Contrary to what is being peddled on the campuses, and in the nonprofits and NGOs, a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party is not a group of elitists who think they are better than the people. Marxist-Leninist parties are made up of people who put the masses first, and their own needs last, who dedicate their lives to the cause of revolution, and aren't happy unless they are in the struggle.

The bosses have their blueprint, and it's unfolding in front of us. It is low wages, mass unemployment and prisons.

But we have our own blueprint, comrades. We have the work of Marx and Lenin. We have the lives of Harriet Tubman and Nat Turner. We have the legacy of Che Guevara.

The fight ahead of us is not going to be an easy one. It's going to be a long, hard fight. But when it's all over, we are going to have a far better world. We are going to have jobs, equality and freedom for everybody. We are going to have a classless society. □

Spoken word written and read by Q Wideman, North Carolina Heroes Emerging Among Teens (NC HEAT) youth organizer.

This is for the brown kids.

This is for the free and reduced breakfast club.

This is for my loudmouth fistfighters.

My under-the-covers-reading all-nighters.

My late-shift-working in-class nappers.

My back-of-the-classroom rappers.

My mother-tongue-speaking back-talkers.

My always-finding-death-threats in their lockers.

My always-late-to-class little sibling caretakers.

My smartass saggy-pants troublemakers.

My brown genderqueer hip-switchers.

My test-anxiety-prone class-skippers.

My outside-agitator walkout organizers.

This is for my never-meant-to survivors.

In kindergarten, I already knew not to go anywhere unless I was sure there wouldn't be a check-in.

I was always too chicken to speak to the men with guns on their hips.

And slurs in their snarling lips and I didn't even go to a school where they met me at the door.

So I'm gonna try to compute just how much more afraid I'd be today if the first school club I was introduced to was a billy club.

I'll try to raise the number of panic attacks I've had this year to the power of pepper spray, taser, glocks, handcuffs and a badge.

I'll try to multiply my fear by the number of kids who look like me who had their faces slammed into pavement last semester.



And I know I haven't been good at math since I was told I was a poor tester.

But something about the trauma of going to school under occupation seems to add up to walking out with less capacity to trust than we walked in with.

To fear and resistance to authority.

To hyperactivity and needing to get free.

Critical Thinking Question: Why were the millions of dollars Wake County [N.C.] spent on police station contracts and security guards somehow easier to budget than even half the recommended number of counselors?

Answer: Because our minds are worth more to them terrified than understood.

See, our schools might look like prisons, but the bars aren't for keeping us in; they're for pushing us out.

Our schools are factories producing marketable products, not making good citizens, but punishing manufactured misconduct.

There are more of my people incarcerated today than there were slaves in 1850 and black students in Wake County account for 60% of suspensions because their definition of defiance is "looking kinda shifty."

Schools claim to be invested in teaching critical thinking but from us brown kids, asking questions equals dissension which leads to detention, suspension, and apprehension by state henchmen with the intention to arrest.

So ask us again why we don't feel like participating in class discussion.

We dare you.

Ask us why we'd rather spend 90 minutes in a bathroom stall or wandering empty halls than in your classrooms.

We know that when we ask questions we scare you.

You thought you were ready for us.

You'd already bought us jumpsuits instead of graduation gowns.

You'd even opened up a whole new prison by shutting some arts programs down.

You thought you were ready for us.

Us brown kids?

We're ready for you, too

We are:

Healing our black eyes in peer mediation sessions

Channeling Laila Ali in Second Round Boxing lessons

We are:

Staying up all night reading Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*, comprehending all kinds of things we were never supposed to know.

We are:

Working the late shift paying bills to stay alive, even though we know we were never meant to survive.

We are:

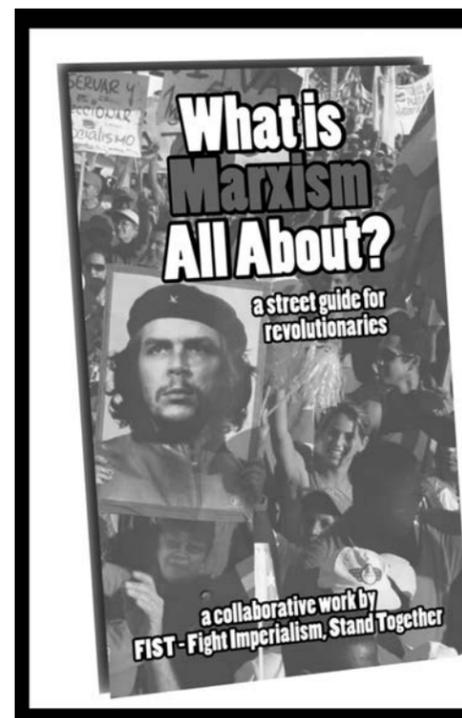
Rapping about restorative justice and letting our spirits soar, spittin' about the day when Central Prison is no more.

We are:

standing together, from AP English to ISS to alternative schools to Central Prison.

We are:

teaching you a lesson, and this time you're gonna have to listen to us, the brown kids, the kids from the back of the bus. □



A guide
Marxist
language
"self-de
are d
Marxist
help s
society
perspe
read
organiz
differen
and de
FIST
Togeth
fightim

YOUTH SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER



Talk given at WWP conference by Eva Panjwani.

In preparing my remarks today on the revolutionary potential of my generation, especially Black and Brown young people, I want to first ask you all, brothers and sisters, 50 years after the March on Washington, are we free?

Living in the age of empire, language loses meaning. When “democracy” means neoliberal capitalism, “reform” means repression, and the phrase “humanitarian intervention” is merely a part of the public relations campaign for the next imperialist war and occupation, what is freedom, after all?

I vividly remember, in the aftermath of 9/11, the mainstream capitalist media wound up xenophobic sentiment by repeatedly posing the question, “Why do they hate us?” and allowing the reactionary forces to answer, “They hate us because of our freedoms.”

How tragic it felt then, that when fear-mongering was baiting Muslims, Arabs and Third World immigrants, white America was asking the very same question that Black and Brown kindergarteners ask their parents every year about white America — “Why do they hate us?”

When people of color are pushed out of their neighborhoods and into specific areas of their cities, unconstitutionally stopped and frisked at alarming rates by the NYPD, our plight does not greatly differ from the people of Gaza stopped daily at checkpoints under the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Youth of color are either locked up in the system of mass incarceration that jails us, or locked out of higher education and good jobs, forming a new racial undercaste within the United States. We are a generation under siege.



Eva Panjwani

WWW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

To my understanding, to be free is to live a life without fear. But a life without fear is a promise we could not yet assure youth of color. For young people — Jonathan Farrell in my home state of North Carolina and Renisha McBride in Detroit, Mich. — the stories are eerily similar. Two Black youth in two different car accidents approached nearby homes for help, for assistance in their moments of vulnerability, and had their lives cut tragically short when their blackness held them seemingly complicit in the white supremacist mentality that they were guilty, dangerous, a threat until proven otherwise.

Jonathan was killed by police officers in a misguided attempt to guard private property, while Renisha was shot in a manner similar to the murder of Trayvon Martin, by a white man who saw her as a threat. For it wasn't just pain and anger at the acquittal of George Zimmerman that sent my generation to the streets, our pain and anger was coupled by a refusal to accept that somehow 17-year-old, unarmed Trayvon was found fatally guilty by a society that criminalized his very existence.

The desire to live a life without fear is the very hope that capitalism extinguishes for undocumented youth. Countless young people have suffered the extreme mental and emotional consequences of a life lived in the shadows. Policies like Secure Communities terrorize our neighborhoods while we are told that border militarization is the price we must pay when seeking immigration reform. So again, I ask you, brothers and sisters, are we free?

Connecting our future to the past

Young revolutionaries before me, like Huey Newton of the Black Panther Party, asked these very same questions in previous generations. Huey taught us that modern capitalism takes away our sense of community, of togetherness, of shared purpose. It promotes individualism and fear. And when Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his “I Have a Dream” speech 50 years ago, he too reminded the crowd that it had been 100 years since the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed, but the “colored” man was not yet free.

