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Against climate change?

Fight for system change!

The largest demonstration against climate change ever will take place in New York City on Sunday, Sept. 21. This important action deserves the support of all employed and unemployed workers and certainly of all who consider themselves revolutionaries.

Climate change is such a dire issue for the worldwide working class that it merits a massive response, one long overdue in the United States. An urgent, unprecedented struggle is needed not only to stop further damage on the planet, but also to reverse the consequences of a crisis already in motion.

Some 100,000 to 200,000 people who join this demonstration will be geared up for struggle to defend the environment. All those who consider themselves revolutionary should contribute to the day's events in a way to encourage further participation and greater struggle from all involved.

They especially should do what is possible to target the capitalist system itself.

We raise this because the idea of abolishing capitalism as a way to resolve the climate crisis does not even enter the minds of the current organizers of this demonstration. Moreover, one of the main groups sponsoring the event is a coalition called The Climate Group, which includes among its members and sponsors Duke Energy, HSBC and Goldman Sachs. Bloomberg, HP, Dell, P&G, Ikea, Nike and News Corp. are also included. Their expensive subway ads claim that the People's Climate March will be a place where "both bankers and hipsters" can march together.

Everyone likes a broad demonstration. But bankers are the enemy. Their idea of fighting climate change is to set up a market for shares in pollution rights. And the big capitalist monopolies are also the major polluters. They have bought themselves a place at the table in the protest movement so they can sabotage it. They do not broaden the movement, but narrow it to appease the rest of the 1%.

All the more so must revolutionaries and all class-conscious forces do their utmost to politically influence this important demonstration. Make the slogan "System change, not climate change!" ring loud. Highlight the Pentagon's role as the world's No. 1 polluter and imperialist war as the greatest contributor to climate change. Fight environmental racism in solidarity

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Banks cause Detroit water crisis

By Kris Hamel
 Detroit

The city of Detroit, under a right-wing, state-appointed "emergency manager" who has plunged the city into the largest municipal bankruptcy in United States history, has been on a vicious campaign since March to turn off the water of residential customers whom the city claims owe more than \$150 on their water bills. These mass shutoffs brought national and international notoriety to the city. It wasn't until July, when an activist with the Moratorium NOW! Coalition testified in court, that the issue was brought into the city's bankruptcy case.

It has recently been uncovered that the vast majority of the \$42.1 million in unpaid residential bills are a

result of the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department's (DWSD) negligence in allowing water to keep running in homes that have been abandoned due to foreclosure.

An article by Joel Kurth, published in the Detroit News on Sept. 12, exposed that there is a total of \$21.5 million in unpaid water bills on the 11,600 homes slated for auction in October due to property tax foreclosure by Wayne County. The article noted that 112 of these homes have water bills of \$10,000 or more and 484 have bills of at least \$5,000, indicating they are abandoned homes with water faucets left on (an average yearly bill for a Detroit household is approximately \$900). These figures do not account for unpaid water bills on homes abandoned due to tax foreclosures in previous years or those

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ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE 6-7



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FIGHTING RACISM & NATIONAL OPPRESSION

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ATLANTA

Hawks owners' racism exposed

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

I am not a sports fan. In fact, I have never been to a professional basketball game, much less an Atlanta Hawks game.

What I know about the owners and managers of the Atlanta Hawks comes from what I have read in the local papers and heard on television — and of course, my own personal experience that bosses, and certainly very wealthy ones, don't have much respect for the people who make the profits for them.

But as Bob Dylan opined, "You don't have to be a weatherman to know which way the wind blows." There is no doubt that there is a blatant, crude, backward current of racist and white supremacist attitudes existing among the decision makers running the Atlanta team.

Majority owner Bruce Levenson abruptly announced on Sept. 7 that he was selling his shares in the team, citing an email he wrote in 2012 about the Black fans "scaring away the whites," too much Black music in the arena, too many Black cheerleaders, and on and on. His announcement made local and national headlines and his derogatory comments were discussed by politicians, sports writers and news anchors.

Everyone was puzzled about what had caused Levenson to incriminate himself. Then it was revealed that an independent investigation was taking place of another incendiary set of comments by general manager Danny Ferry. On a June 6 conference call with four of the team's owners, some investors and other members of the management staff, Ferry ripped potential free agent Luoi Deng, who is from South Sudan, with just about every racist stereotype possible. Mind you, Deng has been honored by a vote of National Basketball Association players for his ethical behavior on and off the court as well as by the United Nations for his humanitarian efforts in Africa.

'Sorry' is not enough

The owners of the Hawks are a fractious group, arguing in public and taken to suing each other, so it was not surprising that owner Michael Gearon Jr. would want

Ferry, Levenson's general manager, fired. Gearon apparently initiated the release of the June 6 audio recording and had also discovered Levenson's 2012 email.

For a week, Hawks CEO Steve Koonin stood by Ferry but twice failed to meet with a number of noted Atlanta civil rights leaders and clergy, who arrived at his office but were turned away. These arrogant actions were duly covered on TV and in the newspapers. Rather than face the public, the Hawks' management asked for "patience and time to heal."

With national attention growing, Ferry announced his indefinite leave of absence, and on Sept. 14, the Hawks' CEO placed a full-page ad in the Atlanta Journal Constitution headlined, "We are very sorry."

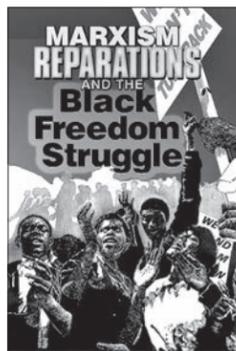
This Atlantan non-sports fan says what is "sorry" is the disgusting, exploitative system that allows a handful of mostly white men to "buy" skilled athletic men, mostly Black, to make them millions in profits — all the while holding them in contempt as human beings. It is clear that Donald Sterling's bigotry was no aberration in the NBA.

Sports, especially at the professional level, is a highly profitable business with TV rights, merchandising, stadium food and beverage sales, and more. Star players may earn millions during a relatively short career, but owners don't even have to break a sweat to get theirs.

After Ferguson and so many more racist assaults and indignities, the exposure of the behind-the-scenes prejudices of the Hawks' management just makes it clearer than ever that revolutionary change is needed in every facet of U.S. life. □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Available at major online booksellers.



GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

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WORKERS WORLD PARTY

Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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WW COMMENTARY

Ray Rice, women's oppression & racism

By Monica Moorehead

The National Football League's Baltimore Ravens' running back, Ray Rice, has been indefinitely suspended from the NFL, and then cut by his team as of Sept. 8 due to a February domestic violence incident involving his then fiancée Janay Palmer.

In May, a surveillance video was publicly released showing Rice dragging an unconscious Palmer out of an elevator at a casino in Atlantic City, N.J. The video prompted a national debate about the need for immediate action against Rice.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell waited until July to arbitrarily suspend Rice from playing in the 2014 NFL season's first two games. Goodell's actions were viewed as a slap on the wrist. Before this videotape surfaced, there were no NFL guidelines for suspending players involved in domestic violence assaults, while a drug offense policy is part of the collective bargaining agreement with the NFL Players Association.

Following their wedding, Ray Rice and Janay Rice held a May 23 press conference about the incident. A somber-looking Janay Rice stated, "I deeply regret the role I played in the incident." Women asked why she apologized. Ray Rice did not publicly apologize to his spouse, but apologized to Ravens' and NFL officials; this caused more public outrage. (sports-grid.com) The Ravens endlessly retweeted Janay Palmer's apology until Sept. 8.

What led to Ray Rice's suspension was TMZ's release of more video of the assault inside the elevator; it showed Ray Rice punching his fiancée so hard that her head hit a railing. He then dragged her out of the elevator. Once this video went viral on Sept. 8, it intensified the discussion on the nature of U.S. sports, domestic violence and women's oppression.

Football and domestic violence

Football is the most violent sport in the U.S. — whether high school, college or, particularly, professional. In recent years, the number of concussions has exploded in pro football. Some retired football players have even committed suicide so their brains could be donated to science to study the impact of thousands of brute force injuries to their heads. The NFL has the shortest playing span of any professional sport due to devastating in-

juries, which often lead to a lifetime of physical and emotional disabilities.

This kind of violence affects the personal lives of football players, their partners and children. Numerous incidents have been reported of domestic violence involving NFL players. What made the episode involving Ray Rice stand out was that it was caught on a video security camera in a public place. The majority of domestic violence incidents take place behind closed doors; many assaults go unreported or the assaulted women refuse to press charges for economic and other reasons.

Following his July conviction for assaulting his partner, Carolina Panther defensive end Greg Hardy played in a game on Sept. 7. San Francisco 49ers player Ray McDonald also played that weekend, following his arrest for battering his pregnant fiancée, even after she informed police.

In December 2012, NFL player Jovan Becher fatally shot Kasandra Perkins, his partner and mother of his child, following an argument. He then committed suicide.

Dave Zirin, who writes the progressive "Edge of Sports" column for The Nation, told Democracy Now! on Sept. 9, "This is about a National Football League that treats violence against women as a public relations crisis, not as a crisis about the ways in which the violence of the game spills over into people's families."

Some sports writers and commentators, including Zirin, are calling for Goodell's resignation for promoting this anti-woman culture. More domestic violence attacks occur during the Super Bowl than on any other day in the U.S.

Women are used as sexual objects to attract high-profile high school athletes to Division I National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball and football programs. Many recruits feel they must comply with this sexualized atmosphere to pay their college tuition or other expenses. An epidemic of sexual assaults by athletes and other male students permeates college campuses.

Coaches are not immune from misogynist behavior. Joe Paterno, the late Penn State football coach, who was accused of concealing facts in the Jerry Sandusky child sexual abuse case, stated after he lost a game in 1990, "I'm going to go home and beat my wife." (Sports Illustrated,

June 27, 1994) His comments did not create controversy.

How racism and sexism intersect

The mainstream media should also be indicted for using the Ray Rice case to reinforce racism and women's oppression. Not since the O.J. Simpson trial in 1994 has a high-profile Black athlete been made the poster person for domestic violence as has Ray Rice.

Ben Roethlisberger, the white Pittsburgh Steelers' quarterback, was accused of sexual assault twice at a Lake Tahoe hotel in 2008. The NFL slapped him with a six-game suspension. He never faced a jury trial because the district attorney claimed there wasn't enough "evidence." It was Roethlisberger's word versus that of a 20-year-old woman whose own character would have been scrutinized. Where was the media attention about this scandal?

Retired Major League Baseball player Chuck Knoblauch, who is also white, has been arrested for domestic violence. The billionaire white owner of the Dallas Cowboys, Jerry Jones, is being sued for a 2009 sexual assault of a young woman. Where is the hoopla about these cases? Must crimes be videotaped to bring national headlines and not just blips on a screen?

Four white field hockey players at Duke University were exonerated from sexual assault charges against a Black single mother. They were portrayed as innocent victims; she was portrayed as promiscuous.

Eight Black women have accused white police officer Daniel Holtzclaw in Oklahoma of raping them after he arrested them. A judge reduced the bail for this serial rapist, setting him free. Where is the public outcry?

Despite the multimillion-dollar contracts of athletes like Ray Rice, he is still an African-American man who is subject to the same racist stereotypes under capitalism. Columnist Charles M. Blow stated in the Sept. 7 New York Times, citing a Sentencing Project report: "Many media outlets reinforce the public's racial misconceptions about crime by presenting African Americans and Latinos differently than whites — both quantitatively and qualitatively. Television news programs and newspapers over-represent racial minorities as crime suspects and whites as crime victims."

While African-American youth, in-

cluding Michael Brown and Trayvon Martin, are executed in the streets, athletes of color like Ray Rice are demonized and criminalized by a system rooted in white supremacy, women's oppression and homophobia.

Violence rooted in women's oppression

Domestic violence is part of women's oppression; women are viewed as men's private property. It is the oldest of oppressions, along with slavery and the oppression of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people.

In a Sept. 12 email to supporters, Maine Rep. Diane Russell states, "One in four American women experiences physical violence from an intimate partner, and every month 46 women are killed by an intimate partner with a gun."

