

WORKERS WORLD



Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

workers.org

Jan. 23, 2014

Vol. 56, No. 3

\$1

Coal industry poisons W. Va. water Capitalist greed impacts 300,000 people

By Benji Pyles
Charleston, W. Va.

A spill into the Elk River near Charleston, W.Va., on Jan. 9 from a chemical plant owned by Freedom Industries forced a cutoff of water in West Virginia as a state-wide “state of emergency” was called that day and a federal “state of emergency” the following day. The spill contaminated the water supply of customers of West Virginian American Water’s Kanawha Water Treatment Facility, which spans nine counties and serves 300,000 people.

The state government issued an advisory that tap water in these nine counties would not be safe for anything but flushing toilets. The chemical 4-methyl cyclohexane methanol is a sudsing agent used in the process called “froth flotation,” used to remove impurities from coal. Exposure to the chemical can cause skin irritation and burns, respiratory irritation, as well as nausea and vomiting, upon ingestion.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Guard have been mobilized to distribute usable water as stores run out of bottled water.

On Jan. 10, most public and private establishments, including schools, daycares and nursing homes were closed. The closings left tens of thousands of people without work and with limited access to basic necessities and services. Hospitals remained open by conserving water, but elective surgeries were cancelled. While restaurants and many department store chains were closed, some remain open.

Lawrence Terrell, an African-American department store worker at the Charleston Town Center Mall, told Workers World: “While restaurants and hair salons closed, many stores in the mall stayed open. Since we cannot wash our hands, the bathrooms are basically closed. Just like bottled water, hand sanitizer is also in short supply.”

The total amount of chemical spilled is still unknown as of Jan. 12 and there is as yet no timeline as to when tap water will be safe for general use.

According to the Jan. 10 Charleston Gazette: “The DEP [Department of Environmental Protection] was getting complaints about a strange licorice odor as early as 8:15 a.m. Thursday [Jan. 9], and when its investigators arrived at Freedom Industries later Thursday morning, they found that the company had taken ‘no spill containment measures.’ The DEP said Freedom first reported the spill at 12:05 p.m. Thursday.”

Jerry McIntyre, president of West Virginia American Water, told the Gazette that his water company had had no contact with Freedom Industries. The authori-

Honor Dr. King’s memory: Fight racism and for workers’ rights!



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

A LIVING WAGE FOR AIRPORT WORKERS 6

FREE Albert Woodfox! 3

JUSTICE for Andy Lopez, Clarence Moses-El 3, 4

REINSTATE Fired Boston Bus Drivers 5

DEFEND IFCO/Pastors For Peace 7

ties were not even able to identify the chemical until 4 p.m. At 5:45 p.m., the office of Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin declared the state of emergency.

Freedom Industries remained silent on the spill until the next morning, when the company president, Gary Southern, issued a statement, saying, “This was unfortunate, unanticipated and we are sorry for the disruption.” Southern also claimed the chemical level is of “low toxicity.” Even the corporate media noted Southern’s hypocrisy, as he could be seen drinking bottled water as he issued the statement.

This spill comes as the West Virginia Legislature is beginning its session, where legislators are scheduled to discuss many proposals that weaken Environmental Protection Agency regulations further and give more power to the coal and hydraulic fracturing (fracking) industries.

In the last eight years, West Virginia suffered two major mine disasters — at Sago and Upper Big Branch — as

Ariel Sharon’s Genocidal Legacy

Workers & politicians

Editorials 10

well as many smaller accidents. Two miners died on the job just last October because the Mine Safety Hazard Administration was not in operation during the federal lockout.

West Virginia is ground zero for strip mining, mountaintop removal and now fracking, all processes that endanger the environment and the population. Though

Continued on page 4

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

Amiri Baraka ¡presente!

Amiri Baraka, a longtime Black revolutionary who was very influential in the struggle against racist and class oppression for over five decades, died on Jan. 9 at the age of 79, following a short illness in Newark, N.J. At a Jan. 10 public forum in New York City, Workers World Party First Secretary Larry Holmes pointed out that Baraka used his status as a spoken word poet, writer and playwright to help elevate the Black liberation struggle starting in the 1960s — when he was first known as Leroi Jones — until his death. It was this powerful combination of politics and artistry that propelled Baraka as a towering, respected and beloved figure within the Black movement and among other progressive sectors.

A wake for Baraka will be held on Friday, Jan. 17, at Metropolitan Baptist Church, 149 Springfield Ave. in Newark from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. The funeral will be held on

Amiri Baraka reads "Somebody Blew Up America" poem before 1,100 people at Mumia Abu-Jamal solidarity rally at the Philadelphia Constitution Center in Phila., Pa., on Dec. 9, 2011.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Saturday, Jan. 18, at Newark Symphony Hall, 1030 Broad Street at 10 a.m.

Go to blackleftunity.blogspot.com/?view=magazine for tributes to Baraka. A full obituary on Amiri Baraka will appear in a future issue of WW.

—Monica Moorehead

WORKERS WORLD this week...

★ In the U.S.

- Coal industry poisons W. Va. water 1
- Amiri Baraka ¡presente!..... 2
- Juanita Starr Doares 1925-2013 2
- Free Albert Woodfox NOW!..... 3
- Milton Vera, Puerto Rican revolutionary 3
- Andy Lopez killing - No justice! No peace!..... 3
- Investigation, reparations sought for Clarence Moses-El .. 4
- Mumia Abu-Jamal on Lynne Stewart: Free 4
- Setback for Veolia boosts Solidarity Day 2 for bus union .. 5
- Autoworkers, community demand 'people's recovery' ... 5
- 1934: When underpaid workers resisted 5
- Big Apple airport workers demand paid King holiday 6
- IFCO/Pastors for Peace fights IRS attacks..... 7
- Native, environmental activists take on GE, Big Oil 7
- A Brief History of 'Marriage' Part 28 8

★ Around the world

- Colombia 2014: A year of sharpening struggle ahead 9
- International meeting to seek justice for Iraq 9
- Haitians get only imperialist occupation 10
- Thousands of African migrants strike in Israel 11
- Chilean soccer team supports Palestine 11

★ Editorials

- Imperialists praise 'butcher' Sharon 10
- Class consciousness -- of politicians, workers 10

★ Noticias en Español

- ¿Por qué la nueva ley de salud es ya tan cara? 12
- ¿Desempleo juvenil global? 12



1925-2013

Juanita Starr Doares

Special to Workers World

Juanita Ann Starr Doares, a fighter for people's rights, and against racism and injustice, died on Dec. 11. She was 88 years old.

She was born in 1925 in western North Carolina to Coyt Velma Lingle and Cecil Mims Starr, a telegraph worker. Her father was of Cherokee/Tuscarora descent, her mother came from a long line of German Lutherans who settled in western North Carolina after the Civil War. She was raised in Columbia, S.C., where her family moved when she was 2 and where her sister and brother, Frances and Frank, were born.

During the Depression her father was sometimes out of work and sometimes worked three jobs to support the family. Her mother made sandwiches for the many jobless and hungry people, Black and white, and served them every day on the porch. "We are here on earth to help people," her mother said. Juanita always remembered those words.

Juanita hated the racism and segregation of the Jim Crow South. Several times she was thrown off city buses for challenging the racist seating rules and refusing to sit while Black passengers were made to stand. She joined the NAACP and voted for Henry Wallace in 1948.

She attended the University of South Carolina and got a job in the college library, replacing a young man named Wade Doares, who had gone off to fight in World War II. They met after the war, when he came to get his old job back. They wed in New York City six years later.

She moved to New York City to attend library school and got a job at the main branch of the New York Public Library. She worked there for 41 years, starting on the night shift in the main reading room and ending up as director of collection development.

Her proudest achievement at the library was working with Jean Blackwell Hutson to save the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and helped moved it into its new home on Malcolm X Boulevard in Harlem.

She marched against racism, for women's rights and against imperialist wars from Vietnam to Iraq. After retiring in 1989, she devoted herself to fighting for the rights of retirees, seniors and the disabled. She helped found the Retired Public Employees Association, the New York Public Library Retirees Association and the

Older Women's League. She served as president of all three and edited their newsletters.

In the 1990s, she led a victorious fight for a cost-of-living adjustment for retired New York State employees. She campaigned tirelessly to defend Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, for lower prescription drug costs for seniors and especially for free health care for all. She received RPEA's Marion Martin Award, OWL's Joyce Baylen Award and the Dorothy Epstein award of the Joint Public Action Committee for Older Adults.

She supported her spouse, Wade, also a librarian, in his battle with cerebellar ataxia. Both were active members of the National Ataxia Foundation.

She is survived by her sister, Frances, and her son, Bill, a longtime member of Workers World Party. □

Start the new year right! Give to Workers World

Think about what this paper brings you 51 weeks a year. We tell the truth about how capitalism at home and imperialism abroad make the world a very unhealthy, oppressive, unjust place for working and oppressed people.

We cover all major national and international news — about working people dealing with austerity measures from Detroit to Riga, Latvia; from school bus drivers in New York City to those in Boston; from airplane machinists in Seattle to railroad workers in Seoul. We point out the role played by U.S. imperialism that oppresses Cambodian garment workers and propels protesters in Cairo.

So start off the new year right by showing how much you value the news and analysis from a revolutionary socialist perspective that Workers World brings you, week after week, year round. We set up the Workers World Supporter Program 36 years ago so you could do just that.

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 2014 Supporter Program. □

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

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. 56, No. 2 • Jan. 16, 2014
Closing date: Jan. 7, 2014
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, Bryan G. Pfeifer, 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, Carlos Vargas
Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

Copyright © 2014 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.

After 41 years in solidarity

Free Albert Woodfox NOW!

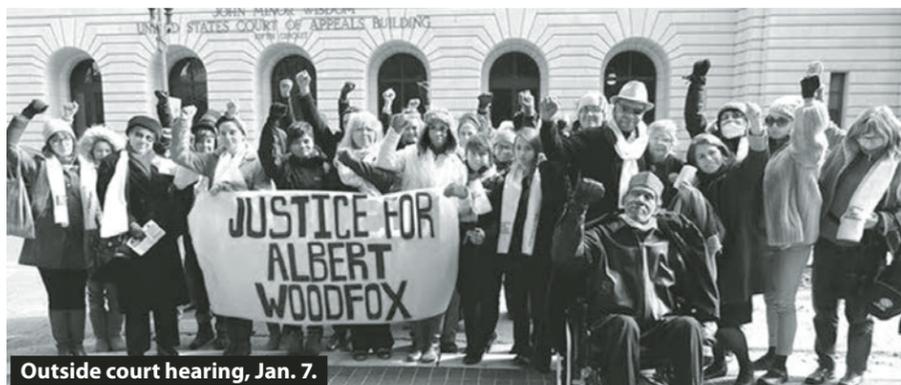
By Anne Pruden and Gloria Rubac
New Orleans

Jan. 7 — Angola 3 supporters, numbering over 100, braved the unusual, sub-freezing, windy weather in New Orleans to attend oral arguments in the case of Albert Woodfox at the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals today. After every single seat in the 80-person en banc courtroom was filled, an overflow courtroom with audio of the hearing was opened for another three dozen supporters.

The 5th Circuit will decide whether to uphold U.S. District Judge James Brady's ruling last February that overturned Woodfox's 1972 conviction. This was the third time his conviction was overturned; this time because of racial discrimination in the selection of his grand jury foreperson.

The Angola 3 are three African-American men who were imprisoned in Louisiana in the early 1970s, who began to expose and organize against segregation, rape, systemic corruption and horrific abuse in the biggest prison in the US, an 18,000 acre, former slave plantation called Angola.

These men — Albert Woodfox, Herman Wallace and Robert King — organized hunger strikes and work stoppages and formed a chapter of the Black Panther Party. They called for investigations into inhumane practices. After elected officials and the media started to look at the conditions at Angola, the three were charged with the murder of a guard, a crime they did not commit, and thrown into 6 by 9 foot solitary cells in an attempt to silence them.



Outside court hearing, Jan. 7.

WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

King, released in 2001 after 29 years of solitary confinement, dedicated his life to freeing his two comrades and has built national and international support for the Angola 3. This past October, Wallace's conviction was overturned and he was released. But he had advanced liver cancer and lived in freedom for only three days.

Woodfox, confined to solitary confinement for 41 years, is the last of the Angola 3 still in prison. He endures strip and cavity searches as often as six times a day. He was not allowed to attend today's hearing, but his presence was keenly felt as supporters wore bright yellow scarves reading "Justice for Albert Woodfox" on one side and "Stop Solitary" on the other.

