



# Workers in Spain demand dignity

By G. Dunkel

Demanding dignity and “food, a job and a roof over everyone’s head,” hundreds of thousands of people marched on Madrid on March 22.

Organizers estimated that 2 million people took part in the protest. The government started off with a ridiculous estimate of 35,000-50,000 and then mumbled a vague retraction.

The organizers rented four trains and hundreds of buses to bring people from all over Spain — from Catalonia in the east, Andalusia in the south, Asturias and the Basque Country in the north. Some people walked for weeks, which not only got them to Madrid inexpensively but raised awareness of their struggle in the many towns they passed through.

The marchers gathered in eight spots on the outskirts of Madrid the night before, and then the columns converged for a giant rally in the center of the city.

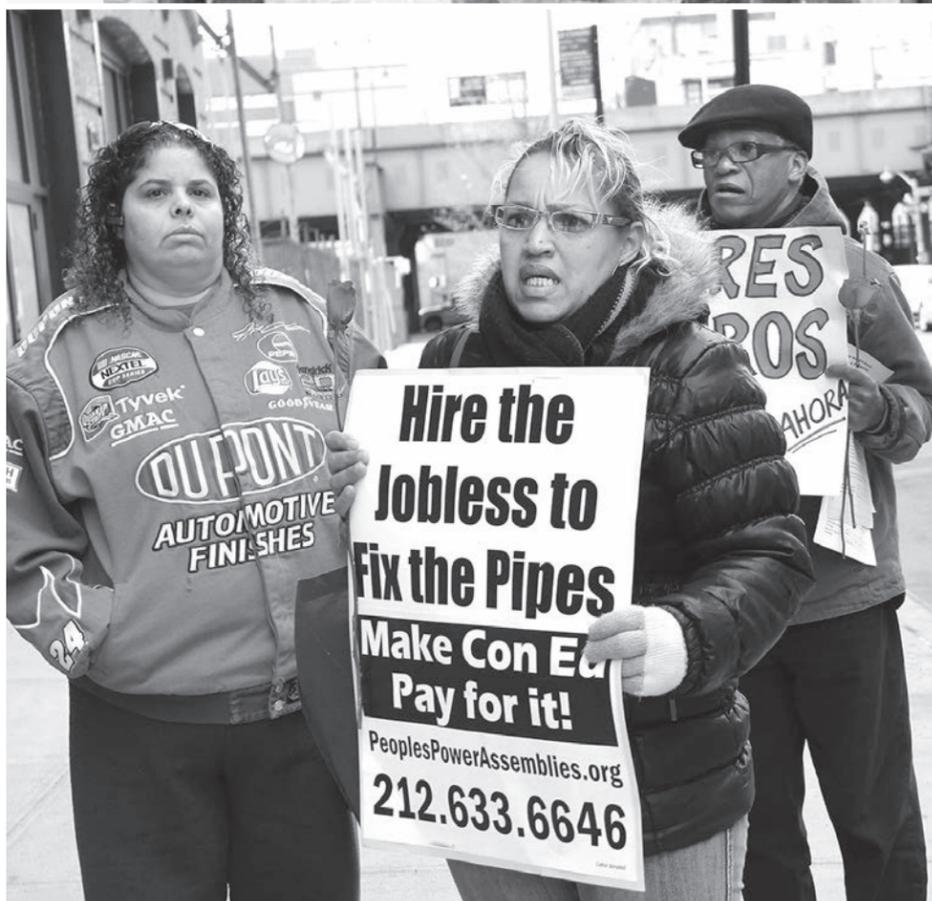
The large coalition that called the rally grew out of the “indignant” movement of 2011 and 2012, under the whip of an austerity program that has proclaimed it is going to make 150 billion euros (about \$200 billion) in cuts during the next three years.

Commenting on the government’s program, Sánchez Gordillo, mayor of Marinaleda and a deputy from the United Left coalition in Andalusia, told French television: “The real rate of unemployment is 37 percent and 42 percent of Spaniards are living under the poverty line. ... Without a job, no one has dignity.” (TV5, March 22)

Gordillo came to prominence in August 2012 during raids on supermarkets in Sevilla and Cádiz, in which he was among the people who stole food and handed it out to poor families.

Spanish youth were a very prominent and angry section of the marchers. Unemployment among those under 25 is at more than 50 percent, in Andalusia it is near 75 percent.

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**GEORGIA**

# Stop the anti-people legislation

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

March 20 — For the ninth consecutive week, Moral Monday Georgia staged actions on March 18 opposing reactionary legislation and demanding expansion of Medicaid for some 650,000 low-income workers in the state.

The coordinated acts of civil disobedience throughout the day — in the Senate gallery, blocking the governor's office door and sitting in the Senate chamber entrance — brought national attention to the right-wing agenda being foisted on the people of Georgia. Inspired by the 2013 Moral Monday movement in North Carolina, which waged tremendous resistance to a rollback of rights in that state, the Georgia coalition, which includes a wide range of organizations and individuals, has launched a visible struggle that uses direct action as a primary tactic.

Thirty-nine people were arrested and jailed, including prominent faith leaders like Rev. Raphael Warnock, pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, and state NAACP president Rev. Francys Johnson. They were joined by students from Morehouse College, retired seniors, the state president of the National Organization for Women and other women's rights advocates, and uninsured and unemployed workers.

Actions on Jan. 13 and Feb. 3 had resulted in dozens of other arrests of youth, students, elected officials, anti-war activists, and community, religious and civil rights leaders.

By law, the Georgia General Assembly meets for 40 days, beginning the second Monday of January. Extreme conservatives dominate both chambers of the Assembly as well as the governor's office.

**People demand health care and more**

Proposed legislation included preventing abortion coverage in state employee insurance plans; making bus drivers, cafeteria workers and other school employees ineligible for unemployment compensation during summer breaks; allowing guns in bars, churches and college cam-

pus; drug testing for food stamp recipients; making it a crime for state workers to disseminate information about the Affordable Care Act; barring DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, which addresses immigrants without papers) students from getting state driver's licenses; mandating that cities reduce early voting from three weeks to six days; and legalization of discrimination toward the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities and others under the guise of defending religious freedom.

Moral Monday Georgia had placed special emphasis on demanding that Gov. Nathan Deal sign the expansion of Medicaid as provided under the Affordable Care Act. When statewide polls consistently showed that the large majority of Georgians supported expansion, and the pressure was beginning to be felt, the right-wing majority in the legislature, with Deal's support, drafted legislation moving the power to expand Medicaid from the governor's office to the General Assembly. Moral Monday Georgia thus targeted both the governor and the legislature in the fight for health care for poor Georgians.

March 18 was the 39th day of the session. With close to 100 bills still to be voted on, including the most contentious, the planned protests upped the ante and added to the tense atmosphere as hours of jockeying and dealing by legislators and pushback by the people took place.

On March 20, as the 2014 session closed at midnight, HB 990, which moves the Medicaid decision-making power to the General Assembly, passed along with a number of other reactionary laws.

Some right-wing legislation, however, went down in defeat, including privatizing foster care services, preventing DACA immigrants from getting driver's licenses and the so-called "religious freedom" bill.

Moral Monday Georgia is now shifting its attention back to Gov. Deal, demanding that he veto a number of the pieces of legislation, particularly HB 990, and act to expand Medicaid.

*For additional information, see [moralmondayga.com](http://moralmondayga.com).*

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# WORKERS WORLD PARTY

## Who we are & what we're fighting for

Hate capitalism? Workers World Party fights for a socialist society — where the wealth is socially owned and production is planned to satisfy human need. This outmoded capitalist system is dragging down workers' living standards while throwing millions out of their jobs. If you're young, you know they're stealing your future. And capitalism is threatening the entire planet with its unplanned, profit-driven stranglehold over the means of production.

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a handful of billionaires! But we need a revolution to make that change. That's why for 55 years WWP has been building a revolutionary party of the working class inside the belly of the beast.

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

degrading people because of their nationality, sexual or gender identity or disabilities — all are tools the ruling class uses to keep us apart. They ruthlessly super-exploit some in order to better exploit us all. WWP builds unity among all workers while supporting the right of self-determination. Fighting oppression is a working-class issue, which is confirmed by the many labor struggles led today by people of color, immigrants and women.

WWP has a long history of militant opposition to imperialist wars. The billionaire rulers are bent on turning back the clock to the bad old days before socialist revolutions and national liberation struggles liberated territory from their grip. We've been in the streets to oppose every one of imperialism's wars and aggressions. □

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# Marxism explains long-term jobless growth

By Fred Goldstein

Five years into the capitalist recovery, the crisis of mass, long-term unemployment will not go away.

The Labor Department defines long-term unemployment as being 27 weeks or longer without a job. The official number of long-term unemployed in February was 3.8 million workers. (Los Angeles Times, March 20)

"To grasp what that means for the health and future growth of the economy," wrote the Christian Science Monitor on Feb. 15, "consider this: The 'long-term unemployed' alone account for 2.3 percent of the nation's workforce — a share that's almost as high as it's ever been during the depths of any prior recession since Labor Department tallies began in 1948. That's the case even though this is not a recession but roughly Year 5 of a recovery that began officially in June 2009."

## Millions of unemployed not accounted for

However, the figure of 3.8 million long-term unemployed is enormously understated. It is based on the official definition of unemployment, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which defines an unemployed worker as someone who has been looking for a job. That is determined only by a BLS survey.

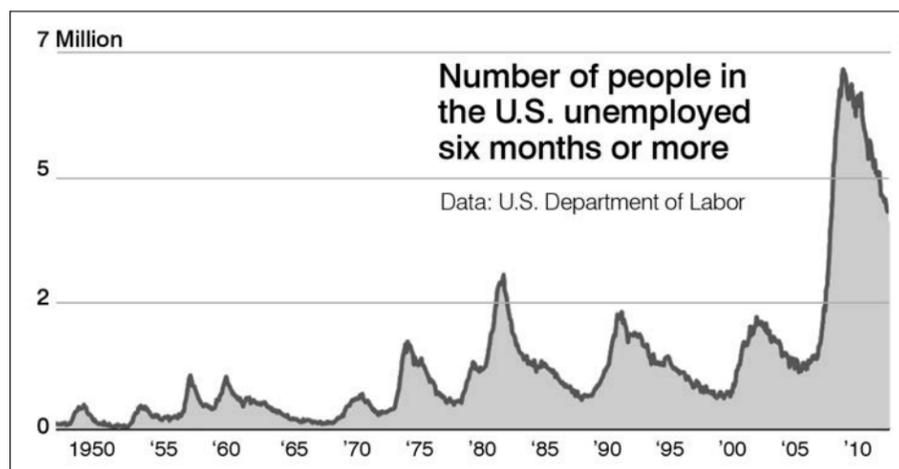
But a record 91 million people were not in the labor force in the five months from October 2013 through February 2014. Comparable numbers apply to the entire past year. The BLS does not provide figures on how many millions of these people are considered to have dropped out of the work force long ago because they were long-term, unemployed workers who gave up trying to find jobs.

