

After 40 years in prison

MOVE 9 women freed!

By Betsey Piette

MOVE 9 members Janet Holloway Africa, 68, and Janine Phillips Africa, 63, were freed on parole May 25, after over 40 years of incarceration. That included a decade of consistently being denied parole petitions by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.

While two other MOVE 9 members, Debbie Sims Africa and Michael Africa Sr., were released in 2018, parole for the two women was arbitrarily denied despite their impeccable disciplinary records and history of mentorship and community service while in prison at SCI Cambridge Springs.

In 2018, attorneys from the Abolitionist Law Center and People’s Law Office filed federal petitions for habeas corpus challenging the parole denials on the grounds of the lack of any evidence that the women presented a risk to public safety.

With May 28 set for a court date on that litigation, the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole granted Janet and Janine parole May 14, one day after the anniversary of the notorious May 13, 1985, bombing of the MOVE home.

In a press release issued May 25, attorney Brad Thomson of the People’s Law Office said, “The release of Janet and Janine is a victory not only for them and their loved ones, but also for the MOVE Organization and the movement to free all political prisoners. Janet and Janine were excellent candidates for parole. They have been described by DOC staff as model prisoners and neither of them has had a single disciplinary incident in over twenty years. While in prison, they have participated in community fundraisers and social programs, including training service dogs. They are remarkable women who deserve to be free.”

MOVE: a history of police violence, frame-ups

A Philadelphia-based Black Liberation organization, MOVE was founded by John Africa in 1972. The group maintained the mantle against police brutality and environmental destruction after all-out state campaigns decimated the ranks of the Black Panther Party and other liberation groups.

MOVE soon became a frequent target of Philadelphia’s notoriously brutal police force. In 1976, police came to the MOVE house and scuffled with group members. During the incident Janine, who was holding her three-week-old baby, Life, was knocked over. Life was trampled by police who shattered his skull. He died later that day.

In May 1977 police obtained a court order requiring MOVE to vacate their Powelton Village home. What followed was a tense, 15-month siege of the surrounding neighborhood, which included shutting off water to the house and preventing food or aid to be sent to the family. Throughout the ordeal, neighbors stepped up to support the family.

When the family still refused to leave their home, on Aug. 8, 1978, police launched an early morning raid, using



Janine (left) and Janet Africa. PHOTO: ONAMOVE.COM

thousands of rounds of munitions, water cannons and tear gas to destroy the compound and drive the family out.

During the raid, Police Officer James P. Ramp was killed by a shot to the back of the head. While MOVE members maintain they did not fire any shots, nine

were convicted of third-degree murder and conspiracy, even though no evidence linked any of them to the shooting. In fact, by immediately razing the entire property, police destroyed any potential evidence that would have helped the MOVE 9 prove their innocence. Police made no efforts to preserve the crime scene or measure for ballistic angles.

Five men and four women MOVE members were given 30-to-100-year sentences. They came to be known as the MOVE 9.

Nearly seven years later, police attacked another MOVE home on Osage Avenue in West Philadelphia on May 13, 1985. They dropped a bomb that destroyed 62 houses on the block and killed 11 MOVE members, including five children. Both Janet and Janine Africa, imprisoned at the time, had young children in the compound who were murdered by the infamous police assault.

Ramona Africa, the only living survivor of the May 13 massacre, was imprisoned for seven years. However, no

Continued on page 9



Atlanta, May 25 PHOTO: STEVE EBERHARDT

Stop the Bans!  
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WW Commentary

The politics behind Tubman \$20 bill delay

By Monica Moorehead

General Harriet Tubman was one of the greatest abolitionists of the 19th century. Born into U.S. slavery, once she escaped from a Maryland plantation, Tubman joined the Underground Railroad and helped to free hundreds of enslaved Black people in the South from bondage. She even became a spy for the Union Army during the Civil War to help bring about the military defeat of the Confederate Army.

Compare the inspiring legacy of this heroic Black woman with that of Andrew Jackson, the seventh U.S. president. Before Jackson was elected president, he owned less than 10 enslaved people on his Heritage cotton plantation in Tennessee. When he died in 1845, that number had grown to at least 150.

Jackson was not only a slave owner, but also a butcher of Indigenous peoples. He led his troops in a bloody massacre of hundreds of Muscogee (aka Creek) Indians at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in Alabama in 1814. Along with untold numbers of other atrocities, that battle contributed to the illegal theft of approximately 20 million acres of Indigenous lands as part of capitalist expansion into the West. For this “major victory,” Jackson was appointed major general. He also led assaults on the Seminole Nation in Florida.

As president, Jackson pushed the Indian Removal Act through Congress in 1830, which forced military removal of Native Nations east of the Mississippi River — Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), Cherokee, Chickasaw and later the Shawnee, Sauk and Fox, Potawatomie, Ottawa, Omaha, Miami and other Indigenous nations — west to Indian Territory (which later became the states of Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas and Nebraska). Thousands of Native people died along the Trail of Tears.

Why bring up the totally divergent lives of Tubman and Jackson? The image of Harriet Tubman was scheduled to replace Jackson’s on the most popular U.S. money denomination, the \$20 bill, in 2020 to mark the centennial of women legally gaining the right to vote with the passage of the 19th Amendment.

For the record, this right was mainly relegated to white women, not Black women living in the Jim Crow South or other women of color. It would take another 45 years for the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to be passed for women of color everywhere to win this basic democratic right, which is still under attack from the neo-fascist right wing.

Before he left office, President Barack Obama had slated the image change from Jackson to Tubman for 2020. However, at a congressional hearing this May 22, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin reversed this directive, stating that the image of Jackson will remain on the bill until after the current president, a white supremacist and misogynist, leaves office. It could take upwards of nine more years before this change officially takes place, due to White House opposition for which there was no coherent explanation.

Mnuchin claimed: “It is my responsibility now to focus on what is the issue of counterfeiting and the security features.” He said he would not reintroduce the Tubman proposal again, even if he agrees to a second term.

Trump degrades Tubman’s legacy

It is no secret that Trump, a great admirer of Jackson, has opposed this change in the \$20 bill since before he took office, calling it “pure political correctness.” During



his 2016 presidential campaign, he called for Tubman’s image to be relegated to the very rare \$2 bill. Trump stated at the time: “Andrew Jackson had a great history, and I think it’s very rough when you take somebody off the bill.” (nytimes.com, May 22) Trump has frequently hosted announcements in front of Jackson’s portrait, even a 2017 event honoring the Navajo (Diné) code talkers, World War II veterans.

The same day that Mnuchin made his decision, a white New York designer, Dano Wall, tweeted in response, “We’ll see about that.” Wall took the initiative to produce a 3-D stamp image of Tubman to superimpose over Jackson’s. He initially made 500 stamps, which sold out immediately. He plans to reproduce another 5,000 for others to use.

Wall stated, “Putting Harriet Tubman on the front of the \$20 bill would have constituted a monumental symbolic change, disrupting the pattern of white men who appear on our bills, and, by putting her on the most popular note currently in circulation, indicates exactly what kind of a life we choose to celebrate; what values we, as a country, most hope to emulate. Harriet Tubman’s unparalleled grit, intelligence and bravery over the course of her long life certainly make her worthy of such an honor.” (Washington Post, May 23)

To recognize Tubman, no matter the form of the act, would be to acknowledge that there was resistance to slavery. It’s the last thing this administration wants anyone, especially young people, to be inspired by.

Even the so-called liberal President Bill Clinton could not bring himself to publicly apologize for slavery in the late 1980s. Then, a bill in Congress sparked debate over why Black people should have reparations from the corporations and government who became rich from the unpaid labor from enslaved ancestors — unpaid labor amounting to trillions of dollars. □

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Vol. 61, No. 22 • May 30, 2019
Closing date: May 29, 2019

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Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly
except the last week of December by WW Publishers,
147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone:
212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$30; institu-
tions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and
edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to
Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY
10011. Back issues and individual articles are available
on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing,
Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998.
A searchable archive is available on the Web at
www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription.
Subscription information is at workers.org.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl.
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# Fightback builds against abortion bans

By Kathy Durkin

Momentum is building to overturn restrictive abortion laws passed by right-wing-controlled state legislatures aiming to outlaw the procedure and punish those who have abortions and/or medical providers. Protests across the U.S. show militant opposition to the repressive, misogynist laws as people demand their legal and human rights to reproductive health care and personal autonomy.