The National Domestic Violence Hotline says that one in five women in the U.S. has been raped; more than 9 percent of women have been raped by an intimate partner.

The National Coalition on Domestic Violence's website highlights a U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention statistic: "Approximately 42.4 million women in the United States have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime."

The "Police Domestic Violence" handbook says women suffer domestic violence in 40 percent of police-officer families, double the rate of nonpolice families. Author Diane Wetendorf says, "The biggest problem for a woman reporting that she's been abused by her police officer husband or boyfriend is that nobody believes you. If you do speak up, the police are very good at turning the accusations around. The women get terrified, too, so the crime is very under-reported. There is a legitimate fear of retaliation." (San Francisco Gate, Sept. 14)

This is true for many women who report their abuse to authorities. The repressive state and media treat them as criminals and the abusers as the victims. Marissa Alexander, a heroic African-American woman, spent almost three years in prison for defending herself and her children from an abusive spouse. Released on bail earlier this year due to mass pressure, she will be retried in December in Jacksonville, Fla.

Then there are women like Janay Rice

Continued on page 10

WWP hosts Philly socialism conference

By Matty Starrdust
Philadelphia

Some 100 community members, students and activists attended the Philadelphia Workers World Party Socialism Conference on Sept. 13 held at the historic Church of the Advocate, a center of struggle for Black liberation.

Speakers included WWP First Secretary Larry Holmes; secretariat members Deirdre Griswold and Sara Flounders; Berta Joubert-Ceci, leader of the Philadelphia branch of Workers World; Scott Williams from Fight Imperialism, Stand Together; and Pam Africa, leader of the MOVE organization and the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Temple student activist Katherine Mejia from People Underground for Revolutionary Progress; immigrant activist María Serna; Lamont Lilly, anti-police brutality activist from North Carolina;

and Dr. Anthony Monteiro, long-time revolutionary activist from North Philadelphia, were also featured speakers.

The conference's three segments addressed the tasks at hand for the working class and oppressed in the U.S. — the center of world imperialism; the need for a globally united working class to combat capitalist oppression and environmental destruction; and why only socialism can overthrow capitalism and liberate the working class.

Several speakers raised the resistance to racism and police brutality exemplified by the uprisings in Ferguson, Mo. As the U.S. ruling class again bangs its war drums, this time with Syria in the crosshairs, conference participants opposed yet another U.S. war. Joyce Chediak, Lebanese-American activist, editor of "Gaza: Symbol of Resistance" and another of the featured speakers, said the U.S. ruling class and military are the primary enemy, not ISIS. She called the heroic resistance



UNITE HERE Local 7 member Sara Benjamin at socialist conference, Sept. 13.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

in Gaza a setback to Israeli occupation.

U.S. imperialism's systematic destruction of and attacks on progressive organizations in the Middle East left a vacuum for ISIS to gain footholds in the region, Holmes pointed out. Speakers agreed unanimously that there can be

no peace or stability in the Middle East while the U.S. bombs people, invades countries and overthrows governments with impunity.

Holmes called for principled unity on the left in the face of unbridled capitalist destruction. □

Central Park Five settlement finalized

By Dolores Cox
New York

"This is now the icing on the cake," said Raymond Santana, one of the Central Park Five. "My whole life has been about fighting this case. ... Back in 1989, our voices were taken from us and we were silenced, and now, to have it back, to stand up tall and to take what's rightfully ours, it's our humanity. ... Finally ... we can just exhale and we can relax and then enjoy the moment of this victory. ... It's overwhelming. It's still sometimes unbelievable." (ny1.com, Sept. 5)

Nearly 12 years after filing their lawsuit against the city of New York and its police department for racially motivated violations of their civil rights, false arrest, malicious prosecution, wrongful conviction and imprisonment, the settlement of the Central Park Five case was approved by Judge Ronald Ellis on Sept. 5 in the amount of \$41 million.

The amount represents \$1 million for each year that Santana, Kharey Wise, Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson and Yusef Salaam served in prison. They served between 7 and 13 years. Then teens, the five are now men in their 30s and 40s.

In June, Mayor Bill de Blasio officially settled the notorious "Central Park Jogger" case, and the comptroller approved the awarded monies. On Sept. 5, de Blasio stated, "This settlement is an act of justice for those five men that is long overdue. We can finally put this case behind us, and these five men and their families can begin to heal these wounds and move forward."

The Central Park Five, as they became known, were five innocent Black and Latino youths, ages 14 to 16, who were arrested April 1989 for the rape of a white woman in Central Park. They were convicted and imprisoned the following year. In 2002, they were exonerated when Matias Reyes, who was in prison for a different crime, confessed to the rape and his DNA matched evidence from the victim.

In 2007, Mayor Michael Bloomberg filed a motion to dismiss the five's lawsuit, which a federal judge denied. However, the settlement agreement included exceptionally strong wording by the city's Corporation Counsel that the settlement is not to be construed as an admission of any wrongdoing by the police detectives or the district attorney's prosecutors, past or present. This followed vicious courtroom attacks on the five by city lawyers during the years of litigation.



LEAFLET: DECEMBER 12TH MOVEMENT
Photo from a leaflet for an Oct. 29, 2012, protest for the Five.

On Sept. 9, Michael Tarif Warren, a lawyer for the five, stated that "even though the corporation counsel is implying that with investigators and prosecutors such as Elizabeth Lederer and Linda Fairstein, there was no malfeasance, the fact that this \$41 million is the highest settlement that the city has ever engaged in for wrongful conviction completely refutes his assertions." (Amsterdam News, Sept. 11)

Supporters of the five say Lederer and Fairstein conspired with the police to railroad the teens, the two have profited hugely from this case, and they must be held accountable. That has led to calls for an investigation into how the case was handled.

In the article Salaam said, "It is all overwhelming and bitter sweet. ... We are all still trying to process what I call a sort of victory. I'm glad the battle is over, but I know the damage done isn't covered by the amount we were awarded. No amount can replace the loss of freedom, justice and equality. ... There was nothing allocated to address the pain and suffering our families went through."

Salaam added his concern for Black communities, saying that "we are far too often the ones at the end of the stake, roasted over the coals to satisfy the sadistic nature of the sick presence of institutionalized racism."

What happened to the teens was a legal lynching, leaving the five with the indelible scars of being labeled criminals. The damage done is irreparable, and justice so long delayed is equivalent to justice denied, the five say.

The will to win and the tenacity of the men, their families and the community to never give up kept the case alive in people's minds and hearts during the past 25 years. Even small victories are important.

There'll be more challenges ahead for the Central Park Five. The struggle continues. □

On the picket line

by Sue Davis

Ironworkers on strike in San Fran.

San Francisco ironworkers, who do very dangerous but essential work on huge construction projects, walked off the job on at least two sites on Sept. 10 and Sept. 11 to demand a re-vote on a concessions contract. A major issue that prompted the wildcat was no translations of the contract into Spanish or Chinese. Some 60 percent of the workers speak Spanish.

The workers are also demanding a cost-of-living wage because they continue to make about what they earned in 2005. "No on new contract, strike for fair wages" read the main banner. Picket signs read "Cost of living soars, wages are ignored" and "We can't afford to live where we work." One worker, a member of Ironworks Local 377, told the Labor Video Project that San Francisco has the highest cost of living in the world, but ironworkers in New York City make twice what workers in San Francisco make. For more details about the wildcat, view videos on youtube.com/laborvideo, Sept. 11 and Sept. 12.

'FedEx workers are FedEx employees'

Just in time for Labor Day, federal appeals courts in California and Oregon ruled that FedEx workers in those states are employees, not contractors. The judge in San Francisco noted that the contract the workers must sign "gives FedEx a broad right to control the manner in which the drivers perform their work." This includes specifying the uniforms they wear, their personal grooming and the vehicles they drive, including the dimensions of shelving and paint color. Though the company does not dictate working hours, it organizes the drivers' workloads so they work between 9 1/2 and 11 hours a day and tells them what packages to deliver on what days and at what times.

"This ruling will have seismic impact on this industry and the lives of FedEx Ground drivers in California," said Beth Ross, the drivers' attorney there. (SFgate.com, Aug. 28) For instance, now drivers will be able to sue for overtime pay, employer contributions to Social Security and Medicare, unemployment benefits, sick pay, family leave and workers' compensation. The ruling affects 2,300 full-time drivers who worked for FedEx between 2000 and 2007 in California and 360 in Oregon. FedEx is appealing the rulings.

These decisions, along with a similar ruling about McDonald's workers on July 29 by the National Labor Relations Board, could — should — have wide ramifications in industries that deliberately hire contractors to "employ" their workers. For instance, workers who drive trucks loaded with Walmart goods from California ports to inland warehouses have been fighting for years to be categorized as Walmart employees. Workers, often immigrants, who are contracted to provide janitorial work, package delivery, home-care services, construction and even some professional services like writing are deliberately cheated out of a living wage and employee protections while 1% owners revel in their stolen wealth and class privilege. According to the Leonard Carder law firm where Ross works, she is pursuing a national suit against FedEx.

Paid sick days for 6.5 million in Calif.

A California law granting 6.5 million low-wage workers, or 39 percent of the state's workforce, paid sick days was signed into law on Sept. 10; it will go into effect July 1, 2015. Home-care workers, however, were excluded. But unions vowed to continue the fight until they are also covered. Similar policies were passed covering Connecticut workers in 2011 and workers in New York City earlier this year. However, unlike the earlier laws, this one will apply to businesses large and small. (aflcio.blog.org, Sept. 11)

Minn. home-care workers vote union

A large crowd at the Minnesota AFL-CIO Labor Pavilion at the Minnesota State Fair applauded Aug. 26 when it was announced that the 26,000 home-care workers in the state will now be represented by SEIU Healthcare Minnesota. To gain the right to join a union, the workers, predominantly women, many of whom are women of color and/or immigrants, had to first change state laws and then fight off court challenges bankrolled by the National Right to Work Committee. "With our collective voice, we will be stronger in our fight for improvements for both workers and the people we serve," said Rosemary Van Vickie, a home-care worker from Crosby. Key issues for the workers are better pay and benefits and more access to training, with improved quality of care for clients. (workdayminnesota.org, Aug. 26) □

NATIONAL CARAVAN to the MEXICO & TEXAS BORDERS

in **SOLIDARITY** with

Central America refugee children & their families
& all children & youth under attack



CARAVANA NACIONAL a la FRONTERA de MEXICO y TEJAS

en **solidaridad** con

Los niños refugiados de Centro América y sus familias
y todos los niños y jóvenes bajo ataque

Immigrant rights, labor union, faith-based, community and many progressive and social justice activists are organizing a caravan to South Texas in support of migrant refugees. This caravan will take badly needed material aid to the children on the border as well as to organizations that are supporting immigrants. We will carry out a National Educational Campaign.

Latest Bulletin: South Texas immigrant rights activists call for a National Day Against the Militarization of the U.S. Border on day of arrival of the Caravan. Details to come.

Caravanasolidaridad@gmail.com

Make a donation online: gofundme.com/solidaritycaravan

Caravan leaves NYC around Oct. 11! www.may1.info

WE DEMAND:

- Refugee status for all Central American children
- An end to the deportation of all immigrants
- Legalization for the over 12 million undocumented immigrants
- An end to U.S. neoliberal foreign policy, both economic and political, that leads to forced migration around the world
- An immediate end to the Prison Industrial Complex and mass incarcerations
- An end to the killing and abuse of children and youth from Ferguson to Gaza to the Mexico and Texas borders

How you can help:

- Attend our organizing meetings in NYC. For dates and locations, check our website: may1.info
 - Make a monetary or material aid donation. Payable to: **IFCO/Solidarity Caravan 2014**
 - Participate in the Caravan as a driver or a passenger.
 - Ask your church, mosque, synagogue, union or community organization to make a donation, send participants.
 - Organize a local Caravan committee in your city.
 - Volunteer to host the Caravan.
- For more info, call: **917.328.6470**

Still demanding justice for Michael Brown

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

The people of Ferguson, Mo., and supporters are still demanding the indictment and arrest of white police officer Darren Wilson for fatally shooting 18-year-old Michael Brown on Aug. 9. They attempted to block traffic on Interstate 70 on Sept. 10.

