



Defend Ferguson UPRISING!



Youth protesters defy police terror in Ferguson, Mo.

Aug. 19 bulletin: News sources report that 78 people were arrested Aug. 18 during a police riot in Ferguson.

By Abayomi Azikiwe
 Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Aug. 18 — Michael Brown, an 18-year-old African-American youth, was shot at least six times by a Ferguson, Mo., white police officer, Darren Wilson, as shown in an independent autopsy requested by the family. The fatal bullet went through the top of Brown's head into his brain, killing him instantly.

Numerous eyewitnesses saw the fatal shooting of Brown, who was struck down on Aug. 9 as he walked to his grandmother's home. A cellphone videotape captured the scene minutes after the youth was gunned down in the street, as police stood around talking.

When Brown's family members attempted to see his body, police pushed them away. The officer's name was not released until six days after he shot Brown — only after mass pressure.

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'Justice for Michael Brown & all victims of police brutality'



Several hundred people rallied at One Police Plaza in New York City Aug. 18 to demand justice for Michael Brown and to support the rebellion of youth against police brutality in Ferguson, Mo. The rally also demanded justice for those people of color killed by New York police such as Eric Garner, Ramarley Graham and Kyam Livingston. The protesters then marched to City Hall to protest a call made by Mayor Bill de Blasio for people "not to resist arrest" by the police. The protest was called by the People's Power Assembly.

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SPECIAL COVERAGE ON FERGUSON

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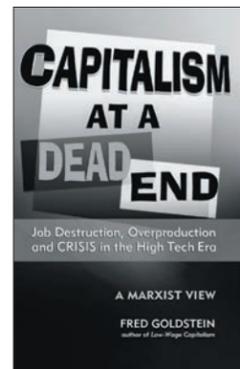
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El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

La tesis de este libro es que la crisis económica, que se inició en agosto de 2007, marcó un punto de inflexión en la historia del capitalismo. El autor sostiene que el sistema no se recuperará, no volverá al ciclo capitalista normal de auge y caída.

Durante décadas, la clase capitalista ha utilizado la revolución tecnológica digital para aumentar la productividad del trabajo a un ritmo récord. Menos trabajadores producen más bienes y servicios en menos tiempo con salarios más bajos. El resultado es una serie de "recuperaciones sin empleos" que hace que las cosas vayan aún peor.

Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tasa decreciente de ganancia, para demostrar por qué el capitalismo global ha llegado finalmente a un punto de inflexión.

El continuo estancamiento y el desempleo generalizado provocarán inevitablemente un resurgimiento de la lucha de clases que no se ve en EE.UU. desde la década de 1930; esta vez se dirigirá contra el propio sistema.

Capitalism at a Dead End

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

The author Fred Goldstein uses Marx's laws of capitalist accumulation and the declining rate of profit to show why global capitalism has finally reached a tipping point. Employers have increased the productivity of labor to such an extent that as soon as the system starts up in a growth curve, production rapidly outstrips demand in the market and overproduction kicks in to block further growth. Then come stagnation, economic contraction, and mass unemployment.

Books are available at most major bookstores

For more information and other writings by the author go to LowWageCapitalism.com

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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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Texas Governor's REAL crimes

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

For the 14 years that Rick Perry has been governor, he has committed crimes against the people of Texas with impunity. So it was almost laughable when he was indicted on Aug. 15 for two felony charges that most of the people in Texas have never heard of and are not impacted by.

What a grand jury has never investigated are Perry's closure of almost every women's health clinic in the state, his refusal to use federal money to expand Medicaid and his brazen authorization of 276 death row executions.

These are his serious crimes that directly affect the lives of millions, causing immeasurable pain, physical and psychological suffering and death. These crimes that Perry has committed against working-class people and particularly African Americans, Latinos/as and women of all nationalities in Texas are not on the Sunday news shows or any bourgeois national news programs.

Last summer, an ethics complaint was filed against Perry saying he had improperly vetoed state funding for the Travis County [Austin's] District Attorney's Public Integrity Unit which focuses on government corruption and tax fraud.

The charges in this case are abuse of official capacity, a first-degree felony, and coercion of a public servant, a third-degree felony. If ever convicted, he could receive a maximum sentence of 109 years in state prison.

Perry threatened the Austin DA with



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

a veto of funding for her office if she refused to resign after being convicted of drunk driving. Legal experts say that Perry had the right to veto funding but not to publicly threaten the DA into resigning. The Travis County PIU was conducting a potentially damaging investigation into a medical research institute that has been one of Perry's favorite avenues for grants and jobs.

Since Perry signed into law last year a bill that severely restricts a woman's right to abortion as well as other medical care dealing with women's reproductive health, Perry has used this reactionary feat to bolster his ratings among conservatives. He has stated that his goal is to make abortion, at any stage, a thing of the past.

The last provisions of Texas' anti-choice legislation go into effect in September. If legal challenges fail, Texas may have only six clinics left where women can have an abortion. Over 12 million women living in 268,000 square miles in Texas and they will have six clinics! This is criminal.

Perry has made clear that he will go to

great lengths to protect an unborn fetus, but he cares little about the real children born in the state.

One in four (6.2 million) Texans are uninsured, the highest rate of any state, yet Perry has refused to accept federal money to expand Medicaid. Medicaid expansion would cover more than one million new low-income

Texans by 2017, according to the state Health and Human Services Commission.

Perry refuses to expand Medicaid despite the federal government covering 100 percent of the costs for the first three years and 90 percent after that. But Perry has chosen his political aspirations over people's lives.

Mass murderer

If anyone else ever authorized the killing of 276 people, they would be indicted for mass murder. Perry has presided over more executions than any governor in the history of the United States. Texas leads the country with 515 executions and over half have been under Perry's reign.

With all the recent news of botched executions, with drug companies refusing to let their drugs be purchased for killing people, with innocent people being exonerated off death rows around the country in greater and greater frequency, we can say with certainty that the system of capital punishment is broken and cannot be fixed.

While Texas has exonerated 12 of the 143 people released from death row because they were proven innocent, we will never know the true number of innocent people already executed.

In early August, a new report by the Washington Post thoroughly discredits the last piece of evidence used to convict Todd Willingham of setting his house on fire to kill his three daughters: testimony by jailhouse snitch Johnny Webb, who testified that Willingham admitted his guilt while in the county jail awaiting trial. The prosecutor had insisted that he made no deal with Webb. But, according to a lengthy paper trail and the informant himself, Webb was indeed coaxed and actually paid to testify against Willingham.

Willingham was executed in 2004 despite a report on Perry's desk by a prominent arson expert and scientist stating the fire was not intentionally set, and therefore, there was no crime. Perry ignored the facts, calling Willingham a monster (because he listened to heavy metal music and had Metallica posters on his wall) and allowed his execution to proceed.

Members of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement have discussed Perry's indictments and their responses ranged from joy that he could go to prison to pessimism that he would be able to worm his way out of the charges.

But one thing they agreed on was that not only was Perry a criminal, but the favorite sign of those protesting executions in Huntsville, Texas, was the one resembling a wanted poster reading "Rick Perry — serial killer!" □

Jury acquits anti-drone protester

by Minnie Bruce Pratt
Syracuse, N.Y.

A six-person jury acquitted anti-drone protester Russell Brown on July 31 in an East Syracuse, N.Y., court of all charges after he testified about how current U.S. murderous drone strikes are like the U.S. war crimes committed during the Vietnam War.

Brown was on trial for an April 2013 protest at Hancock National Guard Airbase in Syracuse. He smeared himself with red dye to represent the death of drone victims and lay down in a roadway in front of the base. He was arrested and faced charges carrying a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

People in Afghanistan are targeted by Reaper drones flown out of Hancock. Soldiers flying the drones are in the 174th

Attack Wing, New York National Guard, the first U.S. squadron to convert to all unpowered combat planes.

Representing himself, Brown, a Marine from 1965 to 1967, gave detailed narratives of U.S. military killings and atrocities against the Vietnamese people that he saw firsthand. (blog.upstatedroneaction.org)

He told the jury of years of sleepless nights, of regret and of guilt for not speaking up against those crimes. He said he wanted to say to soldiers, "You don't have to obey an illegal order."

Asked why he protested, Brown said he was speaking out for people being killed and dedicated his action to the people in Vietnam and in the Middle East who had suffered and died in U.S. wars.

After acquitting Brown, one juror asked supporters to "Thank Russell for us." □

Rasmea Odeh case:

Judge Borman forced to step down

By Fightback News! staff

(fightbacknews.org/where-we-stand) dated Aug. 12.

Detroit — Judge Paul D. Borman was forced to remove himself from the case of Palestinian community leader Rasmea Odeh on Aug. 11. Late last month, Judge Borman stridently denied a defense motion calling on him to step down. The motion asserted that his lifelong support for the state of Israel — whose arrest, torture and conviction of Odeh for alleged Jerusalem bombings in 1969 is at issue in this

case — would not allow for a fair trial.

Odeh has pleaded not guilty to the charge of "unlawful procurement of naturalization" and vehemently refutes the Israeli convictions, which were based on a forced confession after extended periods of vicious physical and sexual torture.

In an unexpected turn of events, Borman admitted his financial ties to Israel "could be perceived as establishing a reasonably objective inference of a lack of impartiality in the context of the issues presented in this case." Defense claims of pro-Israel bias are vindicated, and Bor-

New York City

Subway performers denounce police crackdown



Subway artists and police brutality activists held a news conference at City Hall on Aug. 12 to protest the racist crackdown by the New York Police Department against performers in the mass transit system.

According to media reports in early July, arrests of subway performers have increased by 500 percent under Commissioner William Bratton, from 40 arrests in 2013 to 240 so far this year.

Matthew Christian of the performer advocacy group Busk NY explained that the NYPD ignores official MTA rules of conduct when they harass artists performing on subway platforms and mezzanines. He offered copies of the rules to journalists to see for themselves.

Andrew "Goofy" Saunders of the W.A.F.F.L.E. NY dance collective spoke out about how he was unjustly arrested and jailed. "We just want to dance," he said. "The NYPD has repeatedly gone beyond the provisions of the MTA's rules of conduct by charging train dancers — often young Black or Latino males — with misdemeanor reckless endangerment, even when no injuries have been demonstrated during decades of performances," asserted Josmar Trujillo of New Yorkers Against Bratton.

—Story and photo by Greg Butterfield

man has removed himself. The case has been randomly reassigned to U.S. District Judge Gershwin A. Drain.

When Borman refused the motion for him to step down on July 31, he dismissed defense arguments about his decades of trips to and fundraising for Israel, claiming his "religious convictions" did not bring his impartiality into question.

According to supporters, Borman was falsely covering Zionist ideology with Judaism. "We opposed Judge Borman not because of his Jewish faith, but because of his decades of support for the state of

Israel," said Hatem Abudayyeh, a spokesperson for Odeh's defense committee. "Rasmea overcame vicious torture by Israeli authorities while imprisoned in Palestine in the 70s. She has committed no crime and the government has no case. We need a judge willing to listen to a defense that puts Israel on trial for its crimes against Rasmea, and against all Palestinians."

Supporters of Odeh hail this as a victory for the defense, but are redoubling efforts to win justice for Rasmea.

Continued on page 10

Struggle halts unloading of Israeli ship

By Terri Kay
Oakland, Calif.

Some 5,000 determined protesters marched almost a mile and a half from the West Oakland Bay Area Rapid Transit station to the SSA Marine terminal in the Port of Oakland on Aug. 16. The purpose of the event, called “Block the Boat for Gaza,” was to prevent the cargo of the Zim Piraeus, a ship of the apartheid Israeli Zim shipping company, from being unloaded at the Port of Oakland.

“Zim Lines is the largest Israeli shipping company, and it’s a huge flow of capital for the state of Israel,” said Lara Kiswani, executive director of the Arab Resource and Organizing Center, one of the leading organizations in the large coalition endorsing the event.