Thousands joined demonstrations in 500 cities on May 21, the National Day of Action to Stop the Bans, initiated by 50 organizations, including Planned Parenthood, the American Civil Liberties Union and SisterSong. Other actions took place later that week. Demonstration participation has been multinational, multi-gender and multigenerational.

The Day of Action, kicking off outside the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., emphasized that the majority of people in the U.S. support the court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion. CBS reported that two-thirds of those polled on May 21 do not want the ruling overturned.



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

Cleveland, May 21

The ACLU and Planned Parenthood filed a lawsuit on May 24 seeking to quash Alabama's recent virtual ban on abortion which criminalizes doctors who perform the procedure.

## Highlights of demonstrations

A crowd gathered in downtown **Syracuse**, N.Y., to #StopTheBans on abortion access. Maurice Brown, a city resident, said, "Even though I'm not under attack, I'm still under attack. None of us will be free until all of us are free."

Planned Parenthood of New York City Action Fund, the New York Civil Liberties Union and other groups rallied in **New York City's** Foley Square to support abortion access. NYC People's Power Assembly members carried signs reading: "Abortion is a Human Right! Reproductive Justice Now!" Workers World Party placards read, "End misogyny and patriarchy!"

Nearly 200 pro-choice demonstrators in **Philadelphia** took over several blocks of the meridian on South Broad Street. Strong support came from Center City pedestrians and from drivers continually honking their horns. Young women, still wearing college graduation gowns, joined the protest.

In Georgia, the struggle to ensure reproductive rights has not diminished despite signing of a "heartbeat" bill banning all abortions after six weeks of pregnancy. On May 21, hundreds of people gathered on the Capitol steps in **Atlanta**, where rally speakers, including elected representatives who opposed the bill, affirmed the fight would continue until reproductive freedom is guaranteed for all.

Jalessah Jackson, Georgia coordinator

of SisterSong, stressed: "We must talk about the central role that capitalism and white supremacy play in the legislation that will disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color. These bills are about criminalizing communities." She urged: "Connect with the groups here ... who have been leading this fight — organizations led by Black women, by queer and trans folks." (SisterSong Facebook)

On May 25, in a youth-organized act of resistance by #DoBetterGeorgia, thousands of people marched in blazing heat from Atlanta's Capitol building to CNN's offices. The chanting, sign-waving crowd showed the emergence of a new generation determined to continue the struggle against patriarchy and male dominance.

In **Jackson, Miss.**, 200 pro-choice activists at a May 21 rally heard Mississippi in Action Executive Director Valencia Robinson emphasize that the fight must demand reproductive justice. When she asked the crowd, "Which side are you on?" they replied, "The freedom side!" Signs read: "Stand with Black women!" (Jackson Free Press, May 22) Three days later, U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves issued a temporary injunction blocking enforcement of Mississippi's ban on early abortions.

Close to 500 people, mostly youth, rallied in downtown **Cleveland**. Many of them held homemade signs, including "We are not ovary-acting" and "We won't go back!" Ohio's newly passed "fetal heartbeat" bill is set to start on July 1.

Response was swift after Missouri Gov. Mike Parson signed a bill on May 24 banning abortions after the eighth week of pregnancy, with no rape, incest

or human trafficking exceptions. The next day, newly formed STL Pro-Choice Student Activists led hundreds of demonstrators through downtown **St. Louis** in the Protest for Reproductive Rights. Their theme: "This is everyone's issue." (stlto-day.com, May 25)



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Houston, May 21

A multinational, multigenerational crowd of hundreds of people rallied at **Houston's** City Hall on May 21. Organizers were African-American and Latinx representatives of the ACLU, National Latina Health Initiative and reproductive rights groups. A popular sign read, "Abortion is Health Care!"

The crowd disrupted the City Council meeting with speeches and chants.

About 500 demonstrators rallied at **Seattle** City Hall against misogynist attacks made by state legislatures. Initiated by Planned Parenthood, this lunchtime rally had a large turnout.

*Martha Grevatt, Dianne Mathiowetz, Jim McMahan, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac and Brenda Ryan contributed reports.*

# June 5: Pack the court for subway elevators!

By Tony Murphy  
New York

The fight for accessibility in New York's public transportation system is approaching a critical milestone on June 5. That's when New York State Supreme Court Judge Hagler will make a fateful decision on the lawsuit to mandate elevators in the subway.

Supporters of this popular demand are being asked to once again pack the court that day, just two weeks after 50 people packed the same judge's court on May 21 for the same lawsuit. Wheelchair users turned out en masse, lining one entire side of the court, and supporters spilled into the aisles of the courtroom.

The judge opened the hearing by calling attention to the turnout. When he later referred to the supporters, the attorney for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority actually requested the judge not consider their presence in rendering the decision on the case. Judge Hagler then castigated the MTA attorney by asking him, "Can you imagine what some of the audience had to do to get here today?"

## 'Accessible subways are a right'

The lawyers for the hated MTA knew that the 50 people now packing the courtroom had rallied outside before the hearing and had done so before a row of cameras and microphones of virtually every local TV and radio news show in New York. The support for what should be a basic right — accessible subways — exists alongside the heartfelt solidarity that went out to the family of Malaysia

Goodson, the African-American mother who in January fell to her death down the subway stairs while carrying her baby and a stroller in a station with no elevators.

Leaders in the accessibility-rights struggle, almost all of them wheelchair users, led the sidewalk rally before the hearing. Sasha Goldensohn-Blair of Rise & Resist's Elevator Action Group and Mary Kaessinger of the People's MTA co-chaired the rally. Others addressing the rally included Valerie Joseph for the Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled; Monica Bartley of the Center for Independence of the Disabled New York; Jean Ryan and Robert Acevedo of Disabled In Action; and Michael Schweinberg, president of Local 504 Club. Terrea Mitchell, a sight-impaired rider, spoke for NYC People's Power Assembly.

What was once a demand made almost exclusively by the disability rights community is now being embraced by more sectors of the working class who ride the subway every day. Older riders, parents with strollers and anyone carrying something heavy need elevators, too. One of the rally speakers was Christine Serdjenian-Yearwood from the parents group UP-STAND, who addressed the rally with her baby and stroller.

The trade union movement was there as well. Edward Yood, chair of the Communication Workers of America Local 1180's Committee on People with Disabilities, told the protesters: "As public sector NYC administrative workers, we say that is not acceptable in the great city of New York for less than 20 percent

of New York subway system stations and lines to have elevators."

The MTA can't deliver because of its \$40 billion debt burden. It pays the billionaires on Wall Street — the ones who were bailed out with trillions of dollars — so much money that it doesn't have enough left over to actually run the subway. The New York Times stated it clearly in December 2017: "By law, in a competition for budget money, debt service always comes in first. ... To repay the loans, money has been siphoned from service and maintenance."

## MTA tries to deflect mass anger with lies, racism

The Wall-Street-controlled MTA deflects the mass anger it brings on itself through its connections with the police, politicians and media. It's launched a public campaign blaming "farebeaters" for hurting public transportation, complete with an increased number of police in the subway. The New York Police Department refuses to release any information on who is being targeted for summons or arrest because that would show racist profiling.

With the help of Gov. Andrew Cuomo, the MTA has also launched a media campaign falsely accusing transit workers of "stealing" from public transportation with excessive overtime. In addition to the media blitz, the MTA actually sent armed police to worksites to "monitor overtime."

As the New York State AFL-CIO pointed out: "In fact, it was MTA Management who specifically bargained

for elimination of the overtime caps in the collective bargaining agreements for NYC Transit workers in the interests of avoiding the pension and health costs of full-time workers."

The amount they're complaining about for one particular worker, who supposedly got \$344,000 overtime in one year, pales in comparison to the \$7 million the MTA pays to banks every day.

Even the amount the MTA claims is lost to people who skip the fare — \$215 million a year — is drastically less than what the transit agency pays the banks every year: \$2.6 billion.

With all the various ways the MTA has of deflecting attention and outrage, the headlines that police caught someone who had been pulling the emergency brake on the subway should be viewed with extreme caution. Police, having arrested a 23-year-old African-American rider, accused him of the act.

All the quotes attributed to him have come from unnamed police sources. The headlines and first paragraph of the New York Daily News story about his arrest said he was smirking — but the paper's two separate photos didn't show that. The NYPD's famous railroading of the Central Park Five, a group of innocent Black and Latinx youth, should be kept firmly in mind as this story unfolds.