Large numbers of police were in force to try to prevent the protest from having the desired impact. Despite the heavy law enforcement mobilization and the arrests of 35 protesters, traffic was tied up for hours.

The demonstration illustrated the African-American community's ongoing discontent in the St. Louis suburb, which in August witnessed the most significant urban rebellion in several years in the United States. When the youth in Ferguson rose up in mass demonstrations, it struck a chord among African Americans and other oppressed communities across the U.S.

On Sept. 10, RT reported on the civil disobedience that day: "The protest started at 3 p.m. Central time, with people gathering at the Hanley Road interchange. Police lined the overpass and stood along the street, then surrounded the demonstrators."

St. Louis Post-Dispatch photographer David Carson wrote on Twitter during the start of the action: "Police on Hanley seem ready for lots of arrests with a Department of Corrections bus." Riverfront Times journalist Danny Wicentowski tweeted that a massive reserve force, of more than 20 police cars, was near the staging area.

A Sept. 10 Blaze article reported: "The



Parent and child at protest in Ferguson, Mo.

community appears to be growing impatient as Ferguson officer Darren Wilson waits to find out whether or not he will be indicted by a grand jury in Brown's death. Some in the community are vowing only a conviction will satisfy protesters."

The Blaze article quoted St. Louis resident Whitman Harris who told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch: "If (Darren Wilson) doesn't get a guilty conviction, this whole nation is going to riot."

Criminalization of residents exposed

The Sept. 9 Ferguson City Council meeting was the first since Brown's shooting a month earlier. The turnout was so large that it was moved from City Hall to Greater Grace Church to accommodate 600 participants.

Residents expressed outrage over the St. Louis County grand jury's failure to indict Wilson. Security guards restrained

some speakers who were not satisfied with officials' responses. Mayor James Knowles III stated that the City Council would only listen to comments from the public. People yelled, "Shut it down!" referring to the legislative body.

Several "criminal justice reforms" were read into the record at the meeting, which illustrated the blatant criminalization of the majority African-American community in Ferguson. It was revealed that local authorities had arrested some 12,000 people out of a population of 21,000.

Such a large number of arrests of Ferguson residents sheds light on the state's efforts to criminalize Brown after his death. Mass demonstrations opposing Brown's killing and demanding justice were immediately portrayed as unlawful acts, which prompted the militarization of the police and their utilization of high-powered rifles, teargas, pepper spray, bean bags and rubber bullets.

St. Louis Today reported on the Sept. 9 meeting: "The overhaul to the municipal court system includes reducing revenue from fines and reforming procedures. Court fine revenue would have to stay at or below 15 percent of the city's total revenue and any court revenue over that amount be used for special community projects instead of general revenue uses."

Hundreds of people went to the Ferguson police clerk's office during the week after the City Council meeting to test the reforms. Those facing imminent arrest were given 30 days to arrange payments of outstanding fines that could land them in jail.

The Sept. 12 New York Times said those who went to work out payments "looked around skeptically." It quoted Katrina Clemons, who owed nearly \$800

in fines and penalties from a \$250 traffic ticket, "I don't know if they are going to lock me up."

In 2013, Ferguson issued more than 25,000 arrest warrants, averaging about three per household. The Arch Defenders League, a local nonprofit organization, revealed that about half the courtrooms in Ferguson and surrounding cities often blatantly violate residents' constitutional guarantees, subjecting them to detention, job losses and evictions.

A Sept. 12 New York Times review noted, "Data from municipal courts across Missouri show that in 2013 ... Ferguson had the highest number of warrants issued in the state relative to its size. Arrest warrants are often served by municipal courts when someone fails to appear in court to pay fines for traffic or other violations, like shoplifting, assault or disturbance of peace."

With such a criminal justice collection and incarceration policy in Ferguson and surrounding cities, the only real solution must go beyond mere reforms. It must guarantee a general amnesty for those facing fines and jail sentences for alleged offenses. Such a gesture by the municipal courts would provide a mechanism for some normalization of relations among the police, the prosecutors and the judicial system — and the people.

This amnesty — and the immediate indictment and arrest of police officer Darren Wilson — would go a long way toward meeting some of the demands put forward by the people of Ferguson. Additional programs aimed at job creation and educational opportunities would help to address the gross economic underdevelopment so prevalent in the region. □

Police terror in Milwaukee

By **Workers World staff**

Dontre Hamilton was sleeping in Red Arrow Park in downtown Milwaukee on April 30. Moments later he lay on the ground dead, shot at least 14 times by a Milwaukee cop.

Family spokesperson Nathaniel Hamilton, Dontre's brother, says that before the cop that killed Dontre arrived on the scene, two police officers had previously been called to "check" on him. They surveyed the park and moved on.

The officer that killed Hamilton claims he received a voice mail that stated a man was sleeping in the park and that he hadn't received any information from the other two cops. According to eyewitnesses, this cop attempted to awaken Hamilton with his baton. Hamilton grabbed the baton and defended himself and, during the scuffle, the cop drew his gun and shot Hamilton 14 times.

The family is demanding that the killer cop be charged with homicide. Protests continue to demand justice for Hamilton and the numerous victims of police killings and vigilantes in Wisconsin and nationwide.

More than four months after the incident, Milwaukee Police Chief Ed Flynn still refuses to release the name of the cop that killed Hamilton. No charges have been filed.

The Milwaukee County district attorney's office, led by John Chisholm, is still sitting on a report they received Aug. 8 from the Wisconsin Department of Justice—Division of Criminal Investigation.

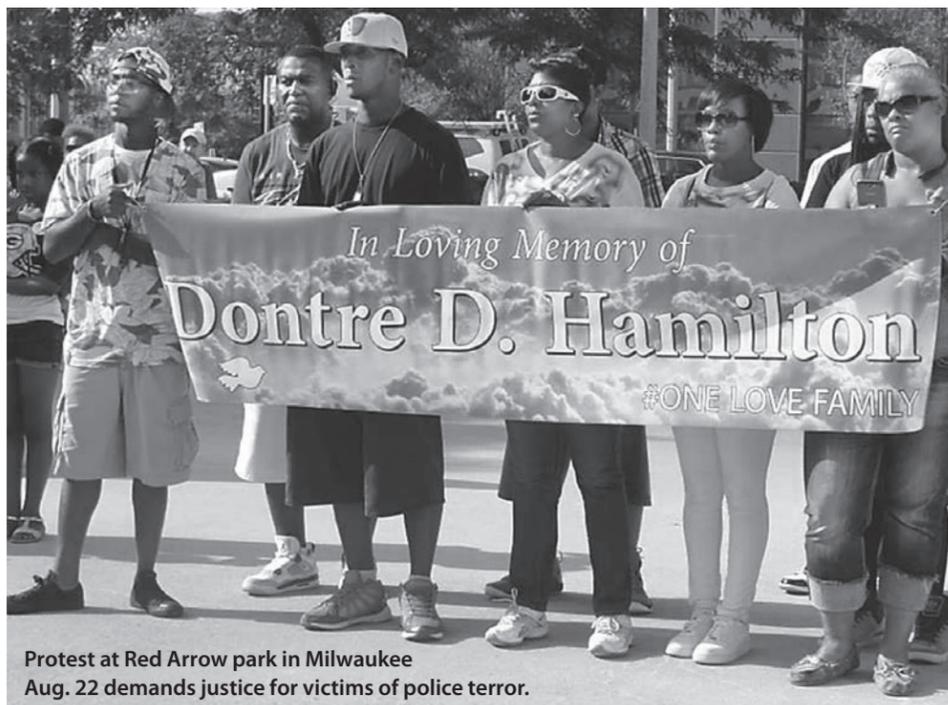
A new state law requires reports of investigations into deaths in police custody to be publicly released if criminal charges are not filed against the officers involved.

Fighting police terror

Similar to Ferguson, Mo., where a cop murdered 18-year-old Michael Brown, Milwaukee is a city where Black and Brown communities are confronting brutal austerity pushed by the banks and corporations and their servants, the racist police and politicians.

Just as in Ferguson, mass protests have erupted in Milwaukee to demand an end to police terror and the semi-apartheid conditions of oppressed communities there. Press conferences, packing of community meetings and more have also taken place. These follow similar protest activities after the police killing of Derek Williams and the vigilante killings of Corey Stingley in West Allis, Wis., and Bo Morrison in West Bend, Wis.

Angela Walker, a community organizer who is running as an independent socialist against Sheriff David Clarke in the Nov. 4 election, said: "We know that mass incarceration is the 'New Jim Crow' and Sheriff Clarke's tactics have cemented Milwaukee's place in that system. Wisconsin is the worst place in the country to raise a Black child and leads the nation in incarcerating Brown and Black people. I believe that it's time to rethink criminal justice. It's time we look at the impact



Protest at Red Arrow park in Milwaukee Aug. 22 demands justice for victims of police terror.

PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

poverty and harsh punitive measures have on crime rates, and advocate for policy changes that will increase opportunity for everyone in our community."

There is growing resistance and solidarity, especially between Black and Brown youth/students in Milwaukee, with support from poor and working-class whites.

The next major protest will be on Sept. 26 at Milwaukee Area Technical College outside the S-Building across from the Municipal Court.

The organizers of the "End Police Brutality, Mass Deportations, and Mass Incarcerations" protest state: "Join us as

we unite as one commUNITY against the Police state here in Milwaukee, and in the United States of America. We all deserve the right to live a life without fear of the police or anyone else harming, separating or killing our families." (tinyurl.com/p9mj5vb)

Call Chisholm's office to demand the release of the name of the killer cop of Dontre Hamilton and that the cop be charged: 414-278-4646 and/or email: da.milwaukee@da.wi.gov. For ongoing updates and information about protests against police terror and occupation in Wisconsin: www.wibailoutpeople.org. □

WHAT WILL IT TAKE

Global warming: Disaster for Arctic peoples

By G. Dunkel

The Arctic is warming two to four times faster than the rest of the globe. This is due to a feedback loop involving the albedo (“whiteness”) effect, which is “a measure of how much of the sun’s energy is reflected back into space.” (skepticalscience.com)

Ice and snow reflect much more of the sun’s rays than open water and bare earth. As global warming slows down the formation of Arctic ice in the fall and hastens its breakup in the spring, more heat from the sun is transferred to the Arctic environment, which increases the changes in the ice and snow cover.

For the 250,000 or so Native peoples in the Arctic — mainly Inuit, living from Alaska to Greenland; but also Sami in northern Norway; Aleut, Athabaskans and Gwich’in in North America; Nenets, Chukchi and many other Indigenous peoples in northern Russia — the changes produced by this warming make the ways they catch the food that sustains them much more risky.



Disco Bay in Greenland, well above the Arctic Circle, in August.

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

And the melting of permafrost makes the way they store what they catch more labor intensive and less secure.

Scientists generally consider the Arctic the area of the world where the ground is permanently frozen, but the speed at which the permafrost is thawing chal-

lenges this definition.

The example of Shishmaref, an Inupiaq village in northwest Alaska, illustrates some of the difficulties Native peoples in the Arctic face. Rising sea levels and the absence of shore ice mean the more violent storms that global warming produces

are threatening to wash away this barrier island. The town’s homes, water system and infrastructure are being undermined.

The absence of sea ice makes it more difficult for hunters to harvest the caribou and seals that provide much of their protein. This town is 400 years old and could be destroyed in the next major storm. (arctic.noaa.gov)

Even though the resource exploitation that was opened up by this warming has brought some wage-paying jobs to the Arctic, hunting is still necessary. But as it becomes riskier and riskier and as young people become entranced with video games and school activities and are disinclined to follow their elders in hunting, social tensions — already high — have grown unbearable for many.

Suicides, alcoholism, glue sniffing and the breakdown of the community solidarity that enabled the Inuit to survive and prosper in the extremely harsh Arctic environment for a few thousand years are some of the social problems linked to global warming in the Arctic. □

Banks cause Detroit water crisis

Continued from page 1

abandoned but not yet in tax foreclosure.