Us rebels and activists are quick to remind folks of the other profound words of Dr. King, on capitalism, on poverty, on war. But when Dr. King spoke his now iconic words — “I have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream” — it sparked something in the imagination of generations to come.

Young people across the nation continue to rally around the promise of a dream. From the DREAM Act and United We Dream, to the undocumented youth known as the Dreamers, to the Dream Defenders occupying the Florida state Capitol for Trayvon's Law, we are the products of a generation that had a dream. We are the products of a dream deferred. We are the sons and daughters of farm workers and slaves, dedicated to repainting the canvas of history with the paintbrushes given to us by Malcolm, by Huey, by Gloria, by Assata, by Cesar, by Sam Marcy and Dottie Ballan.

FIST Youth are a growing coalition of youth and students committed to replacing jails with schools, ending the war on the undocumented, dismantling the systems that criminalize us, and fighting for self-determination for our communities.

We hear your whispered questions, “Where are the youth?” We know our revolution cannot be retweeted and assure you all, even when you may have begun to lose hope, there is a new generation of organizers, marchers, fighters, activists, lovers and dreamers arriving and we are ready. We are a generation forgotten by trade unions, yet from Bangladesh to Baltimore we've taken to the streets to demand a living wage. You may doubt our discipline but just watch as we join hands to take up the torch — we are ready. Wearing butterfly wings and graduation robes we will march against injustice and win the fight for freedom in our lifetime. □



Colleen Davidson chaired youth panel.

Talk given at WWP conference by Tachae Davis.

Youth today are suffering at the hands of imperialism. As a youth of color struggling to survive in Detroit, I am furious at the conditions in which people are forced to live.

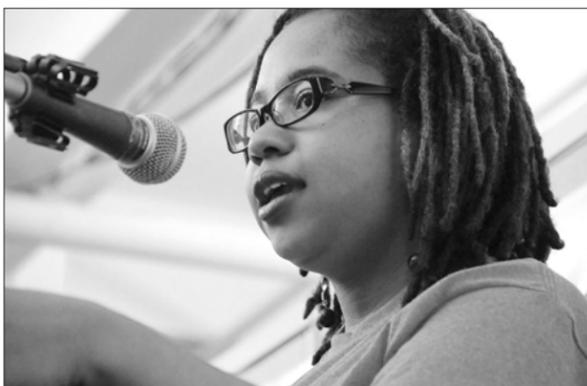
Detroit has always been under constant scrutiny by the media, who will have you believe Detroit just went bankrupt overnight. Detroit's debt was intentionally created to justify its systematic destruction. Big banks trapped Detroit in toxic swap deals that they knew Detroit could not afford, right before the economic collapse in which banks were given low-interest-rate loans by the Fed to bail themselves out. As a result, austerity measures have been introduced repeatedly to cut funds to health, education and other social programs in a predominantly African-American city.

These cuts spell disaster for workers and oppressed people, especially the youth of the city, who are struggling to find work in a state with a reported 18.8 percent unemployment rate, as of July. Recently, the Detroit Free Press reported a fall in the unemployment rate, now at 7.2 percent, but this does not spell recovery, and in fact does not reflect those who have stopped looking for work or who are underemployed.

It is not uncommon to hear of youth, students and nonstudents alike who work two or three jobs just to make ends meet. Often, these jobs are part-time and un-unionized, forcing youth to work overtime to sustain themselves and pay bills, the most expensive being tuition, which has steadily risen. Student debt has ballooned to \$1 trillion in total, as austerity measures also mean more scholarship programs and initiatives have lost funding, which dissuades college and high school students from pursuing a degree.

Even with a degree, many students are still stuck in low-wage jobs that seek to exploit their labor as these corporations expand globally and maximize their profits in record numbers. Many youth are forced to stay with their parents, or move back in, as they can no longer afford a dorm or apartment due to rent increases.

As a student and part-time worker, I struggle to



Tachae Davis

WWW PHOTOS: BRENDA RYAN

make the commute every day by use of public transit, which has also seen dramatic cuts of routes and workers, including drivers and maintenance workers. These issues recently reached a fever pitch on Oct. 22 when the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 26, rallied in front of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, where they stated multiple grievances, including erratic scheduling, poor bus maintenance and violence.

Both bus drivers and commuters agree that overcrowding and late arrival times have created a hostile relationship that makes conditions dangerous for all. In a city that is already heavily policed by state troops, the answer has been to install surveillance cameras on buses. This is but one of a series of reactionary measures the state has enacted to supposedly create order, while they divert people's attention away from the underlying fiscal reasons for the crumbling infrastructure and economy. From foreclosures, to a lackluster bus system and school closings, the message is clear: those who are most vulnerable in a capitalist system are valued the least!

There is a solution, one in which the workers are unionized, and are entitled to safe working conditions and fair wages. Education will be a right, which will not chain youth to insurmountable debt that leaves them overstressed and overworked, without the means to access proper health care or even afford basic necessities such as food.

No longer should individuals and families be forced to choose between feeding themselves, paying bills or putting gas in the car. Government entities that only seek to perpetuate war, exploit other countries and their resources must be dismantled!

What is needed now more than ever is a system that truly guarantees the right to life by ensuring people the very basic things that are needed to build and nourish life.

Youth today have no future in this system, and must unite with other young workers and oppressed youth to fight against imperialism and build socialism! □

... for activists that explains
... concepts in non-technical
... ge. Terms like "imperialism,"
... "determination" and "socialism"
... defined and illustrated. The
... definitions of these words
... sharpen an understanding of
... from a working-class
... ctive. This book is a must-
... for students and youth
... ers involved in many
... nt struggles. Written, edited
... signed by young activists in
... Fight Imperialism, Stand
... er. Learn more about FIST at
... perialism.org

Special Introductory Price: \$8

Order from:

World View Forum
West 24th St., 2nd Floor,
New York, NY 10011

Defending Syria's right to sovereignty

Talk given at WWP conference
by John Parker.

Every nation in the Middle East fighting imperialism will have victories and losses, but regardless of the missteps, the various interpretations of socialism and Arab nationalism, the various degrees of working-class empowerment and international solidarity — one can't deny the essential role of Syria in defending the region against imperialism since Syria's independence in 1946, and especially in continuing that resistance to this day. Not only has Syria historically held back the U.S. cop in the region — Israel — but today the Syrian people and their government are helping to thwart the most dangerous threat to humanity today: U.S. imperialism.

Yet, when the latest crisis of war against Syria began, we witnessed little solidarity here by organizations calling themselves anti-war or even Marxist or communist, with the exception of the United National Antiwar Coalition. Maybe one or two would lend support on paper or digitally over the Internet — but they seemed preoccupied with the fear of being seen as too supportive of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and refused to come out to protests. Why? Because of the demonization that was so overwhelming and came from seemingly everywhere all at once — whether it was from CNN, Fox, the New York Times, the Washington Post, BBC, the Guardian or Al-Jazeera.

Without someone knowing one fact, when you mention Syria you get the inevitable response, "But isn't Assad a brutal dictator?" Well, how brutal are the crimes by U.S. presidents, responsible for



John Parker

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

the killing of millions not just once but in almost every U.S. war from the Philippines, North Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. I didn't even mention Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and death by destabilization, starvation or drones in Indonesia, Sudan, Congo, Yemen, Somalia and Pakistan. And don't forget to count the lives lost in this country due to social programs sacrificed on the altar of the military-industrial complex to pay for these wars.

U.S. imperialism is the greatest purveyor of violence and the root of most violence in the world today. The key to stopping war and state violence is to stop U.S. imperialist war, not encourage it.

How much do we know about Syria's government? A People's Council is elected by universal suffrage of citizens at least 18 years old. It's made up of two major coalitions — the National Progressive Front made up primarily of socialist

and communist parties, and the Popular Front for Change and Liberation. This particular council was the result of elections in 2012, where seven additional parties were added to the once sole party — the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party.