In court, the MTA lawyer begged the judge to ignore the packed court of people with just demands. Like the capitalist system as a whole, in order to keep the rich richer, the only response the MTA can give to those demands are lies, attacks on workers and more racism. □



# On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

## NYS farmworkers win right to organize

The state appellate court in Albany, N.Y., ruled May 23 that excluding farmworkers from a state law protecting workers' right to organize and collectively bargain without fear of retaliation is unconstitutional.

"This is a victory for farmworkers," said Crispin Hernandez, a member of the Workers' Center of Central New York in Syracuse, who initiated the suit after he was fired from his job at Marks Dairy in Lowville in 2016 for striving to organize fellow workers after hours. "All workers deserve to have a voice and be heard at their place of work, and farmworkers deserve to be treated with respect and dignity." The Workers Center of CNY and the Worker Justice Center of New York joined Hernandez in the suit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union.

As workerscny.org noted in its May 23 statement, "Agriculture is big business in New York, and the work is difficult. Most of the farmworkers are immigrants and, without the same protections as other workers, they are particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation." However, the powerful Farm Bureau, which represents the interests of New York state farm owners, fought against the exclusion and plans to appeal the 4-1 ruling.

Workers Center of CNY lead organizer Rebecca Fuentes said, "Farm workers make essential contributions to New York and to all of our lives. Their labor produces the food, nutrition, and money that sustain our economy and our communities."

According to workerscny.org, state lawmakers are also considering legislation to grant farmworkers the same rights as almost all other hourly workers in New York state, including overtime pay and a day of rest. Fuentes observed that the ruling promotes passage of the long-overdue Farmworkers Fair Labor Practices Act, which would codify those protections.

## Sex workers' union fights Instagram discrimination

Instagram's taking money from sex workers. What are the sex workers doing? Organizing and fighting back!

The Adult Performers Actors Guild is a new union whose mission, like others, is to bargain and fight for better wages. ("All Things Considered," npr.com, April 30) Their most recent struggle against Instagram is sparking attention; the APAG has publicly called out the Facebook-owned, photo-sharing giant for discrimination.

In a statement, the APAG raised that Instagram deletes sex worker, porn star and adult model accounts just for existing, while "celebrities like Kim Kardashian and countless other Instagram Verified celebrities post images with full nudity, exposed nipples, bare backside and more. Each photo, with its millions of LIKES, contributes to those women's already massive incomes, as well as Instagram's own bank account." (APAGunion.com, April 18)

Alice Evans, president of APAG, raises that adult performers have also monetized their accounts and used their platforms for promotion. Instagram's uneven ban on those accounts, while keeping those of celebrities, is grounds for discrimination.

The union's legal counsel wrote to Facebook April 22 and 30, but Facebook ignored them. So the APAG decided to craft a petition. Some 500 performers and models sent letters to Facebook and Instagram asking the companies to stop removing their accounts. APAG is still surveying members of the adult performance community to see how platforms are blocking or banning them. (vice.com, May 6) Their next idea? A June 19 Instagram strike outside the company's New York and California offices! (@APAGunion, May 25)

## Airline mechanics win struggle for safety in new contract

After a very contentious, nearly 7-year struggle for a new contract involving two lawsuits over safety issues, 2,500 Southwest Airlines mechanics voted overwhelmingly May 21 for a new 5-year contract. Represented by the Aircraft Mechanics union (AMFA), the workers won \$160 million in back pay as a bonus to cover the years after the last contract ended in August 2012, a 20 percent increase in wages as of April 1, and 3 percent annual raises in August. The AMFA noted in a statement that its major concession was allowing Southwest to continue outsourcing some work to foreign contractors.

The contract is a far cry from Southwest's suit against the union in March for a so-called "illegal work slowdown" that forced the cancellation of 100 flights a day for weeks. The Federal Aviation Administration warned both sides that the dispute could hurt the safety of the airline, which carries more passengers on domestic flights than any other airline. No wonder Southwest changed its tune at the table!

As of May 21, American Airlines sued its mechanics on May 20. Bloomberg noted that Southwest might be seen as a more reliable option in cities where the two airlines compete. □



May 23

## Iowa McDonald's workers join nationwide walkouts

By Mike Kühlenbeck  
Cedar Rapids and Des Moines, Iowa

McDonald's workers in Cedar Rapids and Des Moines went on strike for "living wages and better working conditions" as part of a national day of action May 23.

McDonald's, the most profitable fast food chain in the world, is the second-largest private sector employer in the U.S. Last year the company generated more than \$38.5 billion in sales from its 14,000-plus U.S. stores and \$7.7 billion in revenue.

Despite the company's success, its workers barely survive. Many are forced into poverty and rely on public assistance and second jobs. They can barely pay their bills — let alone afford necessities.

The strikes were organized by Fight for \$15 to coincide with a McDonald's shareholders meeting in Dallas. The strikes in Cedar Rapids, Des Moines and more than a dozen cities nationwide focused on the need for unions, wage increases and better working conditions.

The strike also highlighted issues within the food service industry that far too many shy away from addressing: sexual harassment and workplace violence.

Shortly before the strike, 23 complaints of gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment were filed against McDonald's by Fight for \$15, the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Shawn Sebastian, movement politics organizer for Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement Action Fund, told Workers World, "Sexual harassment at McDonald's is widespread and systemic across its locations, and sexual harassment at McDonald's franchises in Iowa is no exception."

"Brave workers in Cedar Rapids and Des Moines, who had experienced sexual harassment, stepped out from behind the counters and onto the strike line to take a stand," Sebastian noted.

The National Employment Law Project released a report May 22, "Behind the Arches: How McDonald's Fails to Protect Workers from Workplace Violence." The report found "a pattern of violence" in McDonald's restaurants, "from belligerent customers irate over missing ketchup or straws, to armed criminals demanding cash and fist fights among customers in the lobby."

According to the report, "Verbal threats, harassment and other types of assault often go unreported to the authorities. Regardless of media attention, these incidents of workplace violence regularly place both workers and customers at risk."

Both Iowa demonstrations were supported by the Service Employees Union (SEIU). There was also a strong turnout of Iowa CCI members, as well as unionists, on the pickets.

While McDonald's was the main target, the message also being sent by the workers was directed at all food service companies, corporations and elected officials.

### Cedar Rapids

At 7 a.m., more than 50 McDonald's workers and allies formed a picket line outside the storefront of a "Mickey D's" on

1530 1st Avenue East. With the number of people coming and going, the turnout was probably as many as 100. They marched through the restaurant's drive-through, chanting, "Hold the pickles, hold the fries; make our wages supersize!"

The speaking portion of the rally was led by SEIU Local 199 President Cathy Glasson. Workers shared their stories, grievances and demands.

Cedar Rapids McDonald's employee Kelly Osburn provides for her 5-year-old grandson. She joined the strike because she "works very hard for a very small wage" and supports the call for a union, higher wages, sick leave and paid vacation.

In a video message directed at McDonald's, Osburn said, "We're the ones running your company, not you guys sitting on the fat paychecks. We are making the Frappés, we are making the hamburgers, and we make \$8.25 an hour. It's just not fair."

### Des Moines

At noon the same day, more than 100 McDonald's workers and supporters rallied outside the restaurant at 3610 Merle Hay Road. Again, with people coming and going, the turnout numbered in the hundreds.

Several strikers carried signs with slogans like "Raise the minimum wage," "Iowa needs unions" and "We can't survive on \$7.25," a reference to the current state minimum wage. Among the rallying cries, strikers chanted, "We work! We sweat! We want \$15 on our checks!"

Iowa CCI organizer Sebastian said in Des Moines that, like in Cedar Rapids and other cities, workers stood "shoulder to shoulder" with community organizations "to take a stand against corporate power and sexual harassment and for \$15 and a union."

The strikers were joined by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, who recently announced his candidacy for president. His appearance made local headlines, but almost obscured the fact that this was an event of and by the workers.

### A movement of and for workers

In other parts of the country, a handful of Democratic presidential candidates voiced support for the strikers, including Bernie Sanders, Julián Castro, Jay Inslee and Cory Booker. While much of the media spotlight was cast on the presidential hopefuls who joined the rallies, the workers are taking the biggest risk by standing up for their rights. They are not political props. They are fighting for their lives.