The ruling class is worried about this trend. Many articles have appeared in the big business press about it. And research has been done on the subject. Some studies claim that the problem is that workers don't have the needed skills. Others say that the bosses discriminate and won't hire anyone who has been out of a job for six months or longer. Others say that discouragement over long-term unemployment saps the morale of workers and they give up.

## Marx gave the explanation

Of course there is discrimination by the bosses. For example, Black workers are 22 percent of the long-term unemployed but 13 percent of the population. Of course some workers don't have the skills that may be needed. And it does not take rocket science to know that going without a job for months and years is totally demoralizing.

But Karl Marx laid out a much more



fundamental explanation for the persistence of long-term unemployment — which applies to the present stage of capitalism. He explained it in Volume 1 of his monumental work, "Capital."

In that work Marx developed the Law of Capitalist Accumulation. In summary, the law states that as capitalism develops generation after generation, the capitalists compete with each other for market share by steadily trying to make their production more efficient, so they can have a cost advantage over their competitors, get more profits and destroy or swallow up their competition.

This cost advantage comes by putting in more and more technology so that fewer and fewer workers turn out more and more goods and services (commodities) in shorter and shorter time for lower and lower wages.

The effect of this process is to get rid of more and more workers by replacing them with machines. In the high-tech era in which we now live, workers are being replaced by robots, software, computers, sensors and all manner of other technological means. Workers' skills are being simplified, many skills are no longer needed, and fewer jobs exist all around.

## Growth of 'reserve army of unemployed'

This leads to what Marx said would be the growth of a "reserve army of unemployed." He predicted that the relative need of the bosses for labor would be reduced as capitalists and bankers invested more and more in technology. A surplus population of workers would grow. That is precisely what underlies the intractable problem of long-term unemployment that is plaguing the working class at this new stage of capitalism at a dead end.

A glance at the U.S. capitalist economy since the crisis began in 2007 confirms Marx's analysis. It reveals that the Law of Capitalist Accumulation has brought devastation to the masses.

In the year 2007, the gross domestic product, meaning all the goods and services produced in the U.S., amounted to

\$14.5 trillion. (useconomy.about.com/od/GDP-by-Year, Feb. 5) In 2013 the U.S. GDP rose to \$16.8 trillion.

When the crisis first broke out, the GDP plunged. Since then, it has not only reached the 2007 peak, but the value of goods and services produced has increased by \$2.3 trillion in constant dollars.

Now look at the labor force. According to BJS statistics, in December 2007, 146.2 million workers were employed, which is consistent with the average number employed during that whole year. This is how many workers produced the \$14.5 trillion in goods and services.

Last December, 144.6 million workers were employed, which is slightly above the monthly range for the year. This means that in 2013 at least 1.6 million fewer workers produced \$2.3 trillion more

**CAPITALISM AT A DEAD END**

goods and services than had been produced in 2007.

Thus, as the bosses employed more and more technology during the crisis and the so-called "recovery," they reduced their need for labor by millions of people. No matter what skills workers have or do not have; no matter whether the bosses discriminate against them or not; and even if they never get demoralized and keep looking for jobs, workers cannot find employment.

Workers cannot work if the bosses don't need to exploit them in order to make profits. If the bosses are making their profits with fewer and fewer workers, then there is permanent growth in the "reserve army of unemployed," as Marx put it.

Capitalist economists will never be able to see this because they are wedded to capitalist exploitation. But workers, with the aid of Marxism, can see the problem clearly. This is a necessary condition to getting rid of the problem — which is capitalism itself.

Fred Goldstein is the author of "Low-Wage Capitalism" and "Capitalism at a Dead End," which has been translated into Spanish as "El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida." Both books are available from online booksellers.

## Protesters tell looters for 1%

# 'Detroit is NOT for sale'



WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

The ultra-right-wing, anti-union, anti-people Manhattan Policy Institute hosted the notorious looters of Detroit's pensions and treasury, Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder and Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr, on March 24 at the Roosevelt Hotel.

New Yorkers with the People's Power Assembly Movement welcomed them only as they should be — with a "Detroit is NOT for sale" emergency demonstration denouncing their pro-1% theft, which the MPI celebrated in the name of "the next opportunity."

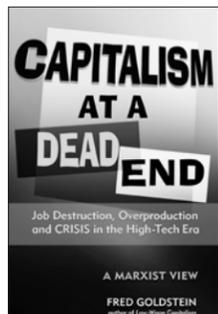
The MPI has also hosted the disgraced and discredited union-busting, anti-public-sector-workers governor of Wisconsin, Scott Walker. Now it is accomplices with the United Bank of Switzerland,

Bank of America and Wall Street firms that marketed subprime loans to Detroit homeowners.

These banks owe Detroit, a majority African-American city, reparations and then some. They are responsible for the subprime housing crisis which has destroyed so many of Detroit's neighborhoods.

The banks are also responsible for draining hundreds of millions of dollars from New York City's treasury — in the form of similar loans, debt-service payments, tax breaks and bailouts. Meanwhile, schools are closing, hospitals are being shut down and essential services are cut, very similar to what has happened in Detroit.

— Report by Larry Holmes



## Low-Wage Capitalism

What the new globalized high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle

"With the capitalist system demonstrably unfair, it is useful, indeed refreshing, to see a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on working people. Fred Goldstein does exactly that."  
Howard Zinn, author of A People's History of the United States

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For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to [www.LowWageCapitalism.com](http://www.LowWageCapitalism.com)

Available at Amazon and other bookstores.

# Postal unions unite against privatization

By Joe Piette

In the face of unprecedented attacks from Congress, corporations and postal management, the four major postal unions have created a fightback coalition with the goal of saving the people's postal service.

The presidents of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU) and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association (NRLCA) signed a proclamation on March 11, pledging to work together:

"We stand for a public Postal Service, enhancement and expansion of service, and protection of good union jobs in our communities. We stand with the people of our country in defense of their right to a universal postal service operated in the public interest."

Among their demands:

- Maintain six-day and home delivery.
- Protect and restore service standards and mail processing facilities.
- Maintain full-time, full-service public post offices in every community.
- Oppose the subcontracting of work and privatization of services.
- Expand postal services to include basic banking, notary, check-cashing and other services.
- End the corporate welfare of excessive pre-sort discounts.
- Form a common front in the fight for genuine postal reform legislation
- Organize joint actions and speak in a united voice.
- Unite with other labor unions in defense of the rights of postal workers and all workers.
- Encourage joint efforts of our union members at the local level.
- Support maximum cooperation in the next round of contract negotiations.
- Build an alliance with the American people in defense of the public postal service.

## Protest Staples on April 24

The first demonstration of this long-needed unity will occur on April 24, the National Day of Action to Stop Sta-

ples, called by the APWU and endorsed by NPMHU and NALC.

The United States Postal Service is currently testing pilot programs at over 80 Staples stores in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, California and Georgia. These programs put postal retail operations in Staples stores and staff them with low-wage, high-turnover Staples employees. "We support the expansion of customer access to USPS services, but we insist that postal work must be performed by uniformed postal workers who have passed a background check, taken an oath of office and are accountable to the people," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. (APWU Web News Article #050-14, March 11)

Nationwide protests against Staples are happening at the same time as the office products company is closing 225 stores, whose owners are shifting its business further online. As Workers World Contributing Editor Fred Goldstein wrote, Staples cutbacks are "aimed at getting rid of workers and store facilities" as it competes with Amazon and Office Max for higher profits. (Workers World, March 16)

Handing over public postal services to a private company that can close stores with no public input is bad for both postal and Staples workers, and the adjacent communities. It also points out how intertwined workers' struggles are today.

In nature, harming one species has consequences for other parts of the biosphere and environment. In totality, the health of nature depends on the well-being of all its diverse parts.

So too in human society. Whether it's privatization, immense inequality, mass incarceration, low wages for millions of workers, or racist and sexist corporate or government practices, all poor and working people are ultimately affected when one section of the working class is harmed.

## Solidarity builds unity

Workers from all four postal unions acting together can go a long way in defeating corporate plans to privatize the USPS. Expanding the struggle to the community makes it more likely the working class will win.

One reason the United Auto Workers lost the vote for recognition in the Tennessee Volkswagen plant in February was

the union's failure to involve the community in their organizing drive. Wealthy enemies of the union and the corporate media inundated Chattanooga residents with lies and misinformation about the UAW organizing drive. Strong union outreach to the community and unity between union and community organizers could have made those lies ineffective.

Postal workers deliver mail in every community. We patronize McDonald's, Subway, Walmart, Staples and other workplaces that pay poverty wages — the wages we would be forced to work for if privatization took place. Instead of just fighting defensively, postal workers should open an offensive by joining the fight to raise the minimum wage and for unionization.

If postal workers want community support, we should support struggles for higher wages, for fair funding of education, against racism and sexism, and so on. In turn, community members will fight alongside postal workers against postal privatization because a people's post office benefits the whole working class.

*The author is a retired letter carrier.*

## Unions hit education cutbacks

The United Federation of Teachers, which represents kindergarten through 12th grade teachers and staff, and the Professional Staff Congress, which represents higher education teachers and staff in New York City, mobilized about 300 of its members on March 21 in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, for a demonstration.

They were protesting across the street from state Sen. Marty Golden's office because he supports a budget that sells out NYC public schools in favor of charter and private schools. This budget also leaves the City University of New York and NYC's K-12 schools woefully underfunded, while giving tax breaks to the banks, big corporations and the 1%. It says "no" to New York



Teachers at all levels protest in Brooklyn, NY.

state's DREAM [Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors] Act and allows for the privatization of the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center.

The New York State United Teachers,

to which both the PSC and UFT belong, has sponsored nearly 20 demonstrations throughout the state demanding more money for education. NYSUT is also sponsoring a statewide ad campaign.

— Report and photo by G. Dunkel

## McDonald's icon busted for wage theft

By Anne Pruden  
New York

A large group of fast-food workers and their supporters held a flash protest on March 18 in a midtown Manhattan McDonald's and shut it down. Workers joined members of the community and immigrant rights activists to fight for a \$15-per-hour minimum wage and union rights for fast-food workers.

As they went in, the protesters shouted: "We came, we saw! What you did is against the law!" — referring to McDonald's withholding overtime pay. It soon was impossible to sit down or order anything. The bosses quickly panicked and began shutting down the lines to the counters, and then demanded that everyone leave — saying that McDonald's was closed.

"Ronald McDonald" — it looked like him — appeared. As the protesters were being kicked out of the store, they handcuffed and "arrested" him. The number



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

of media reporters and police quickly grew. The group's chants against the bosses grew louder: "Every nickel, every dime! We deserve that overtime!"

