

# Iran stays firm as U.S. threatens attack

By Deirdre Griswold

Are the days over when Washington could shake its big stick and the rest of the imperialist world would immediately fall in line?

The Pompeo-Bolton-Trump gang of conspirators in Washington seems to be having a hard time lining up their imperialist partners/rivals behind an attack on Iran. Their attempt to create a global crisis over the damage inflicted on June 13 on two oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, which suffered no loss of life and were in no danger of sinking, was met with much skepticism — not only from the general public but from West European heads of state.

Even these fellow imperialists are well aware that U.S. preparations for an assault on Iran are based on a pack

of lies — and to go along with them would put their own interests at stake.

The so-called “proof” offered by Washington that Iran was behind the attacks has been widely rejected, including by the owner of at least one of the tankers.

That ship, the Kakura Courageous, is owned by a Japanese company. It was attacked while the prime minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, was actually making a state visit to Iran, despite U.S. sanctions.

The idea that Iran would choose such a moment to attack a Japanese ship is ludicrous, to say the least.

Nevertheless, as flimsy as the U.S. arguments to attack Iran are, Washington has been going ahead, trying to line up support from at least some of the European imperialist powers for an aggressive move against the oil-rich country. And on June 17, Trump ordered another 1,000

U.S. troops to the Middle East.

## War threats haven’t worked

Iran has defied the pressure. On the same day, Iran announced that it intends to resume its production of nuclear fuel, which it had agreed to suspend in 2015 in exchange for lifting severe economic sanctions.

Iran’s move should come as no surprise. The Trump administration had already announced — a whole year ago — that it was pulling out of the 2015 agreement. It has since doubled down on the sanctions, trying to starve the Iranians into submission.

So why should Iran continue to honor the deal when the U.S. had already killed it?

At the time that Washington pulled out of the deal,

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## Pride Means Fight Back!



PHOTO: ALAN ROTH

The first Cleveland Pride, 1977: The struggle of lesbian mothers to retain custody of their children was central to the movement then and continues today.

- Pride coverage2, 6-7
- Pensacola revolutionaries

Leslie Feinberg: Stonewall ‘battle was on!’

Caster Semenya resists gender policing

Portland trans march

Layleen Polanco Xtravaganza ¡presente!



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Library allies demonstrate inside Philadelphia City Hall, June 13. Unionized library workers and friends are fighting for more money for libraries in underserved, poor, working-class and people of color neighborhoods. See page 4.

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Pensacola Pride

Revolutionary queer and trans people

protest anti-Black national anthem

By Devin Cole and Julianna Cordray  
Pensacola, Fla.

At this year's Pensacola Pride festival, there was a defiant protest of the organizers' decision to ignore nearly 200 petition signers and led off the festival with the pro-slavery U.S. national anthem. A group of 15 working-class people, mostly transgender people, voiced their principled dissent.

As the anthem was being sung at the beginning of Pride celebrations, protesters unfurled a banner that read, "O say, can you see? Francis Scott Key supported slavery!" They held it up in front of the stage for the anthem's duration and then marched with the banner around Seville Square Park where booths were set up.

This protest was led by Strive, an anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-racist transgender advocacy organization. Several of its members are currently candidates in Workers World Party, and two of the candidates participated directly in the action, as well as this writer, a leader of Strive.

The protest came after several weeks of attempts to have the national anthem removed from Pride. Strive made a public statement outlining in detail the history of the song and the anti-Black, usually overlooked third verse, and the fact that Francis Scott Key was a fierce critic of abolitionism and proponent of slavery. The anthem is anti-Black, racist and outdated, and therefore has no place in Pride or in any sectors of the LGBTQ2S+ movement.

The Gay Grassroots organizers of Pensacola Pride acknowledged this anti-Black history, but chose to keep the anthem, citing, "their love of the military" over the protests of hundreds of Black and Brown, queer and trans people who supported its removal.

Strive's line is that racism and imperialist war are fundamentally contradictory to the goal of LGBTQ2S+ liberation.



PHOTO: MOON BATCHELDER

**LGBTQ2S revolutionaries at Pensacola Pride in Florida on June 15.**

After being told by Gay Grassroots that "silent, respectful protests" would be allowed, Strive arrived at the park to be greeted by a hostage negotiator cop, who seemed to know about Strive's protest before it even began. Gay Grassroots claimed that their organization had not called the cops — but someone must have.

Strive's protest continued, despite this attempt at intimidation. Strive and allies put up an "empty-chairs" vigil to honor the 11 transgender women of color murdered in the U.S. so far in 2019. Tribute was also paid to Nigel Shelby, a 15-year-old gay Black youth who committed suicide in April due to bullying in Alabama.

In effect, the cops were called out on LGBTQ2S+ people because of a silent protest and a vigil dedicated to murdered Black transgender women and a gay man.

After the protest, Strive attempted to set up a booth to distribute free materials to the people — zines, buttons, papers and hygiene products. Strive did not register as

*Continued on page 10*



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for socialism!

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Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans

people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people's movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge — the capitalist system.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you're interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you. □

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

National Office

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

Atlanta

PO Box 18123  
Atlanta, GA 30316  
404.627.0185  
atlanta@workers.org

Austin

austin@workers.org

Boston

284 Amory St.  
Boston, MA 02130  
617.522.6626  
boston@workers.org

Bay Area

P.O. Box 22947  
Oakland, CA 94609  
bayarea@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.

335 Richmond Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
716.883.2534  
buffalo@workers.org

Charlotte

charlotte@workers.org

Cleveland

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

Durham, N.C.

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

Houston

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

Knoxville, Tenn.

knoxville@workers.org

Minneapolis

minneapolis@workers.org

Pensacola, Fla.

pensacola@workers.org

Portland, Ore.

portland@workers.org

workers.org/wwp

Philadelphia

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

Salt Lake City

801.750.0248  
slc@workers.org

San Antonio

sanantonio@workers.org

San Diego

sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.

tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.

dc@workers.org

West Virginia

WestVirginia@workers.org



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Workers World  
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.  
New York, NY 10011  
Phone: 212.627.2994  
E-mail: ww@workers.org  
Web: www.workers.org



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Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell,  
Martha Grevatt, Monica Moorehead, Minnie Bruce  
Pratt

Web Editors: Ben Carroll, John Steffin

Production & Design Editors: Gery Armsby, Sasha  
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Sue Davis, S. Hedgecoke

Contributing Editors: G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Fred  
Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Betsey Piette, Gloria Rubac

Mundo Obrero: Alberto García, Teresa Gutierrez,  
Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis

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# Friendshipment Caravan to Cuba challenges travel restrictions

By Betsey Piette  
Philadelphia

Members of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization/Pastors for Peace Friendship Caravan to Cuba received a warm and enthusiastic welcome in Philadelphia on June 12 at a gathering hosted by the Philadelphia International Action Center. Their 30th Cuba Caravan will travel to Havana and Cienfuegos from June 22 to July 5, visiting 40 U.S. cities before they depart.

A diverse audience of over 50 people attended the event at Calvary United Methodist Church. It was endorsed by Black Alliance for Peace; Comité Boricua Filadelfia-Camden; Socialist Unity Party; Struggle — La Lucha; International Workers Solidarity Network; and Workers World Party/Mundo Obrero.

Cuba is celebrating the 60th anniversary of its revolution in 2019. This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the Venceremos Brigade to Cuba, which will begin in late July and continue for three weeks.

Since the successful Cuban Revolution in 1959, the U.S. government has imposed a criminal blockade on the socialist island. However, in recent months, U.S. imperialism has sharpened its attacks against Cuba and Venezuela, intensifying criminal sanctions against both countries, and supporting an attempted coup in Venezuela.

Inspired in part by the revolutionary example set by the Cuban people, the Bolivarian Revolution began in Venezuela in 1999 to build a socialist society there, under the leadership of Hugo Chávez. The bond of solidarity between Cuba and Venezuela has been and still remains unbreakable.

The solidarity event with revolutionary Cuba, Venezuela and other countries in Latin America and around the world under threat from U.S. imperialism took on new importance in light of the travel restrictions imposed June 4 by the Trump administration on U.S. residents traveling to Cuba. They ban group educational and cultural travel to the island, popularly known as “people-to-people” trips.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

In Philadelphia, some of those supporting the Friendshipment Caravan to Cuba were, left to right, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Michelle Strongfields, Gail Walker, Megan Murray, Carmen Guerrero, Pam Africa and Yahne Ndgo.

## Women speakers praise Cuba

An impressive, multinational panel of women activists addressed a question posed by Philadelphia WWP moderator Megan Murray about what solidarity with Cuba means to them. Pam Africa, minister of confrontation for the MOVE organization, stressed the humanitarian care Cuba has extended globally, setting an example for all. She spoke of the warm reception she received when traveling to Cuba on behalf of U.S. political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Carmen Guerrero, immigrant activist with the Coalición Fortaleza Latina, responded: “Cuba is an example of ‘Si, se puede!’ (Yes we can!) for their policies of peace, brotherhood, liberty, humanity and justice. For people in my home country of Mexico, where we are dealing with many killings and disappearances, Cuba shows that when the people have the power we can do many things together.”

Yahne Ndgo, activist with Black Alliance for Peace, told of her month-long experience living in Cuba earlier this year. There she found she couldn’t access funds from her bank account because of U.S. restrictions. Just buying eggs for breakfast became a burden until her Cuban neighbors turned up at her door with eggs and other food to share.

Ndgo said: “I witnessed a human drive to be part of community versus what you see under capitalism where people are taught to extract as much as they can for themselves. Cuba is the example that another reality is possible.”

Berta Joubert-Ceci, of Comité Boricua Filadelfia-Camden, described her native Puerto Rico and Cuba as “two wings of the same bird.” She noted how these two countries and Venezuela all struggled against Spanish colonialism: “Even before Trump, U.S. administrations have sought ‘regime change’ to regain power and destroy Cuba. They want to destroy the promise of socialism.”

Taryn Fivek, International Action Center representative, who will participate in the upcoming Venceremos Brigade, explained: “Socialism is not just something you say or wear on a shirt, but what you do. Cuba is a prime example. President Bolsonaro in Brazil just expelled all the doctors whom Cuba previously sent in solidarity to especially treat Indigenous populations who are now having their land stolen. Sixty years ago this revolution challenged homelessness, poverty, the lack of health care, education and more. The U.S. doesn’t want people to see how Cubans have learned to liberate themselves.”

Keynote speaker Gail Walker, executive director of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, opened her talk by acknowledging a young Black woman in the audience who had just applied to study medicine at Cuba’s tuition-free Latin American School of Medicine. She said, “Cuba’s scholarship gifts to young people to study medicine are intended to be passed on as gifts to the communities they will eventually serve.”

Walker recounted Cuba’s key contributions in the field of health care, which

include developing treatment for diabetes, fighting Ebola in Africa and setting up clinics in Haiti. She addressed Cuba’s contributions to hurricane preparedness, environmental justice, education and the struggle to combat homophobia. Walker noted that women comprise nearly half of the members of Cuba’s Parliament and three of six Cuban vice presidents.