The fact that presidential candidates have taken notice is a testament to the years of organizing by workers in these sectors. Since 2012, workers across the country have fought for \$15 hourly wages and the right to form a union. The Fight for \$15 came to Iowa three years later.

The May 23 strike represented not just the ongoing struggle of fast food employees, but all workers confronting the high-tech nightmare of late-stage capitalism.

This movement was started by workers, and workers are still leading the charge. □

# Protesters demand justice as Cleveland jail deaths continue

By Martha Grevatt  
Cleveland

On May 10, Nicholas Colbert became the latest person to die in the Cuyahoga County Jail, the ninth in less than a year. The 36-year-old Army National Guard veteran was arrested for drug possession less than 48 hours prior to his death, which jail authorities have called a suicide. Colbert’s mother had called police, as she had sadly thought the struggling heroin addict would be safer in jail than in the streets.

The Coalition to Stop the Inhumanity in the Cuyahoga County Jail (SICCJ) protested outside the jail May 23. The rally and march were one of many demonstrations held since the group formed

last year in response to the spike in deaths and conditions which U.S. federal marshals described as “inhumane.” More than 100 people demonstrated and chanted, “The rich set the bail; the poor go to jail” and other slogans targeting the Cuyahoga County Council and County Executive Armond Budish.

A federal investigation began after the sixth person died in custody last year. In the 10 previous years, no more than two fatalities had occurred inside the jail. Investigators found that staff failed to prevent deaths attributed to suicide and drug overdose.

Inmates recently released or currently housed in the jail have reported that there has been no improvement in the

deplorable conditions they have been forced to endure. These conditions include inadequate medical care, poor quality food, denial of basic necessities such as toilet paper, abuse by guards, and lack of sanitation and overcrowding.

When challenged by SICCJ members at a council meeting, Budish claimed things had improved, giving as an example the fact that pregnant women no longer sleep on the floor. However, with the population exceeding the jail’s capacity, many inmates do sleep on floors.

Most of those languishing in this hell-hole are in for nonviolent offenses and



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

Outside Cuyahoga County jail, May 23.

would be out if they could afford bail. This was the situation that confronted some of the deceased inmates. One of SICCJ’s ongoing projects is a petition campaign pushing for bail reform. □

# June 2: Support sex workers!

By Francis T. Parker

Sable Pickett, a 19-year-old Black woman, was kidnapped and murdered by two serial killers targeting sex workers in Anaheim, Calif., in 2014. Alphonza Watson, a 38-year-old Black trans woman also known as Peaches, was shot to death Dec. 14, 2017, in Baltimore. Gemmel Moore, a Black gay man, was found dead in Ed Buck’s home in July 2017 in Los Angeles. During a New York City police prostitution raid on Nov. 27, 2017, Yang Song, a woman from Shenyang, China, fell to her death from the third story of the massage parlor she worked in.

Last year, Donna Castleberry was shot eight times by undercover officer Andrew Mitchell on Aug. 23 in Ohio. Melissa Ramirez, Guiselda Alicia Cantu, Claudine Luera and Humberto “Janelle” Ortiz were all shot in the head by Juan David Ortiz, a U.S. Border Patrol agent in Laredo, Texas, in September. Ashanti Carmon, a Black trans woman, was shot to death in Maryland on March 30.

This extremely incomplete list of sex workers recently murdered by stigma, patriarchy, white supremacy, transphobia, ableism and by a world that can’t

let women and gender-oppressed people have control of their bodies or have financial autonomy, can be summarized as sex workers who have been murdered by capitalism. The list also includes April Ellis, Ashley Brandeberry, Brittney Taylor, Brandie Seals, Jessica Newcomb, Isabell Pam, Jennifer Ann Wilson, Jarrae Estepp, Josephine Vargas, Kianna Jackson and Essence Owens.

**Sex workers have ‘long, badass history’**

But as sex workers are murdered and assaulted with impunity, they are fighting back. On Feb. 1, hundreds of construction workers, farm laborers and sex workers in Delhi, India, came together to demand better working conditions for all.

In the U.S., sex workers are currently fighting against the misnamed SESTA/FOSTA acts, which criminalize sex work, promote stigma and wrongfully link sex work with sex trafficking. Sex workers’ organizations are demanding decriminalization as they pack courthouses and show up in the streets.

Sex workers have a long, badass history of standing with one another and with all women and gender-oppressed people around the world. Asociación Mujeres

Meretrices de la Argentina en Acción por Nuestros Derechos, the first trade union for sex workers in Latin America, was organized in 1994. In 2007 sex workers in Bolivia sewed their lips together as part of a hunger strike demanding that brothels be reopened.

On June 2, 1975, more than 100 sex workers occupied Saint Nizier church in Lyon, France, demanding the end of fines, police harassment and the release of 10 sex workers who had been recently imprisoned for doing their job. The parish priest refused to call the police on them, and the neighborhood brought them supplies. Eight days into the occupation, police forcibly removed the women from the church.

June 2 is now commemorated as International Whores Day. Last year there were protests and demonstrations with thousands pouring into the streets across the globe to say sex workers are human and sex workers are workers.

Workers World Party was represented in many cities across the U.S. with signs reading, “Self-determination for sex workers,” “Sex workers want rights, not rescue” and “Poverty is criminal; sex workers are not.” As June 2 approaches, we look forward to continuing to show up in support of all sex



PHOTO: HENRY LUNA

workers: full service, cam-girls, strippers, sugar babies, porn stars, etc.

How can you support sex workers?

- Do not out sex workers! Sex workers get to decide who knows, when they know and how they find out.
- Show support in person and online for the decriminalization of sex work.
- Denounce SESTA and FOSTA and all laws that criminalize sex work and wrongfully conflate sex work and sex trafficking.
- Counter social norms that depict sex workers as lazy, dirty, diseased and not actually workers. Sex work is work, and it must be understood as part of the labor struggle.
- Support organizations run by and for sex workers. Pay sex workers for their services and labor.
- Always remember, fuck the police. □

# VW and Trump’s NLRB: partners in union busting

By Martha Grevatt

Volkswagen, the world’s largest auto company, owns 61 plants around the globe. Only one, in Chattanooga, Tenn., does not have a union. VW, with the assistance and encouragement of the capitalist state, intends to keep its only U.S. assembly plant union-free.

When the United Auto Workers first sought to represent the plant workers, the union narrowly lost a 2014 election supervised by the National Labor Relations Board. At the time, VW itself feigned neutrality. False claims by right-wing politicians that a pro-union vote would mean less work in the plant, coupled with a barrage of well-funded anti-UAW ads, were enough to tilt the vote against union representation.

However, the high rate of workplace injuries, a key issue in the union drive, did not decrease after the vote. The UAW, with a majority of VW workers signing cards authorizing representation, petitioned the NLRB April 9 to hold another election in

late April. VW asked the board to delay holding an election and review company arguments against conducting one.

With three of the five NLRB members voting, two voted in VW’s favor and one against. Then May 22, with four of its five members appointed by President Trump, the NLRB ruled 4-1 that an election could not be held.

How could this be justified? Normally, the NLRB requires that only 30 percent of a potential bargaining unit sign union authorization cards to hold an election. In this case, the union had a solid majority.

VW’s arguments were based on a 2015 vote by a smaller unit of workers in the plant, about 160 skilled maintenance workers, to have the UAW bargain on their behalf. The NLRB ordered VW to recognize the union as their representative.

For there to now be an election involving all the plant’s hourly workers, VW claimed, the maintenance unit would first have to decertify the UAW.

What makes this case ludicrous and hypocritical is that VW has spent the past

four years denying these maintenance workers the right to union representation — based on the fact that they are only a small minority of the whole workforce. Moreover, the UAW certified to the NLRB that it had voluntarily withdrawn as a representative of the maintenance trades. That the board majority could uphold VW’s argument demonstrates its blatant anti-union bias.

Lauren McFerran, the last remaining pre-Trump member of the NLRB, described “the Board’s new motto” as “heads, the employer wins; tails, the union loses.”

**Fightback could defeat VW’s strategy**

Now the UAW has to wait for a vote of the maintenance unit to decertify itself, then wait for the NLRB to conduct a plantwide election.

What VW and their anti-union political partners in Tennessee and Washington are banking on is being able to use the time lag to turn workers against the union. Just like their counterparts at Nissan in Mississippi,

VW management will hold more mandatory “captive audience” meetings and one-on-one sessions with workers to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

However, there are signs that the stalling strategy will backfire. UAW Local 42 has spent the past five years convincing workers of the benefits of union representation. The denial of the basic right to vote for union recognition has infuriated plant workers, along with other unions and the Chattanooga community at large. The newly formed Center for VW Facts has exposed VW’s false anti-union claims on TV and radio.