A handcuffed Ronald McDonald looked

down at his shoes in front of the store as media representatives covered the damning testimony being given by the mostly Black and Latino/a fast-food workers. The workers exposed the company's wage

theft — extra exploitation stemming from no overtime pay, altered pay records, and denial of meal and rest breaks.

The workers are also fighting to be reimbursed for the cost of cleaning their uniforms — which is the bosses' responsibility, according to both state and federal law in New York.

Public Advocate Letitia James came to witness the sidewalk hearing for Ronald McDonald and to speak of her plan to push the city government to create an anonymous wage-theft hotline. Her action came a day after state Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said that the owner of seven Manhattan McDonald's will have to pay 1,600 cheated workers nearly \$500,000.

At least seven newspapers and several television stations covered Ronald McDonald's guilty verdict. More working-class people are determined to stop racist superexploitation. This victory will inspire more marching and fighting for workers' rights. □

# Solidarity shown with East Harlem residents in wake of killer gas explosion

By LeiLani Dowell  
New York

A group of people from several New York City-based organizations came to East Harlem on March 23 to show their solidarity and support for the community in the wake of the March 12 gas explosion that killed eight people and injured more than 50. They also demanded reparations for this mostly Latino/a community, known as El Barrio, and an environmental cleanup of the area, whose residents are still suffering from the aftereffects of the blast.

The 127-year-old gas main that burst, razing two buildings and causing extensive damage to the rest of the neighborhood, was operated by Con Edison.

Members of the Chelsea Housing Coalition, People's Power Assembly, Occu-Evolve, May 1st Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights, Parents to Improve School Transportation, Comité Pimón and Workers World Party began the day at the Con Edison East Harlem Payment Center. After protesting the company's criminal and racist negligence, the group left a poster with the names of the eight dead directly beneath the big Con Edison sign.

The activists then marched to the explosion site, handing out roses in commemoration of the dead and a statement of solidarity along the way. Members of



WW PHOTO: JOYCE CHEDIAC

the community shouted along with the chants. The protesters laid a wreath at the site and held a moment of silence, then conducted a mic-check speakout about the explosion.

Rosa Maria de la Torre, of the Chelsea Housing Coalition, told Workers World: "The response was very good. We picked up a few people who saw us, joined in and marched to the end. People were com-

plaining about chest pains and emotional issues, such as having nightmares. Many displaced people are still in shelters. Three-fourths of the buildings in the vicinity of the blast are still boarded up and don't have windows."

The statement handed out to the community read in part: "The organizations below have come together to show our solidarity and love and to express our

condolences with the people of East Harlem and El Barrio. ... We want to make sure that Con Ed and the landlords are held accountable and to make sure that this does not happen again." The statement called for Mayor Bill de Blasio to declare an immediate housing emergency, for reparations, a citywide people's investigation and an environmental cleanup of the area. □

## Rightist's illegal maneuver threatens peace talks

Using illegal methods, Colombia's rightist Inspector General removed Bogotá's popularly elected mayor from office, throwing the future of the vital peace talks with the political guerrilla movement, the FARC-EP, and the future of democracy in Colombia into question.

By Mark Burton

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights had granted "precautionary measures" to Bogotá's popularly elected Mayor Gustavo Petro on March 18 and solicited the Colombian government to not remove the elected mayor from office pending further proceedings under the American Convention on Human Rights.

Unlike the United States, Colombia is a signatory to this Convention. The IACHR found that the possibility of the violation of the political rights of Petro, and consequently the political rights of the population of Bogotá, was imminent, and precautionary measures were warranted to protect against violations of the Convention.

The Inspector General of Colombia Alejandro Ordóñez found Petro unfit for office due to the fact that he tried to bring Bogotá's trash collection services back under public control in order to ensure lower prices and better services for the city's inhabitants. There were also plans to introduce recycling services. Petro petitioned the IACHR for protection and relief.

A group of capitalists who were profiting from the city's trash collection complained to Ordóñez about the plans

to remunicipalize these services. The Inspector General subsequently opened an investigation of Petro. On Dec. 13, Ordóñez, who has not been elected by anyone, declared the popularly elected Petro unfit for office for, among other crimes, interfering with the right to contract.

Banning Petro from office by the Inspector General is one method that the ruling Colombian oligarchy has used to remove leftist leaders. This procedure was previously used against the popular Afro-Colombian Senator Piedad Córdoba. Ordóñez is also reportedly currently investigating progressive Representative Ivan Vargas.

### A history of right-wing terror

Another method of removing popular leaders in Colombia has been the use of terror and assassination. In the 1980s the Unión Patriótica presented an electoral challenge to the ruling oligarchy's hold on power. A genocidal campaign of terror and assassination ensued where between 4,000 and 5,000 of its leaders and followers were assassinated, including two presidential candidates. Thousands more were forced into exile.

More recently 31 leaders of the popular organization, the Patriotic March, have been assassinated since its founding in April 2012. Assassination, death threats and arbitrary arrests continue to plague popular and leftist leaders. Meanwhile, military aid from the United States continues to pour into Colombia to prop up the status quo.

President Juan Manuel Santos of Colombia had previously stated that if

IACHR were to prohibit the firing of Petro, he would respect that decision. Under Article 93 in the Colombian Constitution, previously ratified international human rights treaties are to be given precedence in the Colombian legal system. Therefore a decision of IACHR should be binding on the Colombian government. Hypocritically, and in alliance with other sectors of the oligarchy, President Santos has refused to veto the removal of Petro, since the precautionary measures were issued, which means Petro is now out of office.

Ivan Márquez, a spokesperson for Colombia's largest guerrilla group, the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia-People's Army), stated that the "absurd decision" to remove Petro would have "a very negative impact" on the peace talks. This FARC leader spoke of a loss of confidence in the talks due to the arbitrary and undemocratic dismissal.

The FARC-EP and the Colombian government have been in peace talks since October 2012 in an attempt to end Colombia's 50-year civil war. At these talks in Havana, the FARC has consistently demanded that there must be social change in the country to remove the conditions that led to armed conflict. The peace talks are supported by an overwhelming majority of the country's population, with multiple public opinion polls showing well over 60 percent in favor of the talks.

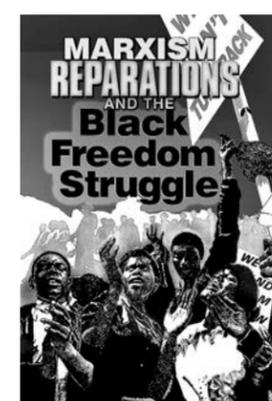
The talks have a multipoint agenda, with one of them political participation. The decision to remove an elected official strikes at the heart of this agenda item as the FARC and many other political sectors are seeking wider political involve-

## COLOMBIA

ment with security guarantees for the left as part of any comprehensive peace agreement.

In the face of this setback, however, the Colombian people continue to mobilize. March 15-17 saw the Agrarian Summit where plans were discussed to organize another agrarian strike to defend peasant farmers against the devastation that will result from the recently imposed free trade agreements. Demands for a constituent assembly to formulate a new, more progressive and inclusive constitution are heard around the country. Despite this undemocratic removal of Bogotá's mayor, a struggle for a new, more just Colombia continues.

Mark Burton is a criminal defense and civil rights lawyer in Denver.



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

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## MICHIGAN

# Ruling legalizes marriage equality

By Martha Grevatt  
Detroit

On March 21, Michigan became the 18th state to allow same-sex couples to marry. Federal Judge Bernard Friedman, appointed to the bench in 1988 by then-President Ronald Reagan, ruled that the so-called “Michigan Marriage Amendment” was unconstitutional. The ruling came two weeks after a nine-day trial, ordered by the judge to hear “experts” from both sides.

The state based its key argument on “the procreative function of marriage,” claiming that children thrive best when raised by a married heterosexual mother and father. Attorneys for Jayne Rowse and April DeBoer argued that being raised by a same-sex couple does not impede a child’s development. Moreover, heterosexual couples are not required to demonstrate an ability or intent to have children, or prove their fitness as parents, to obtain a marriage license.

Judge Friedman found studies presented by the state to be flawed and biased. Those supporting the lawsuit of Rowse and DeBoer — who are raising

three adopted children that as an unmarried couple they were barred from adopting jointly — were deemed “credible.”

The children’s interest was at the core of the lawsuit. The two Detroit-area nurses originally sued for the right to become joint legal parents of all three children. As an unmarried couple, their family could be legally torn apart if one parent died. The judge modified the case to address the law that prevented Rowse and DeBoer from marrying.

Immediately after the ruling, Affirmations — Metro Detroit’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community center — hosted a press conference with the couple and their attorneys. With only an hour’s notice, supporters packed the center, giving these heroes a standing ovation when they entered the room. “We decided we weren’t going to take this anymore,” said DeBoer.

The crowd applauded a comment that this victory was part of a continuum of struggle in Michigan, citing the historic Flint sit-down strike and the example of longtime Detroit African-American resident, Rosa Parks, whose refusal to give up her seat on a segregated bus helped

to launch the historic Montgomery, Ala., bus boycott in 1955.

## Ten years of struggle wins victory

The ruling came on a Friday after County Clerk’s offices were closed. Three such offices opened their doors on Saturday to issue licenses to same-sex couples. In a fourth county, the Clerk’s office issued licenses at the chapel of a Unitarian church, where couples who so desired were then able to have their unions blessed.

Attorney General Bill Schuette, a Tea Party reactionary, appealed the ruling to the Sixth District Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. Judge Friedman denied Schuette’s request for a stay. By the time the appeals court did, in fact, grant a temporary stay, 300 couples had already obtained marriage licenses. With the ruling in limbo, Rowse and DeBoer are waiting for the appeals process to be concluded before seeking a license.

This is a tremendous victory, not only for this family but for all of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer parents in Michigan and their children. According to the most recent census, cited in the ruling, there are over 2,000 parents

raising over 10,000 children. The Michigan anti-LGBTQ amendment, passed by voters in 2004, is one of the strictest in the country and has been used to deny health benefits to state workers’ same-sex partners and their partners’ children.

In five other states where marriage bans have recently been overturned — Texas, Arizona, Virginia, Kentucky and Oklahoma — bigoted opponents of equality have also had rulings stayed pending appeals. If our victories are sustained in these states and Michigan, there will be 23 states and the District of Columbia where same-sex couples can get married. All of these victories came through decades of hard struggle and sacrifice by the LGBTQ movement.

The battle for full civil rights is far from over. In most states, including Michigan, a person can be legally fired, denied housing or denied public accommodation for their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. In Michigan, the movement is advancing — not only with the marriage victory but by winning anti-discrimination ordinances in dozens of cities — and shows no signs of backing down. □

# Women speak on resistance & solidarity



A show of solidarity from some forum participants.

WW PHOTO: SARA FLOUNDERS

Workers World Party sponsored an extraordinary panel of women activists at its annual International Working Women’s Month forum in

New York City on March 21. The program was entitled “Women on the move against the 1%; Oppression of women here and worldwide = resistance and solidarity.” The women speakers connected some of their daily personal and political experiences to the general status of women living under and resisting capitalism and imperialism, including low-wage jobs, racism, sexism, transgender oppression, war, occupation and other forms of institutionalized inequality.