But instead of shutting off the torrential flood of water left running and wasted in these abandoned homes, emergency manager Kevyn Orr, Mayor Mike Duggan and the DWSD management are targeting occupied homes for shutoff for outstanding bills as low as \$150.

From March until July 22, when a temporary moratorium on shutoffs was enacted due to mass outrage, some 19,471 Detroit homes had their water shut off. While 14,012 homes had water restored after entering into payment plans, that still leaves over 5,000 Detroit families without water service. The moratorium ended Aug. 25.

Mayor blames poor, not businesses

Mayor Duggan blamed water rate hikes in the city on the poor, stating that when some residents don’t pay bills the shortfall has to be paid by other Detroiters. (Detroit News, July 29)

In addition to abandoned, foreclosed homes, which account for the bulk of

the \$42 million in unpaid residential accounts, as of April 30 the DWSD had approximately \$25 million in unpaid commercial, industrial and city-owned property accounts.

Between March and August this year, in contrast to 19,471 homeowners having their water cut off, only 157 commercial and industrial properties, out of the more than 11,000 with unpaid bills, were cut off. (Information from documents obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request in connection with court action to stop water shutoffs.) The adversary complaint filed in the city’s bankruptcy case on July 21 said that among the largest unpaid commercial water bills are the state of Michigan, owing \$4.9 million; Vargo Golf, \$437,714; Chrysler, \$48,870; and the Metro Building Group, \$48,256.

The actions by Mayor Duggan, DWSD management and emergency manager Orr (who actually runs Detroit) in diverting the blame for DWSD’s unpaid residential bills onto the poor instead of targeting the real cause — water continually run-

ning in abandoned, foreclosed properties, and unpaid commercial water accounts — amount to fraud or deliberate indifference by these officials.

The city of Detroit has paid out \$126 million to lawyers and consultants since the bankruptcy was filed one year ago. (Wall Street Journal, Sept. 12) Why didn’t these consultants figure out the real cause of the DWSD’s unpaid residential water bills, considering the importance of the fate of the water department to the Detroit bankruptcy? Why didn’t the “blight taskforce” led by billionaire Dan Gilbert of Quicken Loans spot the running water in abandoned homes when they allegedly surveyed the city for their report?

Privatization is their goal

Their real motivation was to lay the basis for the regionalization and ultimate privatization of the DWSD, by showing racist suburban officials like Oakland County executive L. Brooks Patterson, that Detroit is ready to target and shut off water to its poorest residents. A “Mem-

orandum of Understanding on Regionalization” was agreed to by Detroit, Oakland County, Macomb County and Wayne County officials on Sept. 9 and filed as Document 7357 in the Detroit bankruptcy case.

Pursuant to this memorandum, the DWSD will now be administered by a “Great Lakes Authority,” where city of Detroit representatives will constitute a minority. In exchange for gaining control of the DWSD, the new authority will pay \$50 million a year for infrastructure repair. However, the memorandum is silent on the real cause for Detroit’s decaying infrastructure: the diversion of \$537 million out of \$1.1 billion in bonds floated for water repairs to Bank of America, United Bank of Switzerland, Citi, Chase, Morgan Stanley and Deutsche Bank to terminate interest rate swaps (swindles) attached to the bonds.

In addition, the memorandum of understanding brings in Veolia Corporation, the notorious union buster and internationally condemned human rights violator, as an advisor to the city of Detroit to “undertake an



WW message to marchers

Against climate change? Fight for system change!

Continued from page 1

with the most oppressed sectors of the global population.

Much is at stake

Seven hundred volunteers packed the last organizing meeting for the People’s Climate March. It was a young crowd, mostly white but with many people from oppressed communities as well. They were there to struggle, because with climate change so much is at stake.

How much? Half the 650 bird species in North America are threatened; the iconic pine and aspen forests of the Rocky Mountains are dying off, killed by drought, insect infestations and wildfires; and in Guatemala drought has cut down

production of corn and beans, resulting in serious food shortages.

A May 6 scientific paper titled “National Climate Assessment” reported that every corner of the U.S. without exception is feeling the effects of climate change. Water is “growing scarcer in dry regions, torrential rains increasing in wet regions, heat waves becoming more common and more severe, wildfires growing worse, and forests are dying under assault from heat-loving insects. ... Climate change, once considered an issue for the distant future, has moved firmly into the present.” (globalchange.gov)

A week later, the government-funded military research organization called the CNA Corporation’s Military Advisory

Board reported that “the accelerating rate of climate change poses a severe risk to national security and acts as a catalyst for global political conflict.” It gave examples of drought in the Middle East and Africa, which led to conflicts over water and food. Rising sea levels in highly vulnerable coastal regions such as those in Vietnam, Bangladesh and India are placing huge numbers of people at risk for food and safety. All this easily leads to an increase in forced migration and a new wave of refugees the world over.

Secretary of State John Kerry, instead of campaigning to stop climate change, made racist comments and called for more troops: “Tribes are killing each other over water today. ... Think of what hap-

pens if you have massive dislocation, or the drying up of the waters of the Nile, of the major rivers in China and India. The intelligence community takes it seriously, and it’s translated into action.” Kerry continued by saying that the report’s findings “would influence [U.S.] foreign policy” and would create more demand for U.S. troops. (New York Times, May 13)

We are fighting against climate change. Kerry is fighting the next imperialist war.

Leadership is important: lessons of the past

Large demonstrations are good. But program and readiness to struggle mean a lot. Sometimes a lack of revolutionary leadership takes all the steam out of a demonstration. For example, in 1982 there was a demonstration in New York against the Reagan administration’s plan to put nuclear rockets targeting the Soviet Union in Western Europe. One million people marched in Central Park.

The problem was that this action coin-

TO SAVE THE EARTH?

Planet's warming caused by capitalism

By **Betsey Piette**

Over the last few years numerous scientific studies have reported that the pace of global climate change is accelerating and, unless immediate action is taken, may be irreversible.

The most recent report by the United Nations meteorological advisory body sounded the alarm that concentrations of major greenhouse gas emissions reached historic levels in 2013 — the biggest year-over-year increase since 1980. The report also noted a diminishing ability of the world's oceans and plant life to soak up the excess carbon put into the atmosphere by humans.

In 2012, Cuban leader Fidel Castro wrote, "Numerous dangers threaten us, but two of them — nuclear war and climate change — are decisive and both are ever further from approaching a solution." He blamed the discovery and exploration of vast reserves of shale gas as one reason the world was on "an inexorable march toward the abyss," concluding that

the problem was something "no political cadre or sensible person could ignore." (Reuters, Jan. 6, 2012) Cuba has banned fracking.

The U.S., on the other hand, has blocked adoption of any serious climate change accords since George W. Bush refused to sign the 2001 Kyoto Accords. The Obama administration derailed the 2009 Copenhagen summit by rejecting limitations on greenhouse gases. The 2015 Paris meeting will put forth only a nonbinding agreement.

Big business polluters shrug off climate danger. The Heartland Foundation, a chief corporate climate denier — backed by the Koch brothers and Walmart — issued anti-science rebuttals to reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. ExxonMobil sees melting Arctic ice as a business opportunity, making for easier access to drilling sites.

But, unless one is an oil company CEO or a climate change denier, it's hard not to be concerned about the accelerated pace of global warming.

The endless growth required by capitalism is at odds with the finite barriers of nature. This is an inescapable reality. Either the people will end capitalism or capitalism will end the people.

Priority on people's needs, environment

To stop climate change the movement must take on the capitalist system of production for individual profit and replace it with a socialist system. Socialism

can't solve the problem of climate change overnight — too much damage has already been done by centuries of capitalists' unbridled production. But reversal starts with a system of socialist production where people's needs, not corporate greed, are the driving force.

Socialist Cuba — a relatively small country — is a world leader in the fight against climate change. It is setting the example, sometimes all by itself, for what steps must be taken. Cuba's "Program of Local Support for the Modernization of Agriculture" makes it possible to quickly replace crops destroyed by extreme weather events. Farmers in Cuba are planting drought-resistant crops and digging ponds to guarantee water supplies.

The corporate media like to point to China's "severe air quality problem" as a way of dismissing socialism. China, with the world's largest population, has become "the factory of the world" as companies moved manufacturing there. Yet on a per capita basis, China was in 99th place as an emitter of greenhouse gases in 2000 and 72nd in 2005. By contrast, the U.S. was the seventh-largest per capita emitter in both 2000 and 2005. China's emissions per person have risen with industrial growth but it is still way down the list compared to the U.S.

China is now number one in the world in its commitment of vast resources to developing sustainable energy. Solar and biomass-fired electricity are expected to grow tenfold by 2020. Most striking has

been the Chinese government's financial support for renewable energy generators.

Capitalist market relations certainly exist in China, but they do not control the backbone of the economy. The ability to carry out these massive, state-supported plans in response to global warming comes ultimately from the socialist restructuring of Chinese society, made possible by its decades-long revolution.

Socialist revolution may appear to be a distant prospect in the U.S. Meanwhile, the environmental movement can raise transitional demands to expand environmental protection, improve public transportation, rehab energy-inefficient housing stock and stop the military-industrial complex's endless wars for oil. Millions of jobs could be created while reducing fossil fuel consumption and putting an end to the divide between unions and the environmental movement.

The working class must be told the truth about this dead-end system. Some concessions may be wrung out of it by the militant, organized struggle of the workers and oppressed, but capitalism is at war with the masses of people and the environment. It must be destroyed and the wealth — both natural and human-created — liberated for the good of humanity and all life on the planet.

Betsey Piette has written extensively on the anti-fracking movement. Her essay entitled "Drilling into the Abyss" received a first prize at the 2013 Havana Book Fair.



Detroit mass march against water shutoffs, July 18.

assessment of the water system and make recommendations on operating models." Considering that Veolia is one of the top actors in the privatization of public systems worldwide, this can only set the stage for the ultimate privatization of the DWSD.

While the Michigan Constitution and the Detroit City Charter both state that a public utility like the DWSD can only be sold after a vote of the people, the Memorandum of Understanding on Regionalization provides that by a simple majority vote the new Great Lakes Authority board may privatize any aspect of the water system's operations.

Stop the shutoffs against poor Detroiters! Water for the people, not for profit! □

Top ten climates that need changing

1. The climate of greed that says that making oodles of money is more important than keeping the environment safe for people.

2. The putrid climate in Big Oil boardrooms that allows CEOs to say that fracking is OK because drinking polluted water "tastes better than you think."

3. The corporate climate that says that while corporations are people, real people can be discarded when their work is "not profitable enough."

4. The anti-labor, anti-union climate that has dramatically increased the income gap between the 1% and the rest of us.

5. The climate of racism in police departments that says it's OK for cops to stop and frisk and shoot to kill people of color.

6. The climate of social cutbacks that says that somehow cutting food stamps, health care and unemployment insurance is "actually good for you."

7. The climate of wishful thinking that somehow the Democratic politicians won't sell us out to the Republicans "this time."

8. The climate for the Pentagon to make war, war, war — to bomb Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria; send killer drones

to Pakistan; arm Israel in its bloody war against the Palestinians — and make never-ending war to recolonize the world.

9. The divisive climate that pits workers in local communities against environmentalists. We all need good paying, environmentally safe jobs with health care for our families.

10. Another way to protest climate change? Bring all the above climate change issues to the Economic Summit of CEOs at Radio City Music Hall in New York City on Oct. 8.

— Paul Wilcox

cided with Israel's invasion of Lebanon. The demonstration leaders refused to allow even one talk protesting the U.S.-backed Israeli aggression. Lack of international solidarity took the steam out of a massive and otherwise progressive protest. But a grassroots distribution of leaflets by Workers World protesting U.S.-Israeli aggression found an echo in the crowd.

Another important struggle took place at the time of the first U.S. war against Iraq in 1991. The social-democratic tendency in the anti-war movement opposed U.S. bombing but supported the call for sanctions against Iraq, considering this a deterrent to war. Forces that were more class conscious and anti-imperialist argued that sanctions were also a form of war. To allow sanctions meant conceding to the lies U.S. imperialism was using to justify its intervention.