The UAW, joined by 17 area unions, as well as local civil rights organizations, held a rally May 21 to denounce union busting by VW and the NLRB. Some of the union delegations and representatives included the Chattanooga Area Labor Council, United Steelworkers and the Amalgamated Transit Union. Downtown Chattanooga was packed with union supporters chanting, “No hypocrisy, let them vote. It’s about democracy, let them vote.” □



## Gunboat diplomacy and unequal treaties

# China resists—then and now

By Sara Flounders

Most people in the U.S. are unaware of the fact that more than a century ago armies of occupation from the U.S., Britain, France, Germany and Japan were stationed in Chinese cities. The U.S. Navy had fleets of armored ships patrolling Chinese rivers and coastal waters. These concessions were forced on China by brutal gunboat diplomacy and enshrined by onerous unequal treaties that made China pay these imperialist countries huge indemnities.

Now, once again, the U.S. is making demands on China. President Xi Jinping has compared them to those unequal treaties imposed by the imperialist powers over 150 years ago. The latest U.S. trade demands on China have awakened a fervent nationalist response in every current of Chinese society.

In China, the words “unequal treaties” resonate deeply, while most working people in the U.S. have never even heard the term. We are told that U.S. “gunboat diplomacy” was a tactic of more than 150 years ago.

But just this May 19, U.S. warships escalated their so-called “Freedom of Navigation” exercises by sailing through the busy waterways of the South China Sea. On May 23, the U.S. Navy sent two guided missile destroyers through the narrow Straits of Taiwan. These are now regular monthly offensives. They are comparable to Chinese destroyers sailing into the Gulf of Mexico, off the coast of New Orleans and Houston.

The May 22 China Daily warned in an editorial: “With tensions between the two countries already rife, there is no guarantee that the presence of U.S. warships on China’s doorstep will not spark direct confrontation between the two militaries.”

### Break with past wars and chaos

The standing of the Chinese Communist Party is based in no small part on its ability over the past 70 years to break with the humiliations, chaos and constant wars caused by past gunboat diplomacy, the decades of occupation by numerous foreign troops, and the harsh and unequal treaties they imposed.

These treaties were in fact terms of surrender dictated by the major imperialist powers of Britain, the U.S., France, Germany and Japan. China was forced to change its laws, pay huge indemnities and grant as “concessions” control of its cities, major ports and largest waterways.

The resulting uprisings, rebellions and civil wars were crushed, and much of the country was impoverished and destroyed.

The new communist government’s intention to ensure stable development and broad prosperity while resisting foreign intervention was a promise Mao Zedong made in October 1949 while proclaiming the founding of the People’s Republic of China.

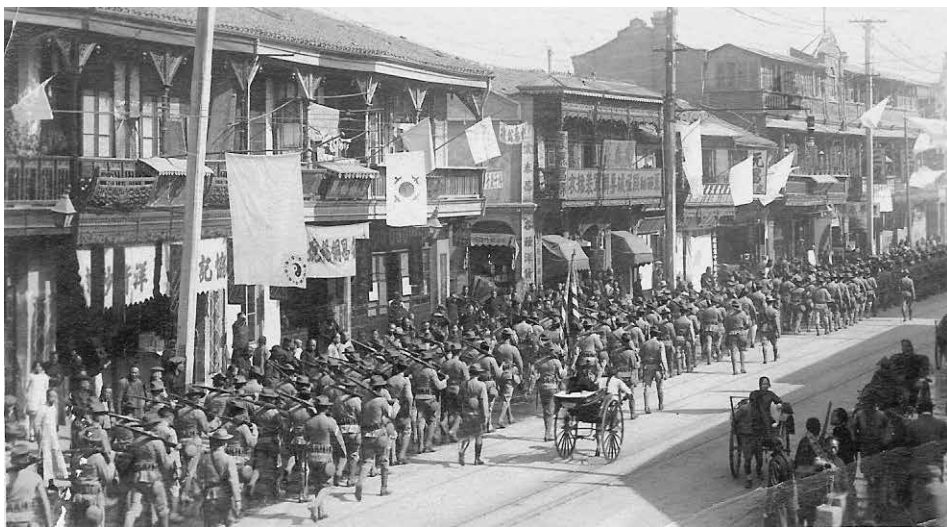
Mao declared: “[T]he Chinese people, comprising one quarter of humanity, have now stood up! The Chinese have always been a great, courageous and industrious nation; it is only in modern times that they have fallen behind. And that was due entirely to oppression and exploitation by foreign imperialism and domestic reactionary governments. For over a century our forefathers never stopped waging unyielding struggles against domestic and foreign oppressors.”

Mao warned that “every day and every minute the imperialists will try to stage a

come-back. This is inevitable and beyond all doubt.”

“It is because we have defeated the reactionary Kuomintang government backed by U.S. imperialism that this great unity of the whole people has been achieved. ...

“We shall emerge in the world as a nation with an advanced culture. Our national defense will be consolidated and no imperialists will ever again be allowed to invade our land.”



U.S. Marines of the Asiatic Fleet marching through Shanghai, 1911.

### ‘We won’t go back!’

The state news agency Xinhua in a May 25 editorial defined the current Chinese view. “Obviously, the U.S. arrogant demands are beyond the scope of trade negotiations and touch on China’s fundamental economic system. This shows that behind the United States’ trade war against China, the U.S. is trying to invade China’s economic sovereignty and force China to damage its core interests.”

The editorial asserts that U.S. attempts to restrict the development of its state-owned enterprises are seen as “forcing China to change its development path” toward socialism.

The demands include structural changes to its economic practices. China has reiterated that it will not make concessions on “matters of principle” and that the enforcement mechanisms would force China to change its own laws.

Several news sources note that China’s capitalist reformers, who seemed willing to accept these onerous conditions, have lost the upper hand in recent weeks. This makes it even less likely that China will make concessions compatible with what the U.S. wants. (channelnewsasia.com, May 26)

Over the past year U.S. demands have steadily increased through 11 negotiating sessions. During the negotiations, the Pentagon was intensifying its military threats with its “Freedom of Navigation” exercises.

The ban on software and electronic components of Huawei Technologies has extended the trade war in an effort to block China’s companies from all global markets. The implications of the Huawei ban are even more far reaching.

Pending legislation in Washington would put a ban on any Chinese company that violates U.S.-imposed sanctions on such countries as Iran, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Cuba and Venezuela.

### 130 years of U.S. troops in China

The Pentagon and U.S. trade negotiators know the criminal history of 130 years of U.S. military occupation of major Chinese cities very well. However, that is seldom mentioned by the corporate

media or in U.S. history books.

U.S. Marines were garrisoned in Beijing (then called Peking), Guangzhou (then called Canton) and Shanghai from 1818 to 1949. They were displaced from 1942 to 1945 by Japanese occupation during World War II. The Chinese Red Army finally expelled them in 1949.

U.S. Marines were on armored warships all along Chinese coastal waters, while special fleets of river gunboats of the

where the British could trade anything they wanted. China was forced to pay for the war and reparations to the merchants for the destroyed opium.

The U.S. government imposed its own Treaty of Wanghia on a weakened China in 1844. That gave the U.S. beneficial trade treatment and the right to station foreign warships and troops on Chinese territory, with autonomy to operate outside Chinese law.

### ‘Century of humiliation’

By 1856 the British fought the Second Opium War for unrestricted trade in any port and an end to all bans on opium. The U.S. and French joined in with their own naval bombardments, amphibious assaults and destruction of forts and city walls. A new treaty legalized Christianity, opium and the mass transport of Chinese indentured laborers to the U.S. and throughout the British Empire.

Each imperialist country enforced its own new treaties on China, granting additional special privileges.

When the Boxer Rebellion, a mass peasant anti-Western movement, broke out in 1899, a multinational imperialist force of British, U.S., Russian, German, Austrian, Italian, French and Japanese troops put it down. Then they spent an entire year looting Beijing, Tianjin and other major cities.

The first Opium War in 1840 is considered the beginning of the Century of Humiliation. When Trump’s trade negotiators first presented their list of demands to their Chinese counterparts, the Chinese news outlet Global Times ran the headline: “Is It Now 1840?”