Negotiations with representatives of opposition groups brought about changes to the constitution that included the elimination of the martial-law-like emergency decree. It established the requirement that half of the parliament or People's Council be made up of workers and peasants; it mandated that major economic industry remain public property in the interest of the Syrian people as a whole, not Western banks and interests; and finally, that Syria remain in "the forefront of confrontation with the Zionist enemy and the bedrock of resistance against colonial hegemony on the Arab world and its capabilities and wealth." That's in the new constitution that was negotiated with the nonrebel, nonmercenary opposition forces and ratified in 2012.

It is no coincidence that in 2011, while these negotiations were taking place, the violent U.S.-sponsored rebel war began, halting the continued progress being made by the nonrebel opposition with the government. And, as the increased rate of reforms was being implemented, so increased the rate of violence by the so-called rebels.

Solidarity and the National Question

Regarding solidarity, the work nationally of Workers World Party and the In-

ternational Action Center reverberated all over the country.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin wrote that to repudiate the self-determination of nations fighting imperialism would be a theoretical error rendering involuntary support to the most dangerous chauvinism and opportunism of the "Great Power" nations. A primary task of our party is to be in solidarity with the latest victim of U.S. imperialist attacks.

At protests against war on Syria, many of the Syrians would bring pictures of Assad and this became the issue and point of departure for some. Not for us. Our job was to do what we could to win over the anti-war movement that was on the fence or too afraid to come out. Our job was to provide facts the anti-war movement needed to feel stronger about adopting an anti-imperialist position, not to tell the Syrians how to protest.

The Syrian community was extremely courageous to protest when their country was being so vilified. A massive attempt was in progress here to isolate and threaten anyone who dared to protest. All of it was in the context of racist violence and state repression against Arab people here. As we were able to attract more people from the anti-war movement, it allowed a safer space for those most targeted by U.S. repression.

Lenin's guidelines regarding the national question and fightback against imperialism were formed, developed and refined through the living, day-to-day struggles. Our Marxist party continues to use these principles to fit our day-to-day actions. That's how we're going to build a Workers World. □

Messages to Workers World Party Conference

Below is a small sample of the solidarity messages sent to the Workers World Party Conference. These reflect on international solidarity in the anti-imperialist movement.

INDIA – Socialist Unity Centre of India

Winds of change have started to blow over the United States and indeed over the whole world. People's resentment towards the capitalist system is bursting forth everywhere in the form of massive demonstrations, and an awareness is slowly dawning that capitalism cannot provide any solution to the myriad problems that the people are facing. The people's anti-capitalist struggle can emerge victorious only if it has a firm ideological base of Marxism-Leninism.

The Workers World Party has always followed a policy of uncompromising anti-imperialism and proletarian internationalism and is engaged in the task of organizing militant movements against the anti-people policies of the U.S. government. Its determined opposition to the deployment of U.S. forces in Syria, along with the protests of peace-loving people all over the world, finally forced the U.S. administration to halt the impending military attack. This is a victory for the anti-war movement.

Manik Mukherjee Member, Polit Bureau Central Committee SUCI (Communist)

Bolivarian Continental Movement – LATIN AMERICA

From Our America — which is constantly attacked by the Pentagon, the CIA and large corporations — we embrace you.

We live at a time of profound change,

rescuing independence and processes toward new revolutions, that we must defend in Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua ... that we must defend and help to deepen with determination. ...

It is time for a dignified peace with social justice and real democracy for Colombia. ...

It is time to cry for self-determination for the peoples of Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan ... to demand an end to the "global war on terrorism" and the criminal militarism backed up by U.S. imperialism. ...

It is time for the independence of Puerto Rico, the end of military intervention in Haiti and the dismantling of U.S. military bases in Our America and the world.

It is time to combat declining, nefarious and neoliberal capitalism, and time to create something new.

It is time for the ideals of Marx, Lincoln, Bolívar, Martí, Louverture ... and Che. Forward ever, backward never.

Narciso Isa Conde – Collective Presidency.

Carlos Casanueva – Secretary General and Executive Committee. Nov. 12, *Our America*.

LEBANON – Teachers' Union leader

Dear Comrades,

You are carrying the burden of defending the rights of different sectors of people: Workers, Youth, Women, People of Color, Refugees, Minorities, Indigenous, Bus drivers. ... Also facing the Imperialist lust of expansion and their aggression against free states and lately your magnificent field demonstrations that played

a decisive role in defeating the aggression against Syria.

We should always work as if the victory of our struggle is taking place tomorrow and we have to believe that the change is not so far. Many things in the capitalist world are taking place and for sure it is reaching a dead end.

Comrades like you never give up.

You are always on the frontier to achieve our main objective for complete change and Socialism.

Long Live your Struggle,

Long Live the Working Class,

Long Live the Workers World Party

Mohamad Kassem

GERMANY

As activists working against imperialism and war, and for international solidarity, we particularly welcome your internationalist commitment, especially your valuable engagement to oppose any intervention by the U.S. and its NATO partners in other countries.

To take this position is far from self-evident. As the number of imperialist assaults increased — since the collapse of the Soviet Union — the weaker the resistance to them was in the West. During the NATO war against Libya and the current aggression against Syria, many left-wing organizations and intellectuals were erroneously drawn to take an incorrect position under the pressure of media propaganda and idealistic political aberrations. Your clear anti-imperialist positions and analyses are an important contribution to bringing clarification on these questions.

Joachim Guilliard, blogger and anti-imperialist activist

IRAN (SI – Solidarity with Iran)

Fighting the attacks of the U.S. ruling class to further jeopardize the life of workers and other oppressed layers of the American society demands carrying at the same time a struggle to stop aggressions of the same power against the people of oppressed nations who constitute the great majority of the world population. Iran is among such nations and since it insists on its sovereignty and self-determination, it is currently under illegal, illegitimate and inhuman sanctions.

Working-class movements all over the world and especially in the U.S. should strongly support the struggles of oppressed nations and we are glad that such understanding exists in the Workers World Party.

SI-Solidarity with Iran

Co-founder and Coordinator

Hamid Shahrabi

'Tis the season to – Give to Workers World!

You can show that you appreciate Workers World newspaper throughout the whole year. Help us continue to publish working-class truth and build many vital struggles in 2014 and the years to come.

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. □

The time is now to free Oscar López!

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

The campaign to free Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera is reaching new heights with the Nov. 23 demonstrations in Puerto Rico and the U.S. The campaign and the demonstrations have had the solidarity of many organizations in many countries throughout the world.

There are some crucial issues that unite the Puerto Rican people beyond any material possession. It has been demonstrated several times throughout history. The most recent examples were the struggle against the U.S. Navy in Vieques, which successfully kicked out the hated Pentagon, and the mass outpouring for the funeral of Macheteros Commander Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, viciously assassinated by FBI agents in his home.

And in the mid-1970s, a similar campaign to free political prisoners Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores and Andrés Figueroa Cordero took place uniting, as the Campaign to Free Oscar is doing today, the people regardless of their political affiliation. It is a demonstration of national pride that says

to the imperialist forces: Enough!