The tactic to support sanctions showed there was a tendency in the movement

that could not break from Washington's propaganda. Such a tendency cannot be counted on to fight vigilantly for the interests of the working class.

Differences have also shown up on the tactical front for the climate change march. It was originally set for Sept. 21 because the United Nations is taking up climate change the next day. Yet organizers capitulated to police demands — the march goes nowhere near the U.N., nor even to Times Square, but is gathering at Columbus Circle and marching to 11th Avenue.

The progressive movement fights hard for the "right to sight and sound." That is the right for any protest to be within sight of the target and to be heard by those one is protesting. We don't want to lose that right to the cops.

What the left must do

Revolutionaries, communists and class-conscious elements are the best

defenders of the working class. Because of the deep contradictions in the leadership of this march, the left must participate and bring its program to those who want to fight climate change, a program that speaks to revolutionary class consciousness.

The left is struggling to intervene in the class struggle on many fronts: The low-wage worker struggle, stopping the war against Syria and Iraq, stopping NATO in Ukraine, defending the people of Ferguson, Mo., organizing in defense of immigrants, defending militant unionists.

But class-conscious elements must rise to the challenge and join workers in India and Bolivia and Liberia who deeply understand that no movement on climate change will succeed without understanding that the interests of the working class and oppressed are irreconcilable with those of the capitalist class.

Only the working class in its entirety

can even begin to deal with the crisis of climate change.

Socialism is the answer, and not just in Cuba, which leads all other countries in a small carbon footprint. If we are to stop climate change, we need to fight for socialism in the U.S. Many of the climate marchers probably never thought socialism in the U.S. was even possible. We know it is possible and necessary.

Climate change is a working-class issue to the core. It is an issue of the entire working class, those here today and those born tomorrow. Only the workers running society can make the necessary plans to run society for the benefit of humanity and the environment, not for profit. Only the workers running the means of production can genuinely stop the dramatic effects of climate change.

Stop the Pentagon and corporate polluters! System change, not climate change! □



From left, Fernando González and René González. Still in U.S. prisons are Ramón Labañino, Gerardo Hernández and Antonio Guerrero.

THE CUBAN FIVE

16 years of unjust imprisonment

By Malcolm Sacks

People of conscience gathered Sept. 12 in cities across the country and the world to commemorate the 16th year since Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González — known collectively as the Cuban Five — were arrested in Miami.

Several years before their arrest in 1998, these five intelligence officers began a mission to infiltrate and monitor anti-Cuban terrorist organizations in the Miami area. They passed on their findings, including plots against Cuba, to the Cuban authorities, who in turn informed the FBI. But instead of prosecuting the right-wing groups, the FBI arrested the five.

For 17 months following their arrest, the five were held in isolation, as 26 charges were brought against them, including conspiracy to commit espionage and conspiracy to commit murder. The latter charge was only brought against Hernández nine months after his arrest, in an atmosphere of intense media pressure for his alleged involvement in the 1996 shooting down of a “Brothers to the Rescue” plane over Cuba.

Between 2000 and 2001, the Five were tried in Miami, despite attempts to have the venue changed to a less biased and hostile environment. It was subsequently discovered that the U.S. government was secretly paying journalists in Miami while they covered the trial, which helped to create an atmosphere of pressure that contributed to the Five’s conviction and harsh sentencing.

The Five’s attorneys and the international movement for their freedom scored an important legal and political victory in 2005, when a three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the convictions and ordered a new trial, citing the prejudicial atmosphere of the trial as well as the U.S. government’s misconduct. This victory did not last, however. In response to the prosecution’s appeal, the full court agreed to rehear the case, and exactly one year after the Cuban Five’s convictions were overturned, they were reinstated. In 2009, the Supreme Court refused to review the case, exhausting nearly all judicial avenues for their release.

Solidarity can free the Five

Currently, two of the Five are free in Cuba; three are still imprisoned in the U.S. René González endured 13 years in prison, completing his sentence in 2011, and was allowed to return to Cuba in 2013. Fernando González was imprisoned 15 years and returned to Cuba in February. Guerrero, Labañino and Hernández remain unjustly incarcerated. Guerrero’s sentence was reduced in 2009 from life to 21 years, 10 months; if he completes his sentence, he will be released in 2017. Labañino’s sentence was also reduced, from life to 30 years, with a release date in 2024. Gerardo Hernández’s sentence was not reduced, and his situation is the most dire, as he is serving two life terms plus 15 years.

The only possible legal solution at this point are habeas corpus appeals, based

mostly on the new evidence of U.S. government misconduct in paying Miami journalists before, during and after the trial. Although the U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear the case, appeals of a future habeas decision could wind their way to the Supreme Court, but, given the makeup of federal courts in the U.S., a dismissal is not likely, and there is no time frame for such a decision.

What has been said from the beginning of this case — and continues to be emphasized by the Cuban people, the Five, their families and their supporters all over the globe — is that this is a political case determined by political factors. The Cuban Five are political prisoners, and as has been shown by historical movements to free political prisoners, the solution will only be motivated by political calculations.

One of these calculations could have to do with Alan Gross, the U.S. Agency for International Development subcontractor arrested in 2009 in Havana. He was there to illegally distribute telecommunications equipment as part of one of the U.S. gov-

ernment’s so-called “Cuba democracy” programs aimed at subverting the revolution. He is currently serving a 15-year sentence, and there has been talk on both the U.S. and Cuban sides of the possibility of an exchange of Gross for the remaining members of the Five. But just as the Five’s supporters are not holding their breath for a victory in the courts, neither can we wait for a deal from the U.S. government, which has continually rejected gestures of goodwill from Cuba.

That is why the Cubans attach so much importance to solidarity, especially coming from the people of the U.S. It is this solidarity, in demanding freedom for Guerrero, Labañino and Hernández, that, if strong enough, might achieve justice. Free all the Cuban Five!

Want to know more about the case of the Cuban Five? Watch this 3-minute video: youtu.be/peyjFpoNDfM

Malcolm Sacks is an organizer of the *Venceremos Brigade*, and met with Fernando González in Cuba several times in July.

Cuba helps fight Ebola

By Kathy Durkin

In a stellar example of solidarity with the people of West Africa, socialist Cuba will provide health care workers to aid in the urgent fight against the Ebola epidemic in the region.

Cuban Health Minister Roberto Morales announced on Sept. 12, at a joint press conference with World Health Organization Director General Margaret Chan in Geneva, that his country would send 165 doctors, nurses and infectious disease experts to Sierra Leone.

This is “the biggest commitment of personnel to the health crisis so far by any country,” said Chan. Even as some countries have committed funds or small treatment centers, she stresses, “The thing we need most of all is people, health care workers.” (New York Times, Sept. 13)

To date, more than 2,400 people have died in the Ebola outbreak, and 4,784 cases have been reported in West Africa. The virus is spreading quickly; half of the cases and half of the deaths have occurred in the last three weeks, making this an increasingly urgent situation.

WHO estimates that 20,000 people could be affected and says existing medical resources are woefully inadequate to deal with the epidemic. This is a crisis of such magnitude that it requires a massive global response.

Ebola is spreading in the poorest countries, whose resources have been ravaged, and their economies deliberately

underdeveloped by Western capitalist countries. This has affected their health care systems, which are grossly underfunded and ignored by imperialist governments, including the United States. These same countries outrageously pour billions of dollars and personnel into military interventions in Africa to protect their economic interests.

Yet, small, socialist Cuba, with a population of only 11 million and one-tenth the per-capita income of the richer capitalist countries, is taking the lead and demonstrating what should be done to aid the peoples of Western Africa. The Caribbean nation is showing the world what socialist consciousness and international solidarity mean and how they are concretely manifested.

Global solidarity is intrinsic to the 1959 Cuban Revolution. Since then, Cuba has aided scores of countries, including Haiti, where medical aid workers have been essential in fighting the cholera epidemic.

Granma, the newspaper of Cuba’s Communist Party, quotes Morales, “At present, Cuban health workers, including over 2,500 doctors, are offering their services in 32 African countries.” (Sept. 12)

Socialist ideals permeate Cuba. The revolution’s main priorities are not only the health and well-being of its own people. In the spirit of internationalism, expressions of solidarity and concrete assistance are extended to the world’s workers and oppressed peoples. □

Israeli soldiers refuse orders against Palestinians

By Chris Fry

Some 43 members of an elite Israeli Defense Force intelligence unit, many still on active duty, sent an open letter of protest to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu on Sept. 12, in which they refuse to spy on the Palestinian people. It states:

“We, veterans of Unit 8200, reserve soldiers both past and present, declare that we refuse to take part in actions against Palestinians and refuse to continue serving as tools in deepening the military control over the occupied territories.

“It is commonly thought that the service in military intelligence is free of moral dilemmas and solely contributes to the reduction of violence and harm to innocent people. However, our military service has taught us that intelligence is an integral part of Israel’s military occupation over the territories,” the letter continues.

The information that the unit gathered “harms innocent people. It is used for political persecution and to create divisions within Palestinian society by recruiting collaborators and driving parts of Palestinian society against itself,” the letter states. (RT, Sept. 13)

As expected, Israel’s political and military leadership met this letter with hostility. Yariv Levin, of the right-wing Likud Party and a Knesset member, called for the immediate removal of the 43 soldiers from Unit 8200 and said, “We must keep the objecting reservists away from

their army’s ranks immediately.” (Arutz Sheva, Israel National News, Sept. 13)

Levin and other Israeli leaders aim to prevent such ideas from spreading further into the IDF, particularly after its recent brutal attacks on Gaza during Israel’s operation “Protective Edge,” which killed 2,000 Palestinians, and set off worldwide opposition.

This is not the first case of members of Unit 8200 objecting to Israeli military policy. Ten years ago, several pilots in the unit filed a complaint after refusing to carry out “targeted” assassination missions against Palestinian leaders.

The United States government, Israel’s main sponsor, has maintained a stony silence in response to this courageous stance. U.S. imperialism has failed to successfully cover up all of its own intelligence-gathering crimes, carried out by the National Security Agency and Central Intelligence Agency, since many of them have been revealed by Edward Snowden. Imprisoned hero, Chelsea Manning, has also exposed many U.S. war crimes carried out in Iraq.

The Israeli military is threatening to punish these 43 protesters.

However, Adnan Damiri, a spokesperson for Palestinian security services, responded to their brave actions: “If there are, among the Israelis, 43 soldiers who reject the idea of occupation, we view this as a moral act. We salute humanitarian ideas like this toward an oppressed people.” (RT, Sept. 15) □



GAZA Symbol of Resistance

A book of articles from WW, edited by Joyce Chediac

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

gazaresistancebook.com Available from major online booksellers

Why Obama's 'war on ISIS' must be opposed

By John Catalinotto

President Barack Obama announced Sept. 10 that the U.S. military would build an international coalition to make "war on the Islamic State." He said there were already 10 countries in this coalition. Administration spokespeople on the Sept. 14 Sunday morning talk shows said they were still building the coalition. The next morning a conference of 30 countries opened in Paris on this theme.

The electronic media and the pages of major newspapers — the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times and Christian Science Monitor, for example — were filled with debate on Obama's new war policy. Active and retired Pentagon officers, State Department officials, policy strategists from the imperialist think tanks and op-ed writers all put out their critiques of Obama's strategy of opening another long U.S. war while promising no U.S. "boots on the ground."

Arguments raged from "just right" to "too little, too late," with only a few saying "no way." Many of the retired officers — for example, General Jack Keane, who urges a policy even more aggressive than what Obama proposes — are currently sitting on the boards of military contractors. That's one sector of U.S. capitalism that gains from war, whichever way the battle goes.

That this debate is going on in front of the public reflects hesitations within the U.S. ruling class about the wisdom of waging yet another open-ended U.S. war of conquest in West Asia. More important than reviewing their arguments is the need to stress what this debate is really about: They are discussing what foreign policy will best defend and expand the strategic and economic interests of the U.S. ruling class.

What's at stake are the interests of the richest one hundredth of the 1%, those who own the oil companies, the weapons industry, the banks and the other major monopolies. To the debaters, this tiny but super-wealthy and powerful group's interests are paramount.