### A new Long March

This May 20, President Xi, in a highly publicized move, visited a rare-earth magnet factory in eastern China. This visit was interpreted as part of China’s leverage over its supply of rare-earth materials, which are used in a wide range of high-tech U.S. products, such as smartphones and electric cars.

The next day Xi called on China to embark on a new “Long March” and remain resilient — a clear signal that the country is gearing up for a prolonged struggle with the U.S.

President Xi’s talk was given in Jiangxi, known as the starting point of the 6,000-mile Long March by the Chinese Red Army in 1934-36. This organized retreat, under heavy bombardment, led to the ultimate victory of the Red Army and the defeat of U.S.-backed Nationalist forces by 1949, with the emergence of Mao Zedong as China’s leader.

On May 13, a Morgan Stanley economist, Michael Wilson, warned that the U.S. economy could fall into recession if the country’s trade war keeps escalating. Even before the desperation of Trump’s trade war, this was a steady prediction. It now seems inevitable.

The 18 years of U.S. wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria are by every measure an absolute disaster for U.S. dreams of conquest and recolonization. China, with a population many times larger than all these countries combined, with advanced technology, internal cohesion and many trading partners, is in a strong position to resist U.S. demands.

It is not the world of 1840. U.S. imperialism is on the decline. It can’t recapture its past position with threats and dreams of colonial conquest. □

# Why the imperialists hate Huawei

By Deirdre Griswold

The Chinese company Huawei has been targeted by the Donald Trump administration. At Washington’s request, Canada arrested Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of the company, last December. The charge? That the company did business with Iran, contrary to U.S. sanctions on that country.

Meng, the daughter of Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei, is still under house arrest in Canada and is awaiting possible extradition to the U.S.

Why has Washington focused such animosity on Huawei? Is it really because of Iran, which is also a target of U.S. aggression at the present time? Or is there more to it?

Huawei was founded just 32 years ago, but “today, Huawei’s products and solutions are deployed in over 170 countries, serving more than one third of the global population. Huawei is the third-biggest global manufacturer of routers, switches and other telecommunications equipment by market share after Alcatel-Lucent and Cisco, and the brand recently joined in the ultra-competitive smartphone race.” (“Huawei: Transforming a Chinese Technology Business to a Global Brand,” martinroll.com, February 2018)

Huawei is on the cutting edge of the move to produce 5G (fifth-generation) smartphones, which are much faster and carry much more data than previous mobile phones. Some 5G phones



Huawei workers in North America.

PHOTO: ANDROID AUTHORITY

produced by South Korean firms like Samsung and LG Corp. are already on the market and sell for more than a thousand dollars each. Apple is planning to market a 5G smartphone next year, which will cost at least that much—and probably more.

The owners of the Korean phone companies and of Apple are multimillionaires, even billionaires. But who are the owners of Huawei?

One percent of Huawei is owned by the company’s founder and chief executive, Ren Zhengfei, which makes him a very rich man. But the other 99 percent is owned equally by all 180,000 workers through their union.

What U.S. company allows its workers to own 99 percent of the business—especially a business that is growing and thriving?

It seems very likely that this position of the workers at Huawei is what accounts for its remarkable achievements, as well as for the great hostility of the U.S. ruling class toward the company.

It appears that the workers at Huawei are highly motivated and encouraged to be innovative in a field that is changing and expanding by the minute. This subjective factor can be an objective advantage in the struggle between China and the U.S. over the development of new and higher technology.

### U.S. decline and China’s rise

U.S. imperialism is on the decline, and recent decisions by the Trump administration to impose tariffs on Chinese goods are doing nothing to halt that decline. Since China responded in kind, imposing tariffs on U.S. goods, that uncertainty

has roiled stock markets here and created confusion and dismay on many levels—from Midwest farmers who have lost an important market for their products to industries dependent on Chinese-made components.

China now has the largest economy in the world. It cannot be treated as it was in the past by the imperialist predators.

China is not a chemically pure socialist country. The Chinese Communist Party decided decades ago, after a great internal political struggle, to allow a certain degree of capitalism to function as a stimulus to its economic development. But the party’s control over the basic underpinnings of the economy has allowed that development to proceed for the most part in a planned way, lifting hundreds of millions of workers and peasants out of extreme poverty and revolutionizing the means of production.

Employee ownership of a single company like Huawei is not socialism, either. But in a capitalist country, such a situation would not last very long. Powerful corporate interests would gobble it up, especially as it has become so successful.

Huawei, however, 99-percent-owned by its workers, is thriving in a country where a great revolution lasting for decades broke the state power of the old ruling classes and set up a state based on the working masses. That state has made concessions, but it has not been overthrown. Building socialism “with Chinese characteristics” remains its goal. □

## VENEZUELA Maduro plans early legislative elections

By Marco Teruggi  
Caracas

*This article was published in pagina12.com.ar on May 21. Translation by Michael Otto.*

May 20, 2018, is the date used as the focus of the narrative justifying the current attempted coup. On that day, Nicolás Maduro won the election for president. A large grouping of rightists had announced months before the election that they would refuse to recognize his win and that is what they did. Two days later, on May 22, the National Assembly declared its contempt for the Supreme Court’s ruling: “The farce carried out on May 20 does not exist.”

Almost eight months later, in January, the political translation of the National Assembly’s refusal to recognize Maduro’s win took shape: Juan Guaidó proclaimed himself interim president.

Maduro’s re-election, however, was nothing like the false story manufactured by the right wing. On election day, four candidates participated. Maduro won with 6,190,612 votes, followed by Henri Falcón with 1,917,036 and Javier Bertucci with 988,761 votes, with participation of 46.02 percent of the electoral registry. [The fourth candidate, Reinaldo Quijada, received some 36,000 votes - WW]

International observers from several continents were present, and [former Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis] Rodríguez Zapatero, a key player in the mediation process, said the same conditions existed as in December 2015, when the opposition won the National Assembly.

“Before the election takes place they said that there are no conditions for free

and fair elections ... it is very serious from a democratic point of view to declare elections invalid before they are held when four political leaders are contesting them,” said Rodríguez Zapatero before the elections. The right wing accused him of being a Chavista accomplice for having continued to support what he said in the Dominican Republic when the opposition withdrew from the dialogue table in January 2018: that there was a decision to seek Maduro’s removal through non-electoral means.

The argument for trying to form a parallel government centered on that date. By refusing to recognize the May 20 election, they also didn’t recognize the beginning of Maduro’s new term on Jan. 10, 2019. Articles of the Constitution were adapted to justify Guaidó’s appearance [in January], blessed by Donald Trump’s tweet which anointed him interim president of Venezuela.

If the right-wing’s narrative takes that date as a point of reference, the analysis of Chavismo places the beginning of the current strategy of assault on state power on the rightists’ decision to withdraw from the dialogues taking place in the Dominican Republic in January 2018.

It was there that the United States, with a section of the Venezuelan right wing as its pawns — mainly the Popular Will and Justice First parties — once again made the decision to attempt an overthrow by force, as they did in 2017, 2014 and the initial cycle of Chavismo in the 2001-04 government. What followed was a succession of steps leading to an attempt at regime change, one that they calculated would be a quick overthrow.

One year after the election, and just short of the fourth month since Guaidó’s self-proclamation, this is the situation:

On the international level the two sides are even, stalemated, while Chavismo is much stronger on the national level. The opposition is in a sustained retreat from being able to mobilize and sustain the expectations promised in front of the world’s cameras in January. The headlines that presented Guaidó as a powerful challenger have been replaced by events showing what he really is: The visible face of a strategy that won’t hold water, due once again to a miscalculation.

Chavismo, for its part, is fighting on two major fronts. On the one hand, the Chavistas are resisting assaults such as those of Feb. 23 [at the border] and April 30 [near the air base, when Guaidó and Leopoldo Lopez announced a coup]. This means simultaneously seeking dialogue, like the one begun in Norway last week, for which there are still no public results. On the other hand, it must govern and, in particular, build responses to a complicated economic challenge, violently battered by what is now an openly declared U.S. blockade.

The policy of economic aggression, as part of the strategy of wearing down Chavismo, has grown from 2014 to the present, on the basis of the United States imposing one law and seven executive decrees, which form the framework for Washington’s unilateral attempt to strangle the Venezuelan economy.