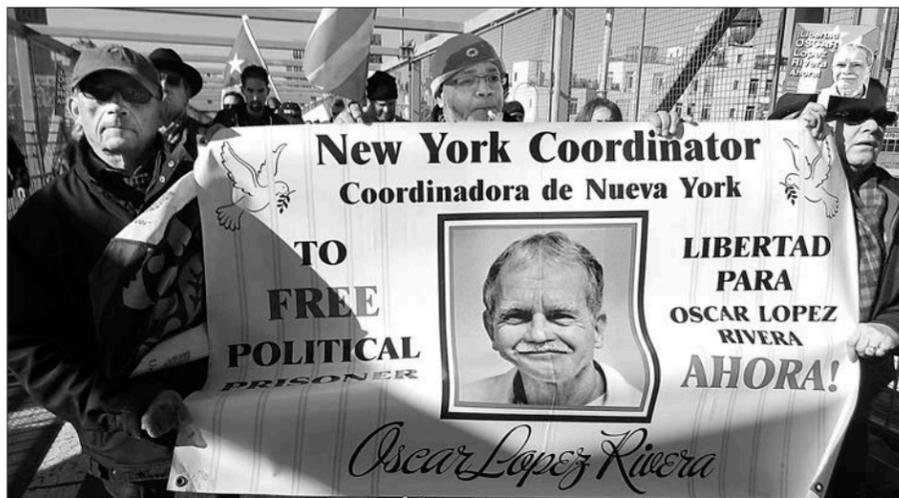
Even if it is not consciously acknowledged, the meaning of this united front is the quest for sovereignty. How dare the U.S. keep one of our own imprisoned for 32 years, just for loving his country and wanting it free! López Rivera was never convicted of harming anyone.

U.S. Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez said it bluntly during a press conference on Nov. 23: “President Barack Obama, how can you go to Egypt and talk about the unity of the people of the Middle East, when here in the USA we have a Puerto Rican in prison for loving his country?” The demand is to President Obama to sign a presidential order to free him.

Many international personalities have demanded the freedom of Oscar López, including Desmond Tutu in South Africa and Rigoberta Menchú in Guatemala. In Puerto Rico, the voices that demand his liberation come from all sectors: politicians, artists, workers, students, athletes, businesspeople, religious leaders, LGBTQ activists, physicians, lawyers, intellectuals and others, including ex-governor, Aníbal Acevedo; current governor, Alejandro García Padilla; and several

mayors. At the recent Latin Grammy Awards Ceremony, Puerto Rican singer Ricky Martin shouted after his perfor-

mance: “Freedom and Justice for Oscar López!” showing the demand written on the palm of his hand. □



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

More than 200 people marched across New York City's Williamsburg Bridge Nov. 23 to demand freedom for Puerto Rican political prisoner, Oscar López Rivera. The 70-year old Rivera has already spent 32 years in federal prison, five years longer than Nelson Mandela's time in apartheid jails. The Community Coalition for the freedom of Oscar López Rivera organized the march that coincided with a march of 50,000 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Among the speakers at the concluding rally were representatives of the Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, newly-elected Councilperson Antonio Reynoso and René Pérez Joglar from Calle 13 who called for the independence of Puerto Rico. — Stephen Millies

Honduras military tries to intimidate int'l observers

Special to Workers World

Nov. 24 — A presidential election is taking place in Honduras today that polls indicate will reverse the 2009 coup. Progressive and human rights organizations have reported on the military's last-minute attempts to intimidate international observers who have come to ensure a fair and free election process.

Elane Spivak-Rodriguez of the Alliance for Global Justice reported to the media: “There was a big raid on a Libre headquarters in Tegucigalpa last night (Nov.

23). Police came in with guns. There were international observers there.” There were also reports of military police seizing passports of international observers from Brazil at the Hotel Suites Aurora earlier in the day.

Xiomara Castro de Zelaya, who has played a leading role in the resistance movement, is running for president in today's elections. She represents the Libre [Libertad y Refundación] party, which grew out of the resistance movement to the coup.

Castro de Zelaya has held a lead in na-

tional polls over ruling National Party candidate Juan Hernández and is expected to win if the vote is fair. The winner will replace Porfirio Lobo Sosa, who became president in a questionable, military-run “election” some five months after the coup. Castro de Zelaya is the spouse of Mel Zelaya, the president ousted in the June 2009 coup.

The present Honduras government, which is a tool of the oligarchy and the military, also refused entry into the country of Nobel Peace Prize winner and election monitor Rigoberta Menchú.

Besides harassing observers, the military police, who are said to number 5,000 in the capital city of Tegucigalpa, have directly interfered with the election process when 30 of them forcibly entered the Libre offices in the Kennedy neighborhood of the capital on Nov. 22.

Observers from the U.S., including activists, lawyers, labor unionists and community organizers have been in Honduras to participate as election monitors and to show their solidarity with the resistance movement there. They include a delegation from the International Action Center. □

Thousands in Haiti Say: ‘Martelly Must Go!’

By G. Dunkel

On Nov. 18, thousands of protesters came out into the streets throughout Haiti to say, “Down with Martelly!” They were commemorating the 210th anniversary of the battle of Vertières, when Jean-Jacques Dessalines led his forces to decisive victory in Haiti's revolutionary war against its French slave masters.

Demonstrators throughout Haiti marked the day by calling for the removal of the venal, corrupt and repressive President Michel Martelly. He was imposed by former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Protesters also called out, “Down with Minustah!” referring to the U.N.'s so-called “peacekeeping” force, which has occupied Haiti since 2004, when it took over from U.S., French and Canadian forces.

Several contingents converged at the demonstration in the capital of Port-au-Prince, which the Nov. 22 issue of *Haiti-Liberté* estimates was attended by between 10,000 and 50,000 people. The march began in a working-class community downtown and proceeded through Delmas up Rue Panaméricaine to Petion-ville, a suburb with wealthy sections that rival gated communities in the United States for their opulence; it's home to some of the most fervent Martelly supporters.

Shots were fired at the march in Delmas, wounding at least three people. Rocks were thrown at anti-government

protesters in Petion-ville. One of the organizers, Rony Timothée, told Haiti News on Nov. 18 that one person was killed and three were wounded.

Haiti-Liberté cites Sen. Moïse Jean-Charles, one of Martelly's most outspoken critics, who remarked during the Port-au-Prince march: “It is clear that Martelly does not have the legitimacy or the credibility to lead the country. We are asking the Americans, French, and Canadians to come and collect their errand boy because he cannot lead the country any more.”

According to online photographs, there were numerous protesters in Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second largest city, but the police vigorously and brutally repressed them. When demonstrators tried to march, police attacked them with tear gas and live fire.

Haiti Press Network reported on Nov. 18 that 31 people, presumed by the police to be organizers, were arrested in the poor neighborhoods of Cap-Haitien overnight on Nov. 17-18. The news agency also complained of police harassing journalists.

Protests also took place in Aux Cayes, Jacmel, Miragoâne and Petit Goâve. There were two demonstrations in Ouanminthe, on the Dominican border, when Martelly and his prime minister, Laurent Lamothe, visited on Nov. 19.

The next wave of protests is planned for Nov. 29.

The U.S. indicates that it is strongly backing Martelly. John Groarke, U.S. Agency for International Development

mission director for Haiti, announced at a Nov. 14 press conference that the U.S. will give Haiti \$200 million in aid.

Radio Metropole, a pro-Martelly station, ran an interview on Nov. 22 with Joël Danies, the U.S. State Department's coordinator of Haitian affairs. He expressed

strong support for Martelly completing his five-year term and said the departure of Martelly was not a “realistic goal.”

The U.S. should stop interfering in Haiti and should respect the sovereignty of its people, who are demanding Martelly's ouster. □

‘Lamothe, Sean Penn don't speak for us’

The Haiti Action Committee held a demonstration against Haitian Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe and actor Sean Penn (named “Ambassador at Large for Haiti” by President Michel Martelly), who were guests at a Salesforce.com convention in San Francisco on Nov. 19.

HAC spokesperson Pierre LaBossiere stated: “The people of Haiti are still in the midst of an occupation instigated by the United States and United Nations in 2004. As supporters of the Martelly government, which is in the process of bringing back dictatorship to Haiti, Prime Minister Lamothe and actor Sean Penn DO NOT speak in the interests of the Haitian majority.”

Demands of the Haitian majority (from the HAC flyer):

- To protest the CORRUPTION and ILLEGALITY of the Martelly/Lamothe government.

- To protest the government's widespread repression of the poor.



- To protest the INJUSTICE of the nearly 10-year-old US/UN occupation and the suffering it inflicts on the Haitian people.