Another advancement Walker noted is that Cuba has taken measures to limit the scourge of gentrification plaguing countless Black and Brown communities in the U.S. “Cuban law restricts any one individual from owning more than two houses — one in a municipality and one in the countryside or at the seashore.”

## Despite ban, ‘caravans will go on’

Walker addressed the travel ban, noting that her father, the Rev. Lucius Walker, founder of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, who died in 2010, first initiated a people-to-people caravan to Nicaragua in 1988. There, two people were killed by a Contra attack and Walker was wounded.

“The U.S. policies around Cuba, starting with the Kennedy administration, are nothing short of genocide,” stated Walker. “Trump’s policies are nothing but an extension of this. He is trying to frighten people from going to Cuba, experiencing it and making up their own minds. Trump nixed the ‘people-to-people’ travel, but not the ‘solidarity-with-people’ visa travel option, which is usually selected by elements intent on supporting opposition inside Cuba to the current government.”

Walker continued: “What Trump has done will have a chilling effect and to some extent it is working. But travel to Cuba is not a crime. We have been indoctrinated about Cuba since birth with so many negative connotations thrown at us. Our intent is that people should see for themselves. We do this as an act of civil disobedience.”

In concluding, Walker emphasized: “We know we face potential fines and even jail terms, but the U.S. blockade and travel ban against Cuba are wrong. They are criminal. We will continue to do caravans until we see this policy change once and for all.” □

# Women strike across Switzerland for equal pay and more

By Kathy Durkin

Wage. Time. Respect. That was the motto of the 24-hour “Women’s Strike” for gender pay equity, equal rights, respect and an end to gender-based violence, which swept Switzerland on June 14. Hundreds of thousands of women and people of all genders from labor unions, women’s rights and allied groups, educational and faith-based institutions, and even farms marched, rallied and struck.

Colorful banners flew from bridges and buildings in major cities. The color purple was visible everywhere, including in clothing, because of its symbolism with European women’s suffrage movements. Women in Switzerland could not vote until 1971.

In Bern, the capital, 100,000 people demonstrated, while workers struck in factories. There, Rachel Luthy stressed: “We must fight for equal pay ... abortion rights, zero tolerance for domestic violence and more. Most importantly, we must smash the patriarchy!” (New York Times, June 14)

In the country’s largest demonstration, 160,000 people marched in Zurich, a global center of finance capital. Organizers there welcomed women, trans, intersex and queer people, immigrants and those of varying ages, communities, abilities and incomes. In Basel, 40,000 people participated in 50 activities, while actions took place in all major cities and towns.

Many women struck for the entire day, but organizers asked those who couldn’t do that to leave their workplaces at 3:24 p.m., because women work for free after that time due to wage inequality. Women earn 20 percent less than male workers -- an outrage in one of the world’s wealthiest countries. It’s even worse for immigrants.

The World Economic Forum ranks Switzerland 44th in wage equity for similar work, compared with all other countries. (npr.org, June 14) What enormous profits the capitalists are making by cheating women out of their full salaries!

It was exactly 28 years ago that 500,000 Swiss women held a historic strike for equal rights. That resulted in

passage of the Gender Equality Act in 1996, which prohibited workplace gender discrimination.

In 2018, the Swiss Parliament enacted a law calling for corporations to “study” gender pay disparities, but that only applied to companies with over 100 employees. It didn’t include penalties for firms that flouted the law.

Women labor leaders called the law

“meaningless.” It so enraged women that they then began planning a national protest. Labor unions got involved, and USS, an umbrella group of 16 Swiss unions, was instrumental in organizing the June 14 strike.

As the cost of living skyrockets in Europe’s least “family-friendly” economy, and gender pay inequality grows, this struggle will continue. □



“Women Strike” on June 14 in Zurich, Switzerland.

PHOTO: FRAUENSTREIKENZH FACEBOOK



# Company intimidation behind 'no union' vote at VW

By Martha Grevatt

For three days, June 12-14, workers at the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tenn., voted whether to allow the United Auto Workers union to represent them. The union narrowly lost the election, 833 to 776. Over 90 percent of the plant’s 1,700-plus workers voted.

Compared to the first plantwide vote in 2014, which was 712 to 626 against the union, the UAW inched closer to securing a win.

The need for union representation is glaring. Workers’ no. 1 complaint is the high rate of injuries at the plant, caused by line speedups and trying to get more work out of fewer workers. Repetitive motion injuries are commonplace, and injured workers are routinely put back on the same job that caused their injury.

Other big issues are last-minute shift changes and overtime scheduling that make it hard for workers and their families to plan their lives. The company was not going to address these or other issues on its own as a matter of conscience.

Volkswagen, which during the 2014 vote feigned neutrality, now wants to keep Chattanooga union-free. For four years after the National Labor Relations Board certified that the UAW had won an election covering 160 skilled maintenance workers at the plant, Volkswagen refused to bargain. Yet VW argued to the NLRB that an election involving all the plant’s hourly workers could not go forward because of the smaller unit’s vote.

The NLRB bought VW’s frivolous argument and denied the UAW’s petition to hold an election in late April. This would have been shocking, except for the fact that, with four of five board members appointed by Trump, anti-labor rulings have become routine. After the union filed a new petition, the June election was set.

**Delays bought union busters time**

The UAW took signed authorization cards from a majority of the VW hourly workers when it went to the NLRB in April. Why the loss?

Delaying the election gave VW and other anti-union forces nine weeks to mislead and frighten the workers into rejecting the union. There were constant ads on TV, radio and billboards appealing to prejudice and warning of “domination” by the Detroit-based union. Management gave out free T-shirts that read, “One



Team: I am Volkswagen.”

Workers were required to attend company-run morning meetings where speeches and leaflets conveyed a one-sided message. Workers were harassed for wearing union stickers or passing out union literature. VW CEO Frank Fischer himself addressed the workers; he claimed a vote for the union could cause the plant to close.

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee addressed one meeting, emphasizing his negative view of unions. The state had given VW over half a million dollars worth of tax breaks to lure the company to Tennessee. Governor Lee and other politicians implied that voting union could trigger a loss of incentives. Without the incentives, politicians suggested Volkswagen would cancel expansion plans to build a new electric vehicle in Chattanooga.

To court workers, the company also made some improvements — which they could have made all along — including cooling the plant, more desirable schedules and ouster of unpopular managers.

The monumental level of propagandizing and fearmongering over more than two months was enough to tip the scales in the company’s favor.

### How can the UAW win?

Asian and European auto companies have over 30 plants in the U.S., almost all in Southern states and all non-union. Nissan defeated a union drive in Canton, Miss., in 2017 by using scare tactics similar to VW’s. A victory at VW could have launched a massive organizing drive at the other foreign-owned transplants — which would in turn boost organizing across the South.

The UAW is demanding changes in the labor laws that allow corporate intimidation to take place. “Over a period of nine weeks — an unprecedented length of time due to legal gamesmanship — Volkswagen was able to break the will of enough workers to destroy their majority,” said UAW

Organizing Director Tracy Romero. (UAW.org)

The VW vote exposes the fraudulent character of “democracy” under capitalism. There is no real right to organize if companies can threaten to close plants or fire workers for organizing.

Some workers, however, claimed they weren’t against having a union, they were just against the UAW. These may be face-saving claims, but they could be an honest reaction to real problems inside the UAW.

So far nine people — UAW Chrysler Department officials and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles executives — have been convicted in a bribery scandal, with more under investigation. FCA gave lavish amounts of money to UAW leaders, allegedly to get them to sell members an inferior contract in 2015.

This outrageous corruption is an outgrowth of the long-standing orientation of the International UAW leadership toward “partnership” with company management. For decades, concessions have been peddled to the rank and file to keep corporations “competitive” or “profitable.”

The loss at VW — with wages that are the lowest among the transplants — takes place as the UAW begins negotiations for new contracts with Ford, General Motors and FCA. The Detroit Three will use lower transplant wages as ammunition, arguing that higher labor costs make them less competitive.

But now that the Detroit auto companies are making billions in record profits, the leaders are feeling a push from below. The rank and file want to reverse concessions and get rid of tiered wages — a divisive scheme where newer workers doing the same job as higher-seniority workers make less pay. Current contracts have new hires classified as temporary. They have few rights, can be fired with little recourse, and their pay is actually lower than that of VW production workers.

It may well take a strike to make real headway. For the UAW to be attractive to potential members, as well as hold on to current members as more states become “right-to-work-for-less,” the union must break up its partnership with capital.

It’s time to revive the fighting spirit of the 1936-37 sit-down strikes! □

## Workers’ protest airs dirty laundry of greedy bosses

The Laundry Workers Center and the People’s Power Assemblies went to Flushing, Queens, N.Y., June 15 to demand the owners of the New TYS Laundromat pay the workers what they owe them. Throughout the neighborhood people could hear this chant: “Pay the Workers What You Owe Them, Wage Theft Is a Crime.”

As the chants rang out, people throughout the neighborhood stopped by to find out what was happening. The LWC explained that they were there to demand over \$200,000 in back pay that TYS Laundromat workers are owed, along with \$400,000 in damages they’re owed for having to work in unsafe and hazardous conditions.

It was further explained that the owners of the laundromat were living in three-story housing in Flushing, while paying their workers low wages and also



Queens, N.Y. WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

firing them.

The LWC and the PPA stated that they will keep coming to the owner’s neighborhood to continue airing their dirty laundry until the workers get what they deserve.

— Report by Siddika Degia

## Philadelphia

# Library workers and allies demand more funding

By Joe Piette

About 50 members and allies of Friends of the Free Library rallied June 13 inside Philadelphia City Hall, demanding city officials increase annual funding by \$15 million.

Unionized library workers and Library Friends Group members organized the #FundOurLibraries campaign to protest inadequate funding for the city’s 54 library branches. Over 750 emergency closures took place in 2018, 350 from lack of staff and 400 from building problems. An average of two branches were closed every day.

Activists were able to push Mayor Jim Kenney and the City Council for an increase of \$3.5 million in the 2020 budget by gathering over 5,000 petitions, organizing hundreds of letters, phone calls and meetings with elected officials, and packing city budget hearings.

But FFL estimates, in their June 13 press release, at least \$15 million is needed annually for staffing to keep all library branches open six days a week, to increase community programming and to make repairs on “dozens of failing roofs” and other building problems.

The city always seems strapped for cash when it comes to funding public schools or keeping libraries open, but has plenty of money to pay for police brutality. Between



Library supporters rallied inside Philadelphia City Hall, June 13.

2013 and 2017 Philadelphia paid over \$50 million to settle lawsuits filed against police officers, most of whom remain on the force.

As Philadelphia’s neighborhoods fight for funds for libraries, the Kenney administration increased the police budget by \$18 million in fiscal year 2019 to \$709 million, the largest item in the city’s annual budget. The Police Department budget was again upped in 2020 — by \$54 million.