At a press conference and rally after the hearing, Robert King urged continued support for Woodfox. He reminded the crowd that in June there will be a hearing on their civil rights lawsuit contesting the use of solitary confinement.

Malik Rahim, a leader of the Common Ground Collective and a former member of the Black Panther Party, told the media

that Woodfox would be freed, not by the court across the street but by the court of public opinion. "We have to let the state know that 'the good old boys' won't run West Feliciana Parish!" he said, referring to the parish where Angola is located.

Rahim was recently successful in having the New Orleans City Council pass a resolution recognizing the Angola 3. This is the first time any elected officials in Louisiana have recognized the injustice in the Angola 3 case.

Speaking for the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, which has mounted a strong campaign against solitary confinement, was the Rev. Dr. Patricia Teel Bates. "As a faith leader, I am here to support the immediate release of Mr. Albert Woodfox, and to call for an end to the immorality and inhumanity of his confinement. As I speak, we remember that over 80,000 men, women and youth in U.S. prisons, jails and detention centers are subjected to solitary confinement on any given day, detained in a cell alone for 23 hours a day for months, years, decades. Such conditions have long been considered a form of torture."

Other speakers included longtime supporter, artist Jackie Sumell, who worked with Herman Wallace to write and produce the recent film "Herman's House." Also speaking was Ron Harpell, who produced a documentary film about Robert King called "Hard Times."

Also in attendance were representa-

Continued on page 4

A loving tribute to MILTON VERA PUERTO RICAN REVOLUTIONARY

By Angela Vera

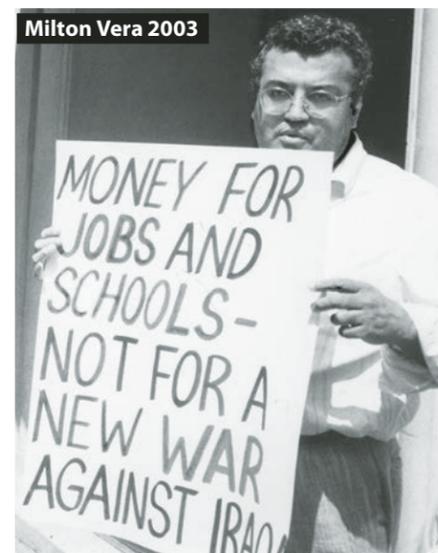
I met Milton roughly 30 years ago when I was working at Casa Nicaragua, during a time of tumultuous revolutionary struggles throughout Latin America and the world. I would always see Milton at organizing meetings, but we didn't get to know each other better until Comrade Rafael Ramos formally introduced us.

Milton was a revolutionary and strong advocate for his beliefs. He joined Workers World Party because he wanted to make the world a better place and was optimistic that it could happen. He was convinced that socialism was the path through which the working class, and by extension the world, would improve.

Milton was warm, generous and empathetic. He loved life and wanted to spread his optimism to others, and his outgoing nature made it easy for him to do so. I was here illegally at the time and was very shy, but Milton made it easy to become close. I found that he understood the struggles of undocumented people, and he would go out of his way to help me, even going so far as to assist in legalizing my status.

I was not the only one he helped. Milton would try to get people jobs, give them money in their times of need, and always had his apartment door open, making sure people felt at home. He would listen to anyone who would come to him for help, be it emotional or physical. This was particularly true with party members, who he considered his second family.

Milton was a family man who was always concerned about the well-being of his children. He visited them often and



made sure they were both financially and emotionally cared for. He tirelessly advocated for family unity, so that all branches of his family loved and respected each other.

Milton's impact on our lives cannot fully be described in words. He will live on through the lessons he taught, the jokes he made, the love he provided and the concern he showed for his fellow human beings and his commitment for social justice and equality. Our memories of him serve as the best testament of the kind of man he was, and our actions moving forward are the best way in which we can honor him. While he will be missed, I know that more than sorrow from his death, he would want us to remember the joy that he spread in our lives. Milton Vera ¡presente!

Workers World Party will be holding a special memorial for Milton Vera.

Police killing of Andy Lopez

No justice! No peace!

By Terri Kay
Santa Rosa, Calif.

Supporters demanding justice for Andy Lopez, led by the Mothers in White, packed a Sonoma County Board of Supervisors (BOS) public hearing on Jan. 7. Thirteen-year-old Andy Lopez was killed by Deputy Erick Gelhaus, Santa Rosa Sheriff's Department, on Oct. 22 as Andy was returning a replica AK-47 BB gun to his friend's house. Ever since the killing, the streets of Santa Rosa have been filled by young, mostly Latino/a students demanding justice for the loss of his young life.

The community was recently further enraged upon hearing that Deputy Gelhaus was returning to work, albeit on desk duty. No charges have been filed against this deputy, despite the blatant circumstances under which Lopez was killed. Gelhaus pumped at least seven rounds of bullets into the 13-year-old's body within two to three seconds of "shouting" an order to the Latino child to drop the gun.

Over 50 members of the community testified at the hearing. Dara McCuiston, one of the Mothers in White, said to the supervisors: "You have terrorized an entire community. It tells the community that it's open season on Mexicans. ... Arrest Gelhaus!" Nicole, the mother of Andy's best friend, talked about how her own son must testify in a case about the murder of his sister, and he won't have his best friend at his side during this trying time.

Sixteen years ago, the U.S. Civil Rights Department investigated officer-involved-shootings in Sonoma County. The resulting recommendations they issued in 2000 were never implemented. Since then there

have been 37 civilian deaths in Sonoma County related to police shootings. Since the Lopez killing, the BOS has approved a park on the site of the Andy Lopez memorial, the place where he was killed, and formed a long-sought-after Community and Local Law Enforcement Task Force.

Albert Howard, referring to other law enforcement killings as well, described them as "wanton outright murders wrapped in veils of secrecy — those who murdered our youth protected by those elected to serve us ... shoot to kill and leave no witnesses" at the hearing. The latter comment referred to lessons by Gelhaus, a Sonoma County firearms instructor for 19 years. In a 2008 article for the monthly policing and gun rights magazine, S.W.A.T., Gelhaus gave other officers advice on what to do if the possibility arises: "Today is the day you may need to kill someone in order to go home. If you cannot turn on the 'mean gene' for yourself, who will? If you find yourself in an ambush, in the kill zone, you need to turn on that mean gene."

Another speaker, Ramon Cairo, from Brown Berets of Sonoma County, said: "A predator came into our community and murdered a child. It's hunting season, and if you happen to be a minority, the mark is on you!" Addressing the supervisors, he added, "Silence is complicity." Alice Loaiza, of Marcha Patriótica — Capitulo, California, spoke about how "the name of Andy Lopez is known all over Latin America."

On Jan. 2, a memorial altar erected on the site where Andy was killed caught fire under suspicious circumstances. The community quickly rallied and rebuilt it two days later. □



Milton Vera 1975, center.

Justice for Clarence Moses-El

By Larry Hales

In November 1996, Clarence Moses-El, who is imprisoned at Bent County Correctional Facility in Las Animas, Colo., expected to be vindicated of the rape for which he had been convicted in Denver. Ever since his conviction in 1987, Moses-El has upheld his innocence. From the beginning, he asked that the biological evidence be tested. It wasn't.

But in 1996, after having raised the \$1,000 requested by Barry Scheck of the Innocence Project, money that he was able to pull together from donations given to him by fellow prisoners, Moses-El felt that he was finally going to prove his innocence.

He won a court order to get evidence tested, including a sexual assault kit, bed sheets and clothes of the victim. Four weeks passed. Instead of being tested, the evidence — in a box marked, "DO NOT DESTROY" — was tossed into a dumpster by the Denver Police Department. And with it, it appeared that Moses-El's chance to prove his innocence was discarded.

Moses-El would later appeal his conviction, but the request for a new trial was turned down by a judge based on the 1988 *Arizona v. Youngblood* decision, which determined that destroying evidence or negligence, in and of itself, does not constitute "bad faith." The court's opinion stated, "Unless a criminal defendant can show bad faith on the part of the police, failure to preserve potentially useful evidence does not constitute a denial of due process of law." (coloradoindependent.com, Dec. 2, 2013)

The destruction of the evidence was against procedures of the DPD, according to a series of articles on destruction of evidence published by the Denver Post in July 2007. The newspaper found at least 141 cases of persons in prison who had evidence thrown out that would have exonerated them of the crimes of which they had been convicted.

In 2007, attorneys associated with the Innocence Project requested that



Clarence Moses-El

the case be reopened, especially after the Denver Post articles, but the district attorney, Mitch Morrissey, refused to investigate the case, stating, "The defendant has had his day in court."

Investigator: 'I have always had doubts'

Morrissey still upholds that Moses-El does not deserve a new day in court, despite a confession by the person originally identified as being the attacker.

LC Jackson, who was one of three people with the victim when they were drinking that night and identified as one of the persons possibly responsible for the attack, recently gave a confession after having written a letter to Moses-El, which began with: "I really don't know what to say to you. But let's start by bringing what was done in the dark into the light. I have a lot on my heart." (coloradoindependent.com, Dec. 2, 2013)

Jackson is currently in prison for the 1992 rape and assault of a 9-year-old and her mother.

The victim did not bring up Moses-El's name until almost two days after the assault, when she said a vision came to her in a dream. She claimed she had visions or premonitions before that had turned out to be true. Her first statement referring to who could be responsible for the brutal rape and assault, which led to her

losing vision in one eye, was "LC, Earl, Darnell," the three men she had been drinking with together earlier in the evening and before she went home alone.

Moses-El was arrested, while Jackson and the others were never arrested or questioned regarding the assault, although they were listed in the victim's statement and police records.

As to why the victim would accuse Moses-El, the original investigator cites an ongoing argument between the victim and Moses-El's spouse, the last of

which ended with the victim telling his spouse that she would get even with her.

James Huff, a detective who investigated the case and is since deceased, stated in 2005 in a sworn statement: "Due to the fighting and the bickering, the jealousy, the pettiness, all of that, I always have had doubts about this. I could never prove it either way," and "This is one of those cases where I really wish there was DNA." ([Denver Post](http://denverpost.com), July 22, 2007)

There is now a resurgence to win a new investigation in the case and exonerate Clarence Moses-El. It is important that he be set free as well as paid reparations for the 27 years that he has been locked in prison for a crime he did not commit. This could have been proven years ago except for destroyed evidence and failure to test the evidence in the original trial. □

Free Albert Woodfox

Continued from page 3

tives of Amnesty International, whose members hand-delivered 50,000 signatures on a petition in October urging the Louisiana attorney general's office to drop their appeal of Woodfox's overturned conviction.

The Angola 3's civil suit contends that their more than three decades of solitary confinement is cruel and unusual punishment. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled the suit has merit to proceed to trial. The outcome of this landmark civil case could be precedent-setting and eliminate long-term solitary confinement in U.S. prisons.

Developments can be followed via Angola3.org and angola3news.blogspot.com.

Letters can be sent to Albert Woodfox #72148, David Wade Correctional Center, N1 A3, 670 Bell Hill Road, Homer, LA 71040.

Pruden and Rubac are longtime members of Workers World Party and veteran activists in the struggle to free all political prisoners. Rubac is a leader of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement.

W. Va. water poisoned

Continued from page 1

the state has rich resources — such as coal, timber, oil and gas — that enrich the corporations that extract them, West Virginia has historically and currently remained one of the most impoverished states.

Spill raises questions

This event raises some obvious questions: When did Freedom Industries know about the leak? Why did they not advise the water company or authorities as to the identity of the chemical? Why were there no monitoring and/or reporting protocols? Why were there no instructions in place to advise those who had been exposed? Why are chemical tanks allowed to be placed beside a river and just upstream from a major water intake in the first place?

This situation is a superb example of the anarchy inherent in the capitalist system, where maximizing profit is given priority over safety.

The public knows little about Freedom Industries. Most people affected were unaware of the company's existence until the spill. What is known is that Freedom is a distributor for Georgia-Pacific, which is a subsidiary of Koch Industries. The billionaire Koch brothers, Charles and David, are founders of the racist, anti-worker, anti-environmental movement that has imposed the reactionary "FreedomWorks" and "Americans for Prosperity" groups and the anti-worker Tea Party.



Freedom Industries, Jan.10, 2014.

This spill is one more example of the disastrous symptoms caused by the profit-driven system. It's another disaster that raises the advantages of having industry centrally planned and under the control of workers and oppressed people instead of leaving this power in the hands of the ruling class.