Monica Moorehead, an organizer of the forum, remarked: “It was so inspiring and educational for everyone who attended this three-hour forum to hear these courageous women not only speak about their roles in their various groups and coalitions, but also connect their daily struggles to other women and communities that are thousands of miles away. Their words showed that these struggles know no borders. They also spoke about the need to put aside any differences in order to work together because building

unity and solidarity is the only way to replace this oppressive system with one — socialism — that is based on winning social justice and workers’ empowerment, including the liberation of women.”

The speakers and their organizations were Joyce Kanowitz, People with Disabilities Caucus of Workers World Party; Madison St. Claire, Strategic Trans Alliance for Radical Reform, part of the Sylvia Rivera Law Project; Rosanna Rodriguez, Laundry Workers Center; Rosa Maria de la Torre, Chelsea Coalition for Housing; Norma Capuyan, KALUMARAN: Strength of Indigenous Peoples in Mindanao, Philippines; Fatin Jarara, Al-Awda, Palestine Right to Return Coalition; Brenda Stokely, Million Worker March Movement; Kaylee Knowles, Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) youth group; Teresa Gutierrez, May 1 Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights; and Sharon Black, Baltimore “We Deserve Better” Workers Assembly. LeiLani Dowell from Workers World newspaper chaired the meeting. □

# The people protest Albany oil trains

By Chris Fry  
Albany, N.Y.

At the urging of Albany, N.Y., neighborhood residents who were joined by several environmental organizations, on March 12 Albany County Executive Daniel McCoy placed a moratorium on oil company Global Partners’ plans to install seven boilers to heat tar sands oil here before loading it onto barges to ship down the Hudson River.

At the same time, associates of the infamous billionaire Koch brothers announced plans for a 150-mile pipeline between the Albany train depot and the Bayway oil refinery in Linden, N.J., which is within the New York harbor area. This pipeline would run along the New York Thruway.

McCoy halted the oil heating plans

under a New York state public health law that “empowers county health departments to address threats to public health or safety.” He said that he will not lift the moratorium “until a public health investigation is carried out and action plans are made for large-scale disasters resulting from the transport or processing of oil.” (america.aljazeera.com, March 13)

Thirteen oil train cars derailed from a 110-car train in the CSX rail complex in Selkirk, N.Y., just outside of Albany, on Feb. 28. Fortunately, there was no leak or explosion. There have, however, been fiery explosions in Alabama, North Dakota and New Brunswick, Canada. An oil train derailment and explosion last July killed 47 people in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, as it incinerated much of the town’s downtown area.

Residents of the Ezra Prentice Homes community in Albany attended the press conference where McCoy announced his moratorium. Their homes are just across a fence from the main oil train depot in Albany, where row after row of puncture-prone DOT-111 oil train cars are parked.

Residents and leaders of several environmental groups praised McCoy’s move.

The moratorium does not impede the oil train flow into Albany from the Bakken oil fields in North Dakota, a flow which has grown over the last two years to 1 billion gallons a year. Permits by oil shippers have already been given to allow oil companies to ship 2.8 billion gallons of oil per year through Albany, especially as tar sands oil from Alberta, Canada, joins the flow.

But certainly these same regulations could be used to ban the entry of non-up-

dated DOT-111 oil train cars that federal, state and local agencies have declared extremely unsafe, particularly for the transport of volatile Bakken oil.

Even Wall Street’s Sen. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) has called these oil trains “a ticking time bomb.”

The other menace from the oil heaters that the executive order blocks are their emissions of illness-causing chemicals. In Detroit’s Boynton neighborhood, a poor working-class community, residents have long protested the tar sands processing at the nearby Marathon refinery.

To move the thick oil through pipelines to the refinery, a chemical called dilute bitumen, or “dilbit,” is used. It contains volatile hydrocarbons, including benzene, a known human carcinogen.

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## Uruguay president says

# Yes to Gitmo prisoners, but what about Cuban 5?

By Cheryl LaBash

Uruguayan President Jose Mujica broke through the U.S. corporate media blockade and made headlines about the Cuban 5 heroes — three of whom remain in U.S. prisons. In a radio broadcast on March 21, Mujica reported that Uruguay would accept prisoners from the notorious U.S. Guantanamo concentration camp and also urged the U.S. to free the Five.

“We’re not embarrassed to say that we asked the North American government if they would please do what they could because those two or three Cuban prisoners, they have been there many years, a way is being sought to free them, because that is also shameful,” said Mujica. (Reuters.com)

Mujica raised humanitarian release for the remaining Cuban 5 heroes — Gerardo Hernández, Ramon Labañino and Antonio Guerrero — while providing a path for President Barack Obama to finally fulfill his promise to close Guantanamo prison. This act shows how international pressure has increased to end the Cuban 5’s nearly 16 years of injustice.

Latin American and Caribbean countries stand united against the U.S. economic blockade and political isolation of Cuba. Even some Florida elected officials are open to allowing a resumption of trade and travel to the island. A recent poll by the Atlantic Council revealed that there is majority sentiment against the U.S. blockade and that it is stronger in Florida than in the rest of the U.S.

A new, massive deep-water Cuban container port at Mariel Harbor, built together with Brazil, is prepared to handle superships from Asia through the widened Panama Canal. The U.S. government can no longer use the dwindling number of Cuban exiles in Florida who fled the island in 1959 with dictator Fulgencio Batista as a pretext for its goal of destroying Cuba’s hard-won sovereignty and independence.

### Who are the Cuban 5?

The Cuban 5 are Cuban state security agents who were willing to make the great sacrifice of posing as traitors to

the Cuban Revolution — thus damaging their reputations and relationships with their families and friends — to infiltrate the Miami-based paramilitary organizations responsible for bombing hotels and restaurants in Cuba in the 1990s. These groups committed terrorist murders of tourists in an attempt to sabotage that vital Cuban industry. South Florida CIA-trained exile networks planned and funded the assaults.

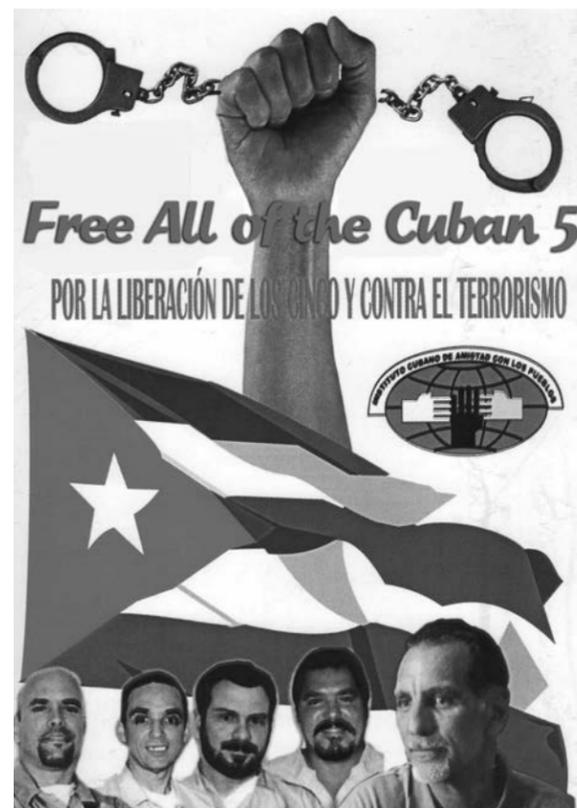
Convicted of conspiracy charges, sentenced to long prison terms, the Five began their terms in U.S. prisons on Sept. 12, 1998. Two, René González and Fernando González, completed their full sentences and have returned to Cuba.

Mujica’s offer to resettle prisoners from the U.S. Guantanamo camp, along with their families, is a humanitarian gesture by a political activist who was himself imprisoned for more than a decade by the past Uruguayan dictatorship. That regime was one of many throughout

Latin America supported by the U.S. government, military and corporate interests. Mujica said plans were not yet finalized for five men to be transferred from Guantanamo to Uruguay, although Uruguayan officials have visited the prison.

For more than ten years, the U.S. has held prisoners at Guantanamo who have never even been brought before a judge, Mujica noted. Guantanamo is most recently known for the desperate, mass-prisoner-protest hunger strikes. The prison regime uses torturous force feeding to prevent Washington’s exposure as a human rights violator due to potential mass suicide of Muslims.

Mujica’s request to the Obama administration was distributed by major corporate news networks, including Associated



Press, Reuters and Agence France-Presse, and has been picked up by ABCnews.go.com and news outlets from Idaho to Miami.

Cheryl LaBash is an organizer of “5 Days for the Cuban 5” in Washington, D.C., June 4 to 11. For more information, go to [5daysfortheCuban5.com](http://5daysfortheCuban5.com).

## Massive ‘March for Dignity’ in Spain

Continued from page 1

The Madrid authorities brought in 1,700 riot police. They attacked the demonstrators when, towards the conclusion of the rally, a large group of protesters attempted to “occupy” the square in front of the parliament. YouTube videos of the scene show cops attacking the protesters to break up the attempted “occupy” while at the same time preventing people from leaving the area.

The main struggle between the cops and the protesters came after the rally was concluded and night fell. Crowds of mainly young people, carrying a banner reading “No pasarán” (“They shall not pass”) and iron bars to break up sidewalks and curbs, confronted the cops, who were firing rubber bullets.

When a squad of cops ran out of bullets, the youth rushed them. There was a toe-to-toe melee, the youth using their bars and the cops their batons, until the



A sea of humanity takes over Madrid, Spain for a day, March 22.

cops retreated. These skirmishes were documented on both French television (TV2 and TV5) as well as YouTube. A police patrol car with cops in it was completely trashed.

Figures given by Le Monde on March 22, relying on Agence France Presse, indicate that the cops didn’t have enough forces present to deal with the size and militance of the protesters. Some 102 people were treated by emergency services, 67 of them cops. The movement argues that the cops’ brutality reflects the regime’s growing dictatorial attempts to repress protest.

The German finance ministry released a statement at the end of February demanding that the European Union maintain its austerity policies. This is going to be difficult to do in Spain, where the anger of the youth over unemployment and a devastating economic future has reached the boiling point.

One reason the French media covered the struggle in Spain intensely is that austerity is also a political issue in France, although it has not yet caused as much pain among the working class.

Still, on March 18, tens of thousands of people took

to the street throughout France to protest against the latest austerity pact. The program was created by French President François Hollande and ratified by the MEDEF — the association of French businesses — and the CFDT — a major labor confederation connected to Hollande’s “Socialist Party,” which is really a pro-imperialist and anti-worker party.