These actions translated into the confiscation of Venezuela’s financial assets, the prohibition of the renegotiation of Venezuela’s foreign debt, as well as the debt of the state-owned PDVSA oil company, the intensified attack on Venezuelan sovereignty, sanctions on oil trade and the Central Bank of Venezuela, and freezing \$5.74 billion in assets held by international banks, among other things.

There are no clear responses on either the economic front or the political front at the moment. Regarding economics, it is because the attacks from the United States continuously escalate, with multiple repercussions, and because there still exist internal problems, such as Venezuela’s dependency on funds earned from exporting oil and the difficulty in increasing levels of internal productivity, etc. As for the political dimension, the electoral scenario would involve moving toward early legislative elections. Nicolás Maduro affirmed this at the public meeting celebrating the one-year anniversary of his electoral victory:

“We are going to hold elections to legitimize the only institution that has not been legitimate for the last five years, we are going to call early elections of the National Assembly to see who has the votes, who wins ... we are moving toward a democratic, electoral solution,” he said, speaking before the Chavista mobilization where the decision for the National Constituent Assembly to remain in office until December 2020 was also announced.

For its part, the right wing contends that each and every resolution requires the departure of Nicolás Maduro, which is synthesized in the slogan, “End the usurpation.” Yesterday [Guaidó spokesperson Carlos Vecchio] reported having met in the U.S. with the State Department and members of the Pentagon’s Defense Secretariat, where they discussed “all the aspects that have to do with the Venezuelan crisis.”

How will this meeting translate into action? It is within the U.S. state apparatus where the central decisions are made to carry out the strategy with Juan Guaidó as its figurehead. □



# Atlanta remembers legacy of Irish socialist James Connolly

By Christian Noakes  
Atlanta

A public meeting and film screening was held in Atlanta on May 19 at which attendees discussed the struggle for national liberation and socialism in Ireland. The event resembled the informal and collaborative character of what the Guyanese Marxist Walter Rodney called a “grounding session.”

Participants were encouraged to delve into the history of British imperialism and Irish resistance, starting with the driving off of the indigenous population of Ulster and their land — known as the Plantation of Ulster — being redistributed to English and Scottish colonists. This led to the current struggle against the colonial and neocolonial states of the occupied northeastern six counties (Northern Ireland) and the 26-county Irish Free State (Republic of Ireland). The event paid special attention to the essential role of the Marxist James Connolly in forging the guiding vision of a workers’ republic.

Connolly was born in 1868 in the Cowgate district of Edinburgh, Scotland. His parents were John Connolly and Mary McGinn, Irish immigrants who fled mass starvation at the hands of the British and their colonial lackeys. James Connolly grew up in a slum known as Little Ireland. Due to severe poverty, he enlisted in the British Army at the age of 14. This brought him to the Irish capital of Dublin where he was exposed to the grim reality of British imperialism.

### A life dedicated to world’s workers

Just as important was Connolly’s military training, which would prove to be instrumental in the intertwined struggles of workers and Irish self-determination. There is no shortage of poetic justice here. While Connolly’s entire life is well worth exploring, his involvement in two monumental events in the modern Irish struggle are particularly illuminating for Irish and non-Irish socialists alike: the 1913 Dublin Lockout and the 1916 Easter Rising.

The Dublin Lockout was an industrial dispute between the workers and employers of that city. At the time, Dublin’s urban and rural working class experienced extremely poor working and living conditions. Its inner city was one of the most destitute in all of Europe.

This widespread destitution drove many workers to the Irish Transport and General Workers’ Union and to strike for the right to unionize and for better conditions. Employers demanded that workers renounce the ITGWU. Rather than intimidating the workers, the bosses’ actions led to increasingly militant strikes. To quell the rising tide, employers locked out workers, thereby increasing the situation’s severity.

As tensions rose, strikers faced violent repression at the hands of police and scabs. Hundreds of workers were injured. At least three workers were killed. Police murdered John Byrne and James Nolan; a strikebreaker killed Alice Brady. Connolly, the union’s founder Jim Larkin and Jack White organized the Irish Citizen Army to defend the workers.

### Working class empowered

Composed of rank-and file ITGWU members, the ICA developed from a defensive organization into a well-organized and disciplined working-class army. Although desperation ended the general strike in 1914 and led many workers to sign pledges not to join the ITGWU, the right to unionize gained more recognition, and the working class was empowered by the ICA’s formation.

These events left an indelible impact on the struggle for Irish national liberation. Connecting social and political revolution, Connolly and the ICA became instrumental in the 1916 Easter Rising, which proclaimed the Republic of Ireland. Along with other groups, such as the Irish Volunteers, militants took control of Dublin by occupying buildings throughout the city. Connolly’s role in uniting the ICA with other Republican organizations and leading the combined forces in Dublin made him one of Ireland’s greatest warriors. His execution by British forces on May 12, 1916, made him one of its greatest martyrs as well.

Although the uprising lasted only six days and was predominantly kept within Dublin, it signaled a momentous leap forward by declaring an independent and egalitarian republic for which generations of Irish men, women and children would fight and die.

While the government of 26 counties claims to be the republic that was proclaimed in 1916, it is a republic in name only. In reality, it is little more than a concession given by the British empire to maintain its control when the Free State



The Starry Plough, which was the flag of the ICA. During the Rising, the ICA flew it from a hotel owned by the leaders of the employers during the lockout.

and “Northern Ireland” were established by the Anglo-Irish Treaty that partitioned the island in 1921.

Society is still organized in the fundamentally oppressive manner that the British forced upon the Irish people for centuries. For socialist Republicans, such as members of the Irish Republican Socialist Movement, the struggle continues to attain an anti-sectarian republic in which the Irish people own their land and all its wealth-producing properties. This entails the workers taking control of the means of production, exchange and distribution in the common interest of the Irish people.

James Connolly’s famous words say it best: “The Irish people will only be free, when they own everything from the plough to the stars.” □

# Elections held for European Parliament

By G. Dunkel

Early projections report that more than 200 million people, out of the 400 million eligible, voted in the European parliamentary elections. This turnout is a significant increase from the last election five years ago and indicates a growing concern about the future of the European Union.

While right-wing parties were predicted to make substantial gains, they only did slightly better than in 2014. The centrist parties that dominated the EU’s parliament for the past 40 years did have substantial losses, while the Greens and Liberal parties did substantially better.

The population of the EU is 540 million people, compared to 328 million in the United States. Elections to the EU Parliament took place from May 23 to May 26 in 28 member countries. Preliminary results were announced late on May 26.

The EU Parliament has little real authority. It can’t propose laws or EU leaders; it can just accept or reject them. The U.S. media barely reported on these elections in the past. This time, the corporate media here paid more attention.

That’s because the far- and fascist-right proclaimed their intent to win this vote in order to break up the EU from the inside. Steve Bannon, one of Trump’s main ideologues, is promenading around Europe from plush hotel to even plusher hotel proclaiming the evils of the EU and meeting with European anti-immigrant ultra-rightists.

At the same time there is a general mood of disgruntlement among workers in many European countries over economic conditions, which also led to the greater turnout.

EU member countries are heterogeneous. Some are developed and wealthy imperialist countries, like France, Germany, Britain, and the smaller Netherlands and Sweden. Others like Romania and Cyprus aren’t.

For the European big bourgeoisie, the EU is a capitalistic coalition that serves as an economic and political machine that can be wielded against former colonies, can improve its competitiveness with U.S. imperialism, and can provide a framework for the big German and French banks to operate more freely and dominate the economies of the other countries. It is also a capitalist tool to keep workers’ demands under multinational control.

### Brexit scenarios

The EU faces an existential threat in Britain’s demand to leave, which was made almost three years ago. This process, called Brexit, has turned British politics into a shambling wreck. The campaign to get the referendum authorizing Brexit approved was based on racist, xenophobic lies, blaming immigrants for the austerity that the British ruling class imposed.

Most Brexit scenarios predict major economic damage to the British economy, the second largest in the EU behind Germany. British, Scottish, Welsh and

Irish workers — the working classes of the nations included in the so-called United Kingdom/Great Britain — will inevitably bear the biggest burden of any economic collapse.

Prime Minister Theresa May’s forced resignation — over the British Parliament’s refusal to approve any deal that she worked out with the EU — makes a precipitous Brexit much more likely come Oct. 31, the deadline for Brexit to be completed.

The right-wing parties in Europe, which the U.S. media generally calls “populist,” have strong differences with each other as well as points of agreement. They are united for the most part in opposing immigration, strengthening their countries’ borders, and hypocritically criticizing “the elites.” After the mess that Brexit has created in Britain, these parties are rather circumspect about calling for an exit from the EU.