While the Free Library is allocated only \$46 million for 2020, funding for police, prisons and “other criminal justice” costs will total \$1.2 billion. (tinyurl.com/y6a9bu7x)

It’s common knowledge Black and Brown residents bear the brunt of police violence. Stop-and-frisk statistics from American Civil Liberties Union Pennsylvania prove it. And 81 percent of people shot by Philadelphia cops between 2007 and 2013 were African American, despite Black people accounting for just more than 40 percent of the city’s population. (tinyurl.com/y2fhznzp5)

The Plain View Project reported on June 1 that 328 Philadelphia police officers posted racist, sexist, homophobic, Islamophobic and otherwise offensive content on Facebook.

But City Hall continues to increase the police budget while inadequately funding education and library programs for high poverty areas and communities of color. Its racist actions speak louder than words, revealing the underlying belief that police occupation of Black and Brown communities is more important than funding programs to help lift those communities from deep poverty.

Philadelphia residents of every age and race need clean, safe and modern library services, not more police! □



# ABC's of the capitalist crisis **Part 2**

*WW reprints here Part 2 of an article, slightly abridged, by Sam Marcy, the late chairperson of Workers World Party, that appeared in the April 12, 1992, Workers World. Despite the years that have passed since then, his analysis is remarkably relevant to understanding the relationship between workers and capitalists today. Part 1 can be found online at workers.org.*

The Philadelphia Inquirer published a very well-documented series of nine articles on Oct. 20-28 of last year [1991] showing the ravages of the capitalist economic crisis with facts and figures. But this series, "The Dismantling of America," took a fundamentally erroneous approach.

The writers, Donald L. Bartlett and James B. Steele, showed that the increases in the salaries of people earning more than \$1 million have risen 2,184 percent in the last decade; people earning \$200,000 to \$1 million saw an increase of 697 percent; for people earning \$20,000 to \$50,000, it was only 44 percent.

They conclude that the total amount of dollars in salaries funneled to the rich soared in the 1980s, as did the number of rich themselves. Meanwhile, the total dollars in wages that went to the middle class increased an average of just 4 percent a year, or 44 percent over the decade.

Their statistics, meticulously gathered from a variety of government sources, cannot be impeached. But it is not the salaries of the rich, the very rich, the super-rich or what they call the middle class that are the determining factor in the development of a capitalist crisis.

What they leave out is who owns the means of production, who owns the big plants, the big establishments, the military-industrial complex. Suppose an inflationary trend happens that is so violent the currency becomes no more than a piece of paper. What happens then? Those who own the plants, equipment, means of transportation, etc., will still be the owners. But the salaried people and wage earners will get ripped off completely.

An inflationary trend that affects wages or salaries on all levels still leaves the capitalist system intact. What is fundamental is which class owns the means of production versus who works as a wage slave.

Instead of proceeding from the viewpoint of ownership and possession of the material wealth of society, these writers deal only with a superficial aspect, the income from salaries and wages. That hides the oppressive, exploitative character of capitalist society.

It is a typical bourgeois approach to judge society purely on the distribution of income. This is not decisive. Targeting the great spread in incomes of course shows the gross and monstrous social inequalities in capitalist society. Nevertheless, this doesn't point out the source of the inequality, which lies in ownership of the basic means of production.

Unfortunately, the writers of this series make another error. One of the articles is entitled, "How the Game Was Rigged Against the Middle Class." At the present time, all capitalist politicians speak in the name of the middle class. They almost never mention capitalist class or working class — just rich and poor.

It is true, of course, that there is a struggle between the rich and the poor. But this does not adequately describe who the rich are, what makes them rich, the basis for their wealth and the basis for the poverty that many millions in this country suffer. The report really obscures the

actual relationships that exist in present-day society, characterized by a struggle between the capitalist class and the working class.

To define the middle class merely on the basis of income is to include many workers, thus masking the function of the working class as the producer of all material values. It lumps the workers together with a vast section of the middle class proper. This includes millions who work for themselves, or employ a few workers whom they exploit, and are a buffer between the working class and the capitalist class. The fact that at the end of the process some may earn even less than a skilled worker doesn't necessarily qualify them as producers of material values.

In fact, capitalist society has middle layers in it that serve a reactionary purpose — police, prison guards, military officers and pen-pushers, hundreds of thousands of others who work in the capitalist state apparatus and are a parasitic element — not to speak of the actual big-time bureaucrats. In any capitalist government these constitute a formidable element of the population that neither produce anything nor serve a useful function.

This social layer of the population is needed to protect and defend the capitalist class's interests. It is pitted against the working class when necessary.

## **Huge fees not all that's wrong**

In their second article, "The Very Lucrative Business of Bankruptcy," the authors also fall into error. In the course of examining the rising tide of bankruptcies, they say the winners are high-priced consultants hired to close companies, while the losers are workers thrown out of their jobs. They go on to show that the lawyers and consultants get huge fees — \$787.50 for three hours of sorting files, over \$1,000 for five hours spent on a plane, \$562.50 for two and a half hours of telephone calls, \$900 for four hours of filling out forms.

There's no question that these bankruptcy attorneys, advisers and consultants get enormous fees. This should be exposed. But to make them out as the super-devils in bankruptcy is just plain nonsense. They must have their fees approved by the bankruptcy judge, which

the authors neglect to mention. Together with the bankruptcy judge and the federal district courts, they are part of a trinity that serves big business and the banks, particularly the biggest creditors. They are the ones primarily responsible for the restructuring of capitalist industry over the last decade.

These writers, by pointing the finger only at the big fees of the high-priced attorneys and consultants, avoid the fundamental causes of the crisis. They absolve the capitalist class as a whole from responsibility for the ravages and destruction of human life and material.

So while their research is valuable and impressive, at the same time it obscures what most needs to be clarified.

One of the most glaring omissions in these articles is the international character of the capitalist crisis. They do well when they point out the huge indebtedness created during the Reagan administration and the havoc it caused later. But it is dealt with as exclusively a national phenomenon. Britain, France and above all Germany and Japan, which contributed so much to U.S. indebtedness by buying U.S. bonds and stocks and investing in U.S. industry, are not mentioned at all.

For a long period the capitalist press incited workers into Japan-bashing because they said Japan was "taking over America." Now Japan has its own economic crisis, so it is withdrawing its funds from the U.S., thereby aggravating the capitalist crisis. First the capitalist press and politicians bashed Japan for investing in the U.S. Now that it's withdrawing, they're bashing it even harder.

It's part and parcel of the ruinous imperialist competition which, if it goes much further, can end up in warfare.

The international character of the capitalist crisis was first brought out in Workers World newspaper when the Bank of Commerce and Credit International collapsed, demonstrating that the U.S., Britain, France, Germany and more than a dozen Third World countries were involved. The fact that corruption was also involved was purely incidental. The main thing is that it demonstrated the international character of the capitalist crisis.

Lest that seem like yesterday's wisdom, it's important to note that just as

the March 30 issue of Business Week trumpeted the emergence of a capitalist recovery, Olympia and York, the world's biggest real estate property developer, announced it was seeking guidance from financial consultants and advisers because of its inability to deal with a \$20-billion debt. The company owns dozens of the choicest real estate properties in New York City and abroad.

But the most interesting aspect of this giant financial and industrial complex is the banks that have supported it with loans and are now seeking to dismantle it. These banks are Citicorp, the biggest U.S. bank, and a half dozen Canadian banks including the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, the Royal Bank of Canada, the Bank of Montreal, and the Bank of Nova Scotia. Other lenders include Chemical Bank, the Dai-Ichi Kangyo Bank, the Sumitomo Bank, Barclay's P.L.C., Credit Suisse, Credit Lyonnais, and the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank.

The capitalist press dins into the ears of the workers day in and day out, whenever the workers complain about jobs being shifted abroad, that we are living in an integrated world economy. But they never bring up the most quintessential and characteristic feature of contemporary world relationships — that is, domination by the giant banks.

## **A scientific solution**

Today there is scarcely any question that doesn't lend itself to scientific solution, although it might take many years. So with all the economic tools available, not to speak of the new technology, why isn't there even one bourgeois economist who will say, "Let us solve the economic crisis scientifically and eliminate crisis"? It's because capitalist crisis can only be eliminated by abolishing the profit system itself and laying the foundation for a socialist society. To ask the capitalists to solve the capitalist crisis is asking them to sign their own death warrant.

Only the working class can solve the capitalist economic crisis, and then only by taking the wealth of society, the basic means of production, into their own hands and establishing a true workers' socialist society. □







Part 70

# Stonewall mea

## Stonewall 1969, night 3: 'The battle was on!'

*Originally published Aug. 14, 2006, this column was part of Leslie Feinberg's series of articles on the connections between LGBTQ2S+ and socialist history. The 120-part series "Lavender & Red," which appeared in Workers World from 2004 to 2008, is available for free download at workers.org/book/lavender-red/.*

Sunday, June 29, saw a lull between the battles [of the Stonewall Uprising], although many cops were patrolling the streets of the Village, hurling slurs at those milling on the corners and sidewalks, reportedly trying to egg on skirmishes.

As thousands of gays and lesbians — drawing to their leadership and ranks people of color, trans people, street youths — had waged pitched battles with the cops on Friday and Saturday during the early nights of the Stonewall Uprising, a fault line of political difference opened visibly wide between those who had the least to lose and the most to gain from fighting back, and those who favored not rocking the boat.

The tony crowd soaking up a little sun in the Hamptons and Fire Island Pines either ignored news of the rebellion or, as historian Martin Duberman noted, tended to condemn it as "regrettable."

The Mattachine Society had posted a sign on the Stonewall Inn reading, "We homosexuals plead with our people to please help maintain peaceful and quiet conduct on the streets of the Village." Mattachine-New York, according to historian David Carter, "after talking to the mayor's office and the police, joined police efforts to stop the protests. ... Mattachine officials came to the Stonewall Inn and talked to people who showed up in an attempt to discourage them from protesting."

This was a far cry from the early days of the first Mattachine in California at the height of the Cold War 1950s, when communists and other revolutionaries led grassroots organizing to confront widespread police entrapment

and brutality against gay men and the Chicane/Mexican communities.

### 'No longer submissive' to cops

However, a bodacious group of gay youths descended on the Sixth Precinct and plastered the police cruisers, a police arrest van and the personal cars of police officers with luminescent fuchsia and blue bumper stickers demanding "Equality for Homosexuals."

Throughout the Village, teams made up of one male and one female passed out leaflets issued by the Homophile Youth Movement that demanded, "Get the Mafia and the Cops Out of Gay Bars."

Assessments of the changed mood of the LGBTQ population on Christopher Street were voiced from two antithetical directions.

Deputy Inspector Pine, who led the initial raid on the Stonewall Inn, made a remark insulting those who showed individual courage, defiance and resistance in the face of police arrest and imprisonment, beatings and torture.