There were 140 demonstrations throughout France, all involving at least partial one-day strikes, with major ones in Marseille, Toulouse and Bordeaux. The union confederations that called and supported these protests — Workers’ Force (FO), Solidaires and the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) — say that these cuts would destroy the public services used by a majority of the people in France.

There will be more protests in France and other European countries as the imperialist banks increase their pressure for austerity — for the workers — and as the bosses cut wages to increase profits while the economy stagnates. □

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(insideclimatenews.org)

Al-Jazeera reports: “According to the Michigan Department of Public Health, consistently elevated levels of cancer and mortality rates from cancer were recorded in Boynton’s ZIP code, 48217, reported as the most polluted in Michigan.” (March 3)

Albany residents have every reason to fight plans to install these oil-heating boilers near their homes. Environmental groups have joined them in opposition, pointing out also the additional risk to wildlife on and in the Hudson River should one of these oil barges with tar sands oil spring a leak.

A pipeline rupture of tar sands oil into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan has already cost \$800 million to clean, and many scientists say that the dispersant used to break up the thick oil continues to harm wildlife in and on the river.

But Big Oil has not given up. On March 13, Pilgrim Pipeline Holding, which is

operated by former high-ranking executives for Koch Industries, announced plans to build a pipeline from Albany to the ocean-port Bayway refinery.

A spokesperson for Pilgrim Pipeline told the press that “a pipeline would take a lot of oil barges off the Hudson.” (Albany Times Union, March 12) What he did not say is that this would mean the continued surge of dangerous oil train shipments to Albany.

The Koch brothers have supported climate-change denier campaigns and organizations. They also financially back Americans for Prosperity, which tried to stop New York state’s climate-change control program to reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses. They failed.

The pressure put on by the Albany community and environmental groups has won an important victory to ensure the safety of these neighborhoods and the environment. It clearly shows what an organized people can do. But the struggle against this menace by Big Oil is not over. □



## Strategic blow to Pentagon in Crimea

# Ukraine crisis sets back NATO's eastward advance

By Fred Goldstein

March 19 — The overwhelming, popular turnout of the Crimean masses who affirmed their decision to separate from the Kiev coup regime in Ukraine and associate with Russia is the first great setback for the U.S. and NATO in their 15-year march to the East.

This constitutes a turning point in the international situation. The irresistibly expansionist imperialist establishment in Washington has engaged Russia in a direct confrontation by seizing control of the Ukrainian government.

The Russian nationalist Putin regime of counterrevolutionary oligarchs is no answer to the problems of the masses of people in Crimea or the workers and farmers in Ukraine. The workers' organizations and the communists must retain their class independence in this struggle, promote class solidarity and be careful not to fall prey to Great Russian chauvinism or bourgeois nationalism.

But at the same time, they should oppose any victory for Washington's war drive in the region, which is the greatest danger.

Since the fall of the USSR and Eastern Europe, NATO has swallowed nine countries from the former socialist camp in Eastern Europe and three formerly Soviet Baltic republics. This expansion toward Russia's borders has taken place in steps, with little resistance.

In NATO's march to the East — a march to encircle Russia on its western border — the seizure of Ukraine was a final and decisive step. But the militarists and expansionists in the Pentagon, the White House and the State Department forgot what the actual relationship of forces was on the ground.

They seem to have forgotten that Russia has a powerful military, including nuclear weapons and a large army. Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland

and other neocons and right-wingers in Washington who were running the Ukraine operation were so narrowly focused on grabbing political power that they disregarded the history of Ukraine. They mistook the pro-imperialist oligarchs and Ukrainian nationalists in Kiev, Lviv and other parts of western Ukraine for the entire country.

### Washington underestimated Ukrainian masses

Above all, they never foresaw the possibility of the intervention of the Ukrainian masses, particularly in Crimea and the eastern and southern parts of the country. They seem not to have noticed all the statues of Lenin, streets named after communists and monuments to the victories over fascism. Even the counterrevolutionary Ukrainian oligarchs had not dared to take them down.

After years of Washington and NATO running completely roughshod over country after country in the former socialist camp, this is their first land grab that has run into the dual resistance of the local population and the Russian state.

Washington gained its objective in Kiev by political subversion and by mobilizing fascist forces for the overthrow of the legally elected government, headed by Viktor Yanukovich. It then installed an unelected puppet government and gained political control of Kiev.

But with the seizure of the government of Ukraine in Kiev by Washington and its junior partners in the European Union, quantity has turned into quality. The imperialists in Washington have plunged across a red line and been caught flat-footed by the swift and forceful response they received, especially in Crimea.

Washington suffered a humiliating rebuff by the massive democratic turnout in Crimea. The U.S. warnings to Russia against federating with Crimea were demonstrably futile and ineffectual. And



to make matters worse for them, the unelected puppet regime in Kiev has not been able to establish its authority, as shown by growing unrest and resistance in large and key industrial sections of the country in the east and the south.

To be sure, the U.S. and the EU still have the stronghold of Kiev, fortified by the fascists in the Svoboda Party and the Right Sector. This is just the first battle in a war which will be filled with future political, economic and military twists and turns that cannot be foreseen.

### Pentagon wanted to oust Russian navy from Crimea

A measure of the setback, particularly for the Pentagon, can be seen in the howls and cries of the capitalist politicians over Crimea's federation with Russia and the swiftness and decisiveness with which this was accomplished.

The howling seems truly disproportionate — but only if you leave out the fact that pushing the Russian Black Sea Fleet out of Sebastopol was a prime strategic objective of the Pentagon. The hope was that by capturing the regime in Kiev, it would become possible to invalidate the lease under which the Russian fleet is stationed there.

Much attention has been rightfully focused on the U.S. goal of bringing NATO into Ukraine. But little has been said about the desire of the U.S. high command to push the Russian navy out

of Crimea. The base at Sebastopol is Russia's only warm-water port and is its strategic entry to the Mediterranean and Syria as well as Iran.

Syria is now in great danger of attack, as the new cold war heats up.

After the takeover of the government in Kiev, there was talk about canceling the Russian navy's leases for Sebastopol. According to the London Telegraph of March 1, "Vitaly Klitschko, the champion boxer who is now a candidate for president in May's elections, joined other leaders of the revolution with a call for a 'general mobilization' against the Russian threat. He called on the government to cancel the lease on the Russian naval base in Sebastopol."

### Economic austerity will undermine political situation

The strategists in Washington have seized control of a bankrupt government that owes money to foreign banks and is running out of cash. Washington and the EU have promised to bail out the regime. Of course that means to bail out the bankers and other investors to whom Kiev owes money. But this will require International Monetary Fund loans, which will only be given on condition of austerity cuts to the government budget and privatization of state enterprises.

Specifically, the IMF will require cuts to natural gas subsidies to the population, which will run into billions of dollars. It will mean less government spending on social welfare, services and government enterprises. And it will mean cuts in pensions.

The economic agreement with the EU and the IMF was to be signed on March 21. But this has been postponed by the regime, for fear of rushing too quickly to level an economic attack on a population that is already aroused.

However, IMF loans can only be postponed for a short time because the regime is running out of cash reserves with which to pay its debts. It won't be long before the regime in Kiev faces bankruptcy. In order to avoid that, it will have to submit to IMF terms, meaning a big economic attack on the masses. The workers in Ukraine will quickly see the consequences of "turning toward Europe" and its so-called "democracy" — that is, democracy for the rich.

The exuberance emanating from Washington after the fascist shock troops forced the Yanukovich government from power has been transformed into outrage among the hawks in the capitalist press, the political establishment and the militarists.

The right wing of the U.S. ruling class is growing more and more frustrated at having their expansionist aims stymied by what they consider to be Russian interference with their goals in Syria, Iran and elsewhere. John McCain and all the

*Continued on page 9*

## What a fascist video looks like

By Deirdre Griswold

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Shouldn't a moving picture be worth even more?

Take the video that spread widely across the Internet for a while — until someone claimed it was copyrighted and it got pulled off a lot of websites.

But not all of them. You can still find it on several sites if you google "Ukrainian fascists attack television director."

The six-minute video shows half-a-dozen burly men from the Svoboda Party in Ukraine attacking Oleksandr Pantelymonov, the acting director of NTU, the state-run television.

The leader of this March 18 attack was Igor Miroshnichenko, a member of the Ukrainian parliament's new committee on "freedom of speech." His Svoboda Party clearly wants to intimidate anyone not under their thumb: it filmed the attack.

This party has five key ministerial posts in what the West calls the "democratic" new Ukrainian government, including those of vice prime minister and minister of defense, in addition to the position of prosecutor general.

In the video, Miroshnichenko calls the TV director an "animal" while he and several others push him, punch him in the head and face, and grab him around the throat. They demand that he sign the letter of resignation that they shove at him. According to several published accounts of the incident, after they got the letter signed they took him out of the building, bundled him into an SUV and drove off. His whereabouts are unknown, as of March 24.

Yes, this was a real fascist attack by the new "defenders of freedom" in Ukraine. They are vital to the pro-West, unelected government, which got in through a coup that depended a great deal on street fighting by fascist groups like Svoboda and the Right Sector — as well as support from the U.S. and NATO.

The U.S. government knew exactly what Svoboda was. For example, in December, while these groups were leading the violence in the streets of Kiev that brought about the collapse of the elected government, Miroshnichenko himself was in the news — for defaming Hollywood actor Mila Kunis.

He wrote on his Facebook page that al-

though Kunis was born in Ukraine, she wasn't really Ukrainian because she's a "zhidovka" — a very offensive term used by anti-Semites to describe Jewish women. Many of her relatives died in the Holocaust when Germany invaded Ukraine during World War II.

The Svoboda Party is descended from a group that fought alongside the Nazis at that time until they were defeated by the Soviet Red Army.

The U.S. government supports Israel because of the pro-imperialist role it plays in the Middle East, but Washington is totally silent about its anti-Semitic friends in Ukraine.

And don't look for news of this outrage on prime time. Don't expect the talking heads or columnists to admit it happened. Ditto for the great "freedom-loving" politicians who are railing at Russia right now for allowing the people of Crimea to separate from the thug regime in Kiev.

Nor is there anything on the website of the Committee to Protect Journalists about the fascist assault on the TV director. Although this committee claims to be "Defending Journalists Worldwide," it has an agenda that mirrors Washington's. □

# Protesters demand: U.S. hands off!

By Kris Hamel

In response to a call from the International Action Center, demonstrations, outreach and other actions took place in cities and areas across the United States in mid-March to demand U.S. hands off Venezuela and no U.S. intervention in Ukraine or Russia. These actions also countered the lies and distortions of the big-business-owned media regarding the situation in these areas of the world.

People rallied in **Oakland, Calif.**, on March 17 to demand U.S. hands off Ukraine, Venezuela and Syria. Participants focused on outreach and public education to counter the mainstream media's pro-imperialist deluge of lies. They handed out hundreds of leaflets to passersby, while speakers exposed the U.S. and its European allies for their war-mongering tactics.