Jeremy Bauman contributed to this article. Pyles and Bauman are Workers World Party activists who reside in Huntington, W. Va. □

Lynne Stewart: Free



Lynne Stewart



Mumia Abu-Jamal

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

Taken from a Jan. 2, 2014, audio column at prisonradio.org.

By the time you read this, Lynne Stewart, New York's people's lawyer, will be home, sleeping in her own bed, in the company of her beloved husband, Ralph Poynter, and their children and grandchildren.

It has been a long and tortured haul — from judge to judge, from bias to hatred (with no small amount of jealousy, we might add) — to punish Stewart, not because of her words in the press, but because of her advocacy on behalf of the

poor, the oppressed, the dispossessed, the targeted and the powerless.

She was the lawyer you got if you were in trouble, broke or both.

She and Ralph toiled in New York for years to make sure people had at least a shot when they entered the icy courtrooms of New York, the anterooms of prisons and perdition.

Lynne is ill, yes; but her spirit is fine. She knows that her family — and the extended family of activists near and far — love her.

As she rests and recuperates with her family, we unite to hope that this season is but the first of many, many, many more. □

Setback for Veolia boosts Solidarity Day 2 for bus union

By Tony Murphy

The fight to reinstate the wrongly fired leaders of United Steelworkers Local 8751, the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, got a boost on Jan. 8 when Veolia Transportation lost the contract to run Massachusetts' commuter rail system.

The loss by Veolia, the vicious French-based, global union-busting company that runs Boston's school bus system, of the \$4 billion contract is another blow against the company's ability to do business in the area. Its vendor contract to run Boston's school bus system is threatened by a series of hearings called by City Councilor Charles Yancey.

Yancey called the hearings because Veolia's multiple violations of the school bus drivers' contract put the company in breach of its vendor contract with the city. Furthermore, the no-show at the first November hearing by Veolia executives, school department officials and former Mayor Thomas Menino was not lost on or appreciated by the city council members of color who were there.

Yancey has therefore used what is called a 17F hearing order to require Veolia executives and school department officials to appear at the next hearing, scheduled for late January.

Boston could be the next place — after St. Louis, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Las Vegas, Pensacola, Fla., Paris, among many other cities — where Veolia's nasty profits-before-people policies have prompted a people's movement that drives it out of the city.

The primary objective, of course, is to win the union leaders' jobs back. In No-

vember, Veolia fired four drivers — Andre Francois, Steve Gillis, Steve Kirschbaum and Garry Murchison — who comprise the union's elected organizational backbone. That's why the Massachusetts AFL-CIO has joined USWA Local 8751 in initiating Solidarity Day 2 on Feb. 1 at Boston's Fields Corner. That's a follow-up to the successful Nov. 9 demonstration on Solidarity Day 1.

On that day hundreds of school bus drivers, out of a total of 860, after rallying throughout Boston's Dorchester neighborhood, marched to Veolia's corporate offices. The majority Haitian and Cape Verdean members marched, danced and chanted, accompanied by joyous drumming, through the streets in a powerful showing, which included community supporters, city council members, radio personalities and union supporters. A busload of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1181 members, the New York school bus drivers union, drove all the way to Boston to show solidarity.

Covered extensively by local media, the demonstration followed a month of yard meetings and rallies, which combined to beat back false propaganda that the firings were because of a "wildcat strike." Forced by the struggle, the big-business media coverage of the rally began accurately reporting that the firings followed Veolia's lockout of the workers.

This time, Solidarity Day 2's embrace by the state labor federation will put Veolia on notice that the union movement is united and is not backing down. Many of the same prominent allies from Solidarity Day 1 will take part in SD2, including Charles Clemons from Touch 106.7, Bos-

ton's African-American radio station.

USWA 8751 has deep support, as shown by an online fundraising campaign for the fired drivers' families, which raised \$14,000 from about 150 donors in a month's time.

Militant union fighting to win against capitalist austerity

Veolia's loss of the state light rail contract was a boost to Local 8751's struggle because it represented the increased collaboration between the Palestinian solidarity movement and organized labor. Veolia has been singled out by U.N. human rights officers as central to the construction of illegal apartheid settlements in the West Bank. The Palestinian solidarity movement used the Nov. 8 public hearing to expose this and call attention to the school bus drivers' fight.

Boston is fast becoming ground zero for the growing international movement against Veolia. Of course, the struggle against Veolia is more than a fight against the corporate crimes of one capitalist company. At its core, it is one of many frontline battles against bank-driven austerity in the U.S. and worldwide.

In early 2012, a fighting coalition of Boston activists successfully fought the closing of Grove Hall Post Office, located in the African-American community of Roxbury.

Local 8751 played a central role in that struggle, with its leaders driving a flatbed truck-turned-stage that community lead-

At Solidarity Day 1 on Nov. 9, workers said, 'What's disgusting? Union busting!'



ers, radio personalities, union leaders, AFL-CIO officials and local politicians used during campaign rallies.

The local helped organize a school bus drivers' union at Eastern Bus Company this past fall; sent a busload of drivers last winter to support striking school bus drivers in New York City; and has been central in the ongoing fight against resegregation of Boston's public schools.

The Boston School Bus Drivers Union exemplifies the best tradition of Karl Marx's statement that unions must, "apart from their original purposes ... learn to act deliberately as organizing centers of the working class in the broad interest of its complete emancipation."

In the era of cutbacks and layoffs, such a union is a threat, and it has been identified for destruction by Boston's 1%. But the fightback ability that made the local such a target has also sparked a dynamic campaign that may make Boston the next city that can score a win — not just against Veolia, but against the bank-mandated capitalist austerity that is causing everything from massive cutbacks in food stamps to the looting of pensions in cities like Detroit. □

Autoworkers, community activists demand 'people's recovery'

working-class unity with the chant "Columbia to Michigan, solidarity is going to win!" Autoworker Caravan has brought the struggle of General Motors workers in Bogotá, Colombia — who were fired after they were injured — to the attention of shop floor workers in Detroit and other cities. The group has raised more than \$15,000 to sustain the families of fired workers, members of the Association of Injured Workers and Ex-workers of GM Colmotores, who have maintained a tent occupation across from the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá for almost 900 days.

A statement of solidarity with the protest and with Detroit's autoworkers from Brazilian GM workers was read. These workers are facing mass layoffs in São José dos Campos. GM is not allowing the workers to transfer to a new plant, which is being built and will employ lower-paid workers.

While their action was being filmed by a German TV crew, autoworkers chanted "Keep Opel open!" — a reference to a GM plant in Bochum, Germany, slated for closing this year.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership, characterized as "NAFTA on steroids," was targeted in a second mike check. The point was made that "if you're in the 1%, TPP is heaven-sent," but for workers on either side of the Pacific it's a bad deal.

The demonstrators took a stand in support of Detroit city workers and residents who are under attack through the bankruptcy proceedings. Chants against the

banks that have destroyed the city were popular.

Another aspect of the "people's recovery" platform that was raised was the need to reverse the concessions of recent auto contracts and eradicate two-tier and

multi-tier pay and benefit structures.

On Jan. 26, Autoworker Caravan will meet to discuss bringing its message to the United Auto Workers Convention in June as well as building workers' power on the shop floor. □

1934: When underpaid workers resisted

By Caleb T. Maupin

As 2014 begins, workers and oppressed people in the United States are looking at the fight ahead. Low-wage workers are on the move, demanding higher wages, union rights and dignity.

Eighty years ago, workers were also fighting back and organizing for justice. The year 1934 was a turning point in the class struggle, and a great year for the working class. It was a year when low-paid workers shook the foundations of the U.S.

The low-wage workers of the 1930s were often recent immigrants from Italy, Eastern Europe or Ireland who worked in industries. Some African-American workers, who had moved north trying to escape Jim Crow, also worked in the industries, receiving even lower wages. The steel mills, textile plants, packing houses

and other urban industrial centers were known for their low wages, lengthy hours and unsafe working conditions.

Beginning in 1929, the U.S. was experiencing the infamous Great Depression. Laid-off workers were poorly clothed, hungry and homeless across the country. Starting in 1931, there were huge uprisings of unemployed workers. The Hunger Marches, led by the Unemployed Councils, brought out thousands of workers to demand "Work or wages now!" "Don't starve, fight!" was the slogan as veterans held the famous Bonus March of 1931, demanding benefits and occupying Washington, D.C.

Many radical organizers looked for inspiration to the Soviet Union at the time, which was having an economic boom while the rest of the world was in a depression. Workers were inspired to fight

Continued on page 6



WW PHOTO: ABAYOMI AZIKIWE

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

For the fifth year in a row, the rank-and-file autoworker advocacy group Autoworker Caravan protested outside the North American International Auto Show at Cobo Hall, in Detroit, on Jan. 12. This protest's theme was the demand for a "people's recovery." In an Occupy-style mike check and skit, the question of "whose recovery?" was asked several times.

The answers pointed out that while the auto bosses and bankers are celebrating the recovery of their profit margins, those for whom there has been no recovery include first- and second-tier U.S. autoworkers, autoworkers in low-wage countries, and Detroit's city workers, retirees and unemployed.

The protest also emphasized global

Big Apple airport workers demand paid King holiday

By Sue Davis

On Dec. 19, hundreds of contract workers at Kennedy, LaGuardia and Newark airports rallied outside the New York headquarters of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and presented a petition to the PA signed by more than 2,000 workers. It had a list of demands and a deadline by which the workers want the PA to address their complaints about being paid poverty wages without affordable health care benefits, paid sick days and holidays, and union representation.

What the 15,000 workers, mostly Black and Latino/a, want is to commemorate the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, celebrated this year on Jan. 20, as a paid federal holiday. "Many of us are children of pioneers who fought for Civil Rights, who changed America," said security guard Prince Jackson at the rally. "They fought for a better life for us, not poverty wages with little or no benefits. ...

"Dr. King died supporting Memphis sanitation workers who were working under deplorable conditions and making what today would be \$11.41 per hour. Forty-six years after Dr. King's death, I earn \$8 an hour. Most airport workers earn just \$8 per hour. We also work under deplorable conditions. We are here to say: Our issues must be addressed, starting with Martin Luther King Day 2014." (SEIU 32BJ press release, Dec. 20)

For over a year, the workers who do such jobs as cleaning airports and handling baggage have been struggling with private contractors — like Airway Cleaners/Alstate Maintenance, PrimeFlight, AirServ and Aviation Safeguard hired

by the PA — for higher wages with benefits and union representation. But the contractors have ignored them. Now, the workers are addressing the PA, which was set up by the states of New York and New Jersey to oversee area transportation and which has used outsourcing to lower its costs.

But the race to the bottom for workers in the country's airport industry has got to stop. A study published last November by the Labor Center at the University of California, Berkeley reported that there was a serious decline nationally in airport workers' wages between 2002 and 2012. For instance, outsourcing of baggage porter jobs increased from 25 percent to 84 percent, with one out of three workers (37 percent) living in poverty and forced to subsist on government benefits. Jobs that used to pay \$19 an hour now pay \$10.60, a 45 percent decrease.

The report, entitled "Course Correction: Reversing Wage Erosion to Restore Good Jobs at American Airports," noted that wages at U.S. airports grew more slowly than wages in the food services and retail industries. But airport workers are joining the growing movement of underpaid workers for both a living wage and a union voice on the job.

To support New York area airport workers' demands for a paid MLK holiday, sign the petition at preview.tinyurl.com/kj6zsf.

The New York City chapters of the People's Power Assembly and OccuEvolve are supporting the Jan. 20 demonstration of airport workers at LaGuardia Airport. Go to peoplespowerassemblies.org for more information. □

1934: underpaid workers resisted

Continued from page 5

back by communist leaders, who agitated about how unemployment, homelessness and poverty would be eliminated in a "Soviet America."

With unemployed workers and veterans already in motion, it was in 1934 that low-paid industrial workers took action on the job.

The general strike wave

In San Francisco, the dockworkers shut the city down. They refused to unload the ships until their union was recognized and the humiliating "shape up" practices were ended. The union also demanded that Black workers be hired to work on the docks. When the longshore workers went on strike, workers all throughout the city joined them. President Franklin D. Roosevelt begged the strikers to return to work, as businesses throughout the country could not receive imported goods. Four longshore workers were killed by the National Guard, who opened fire on the striking workers.