- To support the right of the Haitian majority to fully participate in the running of their country, FREE from repression and terror.

- To support the right of Haitian children, women and men, to have free access to education, food, jobs, housing and health care.

At the same time as the San Francisco protest, in Haiti thousands demonstrated against the illegitimate Martelly/Lamothe government, marking the 210th anniversary of the Battle of Vertières, one of the last battles that sealed the victory of the Haitian revolution.

—Report and photo by Terri Kay

WORKERS WORLD
editorial

National Day of Mourning

Continued from page 1

determination. Their international unity and solidarity strongly shine through.

Racist discrimination, oppression and corporate exploitation continue. The economic crisis has exacerbated Native workers' unemployment. High jobless rates have increased even more. In the Northern Great Plains region, only 44 percent of Indigenous workers were employed in 2011. Accessible jobs often have few benefits, if any, and low wages. At least one-third of Native people are impoverished.

Federal sequestration cutbacks in crucial social programs have hit Native communities hard, with reductions of \$22 million for health care, \$12 million for Head Start, \$65 million for public schools, \$34 million in housing grants and millions for youth programs.

Nearly one-fourth of Native households receive food stamps. Despite these benefits, one in four adults and one in three children don't get sufficient nutritious food and one in 10 households faces outright hunger. The Nov. 1 cuts in food stamp allotments by 13 percent per person are devastating to these communities.

Yet, this government allots trillions of dollars to wage wars, occupy lands abroad, bail out Wall Street and corporations and pay big banks. Congress should put human needs first and ensure jobs and all social programs to Indigenous and other oppressed and low-income communities.

Today, Native peoples are boldly resisting capitalists' pillaging of the earth in search of oil, gas, minerals — and superprofits. They are opposing "climate injustice," whereby poor countries and peoples are harmed by climate-made disasters — such as the horrific typhoon in the Philippines — caused by carbon emissions. Indigenous activists worldwide are demanding reparations from corporate polluters for climate and



An Indigenous woman faces down Royal Canadian Mounted Police during a struggle to stop shale gas fracking on Mi'kmaq lands in New Brunswick, Canada.

ecological damage.

Native communities are organizing against the Keystone XL pipeline, which would transport tar sands oil from Canada through the U.S. Northern Plains to Texas refineries, escalating injurious carbon emissions. Protesters are putting themselves on the line in this life-and-death struggle against environmental genocide.

They are in the forefront of those resisting corporate "fracking." In October, Elsipogtog First Nation tribal members were viciously attacked — and 40 arrested — by police in New Brunswick, Canada, who acted to stop their week-long protest against shale gas extraction. These struggles cry out for support from all progressive forces and communities.

The call for "Freedom for Leonard Peltier" has echoed worldwide; millions of people demand his release. His supporters are campaigning hard for clemency for the ailing 69-year-old hero — imprisoned far from his nation, the Turtle Mountain Band in North Dakota. They request solidarity messages be sent to Leonard Peltier, #89637-132, USP Coleman I, U.S. Penitentiary, P.O. Box 1033, Coleman, FL 33521.

Workers World Party raises high the banner of solidarity with all Indigenous peoples on this National Day of Mourning, and loudly proclaims, "Free Leonard Peltier!" □

Workers pack Boston hearing

EXPOSE UNION BUSTERS

Continued from page 1

city when its bid was not the lowest, as required by state law? And who gave the order to lock out the drivers on Oct. 8?

One driver, Kiette Woody Baptiste, testified that Veolia switched the union's disability insurance carrier, which had different policy terms. She was supposed to be out on disability, but the switch reduced her payments and forced her to get back behind the wheel while in pain.

What also came out at the hearing was Veolia's constant violations of the contract. Union Vice President and Benefits Administrator Steve Gillis — one of the fired drivers — told the committee how violations by Veolia started the day after the notorious union-busting firm signed the contract.

These violations included attempts to reduce the drivers' base pay by linking it to a GPS system and demanding that the workers reapply for their jobs.

Having workers reapply for their jobs is a tactic Veolia has used in other cities and signals an attack on the workers' benefits. In 2010 in Phoenix, Veolia forced non-union workers at the city bus system to reapply for their jobs and sign a waiver that they would not be eligible to recover their lost benefits.

Veolia's track record became a focus of the hearing in the public comments'

section. Speakers took to the mike to detail Veolia's crimes in propping up illegal settlements in occupied Palestine; its privatization of water services that results in high rates and cutting corners on safety; and the high rate of cities, like St. Louis and Detroit, that have rejected the company due to its terrible profits-before-people management of essential services.

Many Boston residents voiced staunch support for the school bus drivers' union, calling attention to its history as a union that fights not only for its members but for the community as well. The union has been active in anti-war demonstrations, the lesbian-gay-bi-trans-queer movement, Occupy encampments and the fight against the racist resegregation of Boston schools.

Sandra MacIntosh, of the Coalition for Equal Quality Education, described how the union had played an active role in the fight to stop school closings and the various "zone plans" that were meant to dismantle busing.

This past March the BPS adopted a plan to return to racist, segregated neighborhood schools over opposition from the community. Billboards throughout Boston are playing a central role in promoting this scheme. Who is paying for them? Veolia Transportation. □

U.N. climate conference fails to agree to reduce pollution

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

More than 190 countries attended the 19th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, this one in Warsaw, Poland, which on Nov. 23 again ended without firm commitments to limit carbon dioxide emissions.

Environmentalists condemned the event, declaring that the intransigence of the Western industrialized states prevented any substantial agreement. Since these meetings began in 1992, they have routinely been the scene of fierce debates over who should pay the price for reforming production policies in order to halt the planet's degradation by global warming that increases disastrous storms and flooding.

On Nov. 21, environmental activists walked out of the gathering, frustrated that no real progress was being made. The imperialist states only agreed to a last-minute weak agreement after China and India backed away from demanding that specific goals related to the 1992 meeting be adhered to.

Moving further from Kyoto Protocol

Washington leads the way in rejecting concrete guidelines and objectives aimed at reducing CO2 emissions. Even the current Obama administration has rejected the notion that the developed capitalist countries should be held accountable for their past industrial crimes against the planet.

Todd Stern, the U.S. envoy for climate change, reiterated that there should be no categories with different emission standards for industrialized countries as for developing countries. Washington's policy submissions to the U.N. oppose formulas based upon the economic capacity and character of various states.

At present the existing categories consist of Annex 1, the capitalist industrialized states largely in Europe and North America plus Japan, Australia and New Zealand, and non-Annex 1, the former colonial, semi-colonial and so-called developing or emerging economies.

Developing states over the last two decades have continued to demand that wealthy countries adopt legally binding, quantified-emission-reduction programs, while the oppressed and emerging economies will make changes "enabled by finance and technology transfer" based on how much various states have contributed to climate change. (E&E Climate Wire, Nov. 18)

India has maintained that formulas should exist based on the degree of industrialization and a state's strictly measured carbon emissions, and there should be no "dilution" of the annex framework. China also wants the pollution history of various countries taken into consideration as a precursor for any binding agreement that may develop by 2015.

Both China and India ask the developed states to provide assistance to the developing countries in order to improve technological systems that limit green-

house gases. India argues that Western industrial states should increase their funding and loosen intellectual property rights on environmental technology. Washington objects.

South Africa, one of the emerging economies that has recently joined the Brazil, Russia, China, India Summit, which held its last gathering in Durban, is involved in the debate around climate change. Lisa Friedman wrote in E&E Publishing that while "South Africa shares the language of its fellow emerging powers about the need for equity," it "wants to see a single legally binding protocol for all parties, with a common global commitment" and that between 2020-2030 there should be a transition for lesser developed countries that will strictly limit CO2 emissions.

Brazil, which has mediated between developed and developing states, is now taking a view similar to that of India and China, basing guidelines upon the history of carbon emissions.