The rally was initiated by Workers World Party and endorsed by the Bay Area Latin American Solidarity Coalition, the Haiti Action Committee, the International Action Center, Lake Merritt Neighbors Organized for Peace, Marcha Patriótica – Capítulo California, the Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and the United National Anti-War Coalition.

That same day in **San Diego**, protesters gathered outside the local NBC affiliate to demand U.S. hands off Russia, Ukraine and Venezuela. Youth, homeward bound workers and sightseeing tourists were handed an informative IAC flyer titled "What's really happening in Ukraine? Don't be fooled!"

Meanwhile in **Detroit**, anti-war activists responded to a call from the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War &



New York

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Injustice and gathered March 18 at Hart Plaza during the afternoon rush hour. With signs and banners they denounced U.S. imperialism's designs to destabilize Venezuela and foment NATO's expansion into Ukraine.

In **Chicago** on March 23, the International Day Against Fascism and Racism, 35 people withstood a right-wing crowd of more than 100 at the Ukrainian Consulate in Chicago. Chanting, "Obama, McCain, no fascist Ukraine," the small crowd stood up to the anger from the Ukrainian right-wing nationalists. The Freedom Road Socialist Organization and Workers World Party members along with other anti-fascists stood up to the reactionaries. (from FightBack! News)

From a "Truth Table" set up by activists in **Philadelphia's** Center City to a rally at **Baltimore's** McKeldin Square and a vigil on the steps of the Federal Building in **Lincoln, Neb.**, these and other actions found people receptive to an anti-war viewpoint.

In **New York City**, people joined a militant rush-hour protest outside CNN's offices at Columbus Circle on March 14.

Picketing outside the opulent Time Warner Center, protesters chanted, "CNN lies, people die, in Ukraine and Venezuela!" and "[Anderson] Cooper, [Wolf] Blitzer, stop supporting fascists!"

At a closing rally outside the Fox News studios, Larry Holmes of the People's Power Assembly said, "We demand to know why CNN and Fox are not talking about the prominent role played by neo-Nazis in this coup d'état in Kiev. Why aren't they talking about how these fascists are displaying the Confederate flag out of some sick nostalgia for slavery?"

Lourdes Vela, representing the New York Bolivarian movement, said: "In Venezuela, the government is doing everything it can to stop the fascists who are trying to carry out a coup. There are paramilitaries and Colombian mercenaries that have entered the country and are trying to infiltrate into all corners. They are doing this because they have lost power."

## John McCain receives indictment

Other actions included a march on the offices of warhawk U.S. Sen. John McCain on March 14 in **Tucson, Ariz.**, where a People's Indictment was read charging McCain with three counts of "material support for terrorists" based on his support of reactionary movements in Ukraine,

Venezuela and Syria. An enlarged copy of the indictment was taped to the door.

In **Los Angeles**, protesters from several organizations and communities overflowed the corner of Echo Park Avenue and Sunset Boulevard on March 14. In front of a large banner reading "White House, CIA, Pentagon — Hands Off Ukraine, Venezuela and Syria," they distributed hundreds of flyers countering U.S. media and government lies.

Activists in **Huntington, W.V.**, also came out March 14, calling for "U.S. hands off Ukraine! Money for people's needs, not war!"

At **Boston's** annual St. Patrick's Day Peace Parade on March 16, the Team Solidarity Sound Truck helped spread the anti-war message while contingents carried signs reading "U.S. imperialism — Hands off Ukraine, Venezuela and Syria." An informational picket was called by Workers World Party in **Durham, N.C.'s**, Brightleaf Square Historic District on March 14. Protesters called for "Money for unemployment insurance, food stamps and higher wages, not war!" and distributed fact sheets to passersby.

Actions were also held in **Buffalo, N.Y.; Houston; and Minneapolis.**

*Greg Butterfield, Steven Ceci, Terri Kay, Bob McCubbin, Frank Neisser, John Parker, Bryan Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Benji Pyles, Paul Teitelbaum and Dan Van Dandervance contributed to this report.*



Oakland, Calif.

WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

Continued from page 8

mouthpieces of the Pentagon hawks are pushing for a new cold war.

The Putin government, on the other hand, has watched NATO expand to Russia's western borders. Moscow has seen the so-called "Rose Revolution" in Georgia in 2003, the "Orange Revolution" of 2004 in Ukraine, the failed "Denim Revolution" in Belarus in 2005 and 2006, and the attempt to overturn the government of Uzbekistan in 2006. All these so-called "color revolutions" were funded by the U.S.: the National Endowment for Democracy — which is really an arm of the CIA, Freedom House, the Soros foundations and others of their ilk.

The Pentagon is pushing in the direction of a new cold war. There may be a slowdown or a temporary pause in the conflict as both sides take a step back to assess their positions — especially Washington and the EU. But that does not remove the danger of further conflict, which will affect the workers and the oppressed everywhere.

The insatiable ambition of the imperialists to expand the boundaries of their domination led Washington and the Pentagon to seize Ukraine and bring a mortal threat to the doors of Russia. For the moment, the ball is in Washington's court.

*Fred Goldstein is the author of "Low-Wage Capitalism" and "Capitalism at a Dead End," which has been translated into Spanish as "El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida."*

## U.S. bombing of Serbia, after 15 years

*The following statement was issued March 24 by the International Action Center in advance of a demonstration outside the United Nations in New York set for 5 p.m. on the same day. It was 15 years ago on this day that the United States began bombing Serbia in its quest to break up Yugoslavia and further expand NATO. The demonstration will demand recognition of Kosovo as part of Serbia and U.S./NATO hands off the Balkans, Ukraine and Russia.*

On the 15th anniversary of the U.S. bombing of Serbia, and as new, even more ominous dangers arise in Ukraine and Crimea, it is important to remember history.

Wall Street dominates peoples through the destructive strategy of "divide and rule." In the Balkans and in Eastern Europe this has meant policies aimed at breaking solidarity among different nationalities and religions by imposing sanctions and economic destabilization and by funding right-wing and fascist organizations and granting immediate recognition to their regimes.

It was U.S. and European Union criminal policy that broke the Yugoslav Federation into six unstable, impoverished micro-states. They executed this crime



In front of the U.N., New York, March 24.

WW PHOTO: SARA FLOUNDERS

by bombing Bosnia in 1994 and carrying out a 78-day bombing campaign in 1999 of Serbia, especially the Serbian province of Kosovo. These wars aimed at expanding the U.S.-commanded NATO alliance into the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Republics.

Despite U.S. and German commitments to the former Soviet Union not to expand NATO one inch further if Soviet troops were withdrawn from East Germany, NATO has now expanded to 12 countries in the Balkans, Eastern Europe and former Soviet Republics.

After the massive destruction of schools, hospitals, industries and com-

munication in Yugoslavia in 1999, Washington still agreed, in the imposed ceasefire and in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244, that Kosovo is historically part of Serbia and would remain an autonomous part of sovereign Serbia, although under U.S./NATO occupation and administration. In 2008, in violation of this signed U.N. agreement, the U.S. recognized the puppet government it had set up and that government's illegal declaration of independence for Kosovo. The overwhelming majority of the people of Serbia of all nationalities opposed this theft of Kosovo by NATO. They continue to raise the slogan: "Kosovo is Serbia." □

# WORKERS WORLD

## editorial

# The enemy is at home

There is so much repetition of propaganda that Washington and the Pentagon represent the righteous, that some people manage to believe it despite the facts. Usually these are people trapped into hearing only one explanation of events. Or perhaps they are the 0.1 percent who actually benefit from this image.

The truth is that U.S. imperialism is the world center of plunder. The boss of all bosses is centered in Wall Street, and the enforcer of all enforcers resides in the Pentagon. This week — in late March — makes that truth even harder to escape.

For if we look at just the last 15 years — that is, without bringing up Hiroshima, Korea and Vietnam — we can get an idea of the amount of destruction Washington and Wall Street's Murder, Inc. have been responsible for.

On March 24, 1999, without United Nations approval, the Pentagon led a NATO bombing attack on Yugoslavia that lasted 78 days. It resulted in the NATO occupation of Kosovo and its eventual extraction from Serbia, the destitution of the Yugoslav government and the breakup of that multinational state into seven micro-states, each now a colony of Western imperialism. This "humanitarian" war killed thousands and wrecked at least \$30 billion worth of infrastructure. (See article page 9.)

On March 19 and 20, 2003, the U.S., with its British junior partner in tow but without even NATO support, invaded Iraq. While the imperialists were unable to install a stable puppet regime, their occupation resulted in the death of nearly 2 million Iraqis and created 5 million refugees. Here the Big Lie was about "weapons of mass destruction." (See article on Iraqi resistance at workers.org.)

We don't need an anniversary to discuss Afghanistan. The Pentagon has

occupied that country for more than 12 years, and it is still there, although the pretext — to kill or capture Osama bin Laden — disappeared in 2011.

Then there was Libya. NATO, with the Pentagon taking on the brunt of the arbitrary bombing — only a no-fly zone was U.N. approved — again deposed a government and replaced it with a failed regime. The Pentagon is still butting in. (See article page 11.)

In Syria, only a last-minute negotiation with Russia prevented a round of Pentagon bombing last September. And the U.S./NATO "aid" to the mercenaries and reactionaries in the "opposition" have killed tens of thousands and done enormous destruction to Syria. And it's not over.

The pretexts — in Libya and Syria — were to demonize the existing regime. Demonize in order to destroy.

This is not to mention the drone strikes in Pakistan and Yemen, growing incursions in Africa — with and without French imperialism — and CIA intervention against Venezuela based on support for fascist elements who try to terrorize the population.

The even bigger threats we saved for last. The "pivot" to Asia means more threats against north Korea and surrounding China with military bases. And then there is Ukraine. (See articles pages 8 and 9.)

The U.S./EU intervention in Ukraine — backing gangs of fascists to take over the Kiev regime, with the potential expansion of NATO to Russia's southwestern border — is the kind of adventure your normal Murder, Inc. would think twice about. Instead we hear a rant making Russia and its leader, Vladimir Putin, another "demon."

The Big Lies are wearing thin. The enemy, and the demons, are at home. □

# AFRICA

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

*Workers are striking in both the private and public sectors in Egypt and students are demanding jobs in Tunisia. While students in Kenya won their strike, the demands of transport workers in Nairobi have not yet been met.*

## EGYPT

In Egypt, where an uprising against the National Democratic Party of ousted President Hosni Mubarak erupted on Jan. 25, 2011, strikes and other forms of unrest among workers have continued. Since the beginning of 2014, union and independent workers' actions have taken place partially causing a shake-up in the interim military-backed regime that was installed after the coup against former President Mohamed Morsi on July 3, 2013.

The resignation of interim Prime Minister Hazem el-Biblawi, a leader of the Social Democratic Party of Egypt, and his replacement by Ibrahim Mehleb, represented sharp disagreements over how to respond to the current political crisis. Thousands of members and leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood and its allied political party, the Freedom and Justice Party, have been killed, wounded and detained since the July 3 coup.