Far from aiding Syrians or Iraqis, U.S. imperialism's aims are antagonistic to the

interests of the masses of people there. Washington's new war also has nothing to do with defending the interests of the working class in the United States. It will not protect the Black people of Ferguson, Mo., from racist cops. It will not protect workers from low wages and layoffs. There is already talk of raising the Pentagon budget, thereby exempting it from sequester cuts imposed on the federal budget.

What U.S. policy did

Starting with the war in 1991 and the subsequent sanctions against the Iraqi people, followed by the invasion in 2003 that led to eight years of occupation, U.S. war crimes tore Iraqi society apart. U.S.-led wars and sanctions killed between 1 million and 2 million people. They demolished Iraq's economic infrastructure and drove 5 million more into exile. U.S. occupation policies divided Iraqi society and provoked a sectarian civil war.

Washington and its allies in NATO and West Asia have also caused great loss of life and destruction in Syria. NATO, including Turkey, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf monarchies, weaponized the groups fighting the Syrian government. Most arms wound up in the hands of groups like al-Nusra Front and ISIS (also called ISIL or just I.S.). Hundreds of thousands of people were killed; millions became refugees. Without NATO and Saudi Arabian aid, ISIS would have stayed local.

Various media claim that the repeated showing of two reporters from the U.S. and one from Britain being executed by ISIS have whipped up some popular fervor for "revenge" — although this mood falls short of support for another Iraq-type war.

While popular revulsion to the televised beheadings is understandable, think of what U.S. imperialism has done. U.S. weapons killed millions of Iraqis and Syrians. They, like the reporters, were victims of terror.

Much ruling-class debate involves what relationship the U.S. should have with the governments of Syria and Iran. Washington has demonized these two

governments and steadily worked to overthrow Bashar al-Assad in Syria and sabotage the economy of Iran. Yet both Syria and Iran have been on the front lines fighting against ISIS.

So far, U.S. spokespeople insist they will make no agreements with Syria or Iran. Actually, there is good reason to suspect that — should the "war on ISIS" be successful — it will quickly morph into a U.S. war against Syria.

It is the pinnacle of imperialist arro-

gance to pose, as many have in the ruling-class debate, the question: "Should the U.S. help resolve the conflicts in the Middle East?"

Washington's past interventions have brought only misery and suffering to the region. From the point of view of the interests of all the people involved in the region, as well as those of the working class here, the only thing the U.S. can rightly do is get out, stay out and pay reparations to rebuild what it has wrecked. □

Hands off Syria & Iraq!



Demonstrators went to New York City's Times Square at rush hour on Sept. 12 to stand before the U.S. military recruiting booth at 43rd Street and Broadway and protest President Barack Obama's plans for a new war in the Middle East. The group chanted, "Hands off Syria! Hands off Iraq!"

Obama had spoken two days earlier in a prime-time televised speech to the country. He tried to justify this new U.S. intervention in Iraq and Syria by the existence of the Islamic State, which controls territory in parts of the two countries.

The demonstrators, who were called out by the International Action Center for an emergency action, characterized Obama's speech as a lie, disputing all his

arguments. For them, this new "war on ISIL" has no more legitimacy than President George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq did in 2003. It was apparent from the friendly curiosity of those passing by that Obama had been unable to whip up a war mood in the U.S. population — at least in the New York area.

Groups present included the Pakistan-U.S. Freedom Forum, the Syrian-American Forum, the United National Anti-War Coalition, the youth group Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) and others. Similar protests have taken place or are scheduled in Los Angeles, Chicago, Dearborn, Mich., and some Florida cities.

— Report & photo by John Catalinotto

Donbass fighters: 'Fate is in our hands'

Leaders and ranks of the popular militias in the united Novorossian Armed Forces of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics are workers coming from the many nationalities throughout the Donbass mining region. Here are excerpts from their comments in interviews by Red TV. (More complete excerpts are available at workers.org, with URLs for the original interviews in Russian.)

Alexey Mozgovoi, commander of the "Ghost" Brigade in Lugansk People's Republic

In my opinion, right now, we are witnessing another attempt, by means of negotiations, to stop the resistance and to prevent the destruction of the oligarchic power in Ukraine. ...

The transfer of power from the oligarchy to the people — right now this is the so-called international community's nightmare. ...

Only Kiev's capitulation can resolve the current situation. Only a separation of business interests from government can offer the chance to build a state with a human face. ... Otherwise it was all for naught — all the slogans and all the victims. ...

We did not take up arms just to stop halfway.

Translated by Gleb Bazov.

"Artem," wounded militia fighter in the Joint Army of the South-East and member of Union Borotba (Struggle)

The militias not only fight on the front lines, they also ... protect the civilian population as much as possible during the shelling, even at the cost of their own lives. Without the people's support, nothing would have happened.

However, the forces are unequal so far. But we have one more ally, no less important and dangerous to the enemy. This ally is agitation against the war among Ukrainian soldiers. The Bolsheviks campaigned this way against the imperialist war exactly 100 years ago. If more and more Ukrainians, who are fighting for the interests of the Ukrainian and Western capitalists, refuse to fight or organize their soldiers' committees against the war, the case will be decided. And this trend is already apparent.

There are many militia fighters who consider themselves communists and internationalists. I also note the role of the Workers' Front of Lugansk — formerly the



regional committee of the Communist Party — whose members refused to obey the "official leadership" of the Party and openly supported the People's Republic. ... The recent statement of "Communist militiamen" ... I think reflects the opinions of the majority of militia fighters. ... "If we raise the red banner, we will win this war." And, I might add, help our Ukrainian brothers strangle the fascist vermin, by giving them inspiration to build a Ukraine without fascism.

Interview by Victor Shapinov; translated by Greg Butterfield.

Alexander "Communist," militia fighter, representative of Red Guards of Donbass and co-author of letter from ordinary militia to leaders of Donetsk and Lugansk

The militia was formed by volunteers to protect their homeland without too much thought about the bigger issues. A process of questions and answers eventually led us to a class understanding of the events taking place on our soil. We identified the forces that we oppose — tycoons and oli-

garchs of all stripes: Russian, Ukrainian, international, whatever.

Once, a very long time ago, it was said there are only two classes: proletariat and bourgeoisie. No matter how long it has been, only external things have changed; the essence remains the same. We who are taking part in the events unfolding at such a rapid pace, we poor militia, have posed the question of raising the red flag, which is now being discussed by commanders. ...

Militia leaders who came to the fore in the field and earned the trust and respect of fighters are now forced to sit on the sidelines [of negotiations]. Their struggle is an unenviable one. Arms and uniforms require money. We are preparing for protracted war ahead of the cold rains of autumn, then winter.

On the other hand, the commanders cannot ignore the views of those who report to them and unconditionally trust them. The commanders will have to make a decision if their efforts are on the side of Donbass labor or on the side of those who fund the opposite interests.

Life pushes us to unite in the interests of the working class. Our fate is in our hands. At the present moment it is a matter of survival.

Translated by Greg Butterfield.

Independence campaigns shake two European states

By G. Dunkel

Between 1.5 million and 2 million people took to the streets in Barcelona to demand that the Spanish federal government in the capital of Madrid accept the results of a vote on the independence of Catalonia scheduled for Nov. 9.

Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia, one of the more prosperous regions of Spain. Until 1975, under fascist dictator Francisco Franco, Catalans and their language faced severe repression. Currently Catalonia has some regional and linguistic autonomy.

The Spanish government of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy claims that the vote is unconstitutional and says the government will go to court to have it blocked once the Catalan parliament confirms the date.

In a statement issued in 2010, the Communist Party of Catalonia (PSUC-ViU), which is affiliated with the Spanish CP,

states it does not support independence. It proposes “a federal republic, conferring a large autonomy on the nationalities, but otherwise conserving a strong central state, which guarantees interterritorial solidarity and national unity.”

Scots to vote on independence from Britain Sept. 18

In Scotland, a referendum on independence from Britain scheduled for Sept. 18 has drawn an unprecedented amount of public interest — 97 percent of the residents of Scotland over 16 have registered to vote, 80 percent indicated they intend to vote, and nearly 800,000 voters have requested a postal ballot. Scotland's 5.3 million people are currently British nationals.

Scottish high school and college students eligible to vote are very engaged in the process. Students in Glasgow filled a 12,000-seat hall to hear political speech-

es on the referendum. Just walking the streets of Edinburgh recently, this writer heard numerous street discussions. One in particular involved a bus driver from Spain who was going to vote “no” because he didn't want to encourage Catalans to separate from the Spanish state.

Every Scottish newspaper, even the sleazy tabloids, devotes at least a page to the referendum each day. The British Broadcasting Corporation has at least a half hour of referendum coverage daily, sometimes more.

Videos posted to YouTube by the major Edinburgh newspaper, The Scotsman, showed supporters of both “yes” and “no” campaigns filling the parks with marching bands of pipers and fifes drawing attention to the side they supported on the last Sunday before the vote.

The wording of the Scottish referendum is simple: “Should Scotland be an independent country?” Only two options are provided: “yes” and “no.”

The stakes are high. Scotland has major oil reserves, which the Scottish bourgeoisie want to control.

Britain's regime plans to spend 100 billion pounds to update its nuclear arsenal — much of which is located in Scotland — and additional billions to join Washington's intervention in the Middle East, while increasing austerity at home.

The bourgeois Scottish National Party, which has a majority in the Scottish

parliament and is leading the “yes” campaign, has hinted it will not go along with British military initiatives if the “yes” vote wins. But the SNP intends to keep using the British pound and wants Queen Elizabeth to remain head of government of an independent Scotland.

The “no” campaign, called “Better Together,” has focused on the economic uncertainties involved in independence.

When the English government agreed earlier to honor the referendum, polls showed 65 percent for the “no” option and 35 percent for “yes.” In the last month, however, the “yes” option has won a lot of support, and most pollsters now say the vote is too close to call.

In a leaflet distributed massively in Scotland, the Scottish Socialist Party states, “We want an independent socialist Scotland — a modern democratic republic. We support Scotland's right of self-determination because ... the working class majority will be economically, socially and politically better off.”

In a statement issued in May, the Scottish Communist Party — a section of the British CP — says, “Communists in Scotland do not support independence. Since the 1930s the demand of Communists has been for progressive federalism.” It goes on to define that as “the struggle for progressive social change across the nations of Britain — which enables a social redistribution of wealth and power.” □

Workers unite behind fired union leader



Andre Francois, left, and Steve Kirschbaum (with bullhorn) at Sept. 15 rally. Both were illegally fired by Veolia.

PHOTO: HOWARD ROTMAN

By Monica Moorehead
Boston

A Dorchester, Mass., district courtroom was packed Sept. 15 with mainly school bus drivers and supporters in solidarity with Steve Kirschbaum, a leader and founder of United Steelworkers Local 8751, the Boston School Bus Drivers Union.

Kirschbaum has been falsely accused of four felony charges by the Boston police following a rally in late June demanding that Kirschbaum, along with other union leaders — Andre Francois, Garry Murchison and Steve Gillis — be reinstated. The four were fired last November following an illegal lockout of the workers Oct. 8 by the union-busting conglomerate Veolia.

This latest attack comes in the midst of contract negotiations between the local and Transdev, an Illinois-based company that currently oversees the four school bus yards. The drivers have made it clear that there will be no contract unless all four drivers are rehired.

Defense attorneys Barry P. Wilson and John Pavlos argued strongly at the pretrial hearing that the bogus charges against Kirschbaum should be dismissed because Veolia and the police are abusing the legal system to settle a labor dispute. Wilson stated that the police committed perjury when making the charges. Kirschbaum's case is being sent to the National Labor Relations Board.

In response to the prosecutor's refusal to drop the charges, Wilson and Pavlos requested the pretrial hearing continue,

with the aim of providing more discovery evidence to dispute the charges. The date for the next pretrial hearing is Oct. 6.