The U.S. and Canada have acted to prevent the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol treaty adopted by the U.N. climate change convention in 1997. The Kyoto document set the stage for the current positions adopted by developing states and environmentalists that places responsibility for climate change on the industrialized capitalist states.

Kyoto was slated to go into effect in 2005, but the U.S., which signed the agreement and is the world's major polluter, has failed to ratify the treaty. Canada, which also signed the treaty, withdrew from it in 2011.

Although the European Union adopted the Kyoto Protocol, its alliance with the U.S. has prevented it from adopting views similar to those of the developing states.

Environmental debate must have class character

It is in the interests of the majority of nations and peoples of the world to put firm regulations and guidelines in place for preserving the planet. The major impediment to the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol is the quest to maximize profits that has characterized the world capitalist system.

Climate scientists consider the increase in so-called natural disasters, including massive heatwaves, storms and floods to stem from climate change. Inside the U.S. the issue is highly politicized. The barons of Wall Street pressure government and academia to deny even the existence of a crisis in climate change.

Environmentalists must view the ideological and political struggles surrounding climate change as a manifestation of the modern-day global class struggle. Progressives, trade unionists, national liberation movements, socialist states and international solidarity activists must enter the debate in order to provide the necessary organizational direction to push back the U.S. and its allies in their continuing exploitation of peoples around the world. □

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

Available at Amazon and other bookstores.



Sexual repression as an instrument of class domination

By Bob McCubbin

The ruling classes of the early state societies had written legal codes that “legitimized” their power, property and privileges, and that circumscribed and curtailed the rights of their subjects. Behind these legal documents stood what gave the laws their teeth: the threat of physical force, up to and including death, for violations. The mere existence of the rulers’ “armed bodies of men” was usually sufficient to guarantee “obedience” by the masses. But history also records examples of popular armed rebellions against the king’s bullies.

In Part 21 of this series we noted that the tenets of patriarchal religions brought a message to the masses that male supremacy and economic and social inequality were the natural order of things. A separate but similarly motivated message had to do with sexual relations. Religious challenges to the idea that sexual relations were a natural part of life and something to be enjoyed figure most prominently in the history of Christianity as it evolved from a rebellious sect into a powerful instrument of exploitation and repression for use by the European ruling classes.

Sexual repression as religious doctrine

Patriarchal religious doctrine provided a complimentary and highly efficient resource for ruling-class control. To the external threat of physical repression, Christianity and other patriarchal religions added an internalized “conscience” of what was “moral” and what was not. In James Neill’s “The Origins and Role of Same-Sex Relations in Human Societies,” we find a concise description of the evolution of Catholic Church teachings on sex and marriage: “A common characteristic of the clerical reformers who began assembling the ecclesiastical opinions, penitentials, patristic writings, and the edicts and decrees of church councils into the first collections of canon law was an undisguised horror of sexual activity. ... The ascetic reformers ... were convinced that to achieve salvation it was necessary to be freed from the evil of sex. They not only took a vow of chastity, but strove to eliminate even sexual thoughts from their minds. ...

“[The reformers] were not merely suspicious of sex, but hostile to any sexual activity at all, save for marital relations undertaken expressly and consciously to conceive a child.’ In their zeal for sexual purity, the reformers went beyond even the asceticism of the early church Fathers, and were determined to limit marital sex to the absolute minimum, and on penalizing extra-marital sex as harshly as possible.” (p. 361)

Neill writes that the Catholic Church’s campaign to abolish marriage among priests and nuns was hard fought over several centuries. “Marriage by members of the clergy, theoretically forbidden since the 5th century, was singled out for condemnation in statutes passed by the Council of Mainz presided over by Pope Leo IX in 1054. [Pope Gregory VII’s] statute forbade non-celibate priests from officiating at mass, prohibited clergy who were still married from having any sexual intercourse at all, and required that married clergy who did not immediately separate from their wives be defrocked. ...

“Resistance to the church’s efforts to abolish clerical marriage and enforce celibacy among the clergy was fierce and

widespread. Defiance of the ban, in fact, would persist for nearly two centuries before it was established with finality across Europe.” (pp. 370-371)

The pitiless implementation of sexual repression

If the Vatican’s view of connubial bliss among the heterosexual laity and clergy was harsh, its posture with regard to sex outside of church-sanctioned marriage and especially with regard to homosexual acts proved, in practice, to be global and genocidal.

Taking from Neill’s detailed account just a sampling from the church’s centuries-long campaign against “sodomy,” we read: “The fourth Lateran Council, convened by [Pope] Innocent III in 1215, brought one of the largest ever assemblages of church leaders to Rome.” The decrees passed at this church council included the establishment of what would become the Office of the Inquisition, a requirement that Jews wear special identifying dress, a crusade “to restore the Holy Land to Christian rule,” and a re-statement of the demand for celibacy.

“The end result of the initiatives undertaken by Innocent III was the creation by the late 13th century of a religious tyranny overseen by the papacy, and enforced not only by the Inquisition, but by the newly organized mendicant orders [church groups whose members were sworn to poverty], who made it their business to seek out and punish sexual nonconformists, intellectual dissidents or anyone else who fell outside of the papacy’s vision of a Christian society ruled by God’s law as dictated by the pope.” (p. 378)

Neill describes in detail numerous examples of the horrors that befell hapless individual victims of the Inquisition, but the campaign also included mass killings, as happened, for example, with the massacre of an estimated 7,000 men, women and children in the French town of Beziers. The town was known as a center of the Cathar heresy. The Cathars were one of a number of mass movements in medieval Europe that challenged the anti-sex doctrines of the Catholic Church. These groups appear to have maintained pre-patriarchal religious beliefs and practices, including ritual sexuality by members of the same sex. Therefore, they were special targets for Vatican repression.

Sexual repression had a class basis

Unfortunately, Neill offers only a psychological basis for the crimes of the Catholic Inquisition. He is undoubtedly correct that sexual repression is an important source of psychopathology. But the roots of the European anti-sex campaign were not to be found in the pathology of one or a handful of deranged individuals. The Vatican clearheadedly oversaw a continent-wide organization and was Europe’s prime landowner in this period. Rome at times competed and at other times cooperated with the secular nobility of Europe. Its motive was to continue amassing wealth and preserving its political power. It used both organized violence and the internalization of sexual guilt, by which means it weakened the ability of the masses to unite and resist its harsh rule.

But is our focus on the Catholic Church, with its center in Rome, and Christianity in general an example of a one-sided Eurocentric analysis? We think not. The anti-sexual doctrines of Roman Catholi-

cism at first represented an attack on the social/sexual living patterns practiced by the European masses. Finding them useful in controlling the people, the rulers then had the same sexually repressive doctrines exported all over the world by Catholic and other Christian missionaries as the imperial powers of Europe sought world conquest.

What follows is a small sampling of the crimes perpetrated on an almost global basis by the self-appointed representatives of Jesus Christ, who were, in reality, obvious servants of the European colonial masters.

Ramón Gutiérrez’s book, “When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846,” documents the great harm caused to the Indigenous peoples of then northern Mexico by the Spanish invaders’ religious fanaticism (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1991). In the section of his book titled “Franciscan Evangelism,” he writes: “If the [Pueblo] Indians were to reach God, they too would have to be led through purgation, illumination, and union. This clearly emerges when the friars outlined their mission in New Mexico as that of leading the Indians ‘out from the darkness of paganism and the somberness of death’ and into the ‘Father of Light.’

“The purgation of the Indian’s soul began with a systematic repudiation of Pueblo religion. The Indians had to renounce Satan, banish his earthly assistants (native chiefs), and forsake their superstitious beliefs and idols. To assure that the Indians did not cling to their idolatry the friars raided homes, confiscated katsina dolls, ceremonial masks, prayer sticks, and fetishes. ...

“Once the visible forms of idolatry had been destroyed, the friars turned their attention to the wretched sins of the flesh. Sex in Pueblo society was a positively valued activity that assured social and cosmic reproduction. Few restrictions were placed on sexual pleasures, and certainly guilt and remorse were not associated with such activities. ...