The Zim Piraeus was originally scheduled to be unloaded at the Port of Oakland that Saturday morning at 5 a.m. However, due to the planned blockade, on Friday night the Zim ship slowed to a stop around Santa Cruz, Calif., roughly 70 miles by sea from the Port of Oakland on San Francisco Bay. When it was clear the ship would no longer make the original schedule, protesters rescheduled their plans from an early morning blockade to one on Saturday afternoon, during the longshore workers’ second shift.

By the time the march was heading for the port, it was apparent that the Zim Piraeus was still dodging the blockade at sea and would not be docking that day.

Protesters began chanting “We blocked the ship!” They also chanted, “Occupation is a crime! From Ferguson to Palestine!” tying in the struggle of the Palestinians against Israeli occupation to that of the struggle in Ferguson, Mo., where

the community is still reeling from the police killing of Michael Brown, a young, unarmed African American.

When they reached the berth at SSA where the Zim would have been tied up, the protesters were met with a large and menacing police line across the entire driveway where the longshore workers enter to work the ships. Spontaneously, the crowd marched squarely up to the police, raising their hands in the air and chanting “Hands up! Don’t shoot!” to indicate support for the African-American community in Ferguson.

A rally was held there with speakers including Lara Kiswani, representing AROC; Pierre LaBossiere with the Haiti Action Committee; Clarence Thomas, Million Worker March organizer; Eyad with AROC; and Judy Greenspan, speaking for Workers World Party.

In a victory statement, AROC announced, “Our actions today have sent a clear message that genocide and apartheid do not pay in Oakland, or anywhere on the West Coast. Our action, along with the 100’s of 1000’s of people who mobilized worldwide in solidarity with the resilient Palestinian people, should send a clear and resounding message that the beginning of the end for the Zionist apartheid regime in Palestine is upon us. As South African apartheid fell, Zionist rule in Palestine and Israeli apartheid will fall.” (araborganizing.org, Aug. 17)

Day 2 completes 48-hour shutdown!

Blocking the ship for two longshore work shifts on Saturday was historic. The number of participants was far greater than during the first Zim blockade in Oakland, which was held in 2010 in re-

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Palestinian youth speak in Philadelphia

Three young Palestinian activists — Majd Ahmad, Omar Abuasi and Rajai Dias — addressed a Philadelphia meeting on Aug. 12 on the Gaza resistance to Israeli occupation and the impact of the decades long occupation of Palestine on their own families and lives. All three are leaders in local movements dedicated to raising awareness of the crisis. The meeting was hosted by the Philadelphia International Action Center.

— Betsey Piette



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Union leader responds to tragedy in Ferguson

This Aug. 14 message, posted at cwa-union.org, is from Claude Cummings, Communication Workers of America vice president of District 6 and Executive Board Diversity Committee chair of the same union.

CWA members live and work in every part of Missouri, including Ferguson. They deserve, and our union will support them in securing:

- A full and transparent investigation into the circumstances of Mike Brown’s death and full accountability for anyone involved in any wrongdoing.
- Protection for their rights to go to and from their homes and places of work,

for their right to assemble, and for their right to document and report on the events in Ferguson.

- Investment in the community of Ferguson and all struggling communities in Missouri that remove the longstanding barriers to employment and full participation in community life standing in the paths of too many of our youth.

Our union is part of the Ferguson and St. Louis community. Our members will be there in the long struggle for social and economic justice and democracy. Our prayers and thoughts are with the family of Mike Brown and for peace in Ferguson. □



WW PHOTOS: (ABOVE) INGRID MARTIN; (RIGHT) BILL DORES
New York protest in solidarity with Oakland, Aug. 16, right.

On the picket line

By Sue Davis

Kellogg ordered to end lockout

On July 30, a federal judge ordered Kellogg to end its union-busting lockout of 226 workers at its Memphis cereal plant, reinstate their jobs by Aug. 4 and bargain with Bakery union (BCTGM) Local 252G in good faith. Kellogg locked the workers out on Oct. 22 because they refused changes in wage rates and benefits in the Master Contract signed in 2012, which runs through October 2015. So BCTGM filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board.

By instituting the lockout, the \$14 billion company was trying to bully full-time workers to accept part-time status at greatly reduced pay. If it could get away with this strong-arm tactic in Memphis, the union knew it would impose such drastic cutbacks at its other plants in Omaha, Neb.; Battle Creek, Mich.; and Lancaster, Pa. Even though the workers and their families suffered for nine long months without pay and health benefits, they fought back on defiant picket lines at the plant and boldly confronted Kellogg at a rally outside the April shareholders’ meeting in Battle Creek. May this ruling be a stinging rebuke to CEOs planning to follow in Kellogg’s lockout footsteps. (aflcio.blog.org, July 31)

Tentative deal in Northwest grain lockout

A tentative contract covering Pacific Northwest grain terminals — and potentially ending the nearly 18-month lockout of grain workers by Mitsui-United Grain in Vancouver, Wash. — was reached Aug. 11 by the Longshore and Warehouse Union and grain terminal operators. Both the looming grain harvest and the withdrawal of Washington state escorts for grain inspectors helped to speed contract talks. Terms will not be made public until ILWU members have a chance to vote on the agreement, which covers MUG in Vancouver, Marubeni-Columbia Grain in Portland and Louis Dreyfus in Portland and Seattle. (The Stand, Aug. 13)

Call for solidarity: boycott IKEA

More than 350 workers at the IKEA store in Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, represented by Teamsters Local 213, have been locked out for 13 months. Swedish-owned furniture multinational IKEA, which had record profits in 2013, is trying to impose a two-tier wage system and seriously weaken benefits at its North American flagship store. If successful, that would set standards for ten unorganized IKEA stores in Canada; Montreal has the only other unionized workforce. The lack of hours and consistent work schedules for 240 part-time workers, as well as management bullying, a sharp increase in grievances and management interference with union representatives are serious problems at the store. The locked-out workers at IKEA Richmond are now calling for a boycott in Canada. (The Bullet, socialistproject.ca, June 17)

Let’s show solidarity and extend the boycott throughout North America — especially since the Machinists (IAM) union and the Teamsters are actively involved in organizing workers in IKEA distribution centers and plants in the U.S.

Maryland drivers join National Taxi Workers Alliance

The newly formed Montgomery County Professional Drivers Union, which covers more than 800 taxi drivers in and around Washington, D.C., received an organizing charter from the National Taxi Workers Alliance on July 31. “The overwhelming majority of workers in this industry are immigrants, exploited and disenfranchised, told that [they] have no rights,” said NTWA President Bhairavi Desai, “but that changes now, not just in Montgomery County but throughout this region, which is such a critical place because it’s the capital.” MCPDU President Peter Ibik observed that already the workers have noticed a big change in how they are treated because of their affiliation with the NTWA and AFL-CIO. Due to their status as independent contractors, the drivers are not protected by any wage, hour or worker compensation laws and have no health insurance, disability insurance or any form of retirement benefits. On with the union drive! (dclabor.org, Aug. 1)

More unionized carwashes in L.A.

When 133 newly unionized carwashers in Los Angeles joined United Steelworkers Local 675 in May, it made Los Angeles, with more than a dozen union carwashes, the leader in this national union drive. Owners have signed contracts that comply with all labor, health and safety regulations and give their workers, mostly Latino/a immigrants, a 2 percent raise. Workers are now able to enforce working standards through a grievance procedure. A 2008 study conducted by the L.A. Times showed that underpaying workers, hiring minors, operating without workers’ compensation insurance, and denying workers meal and rest breaks were common illegal practices in this industry. Local 675 is now showing the way for the rest of the country. (aflcio.blog.org, May 7) □

The racist militarization of Ferguson, Mo.

By Larry Hales

Aug. 18 — The air was again choked in Ferguson, Mo., with smoke bombs and tear gas. Protesters' chants competed with bursts of firearms shooting rubber bullets. This was in late evening, after Saturday, Aug. 16, passed into the early moments of Sunday, shortly after the curfew took effect.

Residents of Ferguson, a small suburb in St. Louis County that is more than two-thirds Black, defied Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon's martial law declaration. It had been made mere hours before, ironically in a Black church, and with Nixon flanked by Black politicians.

Many in the audience immediately disagreed with the imposition of police control over the city — not that it would be any different from the condition Ferguson had been in since late Sunday, Aug. 10, the day after 18-year-old Black male Michael Brown was shot to death by a Ferguson cop in broad daylight. His body was then left in the middle of the street for hours. Nixon's official declaration provided legal cover and suspended habeas corpus, so those arrested could be detained without a hearing until the order is lifted.

Martial law was already effectively in place. It began as more than 150 cops from various police agencies descended in full riot gear upon the city of nearly 22,000 people. Justified anger had reached a fever pitch and turned into a mini-rebellion. Since Aug. 10, cops, local, state and other municipalities' forces have displayed a full array of the weaponry at their disposal: assault rifles, tear gas, concussion grenades, smoke bombs, rubber and bean bag bullets, long-range acoustic devices, armored personnel carriers and Humvees. Their tactics include the declaration of a no-fly zone over the city, denying media access and even arresting some mainstream journalists.

Dozens of people had been arrested during the week prior to Nixon's announcement. Many were arrested, not for participating in the rebellion or refusing to disperse, but because police picked them out of crowds during protests.

However, the more repressive the cops became, the more time ticked away without the arrest of the cop responsible for shooting unarmed Michael Brown for the "crime" of walking in the middle of the street. As time passed without the release of the cop's name, the more the righteous indignation of the people of Ferguson and St. Louis County bubbled over.

Around the country, oppressed communities of color, especially Black, Latino/a and Indigenous, seethed with the knowledge that Michael Brown's killing was not an isolated event. Support poured in from as far away as Palestine, where the people have lived under a constant state of siege since 1948 — at the behest of the U.S., in order to maintain its client state of Israel, which helps to secure U.S. hegemony in the region.

In Geneva, the United Nations committee "that oversees compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) placed the U.S. record under the spotlight," reported the American Civil Liberties Union. "The Committee expressed deep concern at the circumstances surrounding Brown's shooting [and] other recent deaths of unarmed African-American men ... at the hands of law enforcement." (aclu.org, Aug. 15)

The strong responses from around the country and around the world are comparable to those following Hurricanes

Katrina and Rita. Then, the conditions of poverty, racism and neglect were laid bare by hurricane winds, as the most vulnerable — tens of thousands of Black residents, especially in New Orleans — were left to suffer for days without safe haven, proper sewerage, food, water or medical care. Some died. Vigilantes and cops set upon the oppressed.

Brown's killing spotlights rampant police brutality

It is not simply how commonplace police brutality is that illuminates the nature of the state; it also reveals that separate realities exist in the United States. The repressive state — the armed bodies of people, the military, the courts, jails and prisons — stands between poor workers and oppressed communities, on one side, and the elite, superwealthy bankers, corporation owners and their political lackeys, on the other.

The U.S., founded by colonial settlers, expropriated the land from Indigenous people through war and genocide and ensnared the people who built this country's wealth — through slavery.

Black people, descendants of the enslaved or recent immigrants from the Black diaspora created by the Atlantic slave trade; those from Africa, as well as migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean; and people of color from around the world have been forced to migrate because of shooting wars or conditions of economic war created by neoliberalism. They live in differing oppressive and sometimes superexploitative conditions in the U.S.

In theory, the U.S. is one country, but in practice it is a land of many nations: a dominant white nation, which owes its privilege to the doctrine of white supremacy and the manner in which U.S. wealth was originally accumulated, and many oppressed nations.

The situation that has unfolded in Ferguson is indicative of the separate realities that exist in this country. Cops there were already on alert, and more than 100 cops were on hand from different police agencies, prepared with full tactical riot gear. They could all be deployed shortly after the rebellion began.

The heavy-handed police response has been used time and again in poor, oppressed communities. Cops in Anaheim, Calif., responded the same way two years ago when the community rose up to protest the killings of Manuel Diaz and Joel Acevedo.