Following the hearing, a boisterous rally took place on the courthouse steps involving more than 250 people. Chants of “Union, union, union!” were echoed by many speakers. Bus drivers Kirschbaum, Francois and Georgia Scott spoke, as well as City Councillor Charles Yancey; former Councillor Chuck Turner; radio personality Charles Clemons; Peoples Power Assembly organizer Larry Holmes; WW managing editor Monica Moorehead; and People with Disabilities activist Brian Shea; along with the two attorneys. □

Ray Rice, women's oppression & racism

Continued from page 3

who blame themselves for their abuse. No women should feel blame, guilt or shame due to women's oppression. The repeated showing of the videotape of Janay Rice's horrific beating reinforces the nightmare that brings about humiliation and shame. She had no control over the assault or the video of the attack. The video should not be shown out of respect for her and other women who have had similar experiences.

Janay Rice said on Instagram on Sept. 9, “No one knows the pain that the media and unwanted [opinions] from the public [have] caused my family. To make us relive a moment in our lives that we re-

gret every day is a horrible thing. To take something away from the man I love that has worked his ass off for all his life just to gain ratings is horrific. This is our life! What don't you all get. If your intentions were to hurt us, embarrass us, make us feel alone, take all happiness away, you succeeded on so many levels.”

Janay Rice's devastating feelings should not be experienced by any woman, yet many women must endure them. The blame lies with the NFL hierarchy, big business media and society's pervasive views that victimize women in a capitalist culture that puts profits before the dignity and needs of humanity. □

Take action:

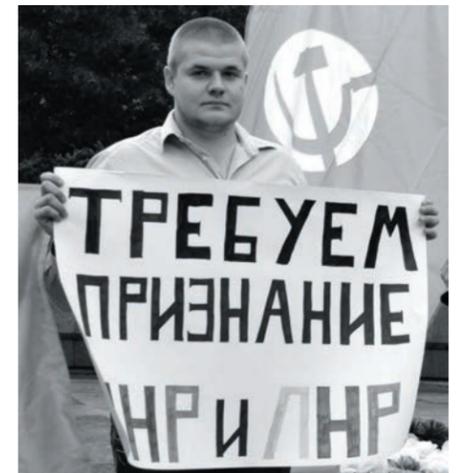
Ukraine anti-fascist activist detained

The following statement was issued by the International Action Center on Sept. 13.

On the night of Sept. 12, Vladislav Wojciechowski, an activist with the leftist Union Borotba (Struggle), was detained in Odessa, Ukraine. According to Borotba, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) is ready to charge Wojciechowski with “terrorism.” Explosives were planted by the authorities during the search of the apartment where he lived.

Neo-Nazi “self-defense” paramilitaries also participated in his arrest. Wojciechowski was beaten, and it is possible that a confession was forced out of him under torture. Currently, he is in SBU custody in Odessa.

Wojciechowski was at the Odessa House of Trade Unions on May 2. He survived the massacre of 48 anti-fascists there, but suffered a traumatic brain in-



Vladislav Wojciechowski

PHOTO: BOROTBA

jury at the hands of neo-Nazi militants.

Wojciechowski's arrest shows that the U.S.-backed Petro Poroshenko regime is not really interested in ending the civil war in Ukraine, but instead continues to persecute its political opponents.

The International Action Center joins in demanding the immediate release of political prisoner Vladislav Wojciechowski!

Please contact the nearest Ukrainian embassy or consulate and the White House in Washington, D.C., to demand Wojciechowski's immediate release. Let them know you hold Ukrainian President Peter Poroshenko and U.S. President Barack Obama responsible for his safety.

In the U.S., contact: Igor Sybiga, Chief of the Consulate General of Ukraine in New York, 240 E. 49th St., New York, NY 10017; phone: 212-371-6965; fax: 212-371-5547; email: gc_usn@mfa.gov.ua; website: ny.mfa.gov.ua.

White House switchboard: 202-456-1414; comment line: 202-456-1111; submit messages of protest to President Obama online at tinyurl.com/cgup8c9. □

Oil-rich Somalia faces famine while U.S. oversees military occupation

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

Early in September, U.S. President Barack Obama announced he had carried out a targeted assassination of the leader of the Al-Shabaab Islamic resistance organization in Somalia. The group has been fighting against the Somali government and a regional military force for over six years.

In a matter of days, Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for retaliatory attacks against two convoys of African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) troops. They were operating alongside high-ranking U.S. military intelligence personnel and representatives of a consultancy firm that advises the government in Mogadishu on counterinsurgency methods against Al-Shabaab.

The attacks against AMISOM and the U.S. military personnel did not gain wide press coverage in the Western corporate media. The Wall Street Journal instead carried a story emphasizing the strategic nature of U.S. intervention in Somalia, where oil and other resources are being exploited.

The AMISOM forces, numbering 22,000, are funded, trained and coordinated by the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency and European Union forces (EUFOR). While the West pours in money for this imperialist intervention, a famine is looming in Somalia. Leading humanitarian agencies concerned with food security have reported that millions of people there are threatened with starvation.

Other than providing additional weap-

onry, military training and diplomatic support for the fractured federal government in Mogadishu, the U.S. State Department has no plans for reaching any degree of a political settlement in the country. AMISOM troops from Uganda, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and other states have been operating in Somalia, some since 2007.

Tensions and disputes have developed surrounding the large-scale Western-funded occupation of Somalia by the AMISOM forces. Allegations of abuse of women by AMISOM troops have been reported. In the southern region of the country, forces not in Al-Shabaab have complained about the dominance of Kenya in the area's internal politics through its military.

Although the occupation is endorsed by the United Nations, the key players are Washington and its NATO allies.

Speaking of the Somalia Food Security Results survey, Phillipe Lazarrini, the United Nations humanitarian director for Somalia, stressed, "It is terrible to think that with almost 2.9 million people in need in Somalia, the aid appeal is only 30 percent funded, with \$658 million still needed to end 2014." (NTV Uganda, Sept. 11)

In the same TV report, the country's director for the World Food Program in Somalia noted that food shortages are expected to be more critical in coming months as prices rise due to insufficient rains and the burgeoning conflict among the government, AMISOM and Al-Shabaab. "We have scaled up to meet growing needs, but funding shortages meant the organization risked running short of vital supplies by

September, leaving us with no alternative than to reduce food assistance to the most vulnerable — [displaced persons] and malnourished children."

This problem is not confined to Somalia. It is regional throughout the Horn of Africa, which encompasses Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea and sections of Sudan. Throughout East Africa, a strong U.S. military presence has bolstered regimes that play an integral role in carrying out Washington's foreign policy imperatives.

On Sept. 15, the regional dimensions of the crisis were highlighted during a joint press conference held by representatives of the U.N. and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), an East African organization.

U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Kyung-Wha Kang and Mahboub Maalim, executive secretary of IGAD, stressed the need for urgent funding to assist 14 million people facing food insecurity in the region. "Displacement in Horn of Africa stands at an estimated 6.8 million people and 14 million people are food insecure, yet funding has remained at half of the appeal," Kang said. (Xinhua, Sept. 15)

Somalia resources exploited by West

All the affected states throughout the Horn and East Africa contain oil, natural gas and other strategic resources. Without persistent conflict, which is largely engineered by the U.S. and other imperialist states, the people in these territories would have adequate food and other resources to raise their standard of living.

The exploration for and drilling of oil

is well underway in Somalia's breakaway region of Puntland in the North. One of the leading firms is Africa Oil Corp., based not in Africa but in Canada. Prospecting for oil is also taking place in another breakaway region of the north, known as Somaliland.

Despite its economic prospects, the peace and security of Somalia remain elusive. In Somaliland, the government has accused a Norwegian petroleum firm of deliberately destabilizing the country. (Reuters, Sept. 3)

The Somaliland petroleum ministry says that oil firms are signing multiple contracts and negotiating agreements with regional governments that are only "adding fire to conflicts."

"These small companies are destabilizing the country and destroying the international community's effort to build the peace and the security of the country," the ministry continued.

The same ministry singled out Norway's DNO, charging the oil and gas company with "planning to introduce armed militiamen in areas already in conflict and thereby stoking old feuds which resulted in internal displacement and harming the innocent and the most vulnerable people."

"We are warning [such] companies that the Somali government will lodge complaints with their respective countries and the United Nations Security Council," the ministry added.

Leading petroleum firms claimed interests in Somali oil resources even before the 1991-92 initial interventions by the U.N. and the U.S. □

WALKING WHILE BLACK

WW PHOTO: JOHNNIE STEVENS

By **Dolores Cox**

The "crime" of walking while Black — and driving, shopping, sitting, standing and merely existing while Black — in the United States is often punishable by death. This means death by police bullets from cops trained to shoot and kill.

Discriminatory, racist practices are entrenched and are rarely challenged by a majority of whites who harbor deep-seated, fixed negative attitudes and opinions regarding the value of Black people. They appear to resist a willingness to change. Blacks and whites live in two different realities.

Because there has never been a level playing field either in the past or in the present day, it will take an enormous amount of time for Blacks even to come close to catching up to the status of whites. That will only be realized if race and class cease to underlie the social and economic structure of society — which is based on capitalism. There must be a shift in the culture of white supremacy — and it must be ended altogether. Racism is a disease of epidemic proportions.

Resistance to rampant police brutality

In Ferguson, Mo., Michael Brown, an unarmed Black youth, was shot to death by a white cop. There, the Black community has lived under siege by a hostile white police force for decades. Police threats and state-sanctioned abuse of power have been everyday occurrences.

Rebellions in Ferguson and other

communities of color are waged against long-standing police brutality that targets Black populations in particular. As Civil Rights leader Fannie Lou Hamer said, Blacks are "sick and tired of being sick and tired."

The recent chokehold killing of Eric Garner, a Black man, by a white cop in notoriously racist, segregated Staten Island, N.Y., is among the many instances of racist slayings by police in New York City and around the country, which is now an epidemic.

Aggressive, abusive police policies and practices have profoundly affected oppressed groups and communities. Generations of Black residents in Ferguson, and similar cities and towns around the U.S., have been traumatized. They have grown up being subjected to racist police brutality, while living in hostile, police-occupied environments for their entire lives, with no sense of safety or security.

Fear is a way of life in communities of color throughout the country. Parents fear for the lives of their young Black sons whenever they leave their houses, never knowing if they will see their children alive again. The children grow up feeling anxious and vulnerable.

The damage caused by this oppression has an enormous negative impact on individuals, families and entire neighborhoods' quality of life. The effects are devastating and long lasting.

White society overlooks or does not even consider the consequences of constant racist police mistreatment unless

pressured by the masses to do so.

Millions of Black people throughout the country are subjected to high levels of day-to-day stress; it is extremely harmful. In addition to police occupation, Blacks are marginalized, disrespected, humiliated, belittled, degraded and made vulnerable. They have been consistently, intentionally and disproportionately profiled and targeted. The socioeconomic hardships, including high unemployment rates and low wages, are unduly burdensome and affect their overall quality of life.

Stop racial profiling and all injustices

The role and function of the police as part of the repressive state has historically been to repress people's movements. This is true today. Now, the police are being used to stifle the justifiable anger of millions of people of color at the massive capitalist economic crisis, which has so cruelly harmed their quality of life.

Racial profiling by police is unlawful, unjustified and discriminatory. Statistics have shown rampant racial disparities in improper arrests and use of physical force. Within the criminal "justice" system, Black people face disproportionately more criminal prosecutions, imprisonments and other forms of victimization.

All of these injustices violate the 14th Amendment of the Constitution, which "guarantees" equal protection under the law, and they flout the 1964 Civil Rights Act. These discriminatory "criminal justice" practices also consume valuable



public resources, which could be used for jobs programs, housing, healthcare, education and other human needs.

Abusive police practices, which result in mistreatment of people based on race, income, gender and age, are now out of control. Accountability and transparency of police actions are needed throughout the country. The supervision, enforcement and discipline of police — with involvement and clout by members of oppressed communities — must be implemented on a much larger scale to prevent abuses.

People's power in communities around the U.S. can change the dynamics. Rebellions and uprisings are displays of legitimate and justifiable outrage against injustices. Uprisings have taken place in many communities in response to their suffering, pain and despair stemming from ongoing desperate conditions, repression and oppression. Communities are demanding control of police actions and the punishing of rogue killer cops.