“The Puebloans practiced serial monogamy and polygamy, and seemed undisturbed by sexual variance. The main distinctions the Christian lexicon had to describe Indian sexual practices were those of sin. Thus the Pueblo ‘berdaches,’ those half-men—half-women who symbolized cosmic harmony, were simply ‘putos’ (male whores) and ‘sodomitas’ (sodomites) to the Spanish. Even the position in which the Indians copulated was ‘bestial.’ ...

“The laws of God commanded chastity before marriage, fidelity within the nuptial state, life-long indissoluble monogamy, and modesty and shame in all bodily matters. Men and women who practiced ‘bestial’ activities, who wallowed in their pagan promiscuity, violating Christian laws of sexual morality, had to be publicly whipped, placed in stocks, and sheared of their locks.” (pp. 71-73)

Missionary malevolence in Kenya and Tahiti

In the book-length collection of essays edited by Peter Drucker titled “Different Rainbows,” we find Kenya-born John Mburu’s contribution under the title “Awakenings: Dreams and Delusions of an Incipient Lesbian and Gay Movement in Kenya” (London: Millivres Ltd., 2000). On the subject of sexual freedom, he writes: “It is evident that the notion of

exclusive heterosexuality in pre-colonial sub-Saharan Africa is not borne out by the evidence. Though same-sex practices were not met with social approval in all African societies, it is clear that in many communities same-sex relations were closely interwoven in the social fabric. In some cases, as with the institution of ‘jin bandaa,’ transvestite homosexuals played a significant role in the community.

“With one of the fastest growing church populations in the world, Africa is pervaded by the influence of Christian doctrine opposed to homosexuality. Early evangelizing missions surreptitiously meshed traditional African customary belief systems with biblical scripture. ... African practices that were considered an abomination — such as levirate, a practice in which widows would marry their deceased husband’s brother; female circumcision; woman-woman marriage; and homosexuality — were stamped out or driven underground. ...

“Kenya’s archaic penal code dates back to the era of British colonial rule. While in Britain penalties against ‘crimes against nature’ were repealed in 1967, these vestiges of Kenya’s colonial past still remain intact.” (pp. 182-184)

Another example of missionary interference in the social/sexual lives of Indigenous peoples comes from Niko Besnier’s contribution to the book “Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History” (edited by Gilbert Herdt. New York: ZoneBooks, 1996). Besnier writes: “For Europeans of the Enlightenment and early Romantic era, Polynesia, one of the last frontiers of colonial expansionism, was the embodiment of a paradise.” (p. 288)

“But soon enough, European perceptions of Polynesia changed course. Particularly as the London Missionary Society was being established in Tahiti, vanguarding massive missionary endeavors throughout Polynesia for years to come, the island turned, in the eyes of foreigners, from the New Cythera [a name given Tahiti by a French explorer] to ‘the filthy Sodom of the South Seas.’ ... Besides infanticide, human sacrifice and adultery ... one feature of Tahitian society particularly captured the missionaries’ attention. ... The Tahitians’ ‘predilection’ for ‘sodomy’ had already been amply described in seafarers’ journals. ... George Hamilton, surgeon on the British frigate ‘Pandora,’ who spent three weeks on the island, had remarked in 1791 that young men were kept ‘for abominable purposes.’” (pp. 290-291)

“British seamen and missionaries of the Georgian era evaluated the practices of which they caught glimpses in Tahiti through a specific framework of moral reference. In the late eighteenth century, ‘sodomy’ had become the focus of particularly virulent revilement in England. As is well documented, sodomy was an ‘utterly confused category’ into which fell many ‘unnatural practices,’ principally homosexual and heterosexual oral or anal intercourse and bestiality.” (p. 293)

Much more documentation for the dissemination of anti-sexual propaganda and repression throughout Indigenous North America, South America, Africa, Oceania and Asia on the part of professional proselytizers for patriarchal religions is available. But in the next installment, we turn our attention to the rise of capitalism in the metropolitan centers of Europe and elsewhere and its effects of the institution of marriage. □

Conferencia WW-Mundo Obrero debate estrategias para derribar el capitalismo

Por John Catalinotto
Nueva York

Trabajadores/as. Juventud. Detroit. Boston. Estos temas están ahora en el primer plano de la conciencia de muchos/as de los/as activistas políticos que asistieron a la conferencia nacional anual del Partido Workers World /Mundo Obrero de este año. Fue una experiencia que marca la vida. No sólo por las palabras, sino por la vibrante atmósfera inducida al principio de la reunión del 16 y 17 de noviembre en Nueva York. Más de 300 personas asistieron desde 20 estados y docenas de ciudades.

Cuando el Partido se preparaba para forjar estrategias para este periodo del capitalismo sin salida, llegaron los/as sindicalistas de autobuses escolares de Boston. En medio de su propia lucha de vida o muerte contra el monopolio transnacional Veolia, decenas de conductores/as de autobuses escolares de Boston mayormente de origen haitiano y caboverdiano que llegaron en autobús desde esa ciudad, entraron a la sala de conferencia al compás de aplausos y gritos de los/as cientos de participantes, muchos de ellos/as jóvenes que asistían a su primera conferencia de WW-MO.

Desde la introducción de Garrett Dicembre el sábado por la mañana, a la sesión de micrófono abierto el domingo, los/as participantes pudieron escuchar y sentir el cambio en la conciencia de la clase obrera. Los/as jóvenes, que experimentan empleos poco remunerados e inseguros, describieron cómo se dieron cuenta de que el “sueño americano” estadounidense se había convertido en una pesadilla de abuso, racismo, acoso sexual y pérdida de trabajo - y esto los/as llevó a comprometerse a una vida de lucha de clases organizada.

Minutos después de que los/as conductores de autobuses llenaran tres filas de asientos en la parte delantera de la sala, llegó la delegación de la Misión Cubana en la ONU. Esto provocó otra ronda de aplausos. WW-MO y sus aliados/as han manifestado una estrecha solidaridad con la Revolución Cubana desde que esa revolución socialista se enfrentó al imperialismo estadounidense.

Mientras Ariel Hernández, primer secretario de la Misión, describía las medidas adoptadas por Cuba para defender sus conquistas socialistas contra el bloqueo estadounidense, vítores y consignas de “Libertad para los Cinco Cubanos” y “Cuba sí, Bloqueo no” llenaron el salón y crearon el ambiente para la conferencia.

La lucha contra el capitalismo sin salida

Las presentaciones de la primera sesión tuvieron una tarea doble: no sólo explicar cómo y por qué una civilización global se está descomponiendo, sino también la apertura de los debates sobre las estrategias para movilizar a la clase obrera a luchar para derrocar el sistema.

Fred Goldstein, miembro del Secretariado, presentó un análisis marxista de la concentración de trabajadores/as de servicios, ahora la mayoría de la clase obrera, en los empleos de baja remuneración, trabajos sin sindicatos en la cadena de tiendas gigantes que colocan a los/

as trabajadores/as que tienen salarios y condiciones similares, muy cerca unos/as de otros y de los/as organizadores.

El primer secretario Larry Holmes, quien examinó las deterioradas condiciones económicas globales para los/as trabajadores/as en los EE.UU. y en todo el mundo, instó a la participación en el movimiento de los/as trabajadores/as de bajos salarios, específicamente para apoyar una huelga el 5 de diciembre que ya está en marcha. La presentación de Holmes se publicará en el próximo número.

Abayomi Azikiwe explicó cómo Detroit se había convertido en el principal ejemplo del ataque de los bancos para saquear las ciudades. Allí la clase dominante está utilizando un procedimiento de bancarrota para transferir miles de millones de dólares de la clase trabajadora, a los bancos. La Coalición Moratoria ¡AHORA! ha hecho un llamado a una manifestación de masas fuera de la corte federal el 10 de diciembre para exigir el rechazo de un acuerdo con el Banco Barclays.