When the strike was finally over, the longshore workers had won many of their demands. They had union representation, much higher pay and better working conditions. Black workers were hired to work alongside white workers on the docks. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union still represents the dockworkers on the West Coast to this day.

In Minneapolis, the drivers who delivered coal so people could heat their homes organized into the Teamsters union. Leaders of the local wanted to expand the union from simply representing

the coal drivers to representing workers throughout the entire city. With the demand "Make Minneapolis a union town!" the coal drivers shut down the city.

The rule was "no scab trucks." No car could travel the streets of Minneapolis without a pass from the union. Activists from the union and community with baseball bats made sure of this. Soon, the National Guard was sent in, but the workers fought back.

When the Minneapolis Teamsters strike ended, the workers were victorious. With Minneapolis as a base area, the Teamsters were able to expand to Kansas, Nebraska and other parts of the country, winning contracts and improving working conditions.

In Toledo, Ohio, the workers at the Auto-Lite auto parts factory also shut the city down in a general strike. Workers across the city walked off the job in solidarity. The National Guard was sent in, and the workers fought back.

In addition to the three municipal general strikes, 1934 was also the year of a national textile workers strike. Workers across the South in the National Textile Union went on strike to demand union representation. South Carolina's governor declared a state of emergency in response to this uprising, and called out the National Guard and vigilante squads to battle the strikers.

Then and now

The American Federation of Labor was at first opposed to organizing industrial workers, instead focusing on "skilled trades." In Minneapolis, San Francisco and Toledo, as well as in the textile mills of



On Martin Luther King Jr. Day

SUPPORT LOW WAGE WORKERS

Fight for \$15 an hr & a union!

'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere'
Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

MON ▶ JAN 20

Support NY Airport Workers Rally

11:30 am @ LaGuardia Airport Ditmars Blvd. & 94th St.

Demand decent pay & a UNION

AIRPORT WORKERS RISE UP /32BJ SEIU

Right now, 15,000 low-wage workers who do maintenance work and many other jobs at NYC's three major airports are fighting for a living wage and a union. These airport workers work for various contractors that pay close to the minimum wage, offer little or no healthcare and paid sick days. These workers do not even get the Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday off with pay.

These workers have demanded that the Port Authority of NY&NJ which operates JFK, LaGuardia, and Newark airports declare that airport workers be given the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday on Mon. Jan. 20, with pay. The airport workers and all workers who are forced to work low-wage jobs need your support.

Millions of low-wage workers — working in fast food restaurants like McDonald's, Wendy's, large retail stores like Walmart and thousands of other places including the airports in and around New York City — are standing up and fighting for a living wage, better working conditions and the right to be in a union.

People's Power Assemblies
peoplespowerassemblies.org
PPA Meetings every Wed. @ 6:30 PM
147 W 24th St., 2nd Fl. NY, NY 10001

OccuEvolve (OWS)
occuevolve.com
Meetings every Fri. @ 7 pm
at 60 Wall St., NYC

ON THE **THIRD ANNIVERSARY** OF THE **OCCUPATION OF THE WISCONSIN CAPITOL**



ATTEND A REGIONAL WORKERS ASSEMBLY

SAT ▶ FEB 15 BALTIMORE ▶ MD

3 pm ~ 7pm SHARP HALL Govans Presbyterian Church
5828 York Rd (near Senator Theater and #8 and 36 buses)



Discuss the Low Wage Workers Struggle for Justice.
Raise Wages Now! Learn about the \$15 an hour minimum wage campaign.
VEOLIA — What's Disgusting? Union Busting from Boston to Baltimore! SuperShuttle drivers & school bus drivers need our support.
NEXT STEPS — **MAY DAY 2014 STRIKE! RALLY & MARCH** Come & testify about your problems & grievances whether it's low pay, no pay, lack of sick days, unfair firing or discrimination.
We want to hear from you!

Initiated by the Baltimore & Maryland **'WE DESERVE BETTER' WORKERS ASSEMBLY**
For more info: Call 410.218.4835 PeoplesPowerAssemblies.org

the South, it was communists, armed with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, who led the struggle. To do it, they had to push back the right-wing labor bureaucrats.

Communists like Samuel Darcy, Farrell Dobbs and William Z. Foster said all workers — "skilled" or "unskilled" — had the right to be unionized. They also said that racism had no place in the labor movement, and that Black workers and white workers should stand together against the bosses. They knew that successful strikes involved the support of the community, especially the unemployed and oppressed workers.

Following the strike wave of 1934, Roosevelt signed the Wagner Act. The right of workers to organize unions became federal law. By the early 1940s,

workers all across the country in steel mills, packing houses, rubber plants and auto plants had won union representation and better wages.

In modern times, the Democratic Party often talks of bringing "good paying industrial jobs back to America." They ignore the fact that industrial jobs only became good paying because of militant organizing and working-class struggle.

Instead of trying to reimport industrial labor to the U.S., it is time for low-paid workers in fast-food restaurants, airports, hotels and everywhere to do what industrial workers did in 1934. It is time for them to fight back. Eighty years after 1934, we must raise the call for working-class power — and fight against capitalism! □

Solidarity group's aid to Palestinians

IFCO/Pastors for Peace resists IRS attacks

By Teresa Gutierrez

Once again the U.S. government is targeting the solidarity movement with harassment in an attempt to silence the progressive movement in this country.

IFCO (the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization)/Pastors for Peace says it has become the victim of "political persecution and an aggressive harassment campaign by the IRS." At the root of this recent attack, according to government documents, is IFCO's work with Viva Palestina.

A faith-based, social justice agency, IFCO/Pastors for Peace was founded over 40 years ago and was the first national foundation, they proudly declare, founded and controlled by people of color. It has carried out some of the most groundbreaking and historic campaigns in solidarity with Cuba and has been a leader of principled actions that defy U.S. policy in bold and even heroic ways.

The co-directors of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, Gail Walker and Father Luis Barrios, issued a statement Jan. 6 on behalf of the organization alerting the progressive movement to a two-plus-year campaign by the Internal Revenue Service against IFCO.

This campaign has resulted in an attempt by the IRS to strip IFCO of its tax-exempt, nonprofit organizational status, commonly known as 501(c)(3). Hundreds if not thousands of social organizations in the U.S. use this status in order to raise badly needed funds and to save on costly government taxes.

If the government is successful in stripping IFCO of this status, it could be a blow to other organizations, too — such as those fighting for immigrant rights and the rights of the homeless, the poor, youth and countless other populations who depend on these organizations for services and survival.

It would send a chilling message to any organization and progressive movement that it could easily be targeted for harassment. But IFCO's response to this harassment is another example that the movement will not be silenced and will fight back.

Muslim bashers behind IRS audit

IFCO representatives explain that the IRS audit was put into motion because of requests by Rep. Brad Sherman, a Democrat from California, and Sue Myrick, a retired Republican congressperson from North Carolina, in a rare show of bipartisan unity. They wrote to the commissioner of the IRS, the U.S. Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury alleging that IFCO "may be raising funds for Hamas." Hamas is a Palestinian organization with broad grassroots support, especially in Gaza where it is the elected authority, but it has been labeled a terrorist organization by the U.S.

Former Rep. Myrick is an extreme conservative. According to the Charlotte Observer, upon her resignation from office last year, "Myrick may be best remembered for her outspokenness on illegal immigration and terrorism. Her supporters were plentiful ... repeatedly casting their ballots to keep her in office. Her critics accused her of fomenting hate against immigrant and Muslim communities. She penned the forward [sic] to a book — 'Muslim Mafia' — whose researchers called Islam a disease. Citing the book, she joined other Republicans in 2009 calling for an investigation of the Council on American-Islamic Rela-

tions, a pro-Islam nonprofit, accusing it of planting 'spies' within national-security committees to shape legislative policy.

"Said Jibril Hough, a spokesman for the Islamic Center of Charlotte, 'I honestly believe that she really thinks there is a conspiracy behind almost any Muslim in public life. That's what her legacy will be. Someone who promoted Islam-o-phobia and thinks there is a conspiracy behind every Muslim in public life.'" (Dec. 29, 2012)

In response to IRS charges, IFCO states, "This is a blatantly false allegation. IFCO is being persecuted because in 2009 we agreed to serve as a fiscal sponsor to the U.S. component of the project Viva Palestina. Viva Palestina is a British-based charity organization that provides food, medicine and essential goods and services needed by the civilian population [of the occupied Palestinian Territories], and that highlights the causes and results of wars with a view to achieving peace."

Solidarity is not 'terrorism'

Viva Palestina is an international solidarity campaign that brought material aid to Palestine in defiance of sanctions, blockades and other acts of war against the oppressed Palestinian people. It helped organize the delivery of \$1 million in food, medicine and essential supplies to the Palestinian people, accompanied by such prominent figures as author Alice Walker, New York City Councilperson Charles Barron, British Member of Parliament George Galloway, former Congressperson Cynthia McKinney, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark and many others, during some of Israel's fiercest attacks on Gaza.

Co-directors Walker and Barrios add that the IRS is also attacking IFCO's decades of solidarity work with Cuba. As the government escalated its years-long harassment with these recent charges, IFCO/Pastors for Peace and all the supporters and friends of IFCO immediately went into motion to challenge and resist this attack.

Countless groups and individuals called IFCO, Walker reports, to show solidarity and ask how they could help. An email campaign asking people to carry out solidarity tore up the Internet with phone calls and emails to the government.

A legal challenge is of course part of the response. The IFCO Appeal, according to Walker and Barrios, "eloquently described work we have historically done to advance the struggles of oppressed people for justice and self-determination. The Appeal proves that the projects we support and operate have faithfully furthered our mission and our organization's tax-exempt purpose."

The appeal also points out that the Viva Palestina project "was not designed to nor did it in fact support any terrorist group but was designed to provide ambulances and medical supplies to the people living in Gaza who had been suffering from the lack of such humanitarian supplies and equipment."

Against blockade and ban on travel to Cuba

In addition, IFCO/Pastors for Peace has for decades organized caravans filled with aid to Nicaragua and other places in Central America.

Because of entrenched animosity to the Cuban Revolution by U.S. imperialism, unlicensed travel and aid to Cuba, as well as spending U.S. dollars there, are all forbidden by the 50-plus-year blockade

against that country.

But IFCO/Pastors for Peace decided heroically in the early 1990s to defy that ban because it is wrong. It not only took forbidden aid to Cuba through the U.S./Cuba Friendship Caravan, but refused to apply for any kind of license. And upon reentry to the U.S., the caravans and the Venceremos Brigade openly and publicly declare they have traveled to Cuba.

Each year ever since, dozens of cars, buses, vans and even trucks filled with all kinds of vital aid have made their way across the U.S., stopping in cities where forums, rallies and meetings explain what kind of country Cuba really is.

These caravans are groundbreaking, and will be part of the progressive and revolutionary history of the Cuban solidarity movement in this country.

During the second caravan to Cuba in 1993, with tons of aid stowed on a little yellow school bus and other vehicles, Pastors for Peace refused to sign legal documents that justified the blockade of Cuba. The caravan was prevented from crossing the U.S.-Mexican border for many days.

As a result, a hunger strike by dozens of the hundreds of participants began right there at the Texas-Mexico border and lasted for 23 days.

This struggle made national news on one of the rare occasions that anything positive is said about Cuba. Time Magazine wrote that the government "blinked" in the confrontation with IFCO.

The caravan and its aid were finally released, to the cheers of the hundreds of participants. This stalemate resulted in a victory not only for Pastors but for the millions in solidarity with Cuba worldwide.

It was this example of defiant heroic solidarity that earned IFCO the wrath of the Office of Foreign Assets Control. Indeed, Pastors for Peace has continued to refuse to go along with any laws that justify the economic and political war against Cuba.

OFAC is the government entity that enforces the blockade of Cuba. It has attempted for over 20 years to harass IFCO, including with injunctions, but has failed.

The progressive movement is confident that today's attack against IFCO/Pastors for Peace will result in another victory for IFCO and all those struggling for a better world. The organization will prevail because, as IFCO points out, aren't conditions such as 15 million children in the world dying of hunger each year and 50 million living in the United States without health insurance real acts of terrorism? These conditions are the basis for a real fightback against the right.

IFCO writes, "We have no way of knowing how the IRS is going to respond to our Appeal, but we want you to know that as always, we are ready to fight; to defend and protect IFCO and its rich history. As we wage this battle we are counting on your support and participation in this vital campaign to defend ourselves and those that we support, against this brutal IRS attack."