Throughout U.S. history, repression has occurred when the cops or National Guard have been called in. Every day, these communities look like occupied zones. If the constant police surveillance and patrols are not enough, neighborhood-specific ordinances, such as New York's "broken windows" policing, give cops extra powers to profile and harass residents.

These "quality of life" ordinances are meant to scare people away from the neighborhoods in advance of real estate developers — or while they are buying land and building residences for new middle- and upper-middle-class whites who seek to live closer to city centers where many oppressed people live. If the period of the 1970s to the 80s was considered an era of "white flight," then the years from the mid-1990s until today can be charac-



'Hands up, don't shoot', Ferguson, Mo.

terized as an era of "white invasion."

In Oakland, Calif., during the Occupy movement and in Ferguson — up until now — the National Guard was not needed. But the armaments being displayed and employed and the tactics being used by police mirror what federal troops would do. The show of force is a sign of the increased militarization of police agencies across the U.S., aided by funds from the Department of Homeland Security. The Pentagon has also sent military vehicles and weaponry to the police force in Ferguson, and several others around the country. (USA Today, Aug. 14)

The conditions for rebellion are ripe in oppressed communities, and they existed in Ferguson before Michael Brown was fatally shot. His killing was just the catalyst.

In recent weeks, there have been many police killings of oppressed people in the U.S. John Crawford III, a Black man, was shot in a southwest Ohio Walmart, while holding a toy air rifle he had picked up in the store. Los Angeles police fatally shot Ezell Ford, an unarmed Black man, who suffered from mental illness, and beat to death Omar Abrego, still wearing his work uniform. Staten Island, N.Y., police choked to death Eric Garner, a Black man, for allegedly selling loose cigarettes. There are surely more such deaths, with the victims unknown to the public.

In addition to the killings are the conditions of poverty and unemployment that prevail in oppressed communities. They are highlighted now in Ferguson, where the effects of gentrification and growing suburban poverty are clearly seen. The city's demographics changed, as it went from being an 85 percent white enclave in 1980 to a 67 percent Black community by the period 2008-12, reported Brookings Institute on Aug. 15.

The institute explains, "But Ferguson has also been home to dramatic economic changes in recent years. The city's unemployment rate rose from less than 5 percent in 2000 to over 13 percent in 2010-12. For those residents who were employed, inflation-adjusted average earnings fell by one-third. The number of households using federal Housing Choice Vouchers climbed from roughly 300 in 2000 to more than 800 by the end of the decade.

"Amid these changes, poverty skyrocketed. Between 2000 and 2010-12, Ferguson's poor population doubled," reported Brookings. By 2012, "roughly, one in four residents lived below the federal poverty line (\$23,402 for a family of 4 in 2012), and 44 percent fell below twice that level." More than half of Black people living in suburban communities live in areas that have a more than 20 percent poverty rate.

Along with the growing poverty and uncertainty in the U.S., because of the unstable nature of the capitalist system

and its inability to contain crisis, neoliberalism is growing. It is manifested in attacks on unions and workers who are organizing, assaults on the right to quality public education and drastic slashes in social welfare programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. With cuts to food benefits invariably come rising food prices.

Conditions for rebellion ripe in oppressed areas

Police agencies in every locality and at the

state level have been preparing for social explosions. Preceding the dramatic infusion of federal monies to cities and states after 9/11, the "War on Drugs" began in an era with a great increase in the incarceration of Black people. Black men, in particular, but also Black women, make up the fastest growing demographic in the prison system.

The mammoth prison-industrial complex today includes the marriage of the prison construction industry with the private prison industry, the use of prison labor, and vast numbers of prison vendors, telephone and surveillance companies that have contracts with private, state and federal prison facilities. The U.S. has the largest prison population in the world at 2.4 million. Yet, the numbers incarcerated do not even include the many hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrant workers held in detention centers.

The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, passed during the Clinton administration, limits the amount of appeals that a person on death row can file. A host of laws hampering civil liberties were enacted, including mandatory sentencing and increased length of prison terms to be served.

These measures, along with laws signed under the Bush and Obama administrations, which include advanced combat training and massive arming of police, point to an increasingly militarized state.

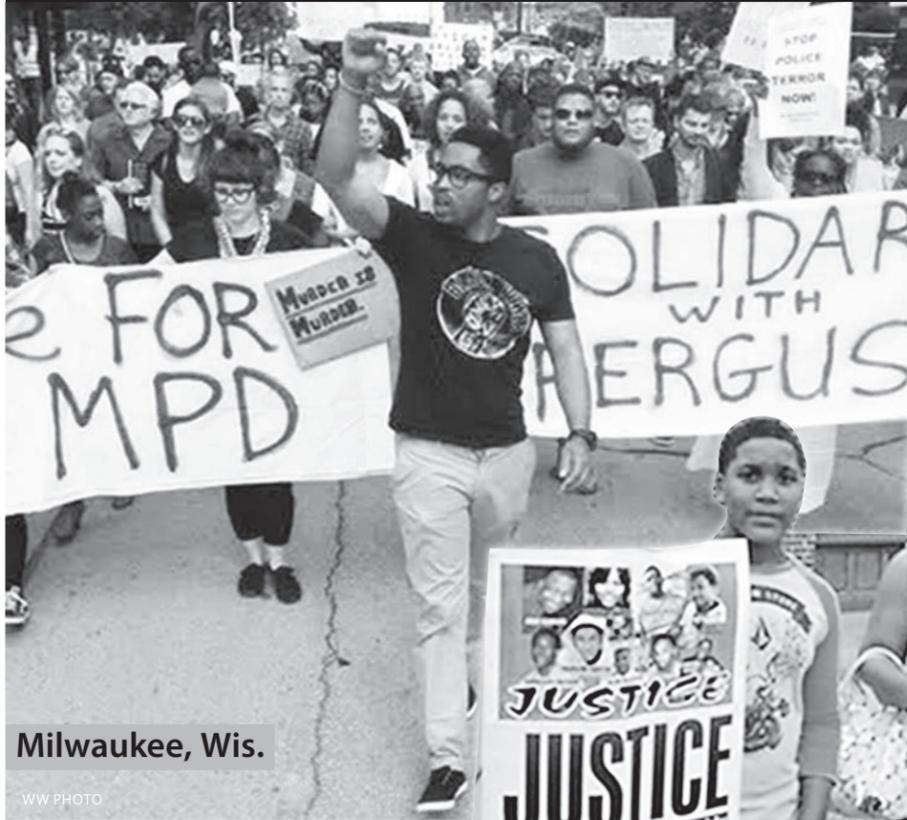
What's happening in Ferguson shows these repressive policies in action. The police there are showing what police forces will do in oppressed communities which protest their terrible living conditions. Ferguson is what national oppression looks like.

The police chief and the media have been slandering Michael Brown, even releasing a video that allegedly shows him stealing cigars — although this had nothing to do with why cops stopped and harassed him. But this is not surprising. This demonization is nothing new. Showing this video was calculated to nullify anger at Michael Brown's killing that might have arisen in white communities.

It is not just the oppressed communities that need to fear the growing militarization of the police, but all workers. Police agencies are being trained in military tactics, as they are armed with high-tech and advanced military hardware for crowd control and squashing social unrest.

The police tactics used to try to suppress the Occupy Wall Street protests should have been an eye opener to all progressive forces. Increasingly, the repressive state apparatus is preparing for greater social unrest and upheaval. Although the powers that be anticipate struggle will arise in the oppressed areas, they expect that it will spread and become broader and more generalized. □

Across the U.S.: 'We are



Milwaukee, Wis.

WW PHOTO

By Kris Hamel

Vigils and demonstrations involving thousands took place the evening of Thursday, Aug. 14, in at least 90 cities across the United States to protest the police killing of Michael Brown, 18, in Ferguson, Mo. Organized quickly on social media, the somber and angry gatherings included a moment of silence for Brown at 7:20 p.m. Eastern time. Other demonstrations against the racist killing and in solidarity with the ongoing rebellion of the African-American community in Ferguson have taken place before and since.

Messages like "Black lives matter" and "Hands up, don't shoot" have been seen in many photos posted on social media. Justice has also been demanded for others whose lives have been snuffed out at the hands of racist cops, like Eric Garner of Staten Island, N.Y.; John Crawford of Beavercreek, Ohio; and Ezell Ford of Los Angeles, along with dozens of others across the U.S. Below is a sampling of some of the protests.



WW PHOTO: GERRY SCOPETTUOLO

Grove Hall, Mass.

Some 400 people gathered in **Durham, N.C.**, in front of the Old Durham Courthouse Aug. 14 to protest the lack of justice and systematic disenfranchisement of oppressed people. The assembly in Durham was intentionally led by militant Black youth. In addition to police brutality, racial profiling and state-sponsored violence, organizers also stressed the importance of connecting local and international struggles, particularly what's happening in Gaza.

A formal remembrance of the victims of police terrorism was conducted with an official libation ceremony, accompanied by revolutionary poetry and traditional African drums. From this assembly, a new organization was formed called "Black Everything" to ensure the continued pursuit of justice, particularly among Black youth. There was also a call for Black pride and for dismantling the

white-supremacist power structure. Art and culture were highlighted as critical forms of expression and communication among oppressed communities.

A crowd of several hundred gathered Aug. 14 at the Old Courthouse Square in **Decatur, Ga.**, a suburb of **Atlanta**. Dozens of people spoke, some recounting their own close calls with police. Although predominantly Black and young, the gathering was multinational and mul-

tigenerational, including families with young children and older folks, all united in solidarity with the need to end police violence. Candles were lit at dusk. At the end, a number of people marched in the streets of downtown Decatur.

In **Orlando, Fla.**, a multinational crowd of 100 gathered at a park. "No justice, no peace. We stand with Ferguson" read one woman's sign. Orlando is about 15 miles from Sanford where young Trayvon Martin was gunned down by racist wannabe cop George Zimmerman in 2012.

In **Miami**, demonstrators outside the federal building included members of the Dream Defenders, who protested Florida's "stand your ground" law by occupying the state Capitol last year. The crowd demanded justice for Brown as well as for Israel Hernandez, a 17-year-old graffiti artist who died from a cop's stun gun in Miami Beach a year ago. (miamiherald.com, Aug. 15)

Four demonstrations supporting the African-American community's outrage in Ferguson were held Aug. 16 in **Houston**. Students from the historically Black Texas Southern University marched from their school to MacGregor Park's recently inaugurated statue of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., where they rallied. The National Black United Front held a rally in Houston's historic Fifth Ward. Another protest was held at the Houston Police Department's downtown headquarters, while another was held on the corner of Houston's busiest intersection, a high-traffic area in a busy shopping district.

East Coast rallies against racism

Between 5,000 to 10,000 people rallied in Union Square, **New York City**, Aug. 14 with many then marching to Times Square. The New York Police Department arrested at least a dozen people, including Black bystanders and Occupy Wall Street activists. Other protests took place in Harlem and Brooklyn.

Four major rallies and marches took place in **Boston**. Over 1,000 people in front of the State House participated Aug. 14 in the national day of silence and vigils for Michael Brown. The next night, some 60 people gathered in Roxbury for a protest organized by rap music producer M.C. Spice and the Nation of Islam. Close

to 1,000 people marched on Boston police headquarters in Roxbury Aug. 16. They condemned the killing of Brown as well as murders at the hands of Boston police of African Americans like Burrell "Bo" Ramsey-White, who was shot and killed in 2012.

Three actions took place in **Baltimore** Aug. 14, including a multinational, militant action of 200 people, mostly youth, who marched past the downtown police headquarters. Representatives of the revolutionary youth group FIST — Fight Imperialism, Stand Together — led chants and helped to direct the march. Workers World newspapers were distributed. All three rallies merged at the end, with close to 500 participants. The state had blocked off city hall from protesters, seemingly afraid of a repeat of the 10,000-strong demonstration in support of Trayvon Martin in 2012, which effectively shut down the Inner Harbor and City Hall.