Nevertheless, his words documented a dramatic overall shift in mass mood in the LGBTQ population: "For those of us in public morals [sic], things were completely changed ... suddenly they were not submissive any more."

Gay male poet Allen Ginsberg visited the Stonewall Inn on Sunday night with Village Voice reporter Lucian Truscott. His later observation to Truscott contains a word that inflicts wounds when used by an anti-gay bigot. Yet speaking about his own community with tender pride, he wrote about the sea change he witnessed: "You know, the guys there were so beautiful—they've lost that wounded look that fags all had 10 years ago."

### Rage still smoldering

David Carter assembled the following firsthand accounts of incidents on Monday through Wednesday from participants. Monday and Tuesday nights were mostly quiet in the Village, as rain soaked

the streets.

Police who tried to pick fights, however, were met with bold responses.

When one arrogant cop at Christopher Street and Waverly twirled his nightstick and hurled insults in the direction of passersby, an individual described as a "wildly 'fem' queen" lit the fuse of a firecracker and detonated it under his feet. The cop landed on his ass on the sidewalk.

The cop shouted and flailed with his club. When the same militant individual tossed another firecracker at him, the crowd fought with the cop and was able to snatch his badge off his uniform.

On Wednesday night, widespread street fighting resumed.

That was the night the Village Voice coverage of the early events in the Stonewall rebellion hit newsstands. Some community members were so enraged by the anti-gay tone of the journalists that they debated torching the Voice's offices that evening.

Carter states, "The second reason that rioting resumed in full force on Wednesday is because various radical Left groups came to protest."

Participant Bob Kohler recalled: "There were more people rioting that could not be easily categorized, and a lot of that had to do with people that came over from other areas. The straight movement moved in heavily that night as a support."

### The left wing of 'gay liberation'

Reports of those of all sexualities who came in support included members of the Black Panther Party, Workers World Party, the Yippies, a group that called itself the Crazies, and other self-identified leftists.

In reality, these were parties and organizations [that already had] memberships of diverse sexualities. And many of the LGBTQ people who fought the cops at Stonewall also self-identified as leftists and revolutionaries.

Struggle erupted around 10 p.m. A chanting crowd, estimated at 500 strong, met a motorcade of police with a shower of bottles.



WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Leslie Feinberg speaking for freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal, New York City, 1999.

Police used their nightsticks to beat back the crowd. Eyewitness Ronnie De Brienza described seeing a friend pummeled by police and dragged off to a patrol car under arrest. "This was it," he said. "From nowhere the crowd swelled to an estimated thousand, and the battle was on."

Those who were there that night describe the battle between police and protesters as ferocious. Once again, eyewitnesses explain, it was the most oppressed who led the struggle. Unarmed protesters fought hard and bravely against police — who were well-protected by equipment and armed to the teeth.

Dick Leitsch, Mattachine-New York leader, observed that night that bodies of Stonewall combatants wounded in battle lay on the streets and sidewalks on Seventh Avenue South between Christopher and West 10th streets.

He concluded: "Young people, many of them queens, were lying on the sidewalk, bleeding from the head, face, mouth, and even the eyes. Others were nursing bruised and often bleeding arms, legs, backs and necks."

Within roughly an hour, the fighting ended. But the battles fought by the most oppressed and most militant layers of the LGBTQ population paved a new road toward revolutionary struggle, with the left wing of "gay liberation" at every barricade. □

## Revolutionaries in action Cleveland's first Pride march

By Martha Grevatt

It might not be obvious today, but the post-Stonewall movement for LGBTQ2S+ liberation began as a very radical movement.

Even the names of early civil rights organizations, such as Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries and Gay Liberation Front — a nod to the National Liberation Front of Vietnam — bear this out. The movement began in the streets as multiply-oppressed gender outlaws fought the cops for several days and nights in the 1969 Stonewall Uprising.

In 1977 it was a few members of Workers World Party who initiated Cleveland's first Gay Pride March — yes, a march, not a "parade."

This was an important year to be in the streets. Anita Bryant, a former beauty pageant winner hired to promote Florida orange juice, was the figurehead leader of a crusade to overturn an anti-discrimination ordinance in Dade County, Fla. The ultimate goal of her organization, Save Our Children (from Homosexuality), was to roll back LGBTQ2S+ rights across the country.

Bryant's hate campaign, built by advancing the most backward stereotypes of LGBTQ2S+ people as child molesters, sparked mass protests from coast to coast and a boycott of Florida citrus products. Bars in the community stopped serving drinks mixed with orange juice.

We formed the Cleveland Gay Pride Day Committee, with support from local activists and the recently formed Ohio Gay Rights Coalition. The immediate goal was to organize a militant response to Bryant, but we also wanted Cleveland to join the many cities that had been celebrating the Stonewall anniversary on an annual basis in June.

At the time there were no LGBTQ2S+ community centers anywhere (although Cleveland's Gay Education and Awareness Resources Foundation opened the first center in the country later that year). Going from bar to bar, disco to disco, we attempted to get a march leaflet in every patron's hand. The response was friendly, but how the march would turn out was a big unknown.

It was a victory when about 250 people came out to march, a huge turnout for

Cleveland's first Stonewall commemoration. The radical organizers used chants, signs and banners to make a militant statement, not only against Bryant and homophobia but all oppression. A banner signed by Youth Against War & Fascism attacked Bryant for also being racist and sexist. (YAWF, WWP's youth group, had formed a Gay Caucus not long after Stonewall.)

There were no corporate sponsors or even bar floats — just grassroots queers in a blue-collar industrial town.

That historic 1977 march did not, unfortunately, start an annual radical tradition in Cleveland right away. The movement in Ohio shifted its focus to the state capital, Columbus, where statewide Pride rallies pushed for protective legislation, rather than a wider radical agenda.

The initiative to go back to marching in Cleveland — while still holding statewide rallies in Columbus — once again came from the left.

In 1990 a lesbian Workers World Party leader argued for a march in downtown Cleveland. Moderate community leaders wanted to only continue the merchant



PHOTO: ALAN ROTH

Youth Against War and Fascism banner at Pride rally in downtown Cleveland, June 1977. Martha Grevatt on microphone.

Pride fair begun in 1989.

But the militants won out, and there has been a Pride march in Cleveland ever since.

It's important to remember the radical roots of Pride — not only on the coasts but in regions of the U.S. where coming out was, and still can be, much harder.

Hats off to today's LGBTQ2S+ youth, especially queer, gender-nonconforming and trans youth of color, who are reviving the militant tradition of the Stonewall Rebellion! □



# Trans fightback!

## The persecution of Caster Semenya

By LeiLani Dowell

The ongoing persecution of South African runner Caster Semenya by the International Association of Athletics Federations has shone a spotlight on the ways sports, under the patriarchal structures of capitalism and imperialism, are used to police and define, in the most unscientific and racist way, rigid definitions of gender.

On May 1, the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) upheld a 2018 IAAF ruling that Semenya would have to medically reduce her naturally high testosterone levels to compete internationally. The IAAF has temporarily suspended the ruling after Semenya filed an appeal on May 29.

Women athletes have been forced to undergo incredibly invasive and humiliating “tests” to “prove” their gender for more than 50 years. In 1966, every woman athlete competing in an international game had to participate in a mandatory inspection of their genitals.

Over time, the IAAF has required only women who have been “flagged” to undergo these procedures, which have ranged from visual inspection of breasts and genitals to chromosome tests and ultrasounds. Once deviations from some elusive “norm” are determined, the commission insists that athletes lower their testosterone levels through either surgical processes or hormone replacement therapy if they want to continue competing.

**Racist policing of sex and gender**

Sports writer Dvora Myers points out that while these kinds of “normalizing” medical practices have routinely been practiced on the nonconsenting bodies of babies and children in the U.S., they have not been standard practice in areas of the Global South. As a result, more athletes from these areas are subject to these kinds

of invasive testing and regulating procedures. (deadspin.com, March 4)

In a 2012 presentation at an international sports science, medicine and education conference in Glasgow, Dr. Stephane Bermon, the director of the IAAF’s Health and Science Department, acknowledged that, in contrast to synthetic testosterone, no studies have actually been done on the ways athletic performance is affected by testosterone produced by the body.

Myers states that this admission exposes the IAAF’s attack on Semenya, which is completely unscientific and random, as “a racist, sexist policy intended to police cultural ideas about what an ideal female body should look like and how it should perform.”

The organization has narrowed its regulations to affect only middle-distance runners — in effect, a direct attack on Semenya, who continues to proudly defy these obstacles. The CAS May 1 ruling against Semenya audaciously declared that “discrimination is a necessary, reasonable and proportionate means of achieving the IAAF’s aim of preserving the integrity of female athletics.”

Athletics South Africa, the national governing body for sport in South Africa, responded: “South Africa knows discrimination better, and CAS has seen fit to open the wounds of apartheid, a system of discrimination condemned by the whole world as a crime against humanity.” (athletics.org.za, May 1)

**Centuries of attacks on Black women**

The particular focus on Semenya has a centuries-old tradition in depiction and scrutiny of Black women’s bodies as unnatural and not womanly. In the early 1800s, Sarah Baartman, a Khoikhoi woman from the Cape of Good Hope area in modern-day South Africa, was displayed in England as a circus attraction. Under the

pejorative name of the “Hottentot Venus,” the main focus of the living exhibit was Baartman’s “abnormally” large buttocks. The “Hottentot apron,” a name coined for the elongated labia of Khoikhoi women, had been sensationalized through travel journals and the texts of “naturalists.”

After Baartman’s death, the British government gave her body to renowned French naturalist George Cuvier, who dissected it and displayed her labia at a French Academy of Science meeting. Baartman’s skeleton and a plaster cast of her body were still on display at the Muséum d’histoire naturelle d’Angers until the late 20th century, when her remains were returned to South Africa as a symbol of postcolonial nationalist pride.

These kinds of actions — with a throughline to the IAAF’s rulings and regulations — set up a rigid definition of femininity that ignores the vast diversity of bodies, identities and expressions found in nature, and explicitly targets the bodies of Black women as the prime example of deviancy. It includes the scrutiny and ridicule of tennis sensation Serena Williams’ body, as well as her outspokenness in response to the racism and sexism she faces on the court.

And yet, in sports some advantages are celebrated — as long as they belong to the right bodies. Washington Post columnist Monica Hesse asks why acclaimed Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps’ documented genetic benefits — including double-jointed ankles and the production of less lactic acid (which causes fatigue) than the average athlete — are not subject to the same kinds of critique as Semenya’s testosterone levels. (May 2)

**Unregulated advantages of race, class, nation**

Meanwhile, the advantages of race, class and nation are unregulated and, in



PHOTO: VIA FACEBOOK

Caster Semenya

fact, ignored in favor of a false narrative of equality, as if every athlete from every country has access to the best nutrition, training facilities and coaches.