Indeed IFCO/Pastors for Peace deserves the support and solidarity of everyone. Cuba and Palestine and all those in struggle deserve no less.

For more information and to find out how to participate in the campaign to defend IFCO/Pastors for Peace, including making needed donations, visit ifconews.org or call the office at 212-926-5757.

Native & environmental activists take on GE & Big Oil

By G. Dunkel

The tar sands of Alberta, Canada, are the dirtiest, most polluting oil source in North America and require very specialized, massive evaporators to extract the oil they contain.

For months, a coalition of Native and environmental activists has been fighting the transportation of this equipment through Indigenous lands in the Northwest.

General Electric makes these huge evaporators, used to reclaim water from tar sand processing at its plant near Portland, Ore. Each one is 96 feet long and weighs up to 644,000 pounds. The convoy that transports them is 380 feet long, 19 feet high, 23 feet wide and weighs around a million pounds. It takes up two traffic lanes.

The first route GE tried to use went through Nez Perce (Niimiipu) tribal lands on Highway 12 and was stopped cold by a blockade led by Nez Perce elders, with the support of environmental activists armed with an injunction.

So GE's hauling company, Omega Morgan, chose another route from the port of Umatilla, Ore., to Homedale, Idaho, along a series of winding mountain roads.

Omega Morgan's attempt to move the first mega load Dec. 2 met quick resistance from the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla, supported by local environmental activists. The protesters — or "protectors" according to the Native activists — locked themselves to the loads,



Equipment at oil sands mine in Alberta, Can.

stalled cars in front of them and generally slowed the convoy down.

The first load hit bad weather and lacked permits to move through Montana. The second began moving on Dec. 22 and is nearly in Idaho. The third is still waiting in Umatilla.

In a Dec. 9 letter to Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber, the board of trustees of the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla challenged the permits issued for transportation of the mega loads. They cited lack of consultation with the tribe by the Oregon Department of Transportation. Board chair Gary Burke noted that "tar sands mining has had negative impacts on Indigenous peoples in Canada, causes significant environmental damage, and is a contributor to global climate change." (yesmagazine.org, Jan. 8)

Linda Sampson, a member of the Walla Walla tribe, added, "In the global picture we all have to breathe the same air, we all have to drink the same water. And as the destruction continues it's going to affect us." □

A Brief History of 'Marriage'

Women and revolution

By Bob McCubbin

*"As we come marching, marching, we bring the greater days,
The rising of the women means the rising of the race.
No more the drudge and idler — ten that toil where one reposes,
But a sharing of life's glories: Bread and roses, bread and roses."*

In 1912, the women textile workers of Lawrence, Mass., went out on strike. Their demands were most eloquently expressed in banners proclaiming "Bread and Roses." These words inspired a poem by James Oppenheim that was subsequently set to music by Martha Coleman. (folkarchive.de/breadrose.html)

At a time when state victory is following state victory in the countrywide struggle for same-sex marriage rights in the U.S., but, at the same time, reactionary attacks against women's reproductive rights are spreading, this series has been an effort to step back and examine, from a historic (and prehistoric) materialist perspective, the evolution of the institution of "marriage," but most particularly the status of women within that institution and within society.

A historical materialist approach, first consistently applied to human social evolution by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, provides a factual, scientific basis for a revolutionary perspective and for revolutionary optimism that dead-end capitalism can be uprooted and replaced by a rational and humane system based on human needs and desires, i.e., socialism.

A much-quoted observation by Marx and Engels in "The Communist Manifesto" — that "the ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class" — motivated our exposure, in the first installment of this series, of the intellectual absurdity of noted 20th century anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski's position on the institution of marriage. We do not think professor Malinowski was an uninformed person. Far from it. What he was, however, was a praised and rewarded intellectual servitor for an imperialist ruling class that was, in the period of powerful and growing national liberation struggles in the first half of the 20th century, losing its hold on its colonial possessions and panicked by the growing strength and influence of the Soviet Union. Such epochal defeats tend to give rise to the most reactionary (and foolish) ideas. Malinowski, despite his erudition and lifetime of anthropological fieldwork, was guilty of promulgating nonsense on the subject of pre-class "marriage" relations.

A scientific assessment of the evolution of human social/sexual relations is unacceptable to the rulers because it brings to the consciousness of the ruled not only that change is possible, but also that it is the very essence of the material world and, thus, of human society. And this

understanding brings with it confidence among the masses of exploited and oppressed working people that their struggles in support of social and economic justice and equality will bear fruit.

The first 12 installments of this series focused on pre-class human societies. The overriding message of this calculated emphasis on prehistory is that there is nothing natural or immutable about the subordinate social position that women have occupied through recorded history and up to the present day. Quite the contrary. The material we have reviewed has shown that the role of women in the evolution of our species has been pivotal.

The horrific history of misogyny

Our focus has been on the relative social and economic positions of women and men in nontransitory social/sexual relations. However, as this chronologically organized survey progressed into the period of the so-called agricultural revolution and beyond, we found it necessary to focus more and more on the deteriorating position of married women, and of women in general. One of the shortcomings of this "Brief History" series has been the relatively short shrift it's given to the despicable tradition in class societies of physical violence against women, both married and unmarried, young and old.

In 1993, Workers World Party published a pamphlet titled "Feminism and Marxism in the 90s." (New York: World View Publishers) Monica Moorehead, Workers World Party leader, WWP Secretariat member and leader in the U.S. anti-apartheid movement, contributed to that publication with an essay titled "Rape and Racism." Following a discussion where she contrasted the judicial treatment of Black and white rape defendants in two highly publicized cases of that time, she concluded: "While women certainly do have the right to seek justice in any arena when a crime such as rape, sexual abuse or battering by their husbands, fathers or boyfriends has been committed against them, the judicial system is a dead end in the long run. How can one expect to receive real justice from a system that has very seldom invoked the death penalty against a white man for raping a Black woman while thousands of Black men have been either legally or illegally lynched for just looking at a white woman, especially in the South?"

"Under the oppressive capitalist system, prosecuting men who have committed the crime of rape may serve an imme-

diated sense of justice, but in the long run, merely sending rapists to jail will not stop rape or any other form of violence against women. In the final analysis, the basis for eradicating sexist violence as well as racism lies in the unity of both working women and men of all nationalities fighting side by side for the complete eradication of class society." (p. 17)

Sue Davis, a longtime Party activist, writer and leader in the women's movement, added her thoughts to the pamphlet with an essay titled "The Sexual Politics of Rape: A Marxist View." She noted that "the rape of women parallels the economic plunder and military domination of countries around the world by U.S. imperialism.

"Objectively, rape, like other symptoms of severe social dysfunction and crisis — such as escalating unemployment, homelessness, poverty, preventable diseases like measles, [tuberculosis], AIDS and all forms of racist, sexist, anti-gay/lesbian violence and oppression — is a crime against humanity that could be eliminated.

"Why rape persists has everything to do with rape's historic role in what Frederick Engels calls 'the world historic defeat of the female sex,' which he details in his classic study, 'The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State.'" (p. 18)

In her concluding remarks, she writes: "Marx and Engels stated in their 1848 'Manifesto of the Communist Party' that 'the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.' Taking such a step would abolish the basis for the centuries-old oppression of women initiated through 'marriage by conquest.' At the same time labor could once again, as it was under the mother-right, be socialized for the benefit of all.

"Only if one understands the historic conditions which brought about the condition of servitude of women will we be able to find the road to complete liberation," states Dorothy Ballan in 'Feminism and Marxism.' That's why only in a society where private property — and corresponding class relationships of ownership versus oppression — has been abolished can real progress be made to eradicate rape from human history." (p. 19)

Misogyny, racism and poverty

Naomi Cohen, a dedicated revolutionary woman, longtime Party member and another of the pamphlet's authors, began her contribution to the booklet with the words: "In April 1992, close to a million women descended on Washington, D.C., in what turned out to be the beginning of the end of the Reagan-Bush era. While freedom of choice and reproductive rights were the central demands for the protest, it was, in fact, an outpouring against over a decade of attacks on women's rights

that led to the 'feminization of poverty' and outrage over the humiliation of Anita Hill at the hands of the all-white, male Senate Judiciary Committee."

Here Cohen refers to the blatantly racist and misogynist treatment that Anita Hill, an African-American attorney and professor, received in 1991, when she testified before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee about her experiences of sexual harassment by Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. Rather than accept the veracity of Hill's testimony against Thomas, or even permit further testimony by other potential witnesses who could support Hill's account, the committee, then headed by current Vice President Joe Biden, subjected Hill to public humiliation and disparagement and proceeded to confirm Thomas.

Cohen notes both the positive impact and an unfortunate shortcoming of the April 1992 women's mobilization. "While the organizers of the march on Washington did not adequately reach out to the many millions of Black, Latina, Asian, Arab and Native women who so desperately need representation and a fightback against racism and poverty, the demonstration did provide a platform for some speakers to raise the issues of job discrimination, lack of child care and inadequate medical care that doubly oppress women of color." (p. 5)

Cohen then elaborates on what she characterizes as "the feminization of poverty." The process of impoverishment she describes has, if anything, deepened in the last two decades. But as a revolutionary Marxist, she sees opportunity where others might feel despair: "In spite of the grim statistics, working women have a revolutionary potential as never before in U.S. history. The entrance of women into the work force on a massive scale has fundamentally changed the character of the working class itself. While once white males seemed to define the category, today the working class is thoroughly multinational and half women — millions of them African American, Latina, Asian, Native and Arabic, many of them undocumented and subjected to working conditions that approximate indentured servitude.

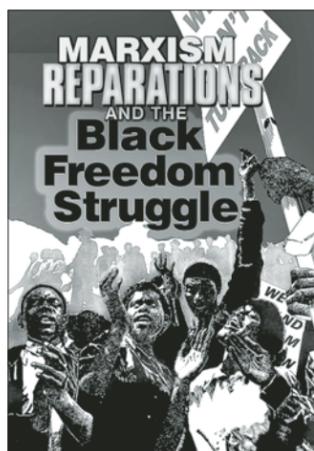
"This change means that women are a more strategic sector of the working class and lays the basis for the political leadership of the class to shift from that of the conservative white male of the past to that of the more oppressed." (p. 7)

With this idea, Cohen echoes the perspective of Workers World Party founder and leader Dorothy Ballan two decades earlier: "There is a virtual revolution going on in the minds of women. It is a harbinger of the general socialist revolution and at the same time is an indispensable ingredient for its success." □

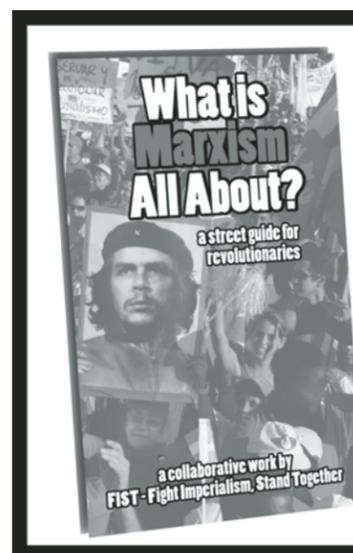
Celebrate the life of Comrade Frances Dostal

Frances Dostal, RN, a founding member of Workers World Party, died Dec. 26, 2013, in Cleveland at the age of 85. She, along with her late companion, Ted Dostal, spent her entire life as a fighter for the workers and oppressed. Her life will be celebrated by comrades and friends on Saturday, Feb. 1, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The memorial will be held at the University Heights branch of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library, 13866 Cedar Rd., University Heights, Ohio 44118-3201. For more information, contact the Cleveland Workers World Party at pfcenter@gmail.com. Go to workers.org to read the obituary.

— Martha Grevatt



MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle
Available at Amazon.com



A guide for activists that explains Marxist concepts in non-technical language. Terms like "imperialism," "self-determination" and "socialism" are defined and illustrated. The Marxist definitions of these words help sharpen an understanding of society from a working-class perspective. This book is a must-read for students and youth organizers involved in many different struggles. Written, edited and designed by young activists in FIST - Fight Imperialism, Stand Together. Learn more about FIST at fightimperialism.org

Special Introductory Price: \$8
Order from:
World View Forum
147 West 24th St., 2nd Floor,
New York, NY 10011
Available at Amazon.com

Colombia 2014:

A year of sharpening struggle ahead

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Sharpening contradictions between the opposing classes and the growing exposure of the real intentions of Colombia's ruling forces are reaching levels that can only be resolved by a new stage of the struggle in 2014. Recent developments in that country — including the increasing participation of the peasant and Indigenous people in the resistance to the regime — if continued and increased — could finally deal an immense blow to Colombia's neoliberal and neocolonial status. This status has kept the majori-

ty of the population's poor and excluded people from sharing in the benefits provided by the country's immense natural riches.