Around 1,000 people gathered at Love Park in **Philadelphia** Aug. 14 to demonstrate solidarity with Michael Brown and all victims of racist police violence. The large multinational crowd stood together and read dozens of names of Black youth and adults who have been killed by police recently, followed by a minute of silence. Afterwards, demonstrators spontaneously marched through pouring rain toward the Philadelphia Art Museum, while others gathered in the local subway station and continued marching and chanting. The demonstration ended with a speakout, followed by renewed calls to have weekly actions until Brown and all other victims of police terror get justice.

In **Syracuse, N.Y.**, community members, high school and college students gathered Aug. 14 in a cool drizzle in Clinton Square to protest Michael Brown's death and demand an end to police brutality. Several participants in the multinational crowd said they knew at least one young person who had been injured by local police. People gathered at the city hall in nearby Kingston and in front of the Dutchess County Jail in Poughkeepsie to honor the memories of those killed by police. (Mid-Hudson News Network, Aug. 15)

From Midwest to West Coast

In downtown **Chicago**, hundreds gathered at Daley Plaza, where chants of "No justice, no peace, no racist police!" were heard. Some 40 people gathered outside the federal courthouse in **Reno, Nev.**, while dozens gathered in **Seattle**, holding up signs that read "Unite against racism" and "Solidarity with Ferguson."

Dozens of community members from across **Milwaukee** and beyond took part in an Aug. 14 vigil in Dineen Park. On Aug. 17 dozens again protested the murder of Michael Brown and numerous Black and Brown community members gunned down by Milwaukee police. Protesters took the streets and briefly shut down a freeway off ramp to demand justice for victims of police terror.

In downtown **St. Louis**, not far from Ferguson, several hundred people, reportedly half Black and half white, gathered in a small park near the Gateway Arch to honor Brown's memory. Attending was Brown's mother, Lesley McSpadden, who waved to the crowd as she wiped away tears, drawing applause. (Associated Press, Aug. 15)

JUSTICE FOR MICHAEL BROWN: End racist police murders!



The following statement was issued by the Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) youth group on Aug. 14. Go to fightimperialism.org.

The story is all too familiar: an unarmed Black man is executed by racist police officers. This time, the victim is 18-year-old Michael Brown of Ferguson, Mo. On Aug. 9, Brown was fatally shot multiple times by an officer of the St. Louis suburb while attempting to surrender.

Dorian Johnson, Michael's friend who was with him during the murder, said that after Brown "felt that [first] shot, he turned around and put his hands in the air. ... He started to get down and the officer still approached with his weapon drawn and fired several more shots." Michael Brown's tragic death, occurring less than a month after Eric Garner was murdered by the Staten Island police department, demonstrates once again that Black lives do not matter to the white supremacist police state.

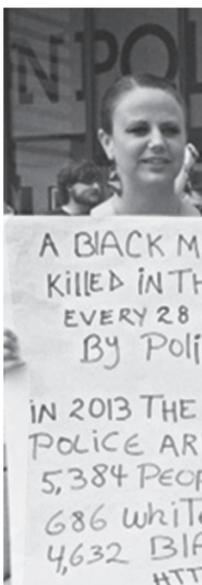
Brown's death has sparked forceful anti-racist uprisings by the youth of Ferguson, and people nationwide, saying it is

our right to fight back by any means necessary. The social role of the police is to maintain the status quo, violently keeping people of color and working-class people from rebelling against a fundamentally unjust capitalist economic system.

They are our class enemy. The narrative presented in the corporate media and white society perpetuates a white supremacist view of young Black men as inherently violent and serves to excuse the pigs that commit these heinous crimes. The country's increasingly militarized police force justifies their actions by blaming Black men for being "aggressive." Yet the history of "law enforcement" in this country -- from slave-catchers to today's mass incarceration system -- shows that it is, in fact, the police who are the aggressors. Michael Brown -- like Ezell Ford, Trayvon Martin and too many others -- was unarmed and surrendering.

Repression breeds resistance. We are already fighting back, and greater injustice will only lead to greater struggle.

No justice, no peace! ☐



ALL Michael Brown!

In **Los Angeles**, the family and friends of Ezell Ford organized a protest of more than 500 people Aug. 17 with a march beginning at the Los Angeles Police Department's downtown headquarters. Ford was a 25-year-old Black man killed by police in South Central L.A. Aug. 11 while lying on the ground unarmed. The family of Omar Abrego, a 37-year-old father of three who

was pulled over for an alleged traffic violation on Aug. 2, then beaten to death by police just four blocks from where Ford was shot, also marched and demanded charges be filed immediately against the killer cops, who are on paid leave.

The protest and signs expressed solidarity with the family of Michael Brown
Continued on page 8

Defend Ferguson UPRISING!

Continued from page 1

On Aug. 15, the day Wilson's name was released, Ferguson authorities also released a video, purportedly showing someone resembling Brown taking a box of cigars from a store and pushing a clerk. The video's contents and the timing of its release further inflamed tensions in the African-American community.

On the evening of Aug. 15, the store in question was trashed. This occurred a day after the St. Louis County Police force was ostensibly pulled back, having been criticized for its brutal actions against demonstrators, community members and even members of the media.

Gov. Jay Nixon, a Democrat, supposedly made the decision to lighten up on the police repression. He was called by President Barack Obama, who was attempting to reduce the damage these developments had on local, state and federal governments.

Nevertheless, by the morning of Aug. 16, riot police units were called back into Ferguson's areas of protest, and a curfew was imposed that evening, resulting in mass efforts to defy orders that people leave the streets by midnight.

On Aug. 17, militarized police units attacked people gathered in the streets more than two hours before the curfew was to go into effect. That evening, police claimed that they were fired upon and that attempts were made to erect barricades to hold back law enforcement and to overrun their command center. These claims were made to try to justify further repression.

Nixon announced that the curfew would be lifted on the evening of Aug. 18, but that he was deploying the National Guard to "maintain order."

Brown shot and killed at close range

The family's autopsy showed that Brown was shot four times in his shoulder and arm and twice in the head, with one fatal shot going through his skull. The fatal wound was apparently the final one, which takes on the dimension of an "execution-style" killing.

At a Aug. 18 press conference in Ferguson called by Brown's family, attorney Benjamin Crump acted as the chief spokesperson and conveyed three questions asked by Lesley

McSpadden, the slain student's mother.

McSpadden wanted to know how many times her son was shot, whether he suffered prior to his death and, finally, why the police officer who killed her child had not been arrested.

"It verifies the worst that the family thinks happened — that he was executed," Crump told the media. "It confirms what the witnesses said, that this was an execution." (CNN, Aug. 18)

Crump was the attorney for the family of Trayvon Martin who was killed by George Zimmerman in February 2012. Like Brown, Martin's death galvanized African-American communities across the U.S., sparking demonstrations aimed at seeking justice and prompting world news coverage of the killings and protests.

Ferguson rebellion:

A crisis for the ruling class

Obama has spoken twice on the situation in Ferguson. On Aug. 14, while on vacation, he was compelled to address the crisis after six days of mass demonstrations. Obama said that the U.S. was "one country with common values" and that the situation in Ferguson must be resolved through peaceful means. He admonished individuals who engaged in attacks on private property and the police.

Nonetheless, if the U.S. were one country, there would not be periodic urban rebellions throughout African-American communities across the country. Many of these outbreaks are fueled by blatant acts of police misconduct and brutality.

The situation in Ferguson is by no means an isolated incident. Since the time of slavery, Africans have resisted national oppression, racist violence and economic exploitation. To even suggest that the oppressed and the oppressor have equal responsibility in a situation that was clearly provoked by the police, the authorities in St. Louis County and the state of Missouri is disingenuous, to say the least.

In a second press conference on Aug. 18 after Obama's return to the White House, he mentioned the situation in Ferguson again.

Initially, as on Aug. 14, Obama discussed the current U.S. military intervention in northern Iraq with aerial bombardment and ground operations. He sought to justify the recent deployment of U.S. "military advisors" and fighter jets. He said civilians were being threatened and the Islamic State needed to be curtailed and contained.

The president never acknowledged the U.S. role in destabilizing Iraq and creating the conditions for sectarianism. The Islamic State, formerly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or the Islamic State of Syria and the Levant (ISIL), has been fighting against the Syrian government on the same side as Washington, which is committed to overthrowing Bashar al-Assad's presidency.

Obama refused to directly address an inquiry about whether he had any reservations about the militarization of U.S.



PHOTO: MEEKO ELLIOTT

NIGHT OF PAIN — NIGHT OF RAGE

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

Once again, a Black unarmed youth has been killed by a cop.

And while the facts surrounding the shooting are presently unclear, what is clear is that a cop shot 18-year-old Michael Brown eight times.

According to at least one eyewitness, Brown was shot as he stood with his hands up in the air.

To anyone who knows American history, this is not a rarity.

It is the result of a systematic function of police across the country to repress, track and target the nation's Black population.

That has been the case for generations. We shall see voices trotted out to call for calm, as outrage arises in Black hearts in response to outrageous treatment. Never do those calling for calm become voices calling for true justice, for justice is equality.

And who dares demand that cops be treated like the people that they oppress? For they have no influence over the repressive forces, and in fact, no political office in America does. They have been bought off, paid off or both.

Listen to the voices of "Black" politicians. Indeed, listen to the voices of white politicians.

Listen to the raging silence. Needed in the suburbs of St. Louis, Missouri — and in every Black community in America — are independent and uncom-

promising Black revolutionary collectives determined to protect the lives and well-being of Black people, period. Existing political structures — silent in the face of these outrages — have failed us and cannot be made to serve our interests. It's time to learn from this, and build for our future necessities. □

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WW PHOTO: MAGGIE VASCASSENNO



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

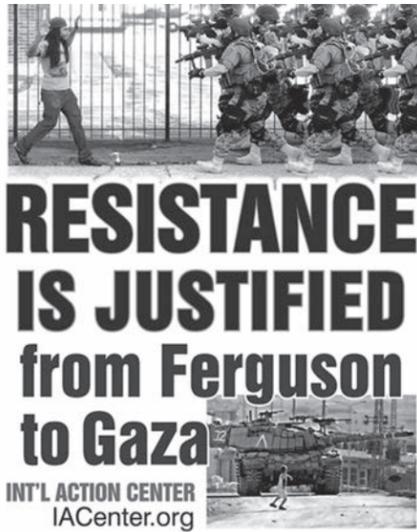
Palestine solidarity with Ferguson struggle

What follows are excerpts from an introductory statement by Rana Baker followed by the full text of a Palestinian solidarity message to the people of Ferguson, Mo. To read Baker's entire introduction and the list of signers, go to *The Electronic Intifada* blog at tinyurl.com/ljuknm3.

Palestinian groups and individuals inside and outside of historic Palestine have signed the following statement in solidarity with their brethren in Ferguson, Missouri.

Unsurprisingly, many of the police deployed to crush unarmed protesters demanding justice for the brutal murder of 18-year-old black American Mike Brown are Israel-trained. Despotism tactics Palestinians largely associate with Israel's colonial military, such as teargassing protesters and harassing journalists, have all been implemented in Ferguson.

Although Ferguson and Palestine are two different contexts, both places and their people are fighting against white supremacist regimes of oppression which continue to view them as "disposable oth-



ers" and act accordingly.

The individuals who signed the statement below may not all know or agree with each other. However, the undersigned all believe that it is the moral responsibility of every Palestinian to support and foster relations with the struggles of the oppressed all over the world.

Full statement

We the undersigned Palestinian individuals and groups express our solidarity with the family of Michael Brown, a young unarmed black man gunned down by police on August 9th in Ferguson, Missouri. We wish to express our support and solidarity with the people of Ferguson who have taken their struggle to the street, facing a militarized police occupation.

From all factions and sectors of our dislocated society, we send you our commitment to stand with you in your hour of pain and time of struggle against the oppression that continues to target our black brothers and sisters in nearly every aspect of their lives.