La miembro del Secretariado de WW-MO Teresa Gutiérrez, discutió el impacto de la crisis sobre los/as inmigrantes en los EE.UU. desde el espléndido recrudecimiento de la lucha en el 2006 y la huelga general el Primero de Mayo de ese año. Con 2,5 millones de deportaciones desde que el presidente Barack Obama asumió el cargo, cientos de miles de detenciones y la continua militarización de la frontera Estados Unidos-México, un nuevo salto en la conciencia se está produciendo entre los/as jóvenes migrantes. Algunos/as incluso han provocado arrestos voluntariamente para poder entrar en los centros de detención masiva y organizar a los/as trabajadores migrantes.

La miembro del Secretariado de WW-MO Monica Moorehead, quien presidió la sesión plenaria de apertura, rindió homenaje al USW 8751, el sindicato de los/as conductores de autobuses escolares de Boston. Stevan Kirschbaum, uno de los fundadores del sindicato y presidente del comité de quejas, quien está ahora despedido, explicó cómo Veolia rompió el contrato y condujo a la multitud a cantar canciones sindicales. Su presentación y la de los otros/as conductores/as de autobuses escolares sobre las tácticas antisindicales de Veolia y su lucha contra ella produjeron consignas de “¡Veolia debe irse!” y el compromiso de defender a los sindicalistas despedidos y recuperar sus empleos.

Una sesión durante el almuerzo para discutir tácticas para enfrentar al gigante transnacional y ganar la lucha en Boston atrajo a más de 100 participantes.

FIST y la ‘generación Trayvon’

La organización juvenil, ‘Luchemos contra el Imperialismo, Unámonos’ (FIST por las siglas en inglés), fue puesta en el mapa. Caleb Maupin de Nueva York, repasó la historia de lucha anti-imperialista de WW-MO y de los/as ‘Jóvenes contra la Guerra y el Fascismo’ de una generación anterior de jóvenes activistas. Tachae Davis de Detroit y Eva Panjwani de Carolina del Norte, trajeron ese espíritu de lucha al año 2013. Colleen Davidson de Baltimore, presidió la sesión y Q Wideman de NC Heat recitó un poema suyo.

El hecho de que el título de esta segunda plenaria habló de la “generación Trayvon” “mostró el enfoque de la juventud en la lucha contra los asesinatos racistas por policías y otras personas, la política del “stop-and-frisk” (parar y cachear) y “el conducto directo de escuela a la cárcel”. El programa de FIST también defiende los derechos de las mujeres y de la comunidad LGBT y la lucha de los/as trabajadores/as migrantes - en la cual los/as jóvenes están asumiendo el liderazgo. Estas luchas se integrarán con la lucha por puestos de trabajo con un salario digno.

Estas palabras rápidamente fueron puestas en acción la noche del 16 de noviembre cuando FIST encabezó una marcha y manifestación a las oficinas cercanas de Veolia, a una oficina del Bank of America y a un restaurante McDonald en protesta de la represión sindical, los bancos ladrones, la brutalidad policial y los bajos salarios.

Una tercera plenaria abarcó la creación de organizaciones populares independientes de los partidos políticos capitalistas para combinar las luchas comunitarias y laborales. Una discusión trató de las Asambleas del Poder Popular y las Asambleas de Trabajadores/as.

La presidió Summer Smith, de Salt Lake City. Entre los/as oradores/as estaban Larry Hales de Nueva York y Sharon Black de Baltimore - donde el movimiento asambleario ya ha participado y dirigido resistencia local y regional. John Parker de Los Ángeles comentó sobre la defensa de Siria contra la intervención de Estados Unidos y la OTAN.

Peter Gilbert de Carolina del Norte describió el asalto por el partido derechista del Té, que ha monopolizado el gobierno del estado y ha lanzado ataques contra los/as trabajadores/as y los pueblos oprimidos en este estado de “derecho al trabajo” (anti-sindical), donde funcionan leyes anti-sindicales.

WW-MO sobre la lucha antiimperialista y la unidad socialista

La última sesión plenaria en este intenso día revisó las iniciativas anti-imperialistas de WW-MO y la unidad socialista. La firmeza antiimperialista de WW-MO estableció el programa para el movimiento anti-guerra. La editora de Mundo Obrero Berta Joubert-Ceci, habló sobre América Latina, y Sara Flounders, co-coordinadora del Centro de Acción Internacional y miembro de la Secretaría de WW-MO, habló sobre la posición de Lenin sobre la lucha contra la guerra imperialista.

El orador invitado Joe Lombardo, de la Coalición Unida Nacional contra la Guerra (UNAC por sus siglas en inglés), también describió el objetivo de UNAC de apuntar al imperialismo estadounidense como el tema central unificador de sus protestas aquí. El orador invitado Kazem Azin, de Solidaridad Irán, agradeció a WW-MO por su papel anti-imperialista consistente en el movimiento contra la guerra.

Kris Hamel, de la redacción del periódico WW-MO, explicó la manera de señalar el camino hacia el socialismo levantando demandas transitorias que los capitalistas seguramente rechazarán

en su ciudad de Detroit, como “Tomen el dinero de los bancos, no de los/as trabajadores/as de la ciudad”.

El orador invitado Joe Iosbaker, de la Organización Socialista Camino a la Libertad, atacada hace tres años por un gran jurado federal represivo, planteó la necesidad de la solidaridad continua, en este momento para Ramea Odeh, una mujer palestina detenida el 22 de octubre en Chicago por haber sido encarcelada por los ocupantes israelíes hace 45 años.

Otra de las redactoras del periódico WW-MO, LeiLani Dowell, quien presidió, trató de la situación en Honduras y la solidaridad de WW-MO con el movimiento de resistencia que fue establecido allí después del golpe de 2009. La candidata de la resistencia para las elecciones presidenciales ha estado ganando en las encuestas. El próximo día, las invitadas de ese movimiento, Lucy Pagoada y Celina Montes, se dirigieron a los/as asistentes.

También el domingo, la secretaria general de BAYAN-USA Bernadette Ellorin, habló del desastre natural agravado por la negligencia del gobierno en algunas partes de las Filipinas y el pretexto del desastre climático que el imperialismo estadounidense ha usado para volver a ocupar partes del país. Abayomi Azikiwe trató de la situación en África, incluyendo el aumento de la intervención militar estadounidense.

El 17 de noviembre, un “micrófono abierto” (open mic) dio la oportunidad a comunistas experimentados/as y también a nuevos/as activistas para responder a las cuestiones planteadas en la conferencia o contar de sus experiencias en la lucha de clases. Tova Fry del Área de la Bahía de San Francisco e Imani Henry de Nueva York, presidieron.

La sesión de clausura presidida por Dianne Mathiowetz de Atlanta, incluyó un análisis por la editora-en-jefe de WW-MO Deirdre Griswold, sobre las circunstancias que rodearon el asesinato en 1963 del presidente John Kennedy. Explicó que un encubrimiento del papel de la extrema derecha continúa hasta hoy en día y describió la contribución de WW-MO para ayudar a organizar en ese momento una investigación independiente.

También, Joyce Chediak reportó sobre la primera reunión durante la conferencia de un caucus de WW-MO de personas con discapacidades y cómo la discapacidad es una construcción social. También habló de la lucha por los derechos de las personas con discapacidades.

Larry Holmes hizo un llamado para que la gente se una al Partido porque se necesitan nuevos/as líderes políticos para dirigir las luchas que seguramente surgirán en el próximo futuro.

Los/as participantes en la conferencia aprobaron una serie de resoluciones sobre la solidaridad internacional y otra de solidaridad con el sindicato USW 8751.

La conferencia había comenzado con una entusiasta canción por Pam Parker acompañada en la guitarra por Richard Miller y se cerró cuando todos/as los/as participantes cantaron “La internacional”, en inglés y en español, y gritaron consignas exigiendo la libertad de los prisioneros políticos Mumia Abu-Jamal y Oscar López, entre otras consignas. □