Before we look at the new developments, we must remember Colombia's reality and examine those developments in context. Colombia remains the most dangerous country for union leaders — 60 percent of all unionists killed in the world are assassinated in Colombia. These treacherous acts are perpetrated by the state and the transnational corporations together with paramilitary forces.

Meeting seeks justice for Iraq

By John Catalinotto

An increase in deaths in Iraq from internal fighting and bombing doubled in 2013 from a year earlier, reaching levels unseen since 2008. In early January, the Nouri al-Maliki regime launched an attack on demonstrators in Falluja and Ramadi, using the alleged presence of al-Qaida as a pretext and asking for U.S. military aid.

It is more than appropriate now for those who opposed the 2003 invasion to fight for reparation payments from the war criminals who invaded and occupied Iraq. The following notice from the Bertrand Russell Tribunal explains what is being done to accomplish this. In the U.S., the International Action Center is supporting this effort, as are others.

"The International Association of Democratic Lawyers, a nongovernmental organization having consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, will hold its 18th Congress in Brussels, Belgium, April 15-19, 2014. This Congress will be the number one meeting, networking and exchange opportunity for hundreds of legal activists throughout the world.

"Two days of this Congress will be dedicated to several commissions on topics and themes in which legal activists worldwide are involved. In partnership with IADL the BRussells Tribunal will organize a commission on April 16-17 about 'Accountability and Justice for Iraq.'

"The aggression against Iraq, launched by the 'Coalition of the Willing,' under the command of the U.S. and Britain, was not just immoral, it was properly illegal and fits the Nuremberg definition of a Crime against Peace. Such a war should have its legal consequences for the aggressors and rights for the victims under international law.

"To date, no official has been brought to justice for war crimes, crimes against humanity and for waging a war of aggression, the supreme international crime. We have to change that equation. All those who are responsible for the invasion of Iraq should be held accountable for the destruction of the country's infrastructure, its economic and social structures, its historical past and its health and education.

"Reasonable legal experts should work towards the goal of making reparations to the Iraqi people, who have been so deeply affected by this war and its aftermath and they should bring the perpetrators to justice."

Developing a 'roadmap' for justice

"The BRussells Tribunal intends to bring together international legal experts and activists who will explore the possibilities for legal actions against those responsible for the war of aggression against Iraq. Participants will also share their experiences about past and present legal procedures and will discuss the different forms of legal action.

"In participation with the International Anti-Occupation Network (IAON), the Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalize War, the Geneva International Center for Justice and other humanitarian organizations, we will try to develop a legal roadmap that can be used by law professionals and activists worldwide.

"The Coalition's military operations, including massive attacks on cities like Falluja, and the counter-insurgency policy, led to substantially increased mortality and massive displacement, affecting millions of people. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed or maimed, families have been destroyed, displaced, and forced into refugee status all over the world. Iraq's education system has been destroyed and its society deconstructed.

"The sectarian political process, organized by the occupying powers, has created a failed state characterized by the complete collapse of all public services, and systematic violations of all aspects of human rights, including the right to life. The U.S. deliberately provoked various factions in Iraqi society in order to divide and rule the country. An ancient, deeply rooted culture has been destroyed, brutalized, thrown into chaos.

"People's tribunals, citizens' arrests and other forms of activism may represent the conscience of the world community and should be deemed necessary in the absence of implementation of international law, but that's not enough.

"Legal action is essential and can take many forms: universal jurisdiction, defending Iraqi victims in court, seeking arrest warrants when former U.S. politicians want to travel outside the U.S., etc.

"We cordially invite you to join us in Brussels in April. If we want to restore the respect for international law; if we want international law to be enforceable; if we want to ensure the legal rights of the victims of illegal aggressions, Iraq should be high on the agenda of lawyers and human rights organizations."

Contact: IADL@brussells Tribunal.org. Follow this event on facebook: tinyurl.com/l7ouqy7. □

Not only unionists are targeted. According to a report released in April 2013 by the Center for Research and Popular Education (CINEP), there were six civil rights violations on the average each day, including 565 attributed to the paramilitary, 268 to the police and 187 to the army. Ten Colombians were killed by political violence per week. The report also states that under President Santos, the killing of civilians, the so-called "false positives," have increased, contrary to the version offered by the official propaganda. (rebellion.org, Jan 11)

Despite this scenario, activists among the country's progressive forces have responded to recent serious attacks with courageous resistance.

'Coup d'etat' against Bogotá's mayor

As part of an ongoing struggle, on Jan. 10 more than 100,000 people rallied for hours in Bogotá's central Plaza Bolívar for a march called in support of Bogotá's elected mayor, Gustavo Petro, and to defend peace and democracy. Petro had been removed from office on Dec. 9 by Alejandro Ordóñez, the inspector general.

The office of mayor of Bogotá is the second most important in the country after the president. This capital city of 8 million people is the economic and industrial center of the country, contributing 50 percent of the national income.

Petro is an ex-guerrilla combatant of the April 19th Movement, popularly known as the M-19, which laid down arms in 1990 in a peace agreement with the government. During his tenure in the Colombian Congress, first as representative and later as senator, Petro exposed the Álvaro Uribe government's ties to the criminal paramilitaries, a development widely known as "parapolitics."

This exposure was an important step in revealing the paramilitary's crimes and led to the indictment and arrest of several politicians, mostly linked to Uribe's grouping. It also provoked the hostility of Uribe and allies like Ordóñez himself, who represent the most vicious of the right-wing politicians and ruling oligarchy.

In a Dec. 29 op-ed column in the Washington Post, Petro explained why he was removed: Ordóñez had accused him of "mishandling the efforts to bring trash collection under public control," and in so doing attacking the system of "free enterprise." He also said that the accumulation of several thousand tons of garbage between Dec. 18 and 20 in 2012, "threatened public health."

In fact, Petro tried to "nationalize" the trash collection that was being monopolized by private contractors, several of whom were allies of Uribe. But not only did Ordóñez remove him from office, he barred Petro from holding any office for 15 years!

This is the same Ordóñez who removed the courageous Afro-Colombian senator, Piedad Córdoba, from office several years ago.

Petro was elected in October 2012, and even though it has not challenged the capitalist economic base, his "Bogotá Humana" (Humane Bogotá) plan has challenged the old patterns of city administration. A reformist plan, BH has brought some social improvements: It reopened a closed hospital, reduced the main private bus line fares, created the Secretariat for Women, prohibited bullfights in Plaza de Toros Santamaría, created MobileCare Centers for Drug Addicts (CAMAD) and initiated several other social programs.

Since Petro took office, Ordóñez and other right-wing politicians have opposed him, but his attempt to bring the privatized trash collection back to the city's control aroused them to take action.

Several Uribista politicians have been gathering signatures to hold a recall referendum, which will be held on March 2, depending on the inspector general's final pronouncement regarding Petro's removal. Petro welcomes the referendum, stating that it will show the opinion of the people of Bogotá.

As a signal of the reactionary ruling-class hostility towards any change of the status quo, a young follower of Petro's administration, Gerson Martínez, a rap artist, was viciously killed last Jan. 5. A flag of Bogotá Humana was left beside his body. Martínez was responsible for organizing some of the December demonstrations supporting Petro.

State repression continues

The day before Martínez was killed, on Jan. 4, police arrested Francisco Javier Toloza, a leader of the growing social and political movement, Patriotic March. His arrest brings to three the number of PM leaders detained in less than two years. Toloza is part of the PM international commission and the National Patriotic Board. The other two arrested are Wilmar Madroño and Huber Ballesteros.

The Patriotic March has grown steadily in numbers and political scope, representing a real challenge to the power of the oligarchy. Composed of hundreds of different grassroots organizations around the country, the PM is showing a decisive will to change the country on behalf of the poor and excluded. It is not surprising, given the history of Colombia, that the PM's leadership is being threatened, arrested and even assassinated.

At a time when the Colombian government is holding peace negotiations with the FARC-EP in Cuba, it is important to analyze the significance of these attacks by the state on the peaceful social movements and progressive activists.

One of the stated purposes of the negotiations is the participation of the FARC-EP guerrilla members in political life. What guarantees will there be that they can peacefully exercise this right? If these attacks against social activists who are not in the armed struggle continue, what will happen to those who lay down their arms to incorporate themselves into the political life? Will there be a repeat of the massacre of the Patriotic Union (UP) in the 1980s, when around 4,000 of the UP's members were systematically killed?

These and other questions remain and will be dealt with in upcoming articles.

International solidarity frees Julián Conrado

Before concluding, we must celebrate the recent freedom of Julián Conrado, the "peoples' singer." Conrado is a FARC-EP member who was detained in Venezuela in May 2011 and held there. He was released from prison on Jan. 9 after the Colombian government announced the suspension of the extradition request.

Conrado had joined the insurgency as many others did, because he faced political persecution. He was part of the "thematic commission" of the FARC-EP during the peace negotiations in 1998-2002 with the Andrés Pastrana government. Conrado had gone to Venezuela to seek medical treatment, but was

Continued on page 11

Imperialists praise ‘butcher’ Sharon

More bully than soldier, Israeli’s Ariel Sharon, nicknamed both “the butcher” for slaughtering Palestinians and “the bulldozer” for destroying their homes, died Jan. 11 after spending the last eight years in a coma.

Were there not so many imperialist politicians and media describing Sharon as a “peacemaker” and thus distorting his life story, we would be tempted to write nothing about him. His role in history deserves little recognition, none of it positive. Or perhaps it deserves only the same recognition given Lt. Col. George Custer, who after a life of massacring Native people led his marauding troops into a fatal ambush at Little Bighorn, Mont. (See, “Custer Had It Coming,” Mahtowin. New York: World View Forum, 1989)

A photo in the New York Times online shows British former Prime Minister Tony Blair, Israel’s Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. Vice President Joe Biden at the butcher’s memorial service. This trio of war criminals came to praise Sharon and finally bury him. After all, he was one of their own.

A brief history of his actions will suffice. As soldier, defense minister and prime minister, Sharon built his reputation by slaughtering not only Palestinian fighters, but unarmed Palestinians and other Arabs of all genders and ages.

The first war crimes Sharon ordered against Palestinian civilians occurred in 1952, when he headed Unit 101, the

first Zionist special forces unit, which became world famous after the massacre of 69 villagers from Qibia, Jordan, on Oct. 14, 1953. In 1956, during the Suez invasion he led the 890th Parachute Regiment, which executed more than 200 Egyptian prisoners and Sudanese civilians.

As defense minister, he led the 1982 invasion of Lebanon and collaborated with the slaughter of 1,900 Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps, with the torturing, rapes and murders directly carried out by Lebanese Falange fascist militia. Even an Israeli court had to find Sharon “indirectly” guilty of that crime.

The Lebanese resistance finally drove the Israelis out in 2000. That same year, as prime minister, Sharon provoked the Second Intifada with a possessive visit to the Esplanade of the Mosques in Jerusalem. By the time of the second Israeli invasion of Lebanon, in 2006, when Lebanese resistance fighters stopped it cold, Sharon was already in a coma. He was replaceable.

The Washington Post and New York Times praised Sharon, as did most imperialist leaders, including the eight who spoke at his funeral. Biden’s speech was the longest. It was 18 minutes of unqualified praise from the center of the empire for a brutal butcher of the settler-state charged with controlling the Indigenous population of the energy and resource-rich Middle East. □

Class consciousness – of politicians, workers

Workers World founder and chairperson, Sam Marcy, wrote that “democracy is merely a form which hides the predatory class character of the bourgeois state.” At a time when working people throughout the U.S. are scrambling to figure out how to survive in the face of unemployment benefit cuts, a recent analysis confirms the truth of the control of the 1% over the 99%.

The analysis, completed by the Center for Responsive Politics and using reports from 2012, shows that a majority of the members of Congress are millionaires. While the Senate has always been a millionaires’ club — the analysis lists the median net worth for all senators at \$2.7 million — the median net worth of all House members, at \$856,000, is well over the median household income in the U.S. during the same period, at \$53,046, (quickfacts.census.gov) and far beyond that of the 14 percent of people below the poverty level. Combined, the median net worth of the 530 members of Congress was \$1,008,767. At least 268 members of Congress had an average net worth of \$1 million or more, the Center reports. (Jan. 9)

These congresspeople are the very ones debating the extension of the unemployment benefits that they allowed to expire at the beginning of this year. Millions of people in the U.S. woke up on Jan. 1 facing the prospect of no money coming in to support them, few jobs available on the market, and even fewer resources to attempt to find those jobs.