Political repression has continued in Egypt with the March 24 death sentence handed down to 529 members and supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood. Demonstrations by students and workers have been banned since October, with those arrested facing harsh prison sentences.

Simultaneously workers are demanding better wages and working conditions in both the private and public sectors. Constant disruptions in services and production are reflections of the workers' disenchantment.

### Strikes and protests spread

"Protests have spread outward from Mahalla, the spiritual home of the Egyptian workers' movement, to the very heart of Cairo. Workers at Mahalla's state-owned Misr Spinning and Weaving Com-

pany walked out on Feb. 10, demanding the removal of holding company [Chair] Fouad Abdel-Alim and the application of the minimum wage. Workers at this factory first demanded a minimum wage in 2006." (Al-Monitor, Feb. 26)

The article continues, "After a wave of solidarity strikes and sit-ins at textile operations around Egypt, more public sector workers have walked out. Strikes are currently being staged by around 100,000 postal workers, bus drivers, government notary employees, street cleaners, field surveyors and medical professionals, according to Mada Masr."

The impact of the workers' actions on the transport sector is immense, noted the article. "An ongoing public transportation strike has halted buses in all 28 of the Greater Cairo Authority's garages, costing the city an estimated 800,000 Egyptian pounds (\$115,000) a day, according to Cairo Gov. Galal al-Saeed."

The Egyptian military has attempted to appeal to patriotism in efforts to persuade employees to return to work, but these appeals have not taken root with the workers and are nothing new in the ideological arsenal of the neocolonial state. According to Josh Stacer, a political scientist and analyst on Egyptian affairs, who said in the article, "This is the same discourse used after the initial 18 days [of the Jan. 25 Revolution] by [former Field Marshal Mohamed] Tantawi and company. It's about demobilizing workers."

## TUNISIA

In Tunisia, the birthplace of the uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East in 2010-11, university graduates have formed a union and are demanding jobs. A demonstration of the Union of Unemployed Graduates (UDC) took place on March 17 in downtown Tunis.

High unemployment and poverty were key elements in the rebellions which swept the country beginning in December 2010. Since the overthrow of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on Jan. 14, 2011, three subsequent governments in Tunis have been unable to stabilize the political and economic situation.

With the collapse of the previous government of Prime Minister Ali Larayedh and the installation of a more "technocratic" cabinet under Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa, a freeze has been placed on hiring in the public sector during the so-called transition period.

"Our demands are not political. We are protesting for jobs. We are asking for bread, bread and bread," said Halima, an unemployed graduate protester, told Press TV on March 17.

"This austerity budget will result in higher unemployment rates," said Wafa Ben Slimane, the UDC spokesperson.

Even though the dictatorial regime of Ben Ali was removed, Tunisia remains firmly in the world capitalist system where high unemployment, austerity and rising poverty characterize the current period.



WW PHOTO: GERRY SCOPPETTUOLO

# Defend Bolivarian Venezuela!

Supporters of the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela turned out for a rally in Boston on March 22. The event was organized by the Boston Bolivarians and supported by many groups and individuals, including the International Action Center; Antonie Castro, Polo Democratica Colombia; Sergio Reyes, Sacco-Vanzetti Commemoration Committee; Green-Rainbow Party; Answer Coalition; Vets for Peace; and Peace Action. The Boston School Bus Union Four, recently fired for union activity in United Steelworkers Local 8751, were represented by Gary Murchison, past union president and one of those fired. □

## WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

Available on amazon.com and bookstores around the country.

PentagonAchillesHeel.com



## LABOR in motion

# Libya faces further imperialist intervention

## KENYA

A significant strike impacting universities and colleges throughout the East African state of Kenya has been settled. Representatives of the Kenya Universities Staff Union and the Universities Academic Staff Union told their members to return to work on March 20 after an agreement had been reached with management.

Workers were seeking the payment of a cash settlement agreed upon during a labor struggle in 2012 which resulted in a collective bargaining agreement. The government had sought legal action to prevent the strike, but the union told its members to disregard the order and leave work, that they had a constitutional right to strike.

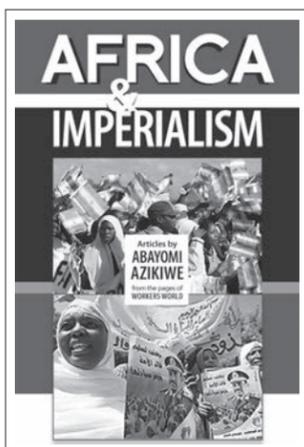
Charles Mukhwaya, Secretary General of KUSU, told the Kenyan press, "We are happy to announce that the strike has been called off. We have reached an amicable solution after a deal was struck that all the monies owed to us will be paid to all our members." (Capital FM, Kenya, March 20)

### Transport drivers' strike

Earlier in March, Kenya had been hit with a transport drivers' strike which jammed traffic for miles in and around the capital of Nairobi. Costs associated with driving buses and taxis, known as "Matatus," have tripled since 2013.

An agreement between the Matatu Welfare Association and the government to lower costs by 65 percent has not been implemented, according to Dickson Mbugua, national chair of the MWA. (Bloomberg.com, March 5) The strike on March 4 was not officially organized by the MWA but by an informal group designed to shut down public transport.

Kenya is a close ally of the United States and often participates in military operations initiated by the Pentagon in East Africa. At present Nairobi has deployed at least 2,000 troops to neighboring Somalia aimed at preventing the Al-Shabaab Islamic organization from increasing its bases inside the country. □



## AFRICA & IMPERIALISM

Articles by Abayomi Azikiwe from the pages of Workers World.

- Africa struggles against imperialism
- WikiLeaks on U.S. role in Africa
- Tunisian masses rebel
- South African workers strike
- Famine in the Sahel
- Women at forefront of liberation struggles
- Africa increases trade with China

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By Abayomi Azikiwe  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Three years after the massive eight-month bombing campaign against Libya was carried out by the Pentagon and NATO, divisions within the rebel forces that served as ground troops for the imperialist war of regime change are prompting greater foreign intervention. The seizure of an oil tanker, the Morning Glory, off the coast of Cyprus, by United States commandos and naval forces illustrates what is at stake for Washington in its efforts to remake the North African state.

The Mediterranean waters around Libya are heavily patrolled by Pentagon and NATO warships.

Rebels who are in opposition to the neocolonial, General National Congress regime in Tripoli are holding three ports where oil is exported from Libya. A dispute over economic and political control of the oil-rich eastern region of the country has brought the production and export of oil from Libya to a virtual standstill.

During the era of the Jamahiriya government under the leadership of Col. Moammar Gadhafi, Libya produced 1.6 million barrels of oil per day. With unrest escalating over the control of the ports, official figures for exports have declined to approximately 200,000 barrels per day.

Militias which control the ports in the east of the country are threatening to export oil in contravention to the wishes of the GNC in Tripoli. The GNC is weak politically and militarily, as represented by the recent coup against Prime Minister Ali Zeidan, who was forced out of his position and fled to Europe after his fledgling military failed to prevent the Morning Glory from leaving the port of Es Sider.

On March 24, international press agencies were allowed to board the Morning Glory, now docked at Tripoli. A crew of 21 people was removed and may face prosecution for what is claimed to be an illegal purchase of oil from the country.

"The crew of the oil tanker is now under my authority and is being investigated," said the neocolonial Libyan state prosecutor, Abdelqadir Radwan. (Reuters, March 23) Yet without the intervention of the U.S., the vessel would never have been returned.

GNC plans for the creation of a new national army in Libya are unfolding at a

slow pace. The soldiers are being trained by the U.S. and the European Union.

Consequently, the proposed army will be an outpost of the U.S. Africa Command and NATO, the forces responsible for the overthrow of the Gadhafi government and the destruction of the Libyan society and economy. Plans have also been floated for a more aggressive training program by NATO and the deployment of troops on the southern border of Libya, where pro-Gadhafi forces are in control of numerous towns and cities.

### Libya's oil and instability

The destruction of the previous political and economic system in Libya has had a devastating impact on the 6 million people there. Prior to the 2011 war, Libya enjoyed the highest standard of living in Africa.

Lacking a coherent system of governance and economic production, the overall quality of life inside the country has deteriorated sharply. The constant fighting between the various militia factions has created a highly precarious security situation, which consequently impacts production within the major industries.

Libya's oil and natural gas production provides supplies of these critical resources to Europe. With the decline in these industries, the price of crude oil has gone up in recent weeks.

The Associated Press reported on March 24 that "the price of oil edged above \$100 a barrel Monday as Russia's annexation of Crimea and Libya's continued difficulties to stabilize its oil industry worried investors. Russia is a key suppli-

er of crude oil and natural gas to Europe while Libya's production of crude, valued by refiners for its high quality, has yet to recover fully since the 2011 civil war which ousted Muammar Gadhafi."

U.S. foreign policy in various geopolitical regions of the world is deepening the existing world capitalist crisis. Resources utilized to maintain these hostile actions towards sovereign states in Africa, Eurasia, the Middle East and Latin America could be rechanneled to rebuild the cities inside the U.S., which are suffering from massive unemployment, pension losses, increasing poverty and declining public services.

Instability within the international petroleum markets inevitably results in higher energy prices in the U.S. A continuing decline in consumer spending in the Western industrialized states creates more joblessness and declining wages.

The AP report noted, "The supply risks should still lend support to the oil prices, for there is no sign as yet of Libyan production recovering," an expert at Commerzbank in Frankfurt told clients. "Furthermore, if the West were to impose additional sanctions on Russia, this could — at least theoretically — curb Russian oil exports and justify a certain price premium."

In another illustration of the tense Libyan security situation even in the capital of Tripoli, a bomb exploded on the runway at the international airport on March 21. Although there were no reported injuries, the incident reveals that the military and security elements around the GNC are incapable of maintaining order at key installations. □

## Make history: Build Workers World

March is Women's History Month, when Workers World makes a special effort to cover women's issues.

One current struggle of the People's Power Assemblies is fighting for \$15 an hour for low-wage workers. This is a woman's issue since 65 percent of low-wage workers are women, with a huge number of them women of color. In the fast-food industry, 36 percent of low-wage workers over the age of 20 are single mothers.

Pushing people into poverty, with homelessness and starvation real possibilities,

must be seen as a direct attack on women and their fight for reproductive justice.

If you appreciate WW's articles on women workers and the struggle for reproductive justice, it's time to join the Workers World Supporter Program.