Mass struggle and people's power through organizing, resistance and disruptions, with the expansion of grassroots movements that demand meaningful policy and structural changes, must and will continue. It is people's power that makes changes.

A longer version of this article was published Sept. 8 and can be found at workers.org.

Crisis del Ébola: Países ricos deben responder

Por Abayomi Azikiwe

En Liberia, donde muchas personas han muerto por el virus del Ébola, enfermeras y médicos se declararon en huelga el 1, 2 y 4 de Septiembre, debido a la falta de pago y a los peligros que enfrentan debido a los mínimos recursos disponibles para hacer frente al creciente desastre sobre atención de la salud.

Este estado de África Occidental, que mantiene lazos políticos y económicos con Estados Unidos, ha documentado cerca de 700 muertes por el virus del Ébola. Las/os enfermeras exigieron recursos médicos y protectores necesarios para examinar y tratar a las/os pacientes afectados por la enfermedad que tiene un alto nivel de muertes.

El 1 de septiembre, las/os enfermeras dijeron que estaban decididas/os a no acudir al trabajo hasta que tuvieran un "equipo de protección personal (EPP), incluyendo protección especial que se usa contra materiales de alto peligro y protegen contra la propagación de la enfermedad", dijo John Tugben, hablando en nombre de las/os huelguistas del Hospital John F. Kennedy de Monrovia. "Desde el inicio del brote de Ébola no hemos tenido ningún equipo protector para trabajar. Como resultado, muchas/os médicos se infectaron con el virus. Tenemos que permanecer en casa hasta que consigamos los EPP". (Afp.com, 2 de sept.)

Refiriéndose a la falta de salarios adecuados para costear el alto costo de vida, George Williams, secretario general de la Asociación de Trabajadores de la Salud de Liberia, dijo a Reuters el 2 de septiembre, "Trabajadores de salud han muerto [en la lucha contra el Ébola], incluidos los médicos en... JFK y para que vengan a trabajar sin alimentos en su mesa... es patético".

Brotes en la región

Casos del virus del Ébola se han registrado en Liberia, Sierra León, Guinea-Conakry, Nigeria y Senegal. Algunos también han sido reportados en la región norte de la República Democrática del Congo.

Las organizaciones internacionales que ayudan en las crisis humanitarias en África y otras partes del mundo enfatizan que los estados industrializados occidentales, incluyendo EUA, no están prestando mucha atención a la propagación de la enfermedad. Al menos, tres casos reportados en EUA fueron adquiridos por personas que trabajaban en los sectores de atención de la salud en África Occidental.

La Organización Mundial de la Salud de la ONU emitió esta declaración: "Los siguientes países comparten fronteras terrestres o importantes conexiones de transporte con los países afectados y por lo tanto están en riesgo de propagación del Ébola: Benín, Burkina Faso, Costa de Marfil, Guinea-Bissau, Malí y Senegal". La "agencia y sus socios" ayudarán a los programas establecidos en los estados impactados, con "planes de vigilan-

cia, preparación y respuesta contra el Ébola". (Centro de Noticias de la ONU, 29 de agosto)

Las cifras varían en el número de casos y muertes por Ébola. Algunos informes indican que hay alrededor de 2.000 víctimas mortales en Liberia, Sierra León y Guinea-Conakry.

Médicos Sin Fronteras también ha dado la voz de alarma sobre la rápida propagación de la enfermedad. Su presidenta, Joanne Liu, en una sesión informativa especial de la ONU sobre el Ébola el 2 de septiembre, advirtió que la rápida propagación del Ébola desde marzo, ha planteado esta cuestión a nivel de seguridad internacional, lo que requiere unidades especializadas de respuesta a desastres biomédicos para detener las crecientes infecciones.

Liu subrayó, "A seis meses de la peor epidemia del Ébola en la historia, el mundo está perdiendo la batalla para contenerla." Ella criticó "una coalición mundial de inacción". (Doctorswithoutborders.org)

Impacto económico del Ébola

Los centros de investigación en África occidental, así como de la OMS, dicen que Liberia, Sierra León y Guinea-Conakry - donde la enfermedad ha golpeado más duro - carecen de la infraestructura sanitaria y la capacidad de investigación necesaria para manejar con eficacia la crisis. Sin embargo, los estados capitalistas desarrollados han sido relativamente insensibles a las fuertes advertencias sobre la amenaza mundial de la epidemia.

El Ghana Online News publicó este comunicado de prensa el 4 de septiembre, publicado por Frank Adarkway-Yiadom, director ejecutivo del Centro de Asuntos Democráticos Africanos: "El actual brote de Ébola puede infligir gran daño económico a la mayoría de los países de África Occidental si la situación no es contenida pronto. ... El brote podría tener un efecto económico directo sobre los presupuestos públicos por el aumento significativo en los gastos de salud, creando así una desaceleración económica inducida por el Ébola en la generación de los ingresos del gobierno en una región donde los presupuestos ya estaban en dificultades".

CADA señala que debido al brote, Caterpillar ha evacuado a las/os empleados de Liberia; Canadian Overseas Petroleum Lt. ha suspendido un proyecto de perforación; Kenya Airways y British Airways han suspendido vuelos a los países de África Occidental afectados por Ébola; ExxonMobil y Chevron están esperando ver si la epidemia se contiene.

Problemas económicos y políticos adicionales que resultan como consecuencia de la prohibición de viajar incluye poner a las comunidades en cuarentena y la falta de una respuesta eficaz por la Unión Regional de África, así como otras organizaciones continentales. No obstante, CADA apeló a los gobiernos regionales adoptar políticas racionales para contener la propagación

del Ébola, advirtiendo que podría causar trastornos sociales, económicos y políticos innecesarios. La organización destacó, "El pánico se evita no sólo mediante la lucha contra una epidemia, sino al ser visto que lo hacen".

Hasta ahora, 30 muertes se han registrado en la provincia de Ecuador, en el norte de la República Democrática del Congo, cerca de la ciudad de Bende, que al parecer se debió a otro grupo de un virus similar. (news.sciencemag.org, 2 de septiembre)

Situada en la región central de África, la RDC, al igual que otros estados de África Occidental afectados por la enfermedad, es un país rico en minerales que alberga numerosas empresas transnacionales que extraen los recursos naturales en gran parte para la exportación a los capitalistas occidentales.

Soluciones deben ser a largo plazo

A pesar de los niveles récord de crecimiento económico reportado en los Estados de África Occidental, la tasa de desarrollo de bienes no sigue el ritmo de las demandas de sus sociedades. Los legados de la esclavitud, colonialismo y neocolonialismo todavía están obstaculizando la capacidad de estos gobiernos para construir las instalaciones médicas necesarias equipadas con tecnología moderna para hacer frente a un brote de una enfermedad tan altamente contagiosa como el Ébola.

A corto plazo, los estados afectados deben recibir el apoyo y la asistencia necesaria para detener la enfermedad y tratar a las personas infectadas. Sin embargo, un proceso de inversiones a gran escala en los sistemas de atención de salud debe llevarse a cabo para protegerse contra futuras epidemias que se propagan a través de la migración transfronteriza y para detener el deterioro del nivel de vida de la clase obrera, campesina y las/os pobres, en medio de la creciente división de clases en África - que se deriva de las relaciones de producción heredadas y mantenidas por el imperialismo.

En los países capitalistas occidentales, incluyendo EUA, no se puede confiar en que hagan mucho fuera de la proliferación de noticias sobre la situación en el África Occidental. Por eso, la epidemia del Ébola es una manifestación de la necesidad de que África sea verdaderamente independiente con autodeterminación, en base a sus propios intereses, en lugar de a las prerrogativas económicas de los países capitalistas occidentales.

En un sistema de gobierno socialista los ingresos por la venta de los recursos minerales, los cultivos comerciales agrícolas y el turismo serían devueltos a la mayoría del pueblo a través de la construcción de hospitales y clínicas. Personal médico y de educación sería entrenado y las masas se movilizarían eficazmente. Un enfoque regional para este tipo de crisis epidemiológicas proporcionaría a las/os africanos de todo el continente con una forma de abordar estos problemas de forma colectiva. □

EDITORIAL 10 de septiembre 2014

¿Guerra contra el ISIL?

Jefa/es de estados imperialistas se reunieron bajo presión de Estados Unidos en la Cumbre de la OTAN del 4-5 septiembre en Newport, Gales, para intensificar sus maniobras contra Rusia en relación a Ucrania, para programar su salida gradual de Afganistán y para abrir una guerra contra el Estado Islámico.

Las propuestas metas de la cumbre eran para hacer la OTAN capaz de intervenir rápidamente en tres continentes, lejos de la región del Atlántico Norte. Mientras que muchos de los miembros europeos de la OTAN se mostraron reacios a incrementar el gasto militar, Washington mantuvo la presión para movilizarse contra Rusia e intervenir en el Medio Oriente y África.

El presidente Barack Obama forzó una propuesta para aumentar el gasto militar de todos los miembros de la OTAN a por lo menos el 2 por ciento de su PIB. Con el capitalismo europeo en picada y la mayoría de las clases dominantes imponiendo austeridad a las/os trabajadores, los gobiernos nacionales mantienen un férreo control sobre sus billeteras. La mayoría del aumento del gasto de los países de la OTAN vendría de sus presupuestos nacionales para comprar del complejo militar e industrial estadounidense. Europa pierde de ambas formas.

A pesar de la presión de Obama para maximizar las sanciones económicas contra Rusia, la mayoría de los jefes de estados europeos — cuyos intereses económicos en Rusia son mucho más importantes que los de EUA — aprovecharon el cese al fuego en Ucrania para posponer nuevas sanciones contra Rusia. La prensa alemana informa que los fabricantes alemanes han ido encontrando maneras de evadir las sanciones existentes y asegurar el suministro de gas desde Rusia para el próximo invierno.

Sin embargo, la OTAN logró aprobar una fuerza de despliegue rápida de 4.000 tropas para lanzar en cualquier punto del mundo con pocos días de aviso, como en Ucrania, donde las fuerzas antifascistas habían apaleado al ejército de la junta de Kiev llevando al cese al fuego el 8 de septiembre.

Con respecto al Estado Islámico, Obama y el primer ministro británico David Cameron publicaron un comunicado conjunto en el Times de Londres el 4 de septiembre, pidiendo a la OTAN enfrentarse a la organización conocida como ISIS o ISIL, la cual los políticos imperialistas y los medios de comunicación corporativos presentan ahora como el mayor peligro a la humanidad.

Al no poder conseguir una amplia aprobación, Obama reunió a varios jefes de estado en la cumbre para establecer una nueva coalición para coordinar un asalto supuestamente destinado a lanzar una "guerra contra el ISIL". Obama apeló al público de EUA en un discurso televisado el 10 de septiembre para empujar y explicar esta nueva acción agresiva.

Los miembros de la coalición son los mismos de siempre, es decir, las grandes potencias imperialistas y algunos de sus clientes: Bretaña, Francia, Alemania, Canadá, Australia, Turquía, Italia, Polonia y Dinamarca. Mientras que los militaristas republicanos siguen criticando a Obama por su supuesta indecisión en asuntos de guerra, están golpeando a un hombre de paja. Obama amenaza una confrontación con Rusia, bombardear Irak y/o Siria, y ataques con drones en Yemen, Pakistán y Somalia. Y a pesar de que prometa no poner "botas sobre el terreno", ¿qué sucederá cuando las bombas resulten ineficaces? Recordemos, Washington no ha renunciado a un cambio de régimen en Siria.

Siempre debemos tener en cuenta que sea lo que se piense de ISIL, para los imperialistas esta organización es solo un pretexto para agredir.

Nos alegra que para contrarrestar estas maniobras de guerra, manifestantes estuvieran frente a la reunión de la OTAN y se enfrentaran a los 9.500 policías y militares que custodiaban a los imperialistas y otros jefes de estado y alzarán sus consignas contra la guerra. El sistema imperialista y sus instrumentos de guerra como la OTAN son la verdadera amenaza para la humanidad. Nos unimos a las/os manifestantes de Gales y respondemos al llamado de Obama de "guerra contra el ISIL" con "¡No a nuevas guerras imperialistas! ¡No a la OTAN"! □