It’s hard to go on job interviews when you can’t put gas in the tank, or buy a subway or bus fare. Unemployment numbers are decreasing not because people are finding jobs, but precisely because those who can no longer afford to seek work are dropped from the statistical workforce.

Allowing these rich politicians to make decisions about unemployment benefits is like asking the fox to guard the henhouse. Karl Marx wrote in 1859, “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that deter-

mines their consciousness.” The social being of these wealthy lawmakers allows them to see workers as expendable, their hardships a vague abstraction.

In fact, the richest member of Congress, Rep. Darrell Issa, is the chairperson of the influential and powerful House Oversight Committee, which claims to “exist to secure two fundamental principles. First, Americans have a right to know that the money Washington takes from them is well spent. And second, Americans deserve an efficient, effective government that works for them.” (oversight.house.gov)

Issa’s average net worth in 2012 was a whopping \$464 million.

For all the oversight committee’s supposed attempts at transparency, in 2012 the rules for congressional income reporting were changed so that spousal incomes over \$1 million, rather than being reported in real figures, could be listed simply as worth “\$1 million or more.” (opensecrets.org, Jan. 9) This allows Congress to claim that the total net worth of its members has fallen — and even so, their median net worth is higher than ever in history.

As social being determines the consciousness of the ruling class in Congress, so does it determine the consciousness of the workers. This fact is what forces these politicians to consider extending unemployment benefits at all — the fact that the longer workers are unemployed, the more likely they are to revolt against the system that augments their suffering in order to continue lining the pockets of the rich. They begin to see racism, sexism, anti-LGBTQ bigotry, etc., as the tools of the ruling class that they are. They begin to unite and fight.

As more and more workers become conscious of the capitalist system’s utter disregard for their survival, more and more come to the understanding that the only way that workers will be truly respected, understood and cared for is under a system in which workers are the guiding force in decision-making about their own lives — namely, a socialist system. □

Four years after devastating earthquake

Haitians get only imperialist occupation

By G. Dunkel

The horrific Jan. 12, 2010, earthquake in Haiti caused building collapses in Port-au-Prince and its suburbs that killed at least 300,000 people. It left an uncounted number injured and 1.5 million homeless.

Four years later, according to the Ministry of Public Works, an estimated 20 percent of the rubble has yet to be removed. Only 7,515 units of public housing have been built and what has been built suffers from major shortcomings. (Haiti Grassroots Watch, Jan. 8)

The massive devastation of Haiti touched off a worldwide outpouring of sympathy and solidarity. Governments promised \$14 billion in aid. However, not much has substantially improved in the lives of the Haitian people.

The U.S. government put together an aid package worth \$128 million to build an industrial park in Caracol on the northwest coast of Haiti that was supposed to supply 60,000 jobs. (Le Monde Diplomatique, May 2013) At the end of 2013, only 2,590 people were working there and many of them weren’t paid even Haiti’s minimum wage of \$4.54 a day. (New York Times, Jan. 10)

The second week of December 2013 saw a nationally coordinated wave of

strikes and protests that at times brought out tens of thousands of workers into the streets of Port-au-Prince, Ouanaminthe and Caracol. The aim of the movement was to raise the minimum wage to \$11 a day. The unions involved picked the busiest time of the year to strike.

The bosses retaliated when workers came back from their Christmas vacations. Jude Pierre, Luckner Louis, Deroys Jean Baptiste, Paul René Pierre, Jean Luvard Exavier and Rubin Mucial — all members of the Textile and Clothing Workers (SOTA) executive board — were fired on Jan. 8 from One World Apparel. SOTA intends to vigorously protest this illegal and unjust termination. (AlterPresse, Jan. 9)

Two positions on what happened

Both the New York Times of Jan. 10 and Haiti-Liberté of Jan. 8-14 wrote editorials summing up their positions on what has happened in Haiti since the earthquake.

The Times, the leading liberal bourgeois daily in the United States, calls for the U.S. government to “stick to its commitments to Haiti, with a particular focus on ... building the capacity of the Haitian government.” The Times finds some hopeful signs: more students are in school and cholera deaths are down, although Haiti

still records over half the cholera cases in the world. But, it adds, “Haiti is a fragile, largely forgotten country.”

It also comments that “we” don’t have a good idea of how the aid provided to Haiti — most of which doesn’t go to the Haitian government — is spent. Could the Times be in part criticizing itself? It published only two articles in 2013 on events in Haiti.

What the Times doesn’t acknowledge is that the U.N. military occupation, called Minustah, really calls the shots in Haiti and that its support is essential in keeping the Michel Martelly government in power. And it was the U.S. and France, both members of the U.N. Security Council that created Minustah, which along with Canada supported Martelly’s decision to keep the popular and progressive Fanmi Lavalas party of Jean-Paul Aristide off the ballot. The direct intervention of Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton kept Martelly on the ballot.

Haiti-Liberté is the largest circulation weekly in Haiti and its diaspora. It is written mostly in French but has one page in English and another in Creole. Its columns are open to progressive voic-

es from community groups and unions in Haiti.

Berthony Dupont, who wrote the editorial, says, “Nothing serious or useful has been tried to get us out of our morass, despite all the hullabaloo and verbiage about the promises made around a fictitious reconstruction.”

He goes on, “The earthquake of Jan. 12 quite simply served as a pretext for the International Community to accelerate its neoliberal program and to reinforce its occupation of the country.” That’s why the aid didn’t go to serve the needs of people but rather to enrich “the oligarchy and the anti-people government of Martelly.”

He explains, “The slave owners, today the imperialists, have never forgiven Haiti for beating the most powerful army in the world and have not ceased to destabilize it, not only to reconquer it but also to punish it for irreversibly putting an end to colonialism based on slavery.”

“To escape this straitjacket, we have only one choice, drive all the imperialists from our shores,” DuPont concludes. He singles out the U.S. government as the most aggressive and powerful. □

Thousands of African migrants strike in Israel

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

Tens of thousands of African migrants suspended a general strike Jan. 13 that had been in effect since January 5 in the Zionist state of Israel. The strike is scheduled to resume on Jan. 15 in the aftermath of the death of Ariel Sharon.

A list of demands put forward by the African community — most of whom come from Eritrea and South Sudan — calls for the nullification of the recently enacted Anti-Infiltrator Law, a halt to arresting people under that law, the release of those currently jailed and a review of asylum requests for Eritreans and Sudanese. The strike impacted the hotel, restaurant, café and cleaning services sectors of the Israeli economy.

Some 60,000 migrants from Eritrea and South Sudan have entered Israel since 2006. Over the last two years, a new detention facility has been constructed to hold migrants on the border with the Egyptian Sinai.

The migrants are forced to flee ongoing conflicts in Central and East Africa and the subsequent economic devastation they have created. These conflicts are a direct result of Western imperialist interference in the internal affairs of post-colonial African states.

The Workers' Hotline organization has received numerous complaints from African migrant workers of terminations and other threats from employers. "A group of workers came to our offices, and we also got phone calls from workers in Eilat who were told not to come back, and that their strike was seen as quitting without notice," said Noah Kaufman, who works as a coordinator for refugees and asylum seekers at the agency. (Haaretz, Jan. 13)

Kaufman went on to say, "There were two accounts of workers given ultimatums — either agree to change their employment conditions for the worse, or quit without getting severance pay or notice."

The agency says it is developing a legal strategy for addressing the ultimatums and firings.

A staff attorney for the Hotline, Michael Tadjer, stated: "Employers cannot exploit the asylum seekers' suffering to worsen their terms of employment.

They are using this as a means to threaten their workers. In essence, they're saying, 'We can fire you, so either you quit or we take away your seniority, worsen your conditions,' or lots of other things. Employers are using this for exploitation." (Haaretz, Jan. 13)

Tadjer went on to note: "The legal question is how much the strike was protected. Although they are unorganized workers, there is an umbrella organization that declared this strike, and there have been precedents in Europe in which sectors of the population went on strike in protest against the government, when policy directly harmed individuals. This strike is a political strike, and it might be that it is supported by law, but it hasn't come up for legal review. We think that firing workers after a week-long strike against a law that harms the most basic thing — their freedom and ability to work — is an act committed in bad faith."

Strike galvanizes migrants to demand asylum

The political actions of the African community in Israel have created a sense of urgency. On Jan. 12, long lines gathered outside the immigration offices in Tel Aviv in order to fill out forms requesting asylum.

One migrant told Haaretz, "I had an appointment, and the first security guard passed me through. The second one said, 'You're leading all of the protests and strikes, you were interviewed on Channel 2, I'll show you.' He tore up the slip, and said, 'Go home,' and began to scream at me."

Political attacks on the African migrant community have been growing for the last two years. From low level politicians to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Africans have been labeled as "infiltrators" and "criminals."

There have been anti-migrant demonstrations by Israeli settlers through neighborhoods where African migrants live and own businesses. Africans have been beaten and their stores trashed.

In response to these racist provocations the African migrant community is



African migrants protest in Tel Aviv.

becoming more outspoken and militant. The general strike and the subsequent mass demonstrations are a reflection of a heightened consciousness and organizational sophistication.

On Jan. 6, thousands of migrants marched to the foreign embassies in Tel Aviv seeking international intervention on their behalf. Some Israelis have marched in solidarity with the migrants' demands. On Jan. 9, thousands gathered outside the parliament in Jerusalem where several left-wing labor politicians addressed them decrying the conditions which they are subjected to by the Israeli authorities. (Reuters, January 8)

David Grossman, a writer who has been labeled as a member of the Israeli left-wing, told the mass demonstration in Jerusalem that the state's treatment of the migrants was shameful.

"I look at you now. ... I feel embarrassed and ashamed. Israel has not created this problem, but there is a problem now (and) we have to struggle with it and to solve it in the most humane way."

Continuation of settler policy against Palestinian and Arab people

Nonetheless, Israel is inherently a settler-colonial state, born in alliance with world imperialism through the suppression, oppression, forced removals and mass killings of the Indigenous Palestinian Arab population. Palestinians still live as colonial subjects in their

national homeland and are subjected to constant detentions, dislocation, racist discrimination, military occupation, and repeated attacks by the army and air force.

Palestinians who have been forced from their homeland are denied the inherent right of return. In the Gaza region of the country, 1.5 million people live in what has been described as the largest open-air prison in the world.

Israel also occupies the Golan Heights in Syria, where an imperialist-backed war of regime-change has resulted in the deaths of at least 100,000 people over the last three years. The Israeli Air Force has carried out several bombing incursions against Syria in just the last year.

Other Israeli air strikes have been carried out against the Republic of Sudan, a staunch supporter of the Palestinian national liberation struggle, which maintains a close fraternal relationship with Iran. Israel is backed up by the U.S. government through billions of dollars in direct aid, diplomatic support and military assistance.

Developments in Israel involving the escalating repression against African migrants should be seriously taken up by the African Union and other mass organizations on the continent. Israel was one of the main advocates and supporters of the partition of South Sudan from Khartoum, leading up to its realization in 2011. □

Chilean soccer team supports Palestine

By **Chris Fry**

The Club Deportivo Palestino, a first division football (soccer) team in Chile, has found a novel and dramatic way to display their support for Palestinians living in occupied Palestine. The team replaced all of the number "1"s on their jerseys with an iconic map of occupied Palestine.

Chile is home to the largest population of Palestinians outside of the Middle

East, with 500,000 people of Palestinian descent living there.

The jersey map symbol has raised a howl of protest from Zionist organizations in Chile, Tel Aviv and Washington. The Israeli Foreign Ministry's deputy director general for Latin America, Itzhak Shoham, called the map a "provocation ... with the evident intention of denying the existence of Israel." (English.al-akhbar.com, Jan. 9)

Gabriel Zaliasnik, the former presi-

dent of Chile's Jewish community, demanded a public apology from CD Palestino, removal of the jerseys, and sanctions by the Chilean football association and the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA).

The U.S.-based Anti-Defamation League chimed in as well, saying: "This clear delegitimization of Israel by substituting for it their map of 'Palestine' is also antithetical to the spirit of international sports competition." (sedjewishworld.com, Jan. 8).