We understand your moral outrage. We empathize with your hurt and anger. We understand the impulse to rebel against the infrastructure of a racist capitalist system that systematically pushes you to the margins of humanity.

And we stand with you.

We recognize the disregard and disrespect for black bodies and black life

endemic to the supremacist system that rules the land with wanton brutality. Your struggles through the ages have been an inspiration to us as we fight our own battles for basic human dignities. We continue to find inspiration and strength from your struggles through the ages and your revolutionary leaders, like Malcolm X, Huey Newton, Kwame Ture, Angela Davis, Fred Hampton, Bobby Seale and others.

We honor the life of Michael Brown, cut short less than a week before he was due to begin university. And we honor the far too many more killed in similar circumstances, motivated by racism and contempt for black life: Ezell Ford, John Crawford, Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin, Tarika Wilson, Malcolm Ferguson, Renisha McBride, Amadou Diallo, Yvette Smith, Oscar Grant, Sean Bell, Kathryn Johnston, Rekia Boyd and too many others to count.

With a Black Power fist in the air, we salute the people of Ferguson and join in your demands for justice. □

The oppression of Gazans & African Americans

By Lamont Lilly
Durham, N.C.

This article is dedicated to the honor and memory of the Four Little Footballers: Mohammed Bakr (11), Ahd Bakr (11), Zakariya Bakr (10) and Ismail Bakr (9).

As I have seen the barrage of Twitter and Facebook photos of dead children in the streets of Gaza, I cannot help but to relate and be empathetic. As I have seen a host of graphic Instagram posts of charred arms and missing legs, I cannot help but to ask myself, why? Why has the slaughter of innocent men, women and children been going on for so long? Why are the innocent not receiving any justice? Why are the unarmed at war with masked mobs, assault rifles and heavy artillery? And who exactly is responsible for these mass killings?

In several cities throughout Palestine, particularly Gaza, innocent children and their parents can be playing in front of their homes or visiting loved ones in the hospital and, two minutes later, be blown to pieces without any just cause or notice whatsoever. The bullets that mutilate have no names; the bombs that dismember have no limitations.

After viewing such photographs daily over the last several weeks, I cannot help

but to think of the reality of the 44 million Afro-Americans here at home.

Less than a month ago in Staten Island, husband and grandfather Eric Garner was viciously choked to death by a New York Police Department officer on live video. As Garner was surrounded by five police officers in broad daylight, he peacefully articulated his defense. Two minutes later he was on the sidewalk, dead, murdered without just cause or any notice whatsoever.

Such commonality reminds me of one particular and quite thought-provoking photo I saw posted on an Instagram thread. It was a double-framed shot that on one side depicted a 1930 public lynching of two Black men in Marion, Ind. As their lifeless bodies dangled in thin air, they were surrounded by "good white folk" smiling for the camera, enjoying their day's kill of strange fruit.

The other half of the double-framed shot captured a small gathering of Israeli citizens seated comfortably on a hill. As entertainment, they had gathered under a nighttime moonlit sky to watch Israeli airstrikes light up the Gaza skyline. With



Lamont Lilly speaks at vigil for Michael Brown Aug. 14 in Durham, N.C.

PHOTO: MEEKO ELLIOTT

beaming smiles and cheering hands, they were obviously enjoying the view of deadly bombs and destruction raining on the backs of Palestinians from above.

I was sure to save this particular photo to my Twitter "favorites" to remember the various ways in which the two groups share a violent strand of mutual oppression.

Yes, the history of African descendants in the Western Hemisphere is quite different from the history of Palestinians in what, historically, is considered North Africa. However, our experiences as two distinct groups devalued by the institutions of white supremacy and imperialism are very similar.

African descendants here in the U.S. and the Palestinians of North Africa are still battling the effects of colonialism, cultural appropriation and mass displacement as we speak. Our shared degree of state-sponsored death, racism and violent repression should be obvious.

The question is: What specific mechanism is responsible for such violence and mass killing?

Internationally, it is the military-industrial complex that reigns supreme — men and women in green, desert-tan and blue uniforms given the authority to kill innocent people with impunity; human instruments of hate, who are often paid quite nicely for such duties.

I should know. I served four years in the United States Army Reserves. And I can tell you from firsthand experience, the United States is not spreading democracy. It's spreading violence, at home and abroad.

Abroad, such agents of the military-industrial complex are typically referred to

as Marines, the Air Force or Navy Seals. Here at home, we call them sheriff's departments, police officers and the FBI.

The U.S.-backed democracy that has slaughtered more than 1,900 Palestinians in the last two months is the same democracy that killed Oscar Grant and Amadou Diallo in cold blood. The democracy that has tortured Palestinian women, raping and severing their breasts from their

torsos, is the same democracy that brutally beat 51-year-old grandmother Marlene Pinnock on the side of a California highway just one month ago.

The ghettos in Gaza aren't much different from the ghettos in the Bronx, N.Y. The ethnic cleansing of Israeli apartheid serves the same purpose as the Black Codes and Jim Crow laws of the Southern confederacy. The forced evacuation of Palestinians from Jerusalem, Gaza and Hebron is the same thing as gentrification in Brooklyn, N.Y.; Washington, D.C.; and Durham, N.C.

When mosques and defenseless worshippers are blindsided by bombs and tear gas, I cannot help but to refer back to the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala. Four little girls were killed in that bombing, just as hundreds of innocent children have been killed in Gaza. The more you think about it, the easier it is to make the connections.

What we share is a catalogue of oppression — the constant banging of white supremacy upon our backs; the constant fear that when your children depart for school, there's a policeman's chance that one of them may not return. The extermination of thousands of innocent Palestinians reeks of the same stench as Black bodies beaten and badgered by police officers and Ku Klux Klansmen, right here in the United States.

I'm not saying that African Americans and Palestinians live the same daily realities. What I am saying is that we share the same oppression. What I've come to realize, brothers and sisters, is that both groups have a common enemy.

Now, let's organize so we can defend ourselves, at home and abroad. □

We are all Michael Brown

Continued from page 7

and speakers linked all three killings with the epidemic of police murder against Black and Brown peoples, especially youth. Signs from the Peoples Power Assemblies highlighting the many racist murders by police and from the International Action Center linking the U.S.-sponsored Israeli war on Gaza with the killing of Michael Brown were well received. Since Aug. 14, there have been daily anti-police brutality protests in South Central and/or downtown Los Angeles.

In **Oakland, Calif.**, thousands who came out Aug. 16 to stop the docking of a ship from apartheid Israel encountered a line of cops standing in formation when they reached the port entrance. Protesters erupted with chants of "Hands up,

don't shoot!" echoing the chants responding to police violence directed against the rebellion in Ferguson.

Several demonstrators made statements linking recent acts of police brutality with the U.S.-backed destruction in Gaza. "On Twitter, we've seen people in Gaza tweet to protesters in Ferguson how to cope with teargas," said Mohamed Shehk, who helped organize the ship blockade. "They're saying things like, 'As Palestinians, we know what it's like to be targeted and killed for being of the wrong ethnicity.'" (theguardian.com, Aug. 17)

Contributing to this report were Steven Ceci, Lamont Lilly, Dianne Mathiowetz, John Parker, Andre Powell, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac, Gerry Scoppettuolo and Scott Williams.

U.S. expands military role in Iraq

By John Catalinotto

Aug. 18 — This morning the Iraqi government forces claimed they had retaken control of the Mosul Dam in northern Iraq from the Islamic State fighters. The Iraqi army is reportedly fighting in alliance with the Peshmerga, the army of the authorities in the Kurdish area of Iraq known as Iraqi Kurdistan, as U.S. drones, jets and bombers strike I.S. targets from the air. The I.S. denies losing control of the dam. (BBC, Aug. 18)

It has become apparent that despite denials from U.S. spokespersons, and including President Barack Obama himself, Washington has reopened its direct military intervention in Iraq, including the potential use of U.S. ground forces. British and French intervention is unlikely to be far behind.

The U.S. bombed mostly trucks, armored vehicles and weapons that the U.S. had supplied the Iraqi army, which were then captured by the I.S. in the uprising that took the city of Mosul in June.

Washington and its European allies — especially the major imperialist countries: Britain, France and Germany — have been sending weapons and/or trucks directly to the Iraqi Kurdistan military for the past week. British warplanes are flying attack missions. The U.S. sent

aid directly to the Kurdish regime rather than the national government in Baghdad, apparently to pressure Iraqi Premier Nouri al-Maliki to resign, which he did on Aug. 15. Washington had backed Maliki's rise to power, but he alienated most of the Iraqi population and outlived his usefulness to imperialism.

The Obama administration has dropped almost all pretense that the “humanitarian” rescue of the Yazidis from Mount Sinjar — a mountain range near Iraq's border with Syria — is anything but a pretext. A U.S. military mission to Mount Sinjar reported that there were not so many people there after all and the U.S. would not send in a rescue mission. Yazidi spokespeople said there are still thousands in the mountains.

Neither U.S. forces nor the Peshmerga led tens of thousands of Yazidis off the mountain. Two Kurdish guerrilla armies did. These are the fighters of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a revolutionary socialist group fighting against Turkey for self-determination, and of the Syrian People's Defense Units (YPG), which have been fighting I.S. and related forces in Syria.

Washington and Brussels define the PKK as a “terrorist” organization. Nevertheless, the Aug. 18 Wall Street Journal reported that PKK officials said they

held discussions with U.S. officials about the fight against the I.S. in Iraq. As of Aug. 18, U.S. officers deny holding these talks and the U.S. and European Union refuse to remove the PKK from the “terrorist” list.

As we have made clear in earlier articles, Washington has had an ambivalent relation with al-Qaida and its offshoot, the I.S. In Afghanistan in the 1980s, in Libya and in Syria, the U.S. and its allies in NATO and the Arab monarchies in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates have funded and armed these narrow, reactionary forces to weaken or destroy governments that have opposed imperialist interests. The U.S. also uses the “terrorist” threat to mobilize the U.S. population to support military interventions.

Imperialist interests in Iraq

With the confusing mix of forces in play, it helps to bring up a quote from an imperialist politician from an earlier era, British Premier Benjamin Disraeli, who said: “We have no permanent friends. We have no permanent enemies. We just have permanent interests.”

So too has U.S. imperialism. Under the George W. Bush administration, the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003 to gain strategic control of Iraq's energy resources, as under the Obama administration the U.S. bombed and sabotaged the Libyan government. Its interventions have failed to establish stable puppet regimes and, while U.S. interventions took oil and gas out of the hands of sovereign states and cut energy production, it left these resources outside firm imperialist control.

The Iraqi Kurdistan regime is com-

posed of parties that have been cooperating with the CIA since the 1970s. The Kurdish-based regime in northern Iraq is currently the only stable U.S. client in the country. With about a third of Iraq's oil reserves, the Kurdish region of Iraq has become the center of Western investment and its capital, Erbil, has attracted imperialist consulates as large as their embassies in Baghdad.

Reports indicate that the 200,000 barrels of oil produced daily in Iraqi Kurdistan will reach 250,000 next year. Obama told the New York Times' Tom Friedman in an Aug. 8 interview: “The Kurdish region is functional in the way we would like to see. ... So we do think it is important to make sure that that space is protected.”

What motivates U.S. imperialism is not the protection of Yazidis, Iraqi Christians, the Kurdish population, or the Iraqi Muslims of Shiite or Sunni sects that the I.S. threatens. Only Washington's energy interests are what motivate Pentagon intervention.

These interests benefit only a narrow sector of the U.S. superrich bankers and owners of the oil monopolies. U.S. workers and the poor of all nationalities, who may be called on again to be the killers and cannon fodder in a war that threatens all Iraqis, don't share these interests.