Dutee Chand, who recently became India’s first openly gay athlete after going public about her sexuality, successfully challenged an IAAF ruling that would have required her to lower her testosterone levels in 2015. She stated: “This wasn’t just about me, but about all women like me, who come from difficult backgrounds. It is mostly people from poor backgrounds who come into running — people who know they will get food, housing, a job, if they run well.” (New York Times, June 27, 2016)

However, sports also have the potential to be a unifying, liberating force. Powerlifter Mary Gregory says, “In lifting, you see people of all different shapes and sizes under the bar, and it doesn’t matter what you look like or how big you are, how small you are, how pretty you are. It’s just about what you can do and what you might be capable of. That’s such an empowering thing, and it really gave me the strength to handle everything.” (Washington Post, May 19)

Gregory, a transgender woman, was stripped May 1 of the awards she won at a 100% Raw Powerlifting Federation competition in Richmond after officials claimed she should have competed in the men’s division.

Like Semenya, she has vowed to continue fighting to compete in the sport she loves. Semenya recently told the press: “I always run every day. For me it is my daily bread. I really don’t have time for nonsense.” (theguardian.com, June 11) □

### Portland, Ore. Trans and nonbinary community pours out for Pride



PHOTO: KENDALL KENDALL

In response to the takeover of Portland Pride by corporations and the cops, over a thousand trans people and allies rallied and marched June 15 to demand an end to the murder of Black and of color trans women and nonbinary people. In the past 30 days at least five have been killed in the U.S. and eight so far in 2019.

Other demands included housing, emergency shelter, health care for trans

and nonbinary youth, abortion rights — specifically, reproductive justice and rights for Black women — and the end of racism, capitalism, ableism and patriarchy. Greater Portland Trans Pride Unity, a coalition of 25 community organizations, organized the event.

— Report by Johnnie Lewis

### New York City Outrage over death of transgender woman



WW PHOTO: HENRY LUNA

Layleen Polanco.

Justice for Layleen Polanco protest, June 10.

Members of Workers World Party and New York City People’s Power Assemblies joined several hundred people in Manhattan’s Foley Square June 10 to demand justice for Layleen Polanco Xtravaganza, an Afro-Latinx transgender woman who died June 7 while incarcerated at the notoriously abusive Rikers Island prison. Layleen Polanco Xtravaganza was an iconic member of the House of Xtravaganza, a well-known “house” in the NYC ballroom scene, and her death sparked outrage in the community.

While supporters at the rally called for a fully transparent investigation into the cause of her death, of which the NYC Department of Corrections had not

released any details, they blamed the cause of her death on anti-trans violence in the so-called “criminal justice” system itself.

Layleen Polanco Xtravaganza had been in Rikers Island for two months because she could not afford \$500 cash bail. Even though she was placed in a special unit for trans people to prevent anti-trans violence, these measures did not prevent her death.

Rikers Island needs to be dismantled, along with the entire mass incarceration system in the U.S. After the rally, her supporters took to the streets and marched through downtown Manhattan.

— Report by John Steffin



# Ongoing repercussions from the Central Park Five case

By Workers World New York City bureau

The four-part Netflix series “When They See Us,” directed by African-American director Ava DuVernay, has set off an avalanche of long overdue repercussions for the high-profile prosecutors who in 1989 framed up five African-American and Latinx youth in New York City. Known as the Central Park Five, the teenagers were arrested, prosecuted and sentenced as guilty for the sexual assault of a white woman, Trisha Meili, referred to in the press as the “Central Park jogger.”

The case garnered both national and international attention due to the extreme racist demonization of these youth, now in their 40s, by the New York Police Department, the courts and the mainstream media. Donald Trump, a publicity-seeking New York real estate developer, actually called for the death penalty for these youth, and to this day has refused to publicly apologize to the Five.

The Five spent seven to 13 years of their life in prison until they were exonerated in 2002, when Matias Reyes, already in prison, confessed to the rape, and his DNA matched evidence from the victim.

The DuVernay series details how the New York police coerced false confessions from the youths with physical and psychological torture, and then railroaded Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson, Yusef Salam, Raymond Santana, and Corey Wise to jail for the attack. The series also dramatizes the emotional toll of the racist media frenzy and frame-up.

In the aftermath of the series exposé, Linda Fairstein, who in 1989 was head of the Sex Crimes Prosecution Unit in the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office, has lost the publisher of her crime novels, Dutton, as well as her agent, ICM Publishing.

She has also resigned from the boards of Vassar College and Safe Horizon, a victims’ resource group.

Elizabeth Lederer, lead prosecutor in



The Central Park Five, from left to right, Kevin Richardson, Antron McCray, Raymond Santana Jr., Korey Wise and Yusef Salaam, attend the premiere of "When They See Us" at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, N.Y., on May 20.

the case, has resigned from her job as a lecturer at Columbia Law School. That action was called for by the school’s Black Students Organization, whose online petition received over 11,000 signatures as of this writing.

That petition also calls for Columbia to revoke Fairstein’s Award of Excellence, made by the university’s School of Medicine.

On Twitter there is a popular hashtag called #cancelLindaFairstein.

### ‘When They See Us’ shines light on repression

Other demands prompted by DuVernay’s series include reopening all cases handled by Lederer and Fairstein between 1976 and 2002. Called for by New York legal defense groups and the city’s Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, these forces also call for the Manhattan DA to fire Lederer, who still serves as an assistant DA and is called “an attorney in good standing” by Manhattan DA Cyrus Vance.

Raymond Santana, one of the five, has also called for the release of unredacted depositions, which would show the extent of the police lying and coercion.

It took DuVernay’s powerful

dramatization of the NYPD’s racist coercion tactics to accomplish what many voices had been urging for years. After Sarah Burns’ excellent documentary, “The Central Park Five,” came out in 2012, the Columbia Black Law Students Association circulated a petition calling for Lederer’s removal.

However, in a June 11 letter, the association stated that in 2013: “Instead of taking decisive action to address the issue, Columbia Law School simply removed the Central Park jogger case from Lederer’s online bio.”

The confession by Reyes in 2002 should have been a career-ending moment for legions of New York power players — not only prosecutors, but also cops and media forces — whose racist tag-team recalled the railroading of the Scottsboro 9 during the 1930s and the lynching of 14-year-old Emmett Till in 1955.

But no. After that, Fairstein went on to a lucrative career writing New York Times bestseller crime novels.

The difference this time around is that DuVernay’s series has struck a chord with the masses. It has been seen worldwide by millions of people. “When They See Us” is Netflix’s most-viewed show every day

since it premiered on May 31. In Britain, it’s the online channel’s second-most-watched show.

While the falsely accused Five received a \$41 million settlement, which can never give back their youth, the city of New York has never apologized or acknowledged wrongdoing.

For her part, Fairstein is doubling down, using the Wall Street Journal to attack DuVernay’s film. She claims it’s “so full of distortions and falsehoods as to be an outright fabrication.” (Washington Post, June 11)

Because the testimony by the Five was coerced, it was so inconsistent it was branded inadmissible by Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance when the convictions were vacated in 2002. Yet Fairstein not only relies on that coerced testimony; she resurrects the old prosecution theory that there was another assailant, not Reyes — whom none of the framed-up youth ever mentioned in the “testimony” she relies on!

Amazingly, Fairstein claims she supported vacating the charges in 2002, but resurrects the old racist NYPD argument that even if they didn’t commit the crime that Reyes did, they were still up to no good.

At this point, the strongest role being played by any apologist for the conviction of the Five is to cover up for the current crimes of the NYPD and all police. Fairstein and others join the ranks of NYPD lawyer Stuart London, who on June 13 claimed Eric Garner died not from Daniel Pantaleo’s chokehold, which the whole world witnessed, but because of his plus size.

Both the gangster-style gunning down of Brandon Webber in Memphis, Tenn., on June 12 and the violent racist police assault on May 27 of a young Black family after their 4-year-old left a Family Dollar store in Phoenix with a 99-cent doll — are the kinds of events that NYPD spokespeople are defending. They strengthen the chord that DuVernay’s series has struck. □

## FRANCE

# PRCF presents solidarity message for Mumia Abu-Jamal

June 17 — The Pole of Communist Renaissance in France (PRCF) presented the following message last week in solidarity with U.S. political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal to the U.S. ambassador in Paris. Translation by John Catalinotto.

Total solidarity with Mumia Abu-Jamal and with all anti-imperialist and anti-racist activists in the United States of America!

Known as the "Voice of the voiceless" in Philadelphia, a tireless advocate for the poor, workers and discriminated minorities, U.S. journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal has been imprisoned for decades by Pennsylvania's racist "justice" system.

Unable to have him executed, the authorities sentenced Mumia to die in prison slowly without even providing him with the urgent medical care required by his state of health.

The PRCF national conference held in Paris on June 1 and 2, 2019, unanimously reaffirmed its humanitarian and political solidarity with Mumia and expressed its admiration for the steadfast example of firmness, internationalist solidarity, indomitable courage and unwavering love of life that [Mumia] gives to everyone in



the depths of their penitentiary.

Unconditional freedom for Mumia, shame on the U.S. rulers who dare to use "human rights" to interfere in the affairs of other countries (Venezuela, Cuba, Iraq, Iran, Nicaragua, Syria, Afghanistan, Korean peninsula, etc.) while treating U.S. militants involved in the fight against imperialism in an inhuman way.

By unanimous agreement at the national conference on June 2, 2019, signed by Pierre Pranchère, Chairman of the International Commission; Aymeric Monville, Secretary; Daniel Antonini, Assistant Secretary; and joined by Georges Gastaud, National Secretary of the PRCF, and Fadi Kassem, Deputy National Secretary. □

## Come out for Pride at 50! Come out for Workers World!

June is Pride month. Rallies and marches worldwide are commemorating the 50th anniversary of the historic Stonewall Rebellion! From the beginning, Workers World Party has a proud history of reporting on and participating in the living struggle for LGBTQ2S justice and equality. Foremost these days is fighting transgender oppression, to stop right-wing legislative attacks on both trans and gender-nonconforming youth and adults and to stop brutal physical attacks and murders, which especially target trans women of color.

Do you know that Workers World has made major theoretical contributions to the LGBTQ2S struggle? One was publication of “The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View” (World View Forum, third ed., 1993), which drew on Frederick Engels and Dorothy Ballan for a dialectical materialist explanation of LGBTQ2S oppression. Another was the body of work of Leslie Feinberg, a proud WWP leader, who created the first Marxist analysis of transgender history and struggle in such books as “Transgender Warriors: Making History,” “Transgender Liberation: Beyond Pink and Blue” and “Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba.”

That analysis drives Workers World’s view that the LGBTQ2S struggle is an integral component of the overall struggle



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

The banner of the Gay Caucus of YAWF (Youth Against War & Fascism of Workers World Party) at New York City Pride march in the early 1970s.

to end patriarchy and capitalist oppression. So if you want to both fight for the liberation of LGBTQ2S people and struggle against capitalist exploitation, help build Workers World newspaper.