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. □

## WORKERS WORLD MUNDO OBRERO

### Quiénes somos y por qué luchamos

¿Odias el capitalismo? El Partido Workers World-Mundo Obrero lucha por una sociedad socialista — en la cual la riqueza es una propiedad social y la producción está planificada para satisfacer las necesidades humanas. Este anticuado sistema capitalista está destrozando el nivel de vida de las/os trabajadores, mientras que elimina millones de puestos de trabajo. Si eres joven, ya sabes que te están robando el futuro. Y el capitalismo está amenazando todo el planeta con su dominio sobre los medios de producción de manera no planificada y con el único objetivo de obtener ganancias. ¡Las/os trabajadores lo han construido todo — y por eso todo le pertenece a la sociedad, no a un puñado de multimillonarios! Pero necesitamos una revolución para cambiar eso. Es por eso que desde hace 55 años el Partido WW-MO ha ido construyendo un partido revolucionario de la clase trabajadora dentro del vientre de la bestia.

Luchamos contra todo tipo de opresión. El racismo, el sexismo, la degradación de las personas por su nacionalidad, iden-

tidad sexual, o discapacidad — son todos instrumentos que la clase dominante utiliza para mantenernos separadas/os. Despiadadamente súper explotan a unas/os para explotar mejor a todas/os.

El Partido WW-MO cimienta la unidad entre todas/os los trabajadores mientras que apoya el derecho a la autodeterminación.

La lucha contra la opresión es una cuestión de la clase trabajadora, demostrado por las numerosas luchas laborales lideradas por gente de color, inmigrantes y mujeres.

El Partido WW-MO tiene una larga historia de oposición militante a las guerras imperialistas. Los dirigentes multimillonarios están empeñados en hacer retroceder el tiempo a los días antes de que las revoluciones socialistas y las luchas de liberación nacional liberaran territorios de sus garras. Nosotras/os hemos estado en las calles para oponernos a cada una de las guerras y agresiones del imperialismo. □



## Crisis de Ucrania retrasa avance de la OTAN hacia el este Golpe estratégico al Pentágono en Crimea

Por Fred Goldstein

19 de marzo - La abrumadora participación popular de las masas de Crimea que afirmaron su decisión de separarse del régimen golpista de Kiev en Ucrania y asociarse con Rusia, es el primer gran revés para los EE.UU. y la OTAN en su marcha hacia el Este en 15 años.

Esto constituye un punto de inflexión en la situación internacional. El establecimiento imperialista irremisiblemente expansionista de Washington ha confrontado directamente a Rusia al tomar control del gobierno ucraniano.

El régimen nacionalista de Putin de oligarcas contrarrevolucionarios no es una respuesta a los problemas de las masas populares en Crimea o a las/os obreros y campesinas/os de Ucrania. Las organizaciones de trabajadoras/es y las/os comunistas deben conservar su independencia de clase en esta lucha, promover la solidaridad de clase y tener cuidado de no caer en el chovinismo gran ruso o el nacionalismo burgués.

Pero al mismo tiempo, deben oponerse a cualquier victoria para la campaña bélica de Washington en la región, que es el mayor peligro.

Desde la caída de la URSS y Europa del Este, la OTAN se ha tragado nueve países del antiguo campo socialista en Europa del Este y tres repúblicas bálticas ex soviéticas. Esta expansión hacia las fronteras de Rusia ha tomado lugar en pasos y con poca resistencia.

En la marcha de la OTAN hacia el Este— una marcha para cercar a Rusia en su frontera occidental— la incautación de Ucrania era un paso final y decisivo. Pero los militaristas y expansionistas en el Pentágono, la Casa Blanca y el Departamento de Estado se olvidaron de cuál es la real relación de fuerzas en el campo de batalla.

Parecen haber olvidado que Rusia tiene una poderosa fuerza militar, incluyendo armas nucleares y un enorme ejército. La subsecretaria de Estado, Victoria Nuland y otros neoconservadores y los derechistas en Washington que estaban ejecutando la operación de Ucrania se centraron de manera tan estrecha en el acaparamiento del poder político que hicieron caso omiso de la historia de Ucrania. Confundieron a los oligarcas pro imperialistas y nacionalistas ucranianos en Kiev, Lviv y otras partes del oeste de Ucrania con el país entero.

**Washington subestimó masas ucranianas**

Por encima de todo, nunca previeron la posibilidad de la intervención de las masas ucranianas, especialmente en Crimea y en el este y sur del país. Parecen no haberse dado cuenta de todas las estatuas de Lenin, las calles con nombres de comunistas y los monumentos a las victorias contra el fascismo. Ni siquiera los oligarcas ucranianos contrarrevolucionarios se habían atrevido a derribarlos.

Después de que por años Washington y la OTAN trataran sin miramientos a país tras país en el ex campo socialista, esta es la primera toma que se ha topado con la resistencia dual de la población local y el Estado ruso.

Washington ganó su objetivo en Kiev por la subversión política y la movilización de fuerzas fascistas para el derrocamiento del gobierno legalmente electo, encabezado por Viktor Yanukovich. Luego instaló un gobierno títere no elegido y ganó el control político de Kiev.

Pero con la toma del gobierno de Ucrania en Kiev por Washington y sus socios menores en la Unión Europea, la cantidad se ha convertido en calidad. Los imperialistas en Washington han traspasado una línea roja y los han cogido desprevenidos por la respuesta rápida y

contundente que recibieron, especialmente en Crimea.

Washington sufrió un humillante desaire con la masiva participación democrática en Crimea. Las advertencias de Estados Unidos a Rusia contra la federación de Crimea fueron evidentemente inútiles e ineficaces. Y para empeorar las cosas para ellos, el régimen marioneta no electo en Kiev no ha sido capaz de establecer su autoridad, como lo demuestra el

creciente malestar y la resistencia en los grandes y principales sectores industriales del país en el este y en el sur.

Es cierto que EE.UU. y la UE todavía dominan Kiev, reforzado por los fascistas en el Partido Svoboda y el Sector de Derecha. Esta es sólo la primera batalla en una guerra que estará llena de futuros giros políticos, económicos y militares que no pueden perverse.

**Pentágono quería sacar a la marina rusa de Crimea**

Una medida de la derrota, sobre todo para el Pentágono, se puede ver en los aullidos y gritos de los políticos capitalistas sobre la federación de Crimea con Rusia y la rapidez y decisión con que esto se logró.

El aullido parece verdaderamente desproporcionado —pero sólo si se deja al lado el hecho de que sacar la Flota rusa del Mar Negro de Sebastopol era un objetivo estratégico primordial del Pentágono. La esperanza era que al capturar el régimen en Kiev, hubiera sido posible invalidar el contrato de la flota rusa que se encuentra estacionada allí.

Mucha atención se ha centrado justamente en el objetivo de EE.UU. de llevar a la OTAN a Ucrania. Pero poco se ha dicho acerca de la voluntad del alto mando estadounidense de empujar a la marina rusa fuera de Crimea. La base en Sebastopol es el único puerto de aguas cálidas de Rusia y es su entrada estratégica al Mediterráneo, a Siria, así como a Irán.

Siria está ahora en gran peligro de ataque, ya que la nueva guerra fría se calienta.

Después de la toma del gobierno en Kiev, se habló de la cancelación de los contratos de la armada rusa en Sebastopol. Según el Telegraph de Londres el 1º de marzo, "Vitaly Klitschko, el campeón de boxeo que ahora es candidato para presidente en las elecciones de mayo, su unió a otros líderes de la revolución con un llamado a una 'movilización general' contra la amenaza rusa. Llamó al gobierno a cancelar el contrato de arrendamiento de la base naval rusa en Sebastopol".

Austeridad económica socavará la situación política

Los estrategas de Washington han tomado el control de un gobierno en bancarota que le debe dinero a los bancos extranjeros y se está quedando sin dinero en efectivo. Washington y la UE se han comprometido a rescatar al régimen. Por supuesto, eso significa rescatar a los banqueros y otros inversores a los que Kiev debe dinero. Pero esto requerirá préstamos del Fondo Monetario Internacional que solo se darán a condición de imponer recortes de austeridad en el presupuesto del gobierno y la privatización de las empresas estatales.

Específicamente, el FMI exigirá recortes a los subsidios de gas natural a la población, que serán miles de millones

de dólares. Esto significará menos gasto gubernamental en el bienestar social, los servicios y las empresas públicas. Y significará recortes en las pensiones.

El acuerdo económico con la UE y el FMI iba a ser firmado el 21 de marzo. Pero esto ha sido postergado por el régimen por temor de atacar demasiado rápido a una población que ya está provocada.

Sin embargo, los préstamos del FMI solo se pueden posponer por un tiempo limitado puesto que el régimen en Kiev se está quedando sin reservas en efectivo para pagar sus deudas. No pasará mucho tiempo antes de que el régimen en Kiev se enfrente a una bancarrota. Para evitar eso, tendrá que someterse a los términos del FMI, lo que significa un gran ataque económico contra las masas. Las/os trabajadoras en Ucrania verán rápidamente las consecuencias de "volverse hacia Europa" y su llamada "democracia" — es decir, la democracia para los ricos.

La exuberancia que emanaba de Washington después de que las tropas de choque fascistas obligaron al gobierno de Yanukovich fuera del poder, se ha transformado en furia entre los halcones en la prensa capitalista, el establecimiento político y los militaristas.

El ala derecha de la clase dominante estadounidense se frustra cada vez más al tener sus objetivos expansionistas bloqueados por lo que consideran una injerencia rusa con sus objetivos en Siria, Irán y otros lugares. John McCain y todos los voceros de los guerrilleros del Pentágono están presionando por una nueva guerra fría.

El gobierno de Putin, por su parte, ha visto cómo la OTAN se extiende hacia las fronteras occidentales de Rusia. Moscú ha sido testigo de la llamada "Revolución Rosa" de Georgia en 2003, la "Revolución Naranja" de 2004 en Ucrania, la fallida "Revolución Denim" en Bielorrusia en 2005 y 2006, y el intento de derrocar el gobierno de Uzbekistán en 2006. Todas estas llamadas "revoluciones de colores" fueron financiadas por los EE.UU.: la Fundación Nacional para la Democracia — la cuál es en realidad un brazo de la CIA; Freedom House; las fundaciones de Soros y otras de su calaña.

El Pentágono está empujando en la dirección de una nueva guerra fría. Puede haber una desaceleración o una pausa temporal en el conflicto cuando ambas partes den un paso atrás para evaluar sus posiciones — sobre todo Washington y la UE. Pero eso no quita el peligro de nuevos conflictos los cuáles afectarán a las/os trabajadoras y a las/os oprimidos de todo el mundo.

La insaciable ambición de los imperialistas por ampliar los límites de su dominación llevó a Washington y el Pentágono a apoderarse de Ucrania y llevar una amenaza mortal a las puertas de Rusia. Por el momento, la pelota está en la cancha de Washington. □

**LIBERTAD PARA OSCAR LÓPEZ RIVERA**

**FREE PUERTO RICAN  
POLITICAL PRISONER  
OSCAR LOPEZ RIVERA!**



**Protesta por el  
33º Aniversario de la  
detención del preso político  
puertorriqueño  
Oscar López Rivera**

**Jueves  
29 mayo, 2014**

a las 5 pm  
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