Right now, U.S. airstrikes are blowing up U.S. armor captured by the I.S. While this is an ideal situation for the profits of the military-industrial complex, the Pentagon generals know it won't establish U.S. control of Iraq. However much Obama promises “no troops on the ground,” everything points to a renewed military intervention by U.S. troops. □

NEW YORK CITY

March marks Rabaa massacre anniversary

Thousands of Egyptian-Americans marched from the Egyptian Mission to the United Nations to Times Square on Aug. 14 to mark the first anniversary of the massacre at Rabaa al-Adawiya Square in Cairo. At least 2,600 supporters of ousted President Mohammad Morsi were killed by the U.S.-backed Egyptian military.

Morsi won the first democratic election in Egypt following the January 2011 rebellion at Tahrir Square, which toppled the 30-year rule of repressive U.S. ally Hosni Mubarak. Taking advantage of dissatisfaction with Morsi and his conservative Muslim Brotherhood movement, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, headed by Gen. Abdel Al-Sisi, staged a coup d'état. The military brass then began a reign of terror against all forces involved in the Egyptian revolution.

Speakers drew attention to Washington's role in the coup. The U.S. provides \$1.3 billion in military aid to Egypt annually in exchange for safeguarding Israel and protecting Big Oil profits in the Suez Canal. Protesters lashed out at Al-Sisi's



collaboration with Israeli genocide in Gaza by keeping the Rafah border crossing closed and helping to enforce the blockade.

The protest was sponsored by Egyptian Americans for Democracy and Human Rights and supported by the International Action Center.

— Story and photo by Greg Butterfield

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes

Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance LeiLani Dowell

The Struggle for Socialism Is Key Monica Moorehead

Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights Imani Henry

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

Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior Mumia Abu-Jamal

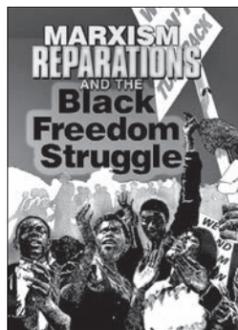
Racism & Poverty in the Delta Larry Hales

Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions Pat Chin

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

Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion John Parker

Available at major bookstores around the country.



GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

UKRAINE

WW salutes revolutionary youth Andrew Brazhevsky

Special to Workers World

Workers World joins with communist and anti-fascist fighters around the world in marking the August 30 Day of Remembrance for Andrew Brazhevsky.

Brazhevsky, a revolutionary youth and member of the Marxist organization Union Borotba (Struggle) in Ukraine, would have turned 27 on Aug. 30. But his life was cut short when he and 47 others were killed by neo-Nazi supporters of the Ukrainian coup regime at Odessa's House of Trade Unions last May 2.

His comrades and friends remember him as a staunch and honorable activist. He worked as a computer programmer and studied Marxism diligently in his spare time. He participated in many anti-fascist and workers' protests in Odessa, and often traveled to other cities as well.

Andrew was a founding member of Borotba in Odessa, Ukraine's largest port on the Black Sea. Like many port cities, Odessa is diverse and multinational, in-



cluding Russian, Kurdish, Turkish, Roma and many other peoples. At his funeral, Andrew's mother recalled how much he loved this aspect of his hometown, and was devoted to defending it from the drive of the Ukrainian fascists

and ultranationalists for racial “purity.”

Borotba states: “Andrew's death was a confirmation of his ideology. He could not stay away, could not remain silent when the Nazis came to Odessa. He gave his life in the struggle for a new and more just society, where there will be an end to inequality, discrimination and human exploitation.”

Workers World salutes the memory of Comrade Brazhevsky and all those who have fallen in the anti-fascist struggle from Odessa to the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. We express our solidarity and support for Borotba as it continues the fight against the Kiev junta and its U.S./EU imperialist backers.

Andrew Brazhevsky, presente! □

GAZA Symbol of Resistance

A book of articles from WW, edited by Joyce Chediak
Here is the story of the most heroic resistance since 1948 to unrelenting Israeli oppression and violence designed to drive Palestinians from their homeland.

— Ramsey Clark

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WORKERS WORLD editorial

Ferguson and an unfinished revolution

The great struggle for justice by the African-American people of Ferguson, Mo., comes after a white cop there gunned down young Michael Brown. Witnesses say the 18-year-old was unarmed and calling “Don’t shoot” with his hands in the air when officer Darren Wilson repeatedly shot and killed him.

It was the last straw. But the roots of this struggle go far back, through centuries of suffering, murder, degradation and torture of Black people at the hands of the slave-owner ruling class of Missouri. That is why this atrocity has struck such a nerve and led to a rebellion by the people of this small city adjacent to St. Louis.

By the time of the Civil War, St. Louis was an important and affluent port at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Most of the hard jobs — on the docks, in domestic service and in the fields — were done by Black people for little or no pay.

St. Louis was a center for the buying and selling of enslaved Africans. Whole families were put on the auction block. Children and their parents were sold off to the highest bidder, often to be separated from each other for life.

Cruelty of the most barbaric sort was inflicted on any who dared to resist or just displease the slave master. A news story from that period tells of a woman in St. Louis who was whipped — to death — by her ‘owner’ for having lost a set of keys.

In 1861, 11 Southern states seceded from the Union and formed the Confederacy. While the underlying struggle was over whether slavery would be allowed in the territories being settled in the West, President Abraham Lincoln did not address the question of slavery until the Emancipation Proclamation, issued on Jan. 1, 1863. Then, for the first time, the Union government pledged freedom for the enslaved people.

This prompted some 180,000 Black men and some women to run away from their “masters” and find their way to the Union Army. While many were still not allowed to bear arms, those who did, like Harriet Tubman, performed heroically, turning the tide of many crucial battles in the Civil War.

But Missouri was exempted from the 1863 Proclamation. You see, while a slave state, it was not officially in rebellion against the federal government.

It took another two years — just months before the South surrendered and the war ended — for Lincoln to issue an Emancipation Proclamation for Missouri. This gives you an idea of how deeply entrenched the slave-owning class was in that state’s economy and politics.

The struggle against slavery had a revolutionary effect, not just in the United

States but around the world. In Britain, the labor movement came out strongly to keep their government from intervening in the war on the side of the Confederacy — which the textile industrialists were urging. Karl Marx was one of the speakers at a London rally of some 3,000 workers in 1864 who sided with the North, even though they were losing thousands of jobs in Britain’s textile mills due to a Northern embargo of Southern cotton.

The war ended chattel slavery in the U.S. — but the revolution of the oppressed Black masses for liberation from the most ferocious oppression was never completed. The Northern industrialists and bankers who came out on top made a rotten compromise in the 1870s with the moneyed men of the South. The latter got to keep their lands and their money to set up a new form of racist oppression. Reconstruction was undercut by the withdrawal of Union soldiers from the South.

Thus began a reign of terror that has lasted in some degree up to the modern era, despite the victories of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements to end segregation and open up schools, jobs and neighborhoods to the descendants of those who had endured the whips and chains of slavery.

Think of this unfinished revolution when you see those images of armored personnel carriers, helicopters and machine guns occupying the town of Ferguson in the same way that U.S. troops are sent abroad to defend the interests of U.S. oil companies.

Think of what life could have been like in this country — in small cities like Ferguson or bigger ones like Oakland, Calif., Detroit and New Orleans — if the power of the brutal master class had really been broken and the promise of land and freedom honored for those who fought to end the most vile form of exploitation ever devised.

Think of this unfinished revolution when you see the statistics on Black poverty, on rates of incarceration and stop-and-frisk, and on the staggering growth of income inequality that has diminished the quality of life of most workers, but those of color the most.

We all need a new social revolution, one that topples the class of oligarchs and makes the working people the collective owners of all we have built. But we also need to give 100 percent support to the struggle to end racist national oppression — that poisonous weed inherited from slavery and colonialism, that undermines class unity and denies the most basic democratic rights to tens of millions of people in this country.

End the occupation of Ferguson! Victory to those fighting for real liberation! □

Rasmea Odeh case: Judge Borman forced to step down

Continued from page 3

Abudayyeh continued, “This case is a political attack on the Palestine liberation movement and that means we need a political defense as much as a legal defense. Thousands of people from across the country are fighting for Rasmea, demanding that the government drop the charges against her. If they don’t, we are still going all out for Detroit, to fill the

courtroom every day of the trial.”

A status hearing in front of Judge Drain is still planned for Tuesday, Sept. 2, in Detroit, and the Rasmea Defense Committee is calling for supporters to pack the courthouse and to call the prosecutors to demand that they drop the charges on that day. The date of the actual trial will be rescheduled. □

WW commentary

Behind Ferguson police, the St. Louis corporate elite

By Stephen Millies

This article is based on comments the author made during a discussion at an Aug. 15 New York Workers World forum.

The trigger-happy, tear-gas throwing, billy-club wielding cops in Ferguson, Mo., aren’t really “out of control.”

These goons are very much in the control of some of the biggest corporations in the land. Michael Brown’s blood is on their hands, too.

Ferguson is corporate headquarters of Emerson Electric, an outfit with sales of \$24 billion and profits of nearly \$2 billion last year. With that amount of money, you would think that Emerson’s CEO, David N. Farr, could at least set up a summer jobs program for youth in his company’s hometown.

Dream on. The majority of Emerson’s 132,000 workers are horribly exploited in overseas sweatshops.

White cops are terrorizing Black people in Ferguson on behalf of a powerful local ruling class in St. Louis.

The city is home to Monsanto, which is trying to control global seed production. With sales of \$15 billion last year, this evil outfit made \$2.5 billion in profits.

During the Vietnam War, Monsanto and Dow Chemical were the biggest manufacturers of Agent Orange, which killed and disabled hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese people. Monsanto’s executives should have been given Nuremberg justice for these war crimes.

Racist terror and restrictive covenants

St. Louis was the second biggest railroad center in the United States after Chicago. While the liars on Fox News are screaming about looters, Wall Street tycoon Jay Gould looted millions from the railroads he controlled.

Among them were two lines serving St. Louis: Wabash (now part of Norfolk Southern) and the Missouri Pacific (now part of Union Pacific).

In 1886, Jay Gould broke the strike of Missouri Pacific workers. Gould bragged that he could hire half of the working class to shoot the other half.

The St. Louis ruling class took Gould’s advice to heart. Across the Mississippi River in East St. Louis, Ill., in 1917, white racist mobs murdered 250 Black people. Children were dragged off streetcars and killed.

Struggle halts unloading of Israeli ship

Continued from page 4

sponse to Israel’s attack on a Gaza aid flotilla ship, the Mavi Marmara. International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 passed a resolution at that time condemning the attack on the aid flotilla.

This time, the Zim ship finally stopped doing “donuts” outside of Monterey Bay and started heading slowly up the Pacific coastline to San Francisco on Sunday, Aug. 17. It looked like the Zim ship could make port in time for the afternoon shift.

The blockade organizers, determined that they could block the ship from being unloaded one more time, made a quick call out for support. Within an hour, almost 400 people arrived at the port.

The AROC statement notes that “[ILWU] workers honored our picket and stood on the side of justice, as they historically have. Oakland said no to Zionism and blocked the boat for an entire weekend. This is the first time in history that this has happened. Israeli apartheid

This bloody massacre wasn’t spontaneous. It was promoted by a racist campaign in local newspapers. It came a year after St. Louis officially established housing segregation.

It wasn’t until 1948 that the U.S. Supreme Court declared that these “racial covenants” were illegal in the Shelley v. Kraemer ruling. This case involved the African-American Shelley family which was trying to buy a house in St. Louis.

Ninety-seven years after the East St. Louis massacre, almost all the factories and stockyards have closed there. The now 98 percent Black city may be the poorest in the U.S.

In the late 1990s, the city slid into virtual bankruptcy. Garbage collection ceased after the Illinois state Legislature refused to pay for it.

Right-wing center

St. Louis is given a liberal veneer by the Post-Dispatch, the city’s only remaining newspaper, which was long owned by the Pulitzer family.

More typical is Washington University in St. Louis. This local elite institution, which has an endowment of \$5.7 billion, refused to admit any Black students until 1952. Even today in a city that is half Black, only 6.8 percent of its students are African American.