We invite you to join the WW Supporter Program, which was set up 43 years ago to help us publish anti-racist, anti-sexist, pro-LGBTQ2S, working-class truth and build campaigns needed to crush capitalism and usher in socialism. Write checks to Workers World and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or click on Donate on workers.org. Know that we are grateful for your help in building the revolutionary press in the U.S. □



## PORTLAND

# Activists demand 'U.S. Hands off Venezuela!'

By Joshua Hanks  
Portland, Ore.

Activists and organizers with the Hands Off Venezuela PDX coalition hosted an event June 15 at the Sunnyside Community Center in Portland's southeast neighborhood. Featured speakers were Dan Shea, president of the Portland chapter of Veterans For Peace, and Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center and Workers World Party representative. The event was moderated by Christopher McLaughlin of Hands Off Venezuela PDX and Democratic Socialists of America.

Shea and Flounders traveled in March to Venezuela as part of a peace delegation, which included 2016 Green Party Vice Presidential candidate Ajamu Baraka and many others. These two reporters told of their experiences in the country which has recently been rocked by a U.S.-backed coup attempt and sabotage of its electrical grid after years of sanctions and imperialist interference. Shea and Flounders told of the massive support in Venezuela for the pro-socialist government led by President Nicolás Maduro. Their remarks were in stark contrast to the lies and distortions in much of the U.S. media.

The Venezuelan constitution was created with the mass involvement of the people. The Bolivarian government has made huge investments in social programs, which have extended health care

and education to many working-class people, primarily Indigenous and Black Venezuelans. Also, millions of units of public housing have been built.

The working people of Venezuela regularly come out into the streets to defend their country from right-wing, U.S.-backed sabotage and counterrevolution. Reactionary opposition demonstrations, which were planned to take place during the peace delegation's visit, attracted relatively few protesters, while thousands of Chavistas filled the streets and squares of Caracas to support the Bolivarian government.

## Sanctions = a silent killer

Speakers discussed the impact of the U.S.-led sanctions. They highlighted the fact that thousands of people have died due to lack of life-saving medications. The sanctions were described as a silent killer which harms, even kills, civilians—children, women and men. This brutal impact of the sanctions receives little, if any, coverage in the corporate media.

Portrayed as a "humane" alternative to war by many in the imperialist ruling class, sanctions are anything but that. Flounders reported meeting Venezuelan government agricultural experts who are developing a system of sustainable urban agriculture to address food insufficiency resulting from the sanctions. Rooftops, yards and empty lots are being converted into gardens, while small animal husbandry, primarily

chickens and rabbits, is being promoted to provide local, sustainable sources of protein.

The Venezuelans reported that they have received technical support from experts from Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea—all countries with deep historical experience in building functional agricultural systems while under extreme imperialist attacks.

The peace delegation met with President Maduro, who extended his gratitude to the anti-war, anti-imperialist movement in the U.S. for the work it has done opposing U.S. imperialism from within the "belly of the beast." The delegation attained somewhat celebrity status while it was in Venezuela, with many residents intrigued by the visit of a U.S. group which opposes U.S. imperialist aggression.

## Q&A exposes Guaidó, supports Maduro

A question-and-answer session followed Flounders and Shea's description of their visit. In reply to a query about the nature of the opposition movement, Shea and Flounders explained that it was disorganized and beset with infighting.

Juan Guaidó, the U.S.-backed, self-proclaimed coup leader who contends he is the legitimate interim president of Venezuela, doesn't even have the support of all those in the opposition movement.



WW PHOTO: JOSHUA HANKS

Hands Off Venezuela on June 15, left to right, Sara Flounders, Dan Shea and Christopher McLaughlin.

And Guaidó certainly does not have the support of the Venezuelan masses who largely back Maduro's democratically elected government.

After the public event, Shea and Flounders met with members of the Hands Off Venezuela PDX coalition to discuss the next steps for the anti-war, anti-imperialist group. While the latest anti-Maduro coup attempt appears to have failed—with the opposition falling into disarray—it is still critically important for all anti-war, anti-imperialist forces to loudly and publicly keep the pressure on U.S. warmakers and proponents of the deadly sanctions. □

# War of words over Venezuela's future

By Marco Teruggi  
Caracas

*This article was published in pagina12.com.ar on June 10. Translation by Michael Otto.*

Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, has four seasons: spring, summer, autumn and Caribbean. All of them fit within a day and a night. They overlap. They create rhythms and dramas, especially for motorcyclists who flee the daily downpours. In only 10 minutes the sky seems to have emptied. It's everyday life in a city where the country's national politics are almost totally concentrated. What happens outside the capital is news when it involves strategic territories in the geography of war.

One of those territories borders Colombia. Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro announced the reopening [June 8] of the international crossing between the state of Táchira, Venezuela, and the city of Cúcuta, Colombia. This story made headline news on Feb. 22 and 23 when the border bridges were transformed into a Hollywood set for a hostile attempt to enter Venezuelan territory by force. The reopening took place within a zone that normally combines fuel smuggling and Colombian paramilitarism with economic and media attacks on Venezuela.

Media attention to self-proclaimed "president" Juan Guaidó has accompanied him into his decline. He spent barely four months in an ascension catapulted by [U.S. President] Donald Trump's support for his current attempts to stick to his plan to replace Maduro. Guaidó's tendency to lose strength is due to his own inability to fulfill his promises. This arose from his initial miscalculation, which led him to announce the imminent fall of President Maduro's government.

What kind of outcome did Trump have

in mind when he blessed Guaidó with a tweet? One similar to what happened with the conflict that [Washington] opened against Mexico on May 30 and was resolved last Friday night [June 7]. That threat was based on an asymmetry of power, the cornering of the adversary and a forced negotiation with Trump's shots fired via Twitter.

Then Trump used the result with Mexico to display an international trophy for his domestic program, which is already taking the form of a presidential campaign. Defeating Bolivarian Venezuela was also supposed to be a quick victory.

But it didn't work for four reasons: Venezuela diversified its markets—mainly with China and Russia—to seek a way out of the economic blockade. The Bolivarian government was able to counter such scenarios due to their experiences in 2014 and 2017 [when faced with right-wing violence]. The coup plotters were unable to crack the Bolivarian National Armed Forces. And the practice of holding regular mobilizations in the streets was a way to support the internal balance of power within Chavismo, among other things.

## Opposition forces divided

This is compounded by what U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo recognized: the divisions and personal ambitions within the Venezuelan right wing. "Keeping the Venezuelan opposition united has been diabolically difficult for us," he said in a recent audio, adding that 40 opposition figures have presidential ambitions. (venezuelanalysis.com, June 6)



This division within the opposition is public. One sector maintains that force alone can lead to the fall of Maduro and does not recognize Chavismo as a political player. Another states that the outcome may include dialogue with Chavismo, provided that the roadmap begins with the departure of the current president. Still another remains cautious in its statements in view of the present lack of clarity surrounding the situation.

Elliott Abrams, U.S. special envoy for Venezuela, stated in an article in the June 5 Miami Herald that the resolution of the conflict should pass, in part, through the departure of Nicolás Maduro and the recognition of the National Assembly by Chavismo. In other words, representatives will return to the National Assembly chamber.

Three interpretations follow: First, Abrams' public message maintains that President Maduro must leave, while at the same time it recognizes Chavismo—mainly the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV)—as a political actor in Abrams' scenario for the future. Second, that one of the core points of the current attempt at debate and dialogue concerns legislative authority, which include both the National Assembly and the National Constituent Assembly—and a possible electoral resolution. Third, Abrams seeks to divide

Chavismo with his words in order to create false paths. These private and public machinations are aimed at locating points where Chavistas might split.

## End the U.S. blockade!

Maduro has referred to the National Assembly on several occasions. He has repeatedly stated that Chavismo must prepare for an early election campaign and has reaffirmed the constituents' decision to extend the National Constituent Assembly's operation until the end of 2020. As for economic issues, the Venezuelan government demands that the U.S. blockade must end, while John Bolton, U.S. national security advisor, states that it will be intensified, particularly in the oil sector.

Those are the last public statements of each side. It is not yet known if there will be another round of negotiations in Oslo, Norway's capital, the city where the first steps have been taken [in meetings this spring]. In a statement in which he expressed his support for a peaceful resolution, President Vladimir Putin of Russia confirmed that his government is neither creating a military base in Venezuela nor deploying troops.

Putin declared: "Let's elect a U.S. president, a British prime minister, a French president like that. What will it be?—where would that lead? I would like to ask those who support this kind of thing—Have you gone mad? Do you understand where this can lead?" (AFP, June 6)

Putin was referring to what is at stake with Guaidó's self-proclamation as Venezuela's president. Putin's statements were made during the meeting attended by People's Republic of China President Xi Jinping at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, where cooperation agreements were signed between Venezuela and Russia. □



# No war on Iran!

The U.S. government is charging that on June 13 Iran attacked two oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz -- the Norwegian-owned MT Front Altair and the Japanese-owned Kokuka Courageous.

The threat of yet another U.S. military aggression in an area already devastated by decades of war is very real. Everyone opposed to such a horrific possibility must do all they can to stop it.

The U.S. charge is preposterous. Governments of other imperialist countries allied in the past with the U.S. are already voicing their skepticism.

Why on earth would Iran attack a Japanese oil tanker at the very moment when the prime minister of Japan was visiting Iran? Shinzo Abe, who was in

Tehran for talks with the Iranian government, called for all countries to refrain from taking actions that could escalate tensions. He made the appeal right after a telephone call with Donald Trump, who had immediately blamed Iran for the attacks and called Iran “a nation of terror.”

Iran, of course, has no warships, planes or submarines terrorizing the whole world. The U.S. does.

The U.S. administration is claiming it has a video of Iranians removing a mine from one of the ships. But Yutaka Katada, president of the Japanese ship company, called reports of a mine attack “false” because damage to the ship was above the water line and sailors on board had

seen “flying objects” before the attack that could have been bullets.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif called the accusations part of a plot by hawkish politicians in the U.S. and the region.

Not even established bourgeois news outlets are buying the Trump administration’s story.

The New Yorker magazine already has an article online about the many phony excuses the U.S. government has used over the decades to justify its military aggression. That article starts out: “The United States has a long history of provoking, instigating or launching wars based on dubious, flimsy or manufactured threats.”

It cites the explosion of the battleship Maine in Havana harbor that the U.S. used to whip up support for the 1898 war with Spain. (It was later proved the Maine blew up, not from a Spanish mine, but from a fire onboard.) Also named as “threats” invented by the U.S. were the phony Gulf of Tonkin “attack” used to justify escalating troops in Vietnam in 1964; and the “intelligence” about Iraqi “weapons of mass destruction” manufactured to facilitate the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The very real threats of more murder and mayhem, issued right now by the U.S. ruling class and its death machine, cry out for militant opposition.