What the Zionists fail to mention are the vicious Israeli attacks against Palestinian soccer players. Israel's bombing attack on a soccer stadium in Gaza in November 2012 killed four young players.

FIFA itself protested the treatment of imprisoned Palestinian hunger-striker Mahmoud Sarsak and the imprisonment of other Palestinian soccer players for "anti-Israeli" activities.

CD Palestino has steadfastly refused



to remove the map logos from their jerseys. The Palestinian Federation of Chile slammed the criticism, saying, "We reject the hypocrisy of those who blame this map, and yet talk about the occupied territory as disputed territory." (Al Arabiya News, Jan. 12) □

Colombia 2014

Continued from page 9

arrested by request of the Colombian government.

That Venezuela's Bolivarian revolutionary government arrested Conrado brings up some of the contradictions that many revolutionaries who support this revolution have expressed concern about. But it is important to state that as an ongoing process, revolutions are transitions

from capitalism with all the dangers and problems brought about by imperialist and right-wing opposition attacks. Venezuelan revolutionaries, though, including the Venezuelan Communist Party and others, had shown strong support for Conrado and have demanded his release from prison.

Next: Santos and the role of the U.S. in Colombia.

¿Por qué la nueva ley de salud es ya tan cara?

Por Deirdre Griswold

Era el año 1965. La guerra del gobierno estadounidense en Vietnam era cada vez más impopular, sobre todo entre los jóvenes que eran reclutados y enviados allá. Los movimientos de liberación de los pueblos oprimidos también iban creciendo, a menudo inspirados en las luchas anticoloniales y la resistencia de los vietnamitas.

En los EE.UU. Lyndon Johnson, cuya presidencia se había iniciado con el asesinato de Kennedy y con todo el escepticismo que despertó, estaba tratando de ganar apoyo popular con lo que él llamó la Guerra contra la Pobreza. El Congreso, bajo la presión de que el pueblo le viera dar fondos a servicios sociales junto a los fondos para las armas, aprobó un proyecto con el apoyo de Johnson que creó el programa de Medicare. Se utilizó el poder del gobierno federal para garantizar que las personas de tercera edad, no importa cuán pobres fueran, tendrían acceso a la atención sanitaria agregando que los que utilizaran el programa no podrían ser objeto de discriminación en base a su raza.

Un año más tarde, el 1 de julio de 1966, el programa de Medicare se puso en marcha. En ese año, "Medicare comenzó a pagar las facturas de 18,9 millones de personas mayores (99 por ciento de las personas elegibles para la cobertura) a tan sólo 11 meses luego de que el presidente Johnson firmara la ley".

La cita es de un revelador artículo escrito para el blog de Asuntos de la Salud

por el doctor David Himmelstein y la doctora Steffi Woolhandler y publicado el 2 de enero de este año. En él contrastan los costos involucrados en el programa de Medicare con lo que se prevé costará la nueva Ley de Asistencia Asequible, (ACA siglas en inglés).

¿Su conclusión? Que la ACA tendrá un costo de cientos de miles de millones de dólares adicionales para proporcionar un seguro para un número menor de personas debido a las reglas complejas y confusas que demanda el sector de atención de salud con fines de lucro.

Examinando los diversos gastos involucrados, los autores estiman que lograr poner en marcha los intercambios de salud de la ACA y poder inscribir a 7 millones de personas, tendrá un costo de más de \$6 mil millones en su primer año.

Por el contrario, Medicare, que fue creado en virtud de la Administración del Seguro Social, tuvo un costo de \$120 millones (\$867 millones en dólares del 2013) e inscribió a 18,9 millones de personas mayores en su primer año. Esto incluye el costo de tratamiento médico para las/os inscritos. Los gastos efectuados en el establecimiento de la ACA son sólo para los propios intercambios de la salud. Una vez que las personas se registren para el nuevo seguro, la mayoría tendrá que pagar por esto de sus propios bolsillos, aunque habrá subsidios para las/os más pobres.

"El inscribir a la mayor parte de las personas mayores en el Medicare fue simple; ya que eran conocidas por la Administración del Seguro Social, que se encarga-

ba de la inscripción", escribe Himmelstein y Woolhandler. "Para encontrar el resto, los federales enviaron correos a las personas mayores, celebraron reuniones locales y pidieron a los trabajadores de correos, guardas forestales y representantes agrícolas ayuda para encontrar a las personas en zonas remotas. La Oficina de Oportunidades Económicas gastó \$14,5 millones para contratar a 5.000 personas mayores de bajos ingresos que iban de puerta en puerta en sus vecindarios.

"A pesar de las predicciones de caos y las preocupaciones de que las personas mayores recién aseguradas inundarían el sistema de salud, hubo pocos embotellamientos. Los hospitales siguieron funcionando sin problemas y sin listas de espera. El único "problema técnico" real fue que muchos hospitales en el sur inicialmente se negaron a integrar sus instalaciones — requisito del Medicare para la certificación y el pago. Pero hacia el final del primer mes, el 99,5 por ciento de los hospitales habían firmado".

'Plan de pagador único podría ahorrar miles de millones'

¿Qué ha hecho el lanzamiento del nuevo plan tan caro?

Los autores dicen que "la complejidad se incrustó en el diseño, al igual que la simplicidad se incrustó en el Medicare. Los intercambios [de la ACA] deben coordinar miles de diferentes planes, con primas, pagos compartidos, deducibles y redes de proveedores que varían de condado a condado; el Medicare ofreció un

plan único y uniforme. Los intercambios deben calcular las subvenciones para cada solicitante después de comprobar los ingresos, el tamaño de la familia y el estado de inmigración; Medicare ofrece cobertura hospitalaria gratuita, con una prima uniforme mínima (\$22) para la cobertura médica. En lugar de crear una nueva burocracia para cobrar las primas de millones de personas inscritas y canalizarlas a las aseguradoras privadas, el Medicare se basó en las nómina existentes y el sistema de impuesto sobre los ingresos para reunir los fondos".

"La complejidad bizantina de la ACA refleja las contorsiones de la ruta que son necesarias para ampliar la cobertura y al mismo tiempo apaciguar a las aseguradoras privadas. Y las aseguradoras privadas seguirán cobrando un peaje elevado. La sobrecarga del Medicare es sólo de un 2 por ciento, frente a un promedio del 13 por ciento para los planes privados (aparte del costo de los intercambios, aproximadamente el 3 por ciento de las primas). Un plan de pagador único que excluya a las aseguradoras privadas podría salvar cientos de miles de millones en costos de transacción".

El pagador único no es medicina socializada — es decir, asistencia de salud universal y gratuita, como la que existe en Cuba y en otros países que han derrocado el capitalismo. Pero sería mucho mejor que la ACA, que a su vez puede ser mejor — para la mayoría de la gente — que no tener ningún seguro. Pero la industria de la salud con fines de lucro es la principal ganadora, hasta ahora. □

¿DESEMPLEO JUVENIL GLOBAL: barril de pólvora contra el capitalismo?

Por Scott Williams

Las estadísticas son alarmantes. Las/os jóvenes constituyen el 17 por ciento de la población mundial pero el 40 por ciento de las/os desempleados. Los reportes oficiales dicen que la tasa mundial de desempleo es de 4,5 por ciento mientras que la tasa mundial de desempleo juvenil es un 12,6 por ciento. Sin embargo, en realidad es mucho más alta.

El desempleo/subempleo juvenil global: mitos y realidad

El mundo cuenta con 1,2 mil millones de jóvenes entre las edades de 15 a 24 años. Ochenta y siete por ciento vive en Asia, África, América Latina y Europa del Este. Alrededor del 30 por ciento de las/os jóvenes del mundo, 357 millones, no está en la escuela ni empleadas/os. De las/os que trabajan en los países "en desarrollo", 536 millones están subempleadas/os, en comparación con 1,5 millones en los 27 países de la Unión Europea. Las mayores tasas de desempleo entre jóvenes se encuentran en el norte de África y Oriente Medio, según el Foro Económico Mundial, una organización internacional sin fines de lucro con sede en Suiza.

Mientras que las estadísticas recopiladas por organizaciones pro-capitalistas afirman que sólo 75 millones de jóvenes de todo el mundo están "desempleadas/os", la realidad es que 903,5 millones de jóvenes en el mundo están desempleadas/os, subempleadas/os o forzados fuera de la fuerza laboral. Esto es más bien el 75,2 por cien-

to — no el 12,6 por ciento — que necesita empleos a tiempo completo con salarios dignos. El otro 24,8 por ciento está en la escuela o trabaja a tiempo completo.

¿Cuál es la causa del desempleo juvenil en el mundo? Entre 1985 y 2000, la fuerza laboral mundial aumentó de 1,5 mil millones a 3,0 mil millones, según el reportaje "La duplicación de la fuerza de trabajo global", escrito por el economista Robert B. Freeman. El aumento en el número de trabajadoras/os es debido en parte a la apertura de China, Rusia, Europa del Este y muchas otras partes del mundo a la competencia laboral global.

La globalización capitalista ha significado mayor explotación y salarios más bajos para las/os trabajadoras/es del mundo. Además, el aumento en la automatización y la tecnología avanzada elimina la necesidad de tener muchas/os trabajadores expertos. Los robots han reemplazado muchos de los puestos de trabajo básicos que las/os trabajadores jóvenes han ocupado tradicionalmente.

"Recuperaciones sin empleos" afectan a la juventud estadounidense

La mayoría de la gente cree que la educación es la clave para el empleo. Esta noción nos la enseñan nuestras/os maestros, nuestras/os madres y padres y los medios de comunicación. Sin embargo, esto resulta ser un mito a nivel sistémico.

En los Estados Unidos, alrededor de 1,7 millones de estudiantes se graduaron de bachillerato en 2013, más que ante-

riormente. La mayoría va a pasar tiempo desempleada después de graduarse. Una tercera parte se mudará de nuevo con sus padres. Durante los próximos dos años, el 40 por ciento trabajará en empleos que no requieren un título universitario.

De hecho, la mayoría de las/os desempleados en EE.UU. tiene menos de 34 años. Mientras tanto, los bancos llaman. La deuda estudiantil cruzó la marca de \$1 billón el año pasado. El promedio de deuda estudiantil es alrededor de \$30.000 dólares, con un crecimiento del 63 por ciento en menos de una década.

Entre los supuestos finales de las últimas dos crisis económicas en EE.UU., entre 2003 y 2010, se perdieron 11 millones de puestos de trabajo. Estas "recuperaciones sin empleos" derivan del crecimiento de la fuerza laboral mundial y el aumento en el uso de la tecnología para crear equipos más productivos.

Si las recuperaciones sin empleos y la deuda estudiantil no son lo suficiente para las/os jóvenes, se les sermonea con comentarios acerca de que estudiaron las asignaturas equivocadas y cómo a los empleadores estadounidenses les encantaría darnos puestos de trabajo si tuviéramos los conocimientos adecuados. Esta "brecha en destrezas" causada por la sustitución de las/os trabajadoras por la tecnología, es el resultado de que los empleadores se niegan a pagar por el entrenamiento de sus trabajadoras/es, no que las/os estudiantes no estén aprendiendo cómo utilizar tecnología avanzada

como estudiantes pre graduadas/os.

Jóvenes desempleadas/os del mundo: levantémonos

Es un principio básico del marxismo que demasiado de una cosa se convierte en su contrario. El exceso de desempleo puede llevar a las/os trabajadores a tomar el poder de los patronos y proporcionar puestos de trabajo para todas/os.

El desempleo juvenil tiene el poder de hacer estallar el capitalismo y el imperialismo a escala global. Las/os jóvenes desempleados necesitan organizarse y hacer valer sus derechos a un futuro. La explosión de la primavera árabe ocurrió en 2011; fue iniciada en Túnez por los jóvenes sin empleo. Allí, el 40 por ciento de las/os graduados universitarios está desempleado, mientras que el 24 por ciento de las/os sin graduar está desempleado.

El mismo fenómeno ha estallado en los movimientos masivos de asambleas de jóvenes en España y Grecia, y en las protestas de Ocupar Wall Street en EE.UU. en 2011. Nada ha cambiado desde entonces. De hecho, nuestras condiciones de vida han empeorado.

La juventud estará a la cabeza de la resistencia militante a la austeridad capitalista, la explotación y la opresión. Las/os jóvenes — mujeres, personas de color, trabajadoras/es, estudiantes y miembros de las comunidades LGBT — deben unirse para derrotar al capitalismo en callejón sin salida y reemplazarlo con el único sistema que beneficia a la humanidad: el socialismo. □