The St. Louis area has been home to a whole series of racist right-wingers. The racist, anti-immigrant and anti-Semite, Pat Buchanan, was writing editorials in the early 1960s attacking the Civil Rights Movement for the now defunct St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

At the same time, local author John Stormer wrote “None Dare Call It Treason,” which claimed a communist conspiracy was in virtual control of the U.S. This book became a bible for Barry Goldwater’s 1964 presidential campaign.

Another Goldwater favorite was “A Choice Not An Echo,” written by Phyllis Schlafly, who lives in nearby Alton, Ill. Schlafly later led the vicious campaign to torpedo the Equal Rights Amendment.

Schlafly has been appalled that men can be arrested for raping their partners, since she believes submission of women is the basis of marriage.

None of this prevented Washington University from bestowing an honorary doctorate degree upon this bigot in 2008.

is falling one port at a time! Palestine will be free from the river to the sea. Long live international solidarity and the struggle for liberation!”

Solidarity actions were held on Aug. 13 in Long Beach, Calif., where they plan to do their own blockade on August 30 (tinyurl.com/l5kxa8a), and on Aug. 16 at the Israeli Consulate in New York City and in downtown Miami. Blockades are also being planned in the Washington state ports of Tacoma and Seattle. (seetinyurl.com/mh62gbw).

Endorsing organizations included Al-Awda New York, American Muslims for Palestine, the Answer Coalition, Arab Youth Organizing, the Alliance of South Asians Taking Action, BAYAN-USA, Bay Area Code Pink, the Bay Area Latin America Solidarity Coalition, Critical Resistance, the Free Palestine Movement, Freedom Archives, Friends of Deir Ibzi’a, Fuerza Mundial/Pueblos en Movimiento, the General Union of Palestine Students

Facts you should know about the fighting in Gaza

By Joyce Chediak

Since Israel began a military offensive in Gaza on July 8, some 2,000 Palestinians and 68 Israelis have been killed. What is going on? Why is it important to you?

Fiction: Israel was exercising its “legitimate right of self-defense” in bombing Gaza.

Fact: Israel has no such “right” under international law. But the Palestinians do have a legal right to resist occupation.

Israel claims self-defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which says that states have a right to self-defense if attacked by another state. But Gaza isn't a foreign state. It has been occupied by Israel since 1967, and 80 percent of its residents are refugees that were forced out of Israeli-invaded land in 1948. Israel controls the land, sea and air borders of Gaza, the civil population registry, and the tax and revenue system.

So Israel is bound by other laws. The 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, as well as the Fourth Geneva Convention and its protocols, call Israel's occupation forced upon the West Bank and Gaza a “belligerency,” or state of war. According to these laws, the people of Gaza have the legal right to “fight against colonial domination and alien occupation in the exercise of their right to self-determination.”

Fiction: Hamas is a terrorist organization and international outlaw.

Fact: Israel disregarded Hamas, the Palestinian peoples' elected choice, and then used state terrorism to try to get them out of office.

Hamas is one of many political, social, military, professional and charitable organizations in Palestinian society. It had enough popular support to win a parliamentary election in 2006 — an election which was called “free and fair” by U.S. former President Jimmy Carter and other election observers.

The U.S. and Israeli governments did not like the Palestinian people's choice, so they declared economic and military war on Hamas and Gaza. Borders were sealed, and Gaza and its people were blockaded for eight years. Since that 2006 election, Israel has waged three wars on Gaza: in 2008, 2012 and now in 2014. Military measures taken by Hamas and other organizations in Gaza have been to defend the people against this constant Israeli aggression.

Fiction: Hamas started the current war by firing rockets into Israel.

Fact: For 17 months Hamas fired no rockets, while Israel repeatedly violated ceasefires and then attacked full force.

After a November 2012 ceasefire agreement ended eight days of Israeli attacks, not one rocket was fired into Israel from Gaza until Israel broke the ceasefire in February 2013.

Since then, according to the Jerusalem Fund, a nonprofit group based in Wash-

ington, D.C., “Palestinian launches have been rare and sporadic and occurred almost always after successive instances of Israeli cease-fire violations.” (blog.thejerusalemfund.org, Feb. 5) The Centre for Research on Globalization reports that of the rockets fired from Gaza in 2013, “none ... came from the Hamas government themselves, despite the widespread violations from Israeli forces.” (July 28) Hamas did not fire any rockets from November 2012 until June 30, 2014, after an Israeli plane struck Gaza.

Israel could easily end the rocket strikes by stopping its attacks, lifting the blockade and letting the Palestinian people have their rights.

Fiction: Gaza rockets purposely target civilians.

Fact: Israel claims “pinpoint precision” for its weapons, yet its bombs hit schools, mosques, hospitals and ambulances and demolished whole neighborhoods. These are war crimes.

Gaza rockets have killed two Israelis. Rather than purposely targeting civilians, their low-tech, mostly homemade rockets are hard to aim. Most military analysts regard these rockets as harassment rather than a serious threat to Israel. The fighters in Gaza would gladly trade their homemade rockets for the laser-guided Cruise and Tomahawk missiles that the U.S. gives to Israel.

Israel claims that its high-tech weaponry can target with pinpoint precision. Yet according to the U.N., Israeli planes, ships, tanks and bombs have killed 1,948 Palestinians — 1,402 of them civilians, including 456 children. Some 9,806 Gazans have been wounded. Israel has destroyed Gaza's industrial sector along with whole neighborhoods, mosques, hospitals and 11,000 homes, devastating the infrastructure and creating a dire economic, humanitarian and public health crisis.

Israel took out Gaza's only power plant. This has drastically reduced the pumping of water to homes and the treatment of sewage, both of which require electricity. The lack of refrigeration has also severely affected food production. Bakeries can barely bake bread.

Fiction: Israel struck because Hamas kidnapped and then killed three Israeli teens on the West Bank.

Fact: Israel used the deaths as a pretext for an assault on the West Bank well beyond the scope of finding the three Israelis. Hamas has denied involvement in the killings.

For 18 days, thousands of Israeli soldiers, security agents, police and special forces scoured through Palestinian towns, refugee camps and villages. They invaded thousands of Palestinian homes at gunpoint, arrested and detained hundreds of West Bank residents without charge, blew up Palestinian homes, rearrested prisoners that had been released in a prisoner exchange and killed at least six civilians who had nothing to do with the abduction of the Israelis.

Hamas denied any responsibility for the deaths of the three Israeli youth.

Fiction: The Israelis killed were just hitchhiking teenagers.

Fact: The youth were part of an aggressive, illegal settlement movement.

Circumstances surrounding the deaths of the three Israelis remain murky, as no autopsy results have been released. They were from Kfar Etzion, one of many illegal settlements whose populations serve as the flying wedge of the Israeli state's West Bank land confiscation.

These settlers, often armed by Tel Aviv, assault Palestinians of all ages, slap Palestinian children in their faces in the street and fire on Palestinians trying to harvest olive crops. They desecrate and set fire to mosques, or declare mosques to be Jewish religious sites and off-limits to Palestinians.

For decades, the bodies of West Bank youth have been discovered, believed to have been killed by settlers roaming the countryside. Settler violence against Palestinians quadrupled between 2006 and 2014, according to the U.N. Secretariat's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Fiction: Hamas uses civilians as human shields, fires rockets from hospitals and homes, and hides weapons under bomb shelters and schools.

Fact: Israel fires on a trapped civilian population, then vilifies Gazans for defending their communities, homes and hospitals.

Using civilians as human shields certainly violates international law. However, even the New York Times states that “there is no evidence that Hamas and other militants force civilians to stay in areas that are under attack — the legal definition of a human shield under international law.” (July 23)

Meanwhile, by closing the borders, Israel and Egypt have forced Gazan civilians to stay in areas being attacked. The population of 1.7 million people is trapped in a 25-mile-long strip, surrounded by concrete walls and fences, with nowhere to go as it is bombed and shot at by the fourth-most-powerful military in the world.

“Gaza is unique in the annals of modern warfare in being a conflict zone with a fence around it, so civilians have no place to flee,” said Chris Gunness, spokesperson for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). (Los Angeles Times, July 22)

Blogger Jim Kavanagh notes that “Israel is using the ‘human shield’ argument ... to hinder careful thought and justify the unjustifiable. Israel finds ‘human shields’ everywhere there are civilians in the way the U.S. government now finds ‘weapons of mass destruction.’” (opednews.com, Aug. 3)

Israel struck six U.N. schools serving as bomb shelters and sheltering thousands of people. UNRWA said it had informed the Israeli military of the locations of the schools repeatedly, in one case 33 times. (The Guardian (Britain), Aug. 8).

Israel repeatedly bombed and finally destroyed the al-Wafa Hospital rehab center in Gaza city, claiming its grounds and vicinity were used by fighters. Basman Alashi, the hospital's director, said the hospital had not been used by Hamas or other fighters: “Israel has targeted our hospital based on false and misleading claims. They are targeting medical facilities, the wounded, the sick and our children, all over the Gaza Strip. They want us to know that nowhere is safe.” (The Guardian (Britain), July 24)

Fiction: Israel hits only military targets.

Fact: Israel has invented a scenario for declaring Palestinian civilians “military targets.”

Law professor Ryan Goodman notes the international law definition of military targets: “lawful targets include members of the armed forces of an opposing side and individuals who ‘directly participate in hostilities’ such as helping to load and fire a weapon. The definition excludes

purely political leaders, religious figures, financial contributors and others without a fighting function.” (justsecurity.org, Aug. 6)

But the Israeli military has invented a whole scenario for declaring Palestinian civilians to be “legitimate military targets.” “Israel's warfare is ... about the transformation of human beings into collateral damage, subjects who can be killed without violating international law,” explained Nicola Perugini in his article, “On ‘human shielding’ in Gaza.” (Al Jazeera, July 18)

Fiction: Hamas tunnels into Israel to kill and terrorize Israeli civilians.

Fact: Israel has blockaded and carpet-bombed Gaza. Tunnels are a supply lifeline and a defensive military response to the world's fourth-most-powerful military.

Gaza's tunnels are a low-tech way to bypass Israel's siege on Gaza, get vital supplies and wage a defensive war. During the Nazi siege of the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II, Jewish people dug tunnels to bring in food and supplies. In the same way, the Palestinians of Gaza brought in food and medicine, cement and arms through tunnels dug into Egypt. The Sisi government in Egypt closed these vital supply tunnels in 2013 and 2014, and had some of them flooded with excrement.

Hamas and other groups have tunneled under their cities and camps to store weapons for self-defense where they can't be spotted by satellites. They have built bomb shelters for their leaders in these tunnels so their government would be able to function beneath Israeli radar. In this 47-year war called “occupation” against them, the Palestinian people have tunneled behind enemy lines into Israel for surprise attacks.

Fiction: The Israeli war on Gaza has strained U.S.-Israeli relations.

Fact: The U.S. government rearmed Israel so it could continue attacking Gaza.

The same week that Israel shelled a U.N. school, killing 16 people, the Pentagon opened up to Israel a secret cache of weapons that it keeps in Israel for its own emergency use, resupplying Israel with 120 mm mortar launchers, 40 mm bomb launchers, and detonators, grenades and ammunition so it could continue attacking Gaza. (middleeastmonitor.com, July 31).

There are no fundamental disagreements between the Israeli and U.S. governments. Israel is Wall Street's most reliable ally in the Middle East region. Israel's murderous attempt to crush the Palestinian people makes the Middle East safer for U.S. oil companies, who fear that people in the region will rise up and take back their resources.

But the Palestinian people will not be crushed. When the New York Times asked 28-year-old Adel al-Ghoula why he was sitting in front of the rubble of his demolished home, he said, “To tell the world: We are rooted in our land until death.” (Aug 18)

Washington gives Israel \$3 billion a year, \$8.5 million a day, in weapons that Israel used to bomb Gaza's only power plant and cut off the water there. Here, the city of Detroit has cut water off to thousands of people, claiming there is no money.