No war on Iran! Stop this war before it starts! □

## Iran stays firm as U.S. threatens attack

*Continued from page 1*

the German, French and British governments said in a joint statement that the U.S. decision to re-impose sanctions on Iran was “deeply regretful.” It was an early sign that the U.S. ruling class could no longer just snap its fingers and round up its imperialist allies — which are also rivals — to rubber stamp its every act of aggression.

Nevertheless, the war danger remains. The Pentagon is moving more troops to the area, and the Trump administration is ratcheting up its threats against Iran.

It is the duty of anti-war forces in this country to view this seriously and take to the streets to resist this blatant aggression.

### Where is Congress?

Where is the U.S. Congress in all this? This is the season when all eyes are supposedly focused on next year’s elections for both the presidency and the Congress, as though that will determine what happens in the future.

The U.S. Constitution is absolutely clear: Only Congress can declare war.

But the last time that happened was in 1942, in the middle of World War II, when the U.S. declared war on Nazi-occupied Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. In the 77 years since then, U.S. presidents have sent young people to kill, die or be permanently maimed in dozens of undeclared wars.

All those who hold up the U.S. political system as a model of “democracy” should be held to account for this usurpation of power by the executive.

Of all the branches of government in this country, the U.S. House of Representatives is presumably the most democratic. But in fact both houses of Congress have long been a rubber stamp for military aggressions demanded by the rapacious billionaire class, which has ground up the bodies of so many, here and abroad, in its insatiable drive for super-profits.

### War and economic crisis

This threat of war is playing out at a time when most governments are bracing themselves for a major downturn in the global capitalist economy. This decline has already started in important areas of production and in the deepening trade wars, but has yet to be reflected in the major stock markets.

Tellingly, the futures price of Brent crude oil, which had hit a five-month low of less than \$60 a barrel the day before the attacks, had a brief but sharp rise on June 13, when it looked like a U.S. war on oil-producing Iran was imminent. When

the prospects of that ebbed, as other Western imperialist countries refrained from endorsing Washington’s claims, the price of oil sank again the next day.

Nothing makes the profiteers salivate more than a juicy military intervention. For now, that hasn’t happened, and the markets as of June 15 reflected that. But there are no guarantees that the reckless cabal in Washington will back off from its threats against Iran.

At \$60 a barrel, U.S. companies that produce oil through the expensive—and environmentally horrendous—extraction method of fracking can’t compete with oil pumped from wells. These companies want higher prices, and they want them now.

But the sinking commodity prices are a sign of capitalist overproduction on a global scale, and overproduction intensifies the fierce inter-capitalist competition for markets. A decline in the price of oil can also reflect pessimism about future economic activity.

### Environment takes a back seat to profits

Even in this day and age, when the burning of fossil fuels has been proven beyond a doubt to be warming the planet and causing more and more deadly extremes of weather, the struggle over oil profits continues to be a major driver of capitalist competition and national antagonisms.

It is shocking to think that another war could be started in order to control the profits from a resource that is hazardous to the future of the whole world. But should anyone expect the capitalist rulers to be sensitive and caring about long-term global warming, when their system is driven by the dog-eat-dog daily struggle for profit and they are willing to create enormous human and environmental catastrophes with their wars?

### U.S. targets oil-producing nations

It is no coincidence that the vast majority of countries subjected to U.S. military attacks over the past several decades have been oil-producing nations.

Just think about what the Pentagon and CIA have been doing: 1991, bombing attack and partial invasion of Iraq; 1998, cruise missile strikes on Sudan; 2003, invasion and occupation of Iraq; 2011, bombing of Libya and the murder of Muammar Gaddafi; 2012, beginning of war against Syria; 2014, airstrikes on Iraq and Syria.

Not to speak of the ongoing U.S. efforts to bring down the Venezuelan government with sanctions and coup attempts.

All of them are oil-producing countries. But not only that.

They are all countries that had been

oppressed and exploited by European colonial powers. They had achieved a measure of sovereignty after a wave of liberation struggles brought about decolonization.

And precisely because they are oil producers, they had the wherewithal to successfully build up their national economies.

However, because of imperialist interventions in the Middle East, led by the U.S. but also participated in by the European NATO powers, many of these countries are today in tatters, their economies destroyed by war and their people traumatized to such a degree that they have no future and are fleeing by the millions.

This is the cause of the im/migration crisis facing much of Europe today, and that is a factor in the reluctance of these imperialist countries to be dragged into yet another war.

### Iran’s tortured past

The latest threats against Iran are nothing new. U.S. imperialist governments, both Republican and Democrat, have had the country in their crosshairs since 1951, when a movement for national sovereignty led by Mohammad Mossadegh nationalized what had been the Anglo-Persian Oil Co.

Two years later, a CIA coup led by Kermit Roosevelt Jr. overthrew the nationalist government and installed the Shah, who allowed U.S. and British companies to take over the oil again. Roosevelt himself soon became an executive of Gulf Oil.

## Revolutionary queer and trans people protest anti-Black national anthem

*Continued from page 2*

a vendor because the organization was not selling anything (as is always the case). Also Strive did not pay the vendor fee because the \$75 fee is an outrageous amount of money to pay at a Pride event in order to be visible.

In response to Strive giving away free materials to people, Gay Grassroots again called the cops — the second time cops were summoned against Strive in the same day at this so-called Pride event.

Despite not selling anything, Strive agreed to take its table down and continued a successful distribution on foot, receiving much support.

But one cannot overlook the alarming reality that a “progressive” LGBT organization called the cops on a group of transgender and gender nonconforming

people — an act of violence that endangers people who face disproportionately high rates of police brutality.

And the Pensacola cops were called at a Pride event that marked the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, which was led by queer, gender nonconforming, trans people of color fighting police brutality!

This “rainbow capitalism” is a political plague in our LGBTQ2S+ movement that must be contained, fought and eradicated. Groups like Strive are working to do just that. There are already talks about an alternative Pride next year in northwest Florida: no cops, no corporate sponsors, no capitalist politicians, no big money, taken from the people and never accounted for again!

Such a Pride would follow Strive’s principle: All money from the community must be put back into the community. □



# Haitians in the streets stage general strike

By G. Dunkel

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. An audit, ordered by a Haitian court and released the end of May, found that between \$2 billion and \$4 billion in funds generated by Venezuela's PetroCaribe oil-purchasing program were lost due to corruption during the two years Jovenel Moïse of the Bald-Headed Haitian Party (PHTK) has been president.

But it wasn't just corruption that drew hundreds of thousands of Haitians into the streets throughout the country on June 9. Inflation has chewed up big chunks of income of the 60 percent of Haitians living below the poverty line (\$2.40 a day). According to the World Bank, inflation is currently 15 percent.

Jerry Tardieu, who represents the relatively well-off community of Pétienville in the National Assembly, made the point in a June 12 AlterPresse interview that when Moïse became president, 66 gourdes (Haitian currency) could buy one dollar; now it takes 100.

The nationwide demonstrations June 9, which took place in Cap Haïtien, St. Marc, Jacmel and Gonaïves, as well as Port-au-Prince, the capital, had a single demand: President Moïse resign and go to jail along with his cronies from the PHTK.

In Port-au-Prince, according to the June 12 Haïti-Liberté, "[O]pposition figures and radios reported at least seven killed and over 100 wounded by gunfire from police and government-aligned gangs." The march began peacefully, but when it reached the area around the Champ de Mars and the National Palace, the cops attacked.

On June 10, Radio France International reported that the cops used live rounds, while two buildings were set on fire. YouTube video clips show the demonstration breaking into smaller groups that scattered over the area around the National Palace.

The French embassy, a supermarket and a big



PHOTO: ALTERPRESSE

In Port-au-Prince, June 9, Haitians on general strike demand to know: "Where is the PetroCaribe money?"

movie theater were some of the targets singled out by protesters.

Then on June 10 and 11, Port-au-Prince was almost completely paralyzed by a general strike that shut down public transportation and most businesses, banks, schools, factories and government offices. According to Yves Pierre-Louis, news director of Radio Timoun, which is housed at the Aristide Foundation for Democracy, "[F]or these first two days, we can say the strike succeeded close to 100 percent."

The general strike involved street barricades made from burning tires, rocks and billboards.

Since this is the time of year that Haitian schools conduct exams, teachers and students who went on strike were risking a semester or, in some cases, a year's worth of school work.

It is clear that certain significant bourgeois figures are now in opposition to Moïse and his cronies, who most certainly have been rejected by the masses of the Haitian people. Given that the United States was so involved in selecting Haiti's president, its conduct in the current struggle is going to play an important role in the outcome. □

# Portland march defends Philippine sovereignty



PHOTO: FULL REVOLUTION MEDIA

In Oregon June 15, BAYAN USA-Pacific Northwest and Malaya Movement Pacific Northwest held a high-spirited march and banner drop off Portland's Hawthorne Bridge to raise awareness about the U.S.-backed war that President Rodrigo Duterte is waging on workers and peasants in the Philippines.

The next day the Portland Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines held a "From Portland to the Philippines" potluck.

The event was a fundraiser to send local organizers to the Philippines to work with peasants and workers oppressed by U.S. military aid sent to the islands. PCHRP's Facebook page reads: "Over 30,000 peasants, farmers, youth, human rights and land defenders have been murdered by President Rodrigo Duterte's U.S.-funded War on Drugs. Communities are harassed and surveilled by local military and police to aid multinational corporations in their theft of natural resources to be exported overseas. While forests are logged, some of the most biodiverse ecosystems in the world are destroyed." (Facebookportlandhrp)

— Report by Lyn Neeley

# #LulaLivre Free Luiz Inacio 'Lula' da Silva

*The following is a statement released June 11 by The International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity, a network of concerned individuals from several countries in Europe, Latin America and North America dedicated to help defend the sovereignty of developing nations. Formerly the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban 5, the ICPJD's main objective is now to raise awareness among the people of the United States about the effects of the U.S. blockade against the Cuban people, and to defend developing nations.*

Since 2016 we have been denouncing the judicial, media and parliamentary coup against Dilma Rousseff, who was stripped from power, with the aim of destroying the Workers' Party of Brazil (PT) and its historic leader Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva in order to prevent him from returning to the presidency.

Removing Dilma from power, replacing her with the usurper Michel Temer, launching a fierce persecution against Lula, imprisoning him without evidence, violating constitutional guarantees of the right to due process, and preventing him [from being] a candidate in the elections was the script used to prevent him from redirecting the destiny of Latin America's largest country.

The judicial plot concocted in the Lava Jato operation, initially promoted by the PT itself, was directed by the prosecutor of the Federal Public Ministry, Deltan Dallagnol, who formed the "anti-corruption" prosecutors' task force, the case of which fell intentionally to former

examining magistrate Sergio Moro, who was awarded the post of Minister of Justice by the current far-right President Jair Bolsonaro.

We have always claimed that Lula was innocent, that Lula was the object of a political witch hunt, as are other Latin American leaders such as Cristina Fernández of Argentina, Jorge Glass and Rafael Correa of Ecuador.