U.S. tax dollars pay for the bombing of homes, factories, schools and service centers in Gaza, while funds for affordable housing, jobs, schools and social services are cut. Let's demand that Washington stop all aid to Israel and use that money to meet human needs right here. □

— San Francisco State University, the Gray Panthers of San Francisco, the Haiti Action Committee, the International Action Center, the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network, Jews for Palestinians, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Marcha Patriótica (Colombia) — California chapter, the Middle East Children's Alliance and Workers World Party. □



WW/MO EDITORIAL

La plaga azul ¡JUSTICIA PARA MICHAEL BROWN!

12 de agosto — La penosa noticia de que la policía ha matado a otro joven afroamericano desarmado viene esta vez de Ferguson, Misuri, un suburbio de San Louis. Michael Brown, de solo 18 años, esperaba entrar a la universidad en pocas semanas. La policía aún no ha explicado el por qué los oficiales acibillaron el cuerpo de Brown con 10 balas después de detenerlo mientras caminaba con un amigo a la casa de su abuela. Tampoco el Departamento Policial de Ferguson ha dado el nombre del policía asesino quien ha sido puesto en "licencia administrativa".

¿Hubiera sido noticia nacional sin la efusión de ira de la comunidad negra luego de la muerte del joven? Un memorial improvisado la noche siguiente se convirtió en una manifestación de protesta, rodeada por cientos de policías antidisturbios armados con gases lacrimógenos, escopetas y perros de ataque. Jóvenes repetidamente enfrentaban a la policía gritando ¡"No me disparen!", mientras le daban la espalda y alzaban las manos.

Ferguson es parte de la ciudad de San Louis, la cual ha perdido población al reducirse la industria. Ferguson es una ciudad de 22.000 habitantes que es dos terceras partes negra; la policía es casi toda blanca. San Louis se convirtió en una metrópoli en la época de la esclavitud. Su riqueza provino de la explotación y la opresión de los pueblos indígena y negro.

Tomó una guerra civil hace más de siglo y medio para poner fin a la esclavitud, pero esa revolución nunca terminó. Un compromiso entre los industrialistas/banqueros del norte y los terratenientes del sur terminó la Reconstrucción de la década de 1870 y permitió que los blancos ricos mantuvieran sus enormes plantaciones. Una nueva ola de terror racista, encabezada por el Ku Klux Klan, arrancó los derechos políticos y sociales recién ganados por las/os negros en el sur forzándoles a retroceder a la semi-esclavitud del sistema de apartheid y segregación racial.

Incluso con el movimiento masivo de derechos civiles de la década de 1950 y 1960, la segregación todavía existe en muchas partes del norte y del sur, junto con precios más altos y salarios más bajos, o ningún salario, a que se enfrentan tantas comunidades negras de la clase trabajadora.

La juventud de Ferguson tiene todo el derecho a rebelarse y dudar de los pronunciamientos oficiales del FBI de que "investigará" si la policía cometió abusos contra los derechos civiles en Ferguson. Estas investigaciones raramente prosperan porque no llegan a abordar las causas fundamentales del problema.

La brutalidad policial es epidémica no por unas pocas "manzanas podridas" o porque no consiguieron mejor "adiestramiento de sensibilidad", sino debido a que el trabajo de la policía es impedir a la gente rebelarse contra un sistema económico que es injusto y cada vez más incapaz de atender las necesidades básicas de la vida. El sistema capitalista explota a todas/os los trabajadores, pero sobre todo es letal a los pueblos negro, latino, indígena, asiático, medio oriental y de otras de naciones oprimidas. La policía se encuentra en sus comunidades para sembrar el terror y mantenerles alejados de sublevarse contra sus insoportables condiciones.

¡Justicia para Michael Brown! ¡Sin justicia, no hay paz! □

Escritora iraquí discute papel destructivo de EUA en su país

Por Haifa Zangana

Si uno fuera a ver la evolución de los acontecimientos en Irak como el guión de una película trágica, la secuencia de escenas podría progresar de la manera siguiente, arrojando luz sobre los acontecimientos que han llevado a la desarticulación y desaparición de lo que fue una gran nación.

La primera escena es evocadora de la era del cine mudo: cinco figuras sombrías de pie, en trajes oscuros, dos de las cuales se turnan para murmurar frases que son inaudibles para el público. No están asistiendo a un funeral, sino al repentino nombramiento de Haider al-Abadi como nuevo primer ministro iraquí. Las otras cuatro figuras al lado de Abadi son Fuad Masum, el recién electo presidente iraquí entregando la orden para confirmar el puesto de Abadi, la cual presenta a las cámaras; Hussein al-Shahristani, el actual ministro de relaciones exteriores y coordinador general de la energía — entre otras tareas — como vice primer ministro; Ibrahim al-Jaffari, el jefe de la alianza de todos los grupos chiitas; y Salim al-Juburi, el recién electo presidente del Parlamento.

Esta primera escena parece coreografiada para mostrar a los representantes de los partidos sectarios y étnicos que EUA facultó en acuerdos formales después de la ocupación: Masum para los partidos kurdos, Juburi para los grupos "sunitas", Jaafary para los grupos chiitas, Shahrastani para las autoridades religiosas en Najaf y Abadi por el partido Da'wa. Una toma más amplia de la cámara muestra cuatro figuras clave de la coalición chiita para indicar un consentimiento más amplio en el grupo parlamentario más grande.

Mostrada en la televisión estatal iraquí el lunes por la tarde [11 de agosto], esta escena tiene lugar en una esquina de una habitación escasamente amueblada, en algún lugar de la Zona Verde, pero no donde los "acontecimientos históricos" en el Iraq post-2003 normalmente tienen lugar: en amplias salas con un público aplaudiendo. Era una escena sombría en desafío al actual primer ministro Nouri al-Maliki.

Se necesita el desafío, ya que Maliki ha sido durante los últimos ocho años el comandante supremo de las fuerzas armadas. También ha estado a cargo del Ministerio de Defensa, el Ministerio del Interior, el Ministerio de Seguridad Nacional y ha cooptado la Corte Suprema para asignarle nueve cuerpos supuestamente independientes de la Constitución, incluyendo el banco central, a cargo de los \$700 mil millones de dólares en regalías del petróleo durante los últimos ocho años; la Comisión de Integridad, a cargo de la lucha contra el fraude y la corrupción; la Comisión Nacional de Medios, televisión, radio y prensa; y la Comisión de Justicia y Cuestionamiento, encargada de decidir quién puede o no puede ser empleado o elegido.

La oficina de Maliki es también la titular de la cartera para la financiación de una serie de milicias que llevan a cabo

atrocidades que los soldados y policías no pueden cometer con facilidad, y para financiar a los jefes tribales que lo apoyan contra el levantamiento de la población.

La escena 2 es del mismo desafiante Maliki, de pie con 30 de sus miembros del Parlamento en filas sombrías, en una gran sala con una lámpara de araña. Pero están ausentes todos los peces gordos de su partido o de la coalición chiita. Maliki habla, ofreciendo una diatriba sobre duplicidad y refiriéndose en innumerables ocasiones a la Constitución. Incluso denuncia la aprobación estadounidense de movidas inconstitucionales. Vale la pena recordar que es el mismo Maliki que no ha mostrado ningún respeto por la Constitución durante sus ocho años en el cargo. Ahora él es el guardián supremo de la Constitución, acusando al presidente iraquí Fuad Masum de violarla y prometiendo proteger la Constitución de Irak.

Escena 3 es de unidades militares en puntos clave en Bagdad bloqueando zonas enteras y protegiendo la Zona Verde. Por el momento, ya que Maliki no da señales de abandonar el poder, Irak tiene dos primeros ministros que pertenecen al mismo partido sectario Da'wa. Los iraquíes en general, parecen desconfiar de la nueva situación. Hay un par de manifestaciones de apoyo a Maliki, y las milicias están por todo Bagdad.

Escena 4 es de funcionarios estadounidenses y comentaristas a raudal, cada uno gritando ¡"Eureka!", lavándose las manos de más de un millón de vidas iraquíes. Finalmente han descubierto que Maliki es el problema y Abadi la solución. Pero Abadi tendrá que formar "un gobierno inclusivo", nos dicen. "Un gobierno inclusivo", como en las películas de Disney, es la varita mágica para deshacerse de todos los demonios. El presidente Barack Obama interrumpió sus vacaciones para dar la bienvenida al nombramiento de Abadi, instando a los iraquíes a "formar un nuevo gobierno inclusivo". (New York Times, 12 de agosto)

El vicepresidente estadounidense Joseph Biden felicitó a Abadi por teléfono, prometiendo el apoyo de EUA, y el secretario de estado John Kerry fue más lejoso, prometiendo que "EUA considerará más ayuda militar, económica y política para Irak, una vez se forme un nuevo gobierno inclusivo".

Al escuchar esta mantra repetitiva de Estados Unidos, uno se pregunta si los funcionarios estadounidenses sufren de un estado agudo de demencia al olvidar su nefasto papel en Irak, o si lo que tienen es desprecio por el pueblo iraquí. ¿Por qué?

En primer lugar, una mirada al Irak de hoy, o lo que queda del Irak que conocíamos, es suficiente para mostrar la magnitud de la destrucción en términos sociales y humanos tanto como en infraestructura. La fragmentación de la sociedad y la animosidad y sentimientos de venganza cada vez mayor luego de la ocupación liderada por EUA de-

nominada "Operación Libertad Iraquí" del 2003.

En segundo lugar, llamar a los políticos iraquíes a formar un nuevo gobierno de unidad es un acto sin sentido ya que la mayoría si no todos los funcionarios iraquíes de hoy son los mismos políticos que han estado colaborando con EUA desde los años noventa. Las etiquetas oficiales pueden haber cambiadas pero la corrupción, el sectarismo y las disputas sobre el poder siguen siendo las mismas.

Las milicias brutales unidas a las mismas partes que participan en el proceso político que ha sido diseñado por la ocupación de EUA quedan igual. Como decimos en Irak: "El mismo burro, con diferente silla". Las protestas pacíficas, desde hace tiempo aplastadas con masacres, terminando en levantamientos armados bajo una cantidad de etiquetas: consejos tribales, consejos militares, consejos políticos. Estas fuerzas se mantienen firmes para continuar la lucha por un Irak soberano y unificado.

Estas cuatro escenas son de eventos y cambios que se desarrollan rápidamente bajo el peso relativo de los distintos poderes y actores. Mientras los combatientes del Estado Islámico aterrizan a las comunidades vulnerables de cristianos, turcomanos y yazidíes en el norte de Irak — obligándoles a abandonar sus hogares — cientos de miles de sunitas se ven obligados a abandonar sus hogares en las ciudades que han sido sometidas a un bombardeo continuo y ataques aéreos con barriles explosivos lanzados por el régimen iraquí. Fuerzas de EUA/R.U. arrojan paquetes de alimentos mientras utilizan el disfraz de ayuda humanitaria para abastecer a la región kurda con armas, lo que es visto por muchos iraquíes como el último clavo en el ataúd de una nación una vez llamada Irak.

Para entender lo que está sucediendo es importante sopesar estos acontecimientos a la luz de la historia reciente de individuos y fuerzas. También se debe examinar la veracidad de las reclamaciones de los medios, teniendo en cuenta las mentiras sobre las cuales se han cometido tantas atrocidades en el pasado, y determinar la responsabilidad de la ocupación liderada por EUA en los acontecimientos catastróficos que hoy se desarrollan. Destruir un país en la mañana y entregar caridad a la población en la noche puede resumir nuestra experiencia con la política estadounidense.

¿Qué podemos hacer en medio de este caos? Con el fin de preservar lo que queda de este país devastado, es nuestra responsabilidad como iraquíes defender la justicia, desenmascarar los abusos a los derechos humanos y defender el principio de la preservación de vidas humanas. Para avanzar en este camino, necesitamos el apoyo del movimiento de solidaridad internacional.

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