This past Sunday, June 9, the Brazilian correspondent for the digital magazine The Intercept brought to light the truth by publishing a series of telegram messages that highlight the gross violations of the Brazilian Constitution and the irregularities committed by Sergio Moro and Prosecutor Dallagnol to plot the condemnation of Lula and ultimately gave Bolsonaro power.

Concerning the ownership of Guarujá's famous apartment, for which Lula was accused and convicted of owning but never did, prosecutor Dallagnol himself expressed doubts about how to build the case to indict the PT leader. Judge Moro, who always boasted of supposed impartiality, was in fact the one who suggested, advised and indicated how to invent and carry out the crude assembly of corruption to incriminate Lula.

Moro always denied it was all politically motivated against Lula, but what The Intercept revealed proves otherwise. Moro consulted Dallagnol and guided him in the investigations; in one of the chats he suggests contacting a source against Lula. Dallagnol later explains that he called the source, but the source wouldn't talk. "I'm thinking of making a

subpoena [to the source], even based on apocryphal news," says Dallagnol.

The montage to criminalize the PT, Dilma and Lula was brewed for more than two years, from 2015 to 2017. In 2018, prosecutors coordinated how to prevent an interview with Lula requested by the Folha de Sao Paulo newspaper and authorized by Brazil's Federal Supreme Court prior to the elections. They [needed] to prevent Lula from publicly asking the people to vote for Fernando Haddad. In one of the leaked messages a prosecutor says: "The decision (of the Supreme Court to authorize the interview) has no date, so we can schedule it after the election."

Lula was silenced to favor the election of Bolsonaro who presented himself to the electorate as the champion of anti-corruption.

The messages that [have] come to light reveal the sinister plot against Lula and hatred of the PT. Glenn Greenwald, an investigative reporter for The Intercept, ... [a] prestigious journalist awarded the Pulitzer for revealing Edward Snowden's revelations about the secret PRISM surveillance program, assures that "the file provided by our source is one of the largest in the history of journalism." It contains explosive secrets in chats, audios and documents about Dallagnol, Moro and many powerful factions. Our reporting is just beginning."

This developing Morogate could be transformed into a Brazilgate [to end Bolsonaro's presidency]; it reminds us of the infamous Watergate case and how the revelations of two journalists about the illegal wiretapping at the headquarters



of the Democratic Party ended [U.S. President] Nixon's government.

Moro and Dallagnol acted in a calculated, coordinated manner, mocking the Constitution of Brazil and the principle of impartiality, to imprison Lula and prevent the triumph of the PT.

The flawed trial against Lula must be annulled.

The International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity demands once again the immediate freedom of Lula, the public recognition of his innocence and the decriminalization of the PT.

Sergio Moro, Dallagnol and all those who mocked the principle of justice to strip Dilma of power, condemn Lula and hand Brazil over to the hands of the fascist Bolsonaro are the ones who must be tried and condemned.

We hope our solidarity will reach the people and workers of Brazil who will paralyze the country, demanding respect for their rights and gains achieved, and the freedom of Lula, in the general strike they will carry out on June 14.

A lot of strength to the workers, peasants and students of Brazil. Much strength and hope to Lula who will soon be free. #LulaLivre. □





FOTO: GRANMA

El Primero de Mayo de 2019, La Habana, Cuba.

# La guerra de clases contra los niños migrantes

## MUNDO OBRERO editorial

A medida que los años de la guerra de Estados Unidos contra inmigrantes se extienden a décadas, se hace difícil imaginar qué horror adicional podría infligir este gobierno capitalista de supremacía blanca a las personas que intentan encontrar un pequeño espacio de seguridad cruzando las fronteras de los Estados Unidos.

Sin embargo, esta última semana ha traído noticias de otra injusticia brutalmente cruel.

El Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos de los EE. UU., a instancias de la administración Trump, anunció que ya no proporcionaría dinero para la educación, la recreación y la asistencia legal para los niños migrantes detenidos en "instalaciones gubernamentales", es decir, en los campos de concentración virtuales donde los migrantes están encerrados.

En este momento, más de 13.000 niños migrantes están "alojados", encarcelados, en más de 100 "refugios", cárceles, en todo Estados Unidos. Estos incluyen a los niños que cruzaron la frontera solos, así como a aquellos separados a la fuerza de padres y familiares por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Estos son niños que huyen de condiciones intolerables en sus países de origen, principalmente en América Central. Allí, la pobreza, la violencia y la agitación han sido fomentadas directa e indirectamente por los Estados Unidos en su intento de

controlar y beneficiarse de la mano de obra transnacional.

La mano de la clase dominante estadounidense en la creación de una crisis de inmigración/migración fue claramente evidente en la reciente huelga general en Honduras. Un movimiento popular de masas salió a las calles para protestar contra el actual gobierno de derecha, brutalmente violento del país. Estos gobernantes fueron colocados encubiertamente por Washington en 2009 a través de un golpe militar contra Manuel Zelaya, el presidente electo y progresista. La gente se ha ido de Honduras desde entonces debido a las horribles condiciones que resultaron de ese golpe.

La reciente directiva de HHS que se niega a proporcionar educación, recreación y asistencia legal para niños encerrados viola el acuerdo de Flores de 1997, que establece estándares para el tratamiento de niños migrantes bajo la custodia del gobierno.

Pero esa burla de la legalidad no debería ser una sorpresa.

Los jefes capitalistas, y los políticos estadounidenses que gobiernan en su interés, solo se preocupan por obtener ganancias de los pueblos del mundo. Los servicios que se niegan a los niños encarcelados sin duda se consideran "adornos innecesarios", especialmente si recortan el margen de ganancias de las empresas contratadas para proporcionar estos "refugios".

Muchas de estas compañías son firmas relacionadas con el ejército como MVM, que proporcionó guardias a la CIA en Irak, y General Dynamics. ("Contratistas de la Defensa están cobrando por la

detención de niños inmigrantes", The Daily Beast, 14 de junio de 2018)

Mientras que el complejo prisión-militar-industrial gana dinero por los niños, estos también están siendo usados como peones, junto con otros migrantes, en un juego político de alto nivel jugado por la administración Trump.

La administración ha duplicado el tiempo en que los niños están encarcelados, lo que hace cada vez más difícil para los padres y la familia liberarlos. Al mismo tiempo, culpa a México por la "crisis en la frontera", que ha sido creada por los EE. UU.

La directiva de HHS contra los niños encarcelados es tan clara como cualquier declaración de guerra. Elimina cualquier pretensión de proporcionar servicios de "cuidado" para ellos. Es una declaración de guerra de clases de los capitalistas transnacionales de los Estados Unidos contra los pueblos inmigrantes y migrantes, que muestra una disposición absoluta a continuar con el ataque genocida de encarcelar y matar a niños.

Cuando el año pasado se desenmascaró la política de "separación familiar" de los Estados Unidos, alejando a los niños de sus padres y seres queridos en la frontera, una protesta y protesta masiva detuvo esa crueldad, al menos en su peor forma.



PHOTO: TELESUR

Niños menores no acompañados en un 'refugio' — o sea, cárcel — en el sur de Texas.

Ahora se debe montar otra ola de protesta contra este uso y abuso de niños migrantes encarcelados en beneficio de los carceleros corporativos.

El clamor debe vincular la liberación de los niños migrantes con el sufrimiento de los niños dentro de los Estados Unidos, cuyas necesidades se están sacrificando en el altar del gigantesco presupuesto de guerra de los Estados Unidos.

La protesta debe vincular la liberación de todos los niños a la lucha contra el encarcelamiento masivo racista y la explotación del trabajo penitenciario en los Estados Unidos, donde se sacrifica la vida de tantas personas con fines de lucro.

La organización debe luchar por la liberación de todos los niños como parte de la implacable oposición a las depredaciones imperialistas de los Estados Unidos en todo el mundo, ya que sus países y sus vidas se destruyen con fines de lucro. □

# ¡No hay guerra contra Irán!

## MUNDO OBRERO editorial

El gobierno de EE.UU. está acusando de que el 13 de junio, Irán atacó a dos barcos petroleros en el Estrecho de Ormuz, — el Frente de Alta Altair de propiedad noruega y el Kokuka Valeroso, de propiedad japonesa.

La amenaza de una nueva agresión militar de los Estados Unidos en un área ya devastada por décadas de guerra es muy real. Todos los que se oponen a una posibilidad tan horrible deben hacer todo lo posible para detenerlo.

La acusación de los Estados Unidos es absurda. Los gobiernos de otros países imperialistas aliados en el pasado con los Estados Unidos ya están expresando su escepticismo.

¿Por qué demonios atacaría Irán a un petrolero japonés en el preciso momento en que el primer ministro de Japón visitaba Irán? Shinzo Abe, quien se encontraba en Teherán para conversar con el gobierno iraní, pidió a todos los países que se abstengan de tomar medidas que podrían aumentar las tensiones. Hizo la apelación justo después de una llamada telefónica con Donald Trump, quien inmediatamente culpó a Irán por los ataques y llamó a Irán "una nación de terror".

Irán, por supuesto, no tiene buques de guerra, aviones o submarinos que aterricen al mundo entero. Estados Unidos sí.

La administración de los Estados Unidos afirma que tiene un video de los iraníes retirando una mina de uno de los barcos. Pero Yutaka Katada, presidente de la compañía naviera japonesa, dijo que los informes de un ataque a una

mina eran "falsos" porque el daño a la nave estaba por encima de la línea de flotación y los marineros a bordo habían visto "objetos voladores" antes del ataque que podría haber sido una bala.

El ministro de Relaciones Exteriores iraní, Mohammad Javad Zarif, calificó las acusaciones como parte de un complot de políticos depredadores en los Estados Unidos y la región.

Ni siquiera los medios de comunicación burgueses establecidos están creyendo el cuento de la administración de Trump.

La revista New Yorker ya tiene un artículo en línea sobre las muchas excusas falsas que el gobierno de los Estados Unidos ha usado durante décadas para justificar su agresión militar. El artículo comienza: "Estados Unidos tiene una larga historia de provocación, instigación o lanzamiento de guerras basadas en amenazas dudosas, endebles o fabricadas".

Cita la explosión del acorazado Maine en el puerto de La Habana que usó Estados Unidos para generar el apoyo a la guerra de 1898 con España. (Más tarde se demostró que el Maine explotó, no de una mina española, sino de un incendio a bordo). También nombradas como "amenazas" inventadas por los EE.UU. fueron el "ataque" falso del Golfo de Tonkin utilizado para justificar el envío de tropas a Vietnam en 1964; y la "inteligencia" sobre las "armas de destrucción masiva" iraquíes fabricada para facilitar la invasión de Irak en 2003.

Las amenazas muy reales de más asesinatos y caos, emitidas ahora mismo por la clase dominante de los Estados Unidos y su máquina de muerte, claman por una oposición militante.

¡No guerra contra Irán! ¡Pongamos un alto a esta guerra antes de que comience! □