Like the Brexiteers in Great Britain, most of the far-right parties in Europe want to increase the power of their national governments against “Brussels,” a generic word for the European Union’s bureaucracy located in the EU’s capital city.

A major point of disagreement in the European right-wing is over whether to have friendly or confrontational relations with Russia.

### Results in Britain, France, Germany

The election results in Britain, France and Germany were particularly interesting.

In Great Britain, the Brexit Party — a single-issue party set up six weeks ago — came in first with 28 seats out of 64. Basically the total vote for leaving was close to the total vote for staying. The Conservatives, the party now running the British government, got less than 10 percent of the vote, coming in fifth, with their lowest percentage vote in almost 200 years.

In France, the semi-fascist Rassemblement National (National Rally) came in first with 23 percent, beating the République en marche (Forward the Republic), President Macron’s party, by just 1 percent. This is an embarrassing defeat for Macron, but not the smashing victory Marine Le Pen, head of the RN, was trumpeting. The two parties that had alternated running France for decades barely made a showing.

In Germany, the Greens made strong gains to finish second with more than 20 percent of the vote, behind Angela Merkel’s center-right party. The far-right Alternative for Germany also made strong gains to finish fourth, just behind the Social Democrats, who with 15.5 percent had a brutal decline of more than 11 percentage points compared to five years ago.

Our guiding principle in looking at such a large, complicated event as the EU parliamentary elections is that workers’ struggles should have no borders. The EU is a capitalist institution being attacked by capitalists in their interests. Workers have their own interests at stake. □



# White House protest: 'End sanctions on Zimbabwe!'

By Monica Moorehead  
Washington, D.C.

A march and rally was held in Washington, D.C., on May 25, African Liberation Day, to demand an end to sanctions against the southern African country of Zimbabwe. Known as Rhodesia after it was colonized by England in the late 1800s, Zimbabwe has been heroically defending its right to sovereignty from these periodic acts of war since the late



WW PHOTO: TERESA GUTIERREZ

Workers World Party members, Monica Moorehead and Richard Kossally, pictured with ZANU-PF representative, Dr. Frank Guni (center).

1970s, when it carried out a massive land reform act.

Both England and the U.S. seek revenge against the Zimbabwean government, especially former president Robert Mugabe—a leading guerrilla fighter during Zimbabwe's liberation—for redistributing millions of acres of land stolen by armed white farmers back to their rightful owners, Black guerrilla fighters. Ian Smith, the white prime minister of apartheid-like Rhodesia, at one time owned a 5,000-acre farm in Zimbabwe.

The May 25 protest, organized by the December 12th Movement and Friends of Zimbabwe, started in front of the African American Civil War Museum and proceeded to the White House. Marchers waved the Zimbabwe flag and the red, black and green Black Liberation flag during the parade-like procession.

Chants such as "Whose land? Our land," "You stole us, you bought us—you owe us" and "We are an African

people" brought attention to the devastating impact the sanctions are wreaking on the infrastructure of the Zimbabwean economy, along with the daily lives of the population in almost every area of life. The sanctions pose a threat to the political stability of the government, while at the same time collectively punishing the population.

As marchers stepped with precision in the streets, they evoked horn honks from drivers and raised fists of support from those on foot. Once the protesters reached the White House, a street rally was held, chaired by long-time D12 Movement leader Viola Plummer. One of the speakers was Dr. Frank Guni, an East Coast representative of the Zimbabwe African National



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

WWP member Teresa Gutierrez.

Union-Patriotic Front in the U.S.

Once the rally ended, the protesters marched back to the original site.

Moorehead spoke at the rally, representing Workers World Party and the International Action Center.



Protest at the White House, May 25.

PHOTO: OMOWALE CLAY

## SUDAN Organizers call for national general strike

By Joanna Straughn

The Sudanese Professionals Association has called for preparation for a nationwide strike after months of sit-ins and vigils across Sudan. The SPA is demanding that talks resume to hasten a transition to a new national governing body with civilian leadership.

However, other forces within the main umbrella of protest groups, notably the Alliance for Freedom and Change, have refused to back the strike call. External capitalist forces are also attempting to influence the outcome of this mass people's struggle in Sudan.

Sudan's former president, Omar Al Bashir, was arrested April 11, as were several other officials associated with his government. Mohammed Hamdan, known as "Hemeti," presently leads Sudan as Deputy Chairman of Sudan's Transitional Military Council and Commander of the Rapid Support Forces.

Hemeti had previously met with leaders of the protest movement and had reached an initial agreement that would include both militia members and civilians in a 300-member body. The SPA has also been negotiating for its composition to be inclusive of different genders, youth and nationalities within Sudan.

Soon after the announcement of the agreement on May 14, shots were fired on unarmed protesters gathered at a sit-in in Khartoum. The most recent reports by Sudanese doctors state that four have died and more are injured.

More strikes and vigils took place in response to the shooting. Hemeti denied issuing a command to act against protesters, condemned the shootings and publicly gave an order to the RSF to "stop using violence against revolutionaries." On May 20, Hemeti announced that several RSF soldiers had been arrested in connection with the shooting.

In addition to the mass sit-in in Khartoum, which has been ongoing since January, a number of collective actions have been taken. On May 23, in response to the call for a national general strike, Hemeti, in front of an assembly of RSF troops, said that engineers and other staff have been assigned to replace striking

workers and that anyone who strikes should go home without returning.

Al Bashir's government had maintained popular subsidies for many years. This was despite the difficulties Sudan faced in developing resources, which would have entailed submitting to foreign investment in order to expand the oil infrastructure.

In 2011 South Sudan broke away, with the backing of the U.S. Three-fourths of Sudan's oil supply, and the means to repay loans based on projected funds from oil sales, went with South Sudan.

### U.S. targeted Sudan, accused Al Bashir of genocide

The U.S. imposed diplomatic sanctions in 1996 and placed Sudan on its list of state sponsors of terrorism. The U.S. accused Al Bashir of genocide in the Darfur region in 2003, an accusation he denies. Militias with irregular ties to the state had made attacks against populations in the Darfur region, in areas where U.S.-backed South Sudan rebels had been mobilizing.

In October 2017, the U.S. lifted some of the sanctions, but refused to remove Sudan from the terrorism list. The lifting of sanctions permitted the government of Sudan to accept loans from the International Monetary Fund. Among other austerity measures, the IMF demanded that wheat subsidies be cut, leading to soaring bread prices and unrest.

Sudan's government spent further resources expanding its military to counter attacks from armed groups, including the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North. Removal of subsidies on staples such as bread catalyzed the sit-ins, according to the SPA.

### Imperialists' role: How much involvement?

According to Radio Dabanga, a Sudan-based news organization (dabangasudan.org), U.S. legislators have sent a letter to the U.S. State Department proposing "a series of measures that should be taken to support the democratic transition in Sudan, including increasing the capacity building of civilian leadership and civil society and to provide the transitional civilian authorities with technical capacity-building assistance."

However, this does not make clear what type of capacity would be supported and to what extent it would serve the needs of the working class of Sudan.

The SPLM-N has agreed to a ceasefire with the government and tentatively supports the umbrella group Alliance for Freedom and Change. Its demands have tended to align with U.S. interests, and it will likely press for those in any negotiating process.

Britain and Norway have also come out in favor of the AFC's demands, stressing that their aid and investment decisions may hinge on whether the government is civilian-led. (Radio Dabanga)

Federica Mogherini, foreign policy chief of the European Union, declared, "A swift and orderly handover to a civilian transitional body with full decision-making authority is the only way to enable a peaceful, credible and inclusive political process that can meet the aspirations of Sudanese society and lead to much-needed political and economic reforms. The position taken by the African Union's Peace and Security Council is welcome and important in this context." (Africanews.com)

The EU has come under criticism among the Sudanese people for the possibility that EU allocations of funds, ostensibly for ameliorating the root causes of migration from Sudan, have been used to fund anti-migrant death squads along

Sudanese border migrant routes to Europe. (tinyurl.com/y4l9mluu)

The United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have contributed \$3 billion to Sudan's central bank. Some have interpreted the aid as attempting to reinforce the Transitional Military Council's leverage against the opposition of the Alliance for Freedom and Change. Saudi Arabia has previously been accused of recruiting troops out of Sudan's RSF to fight in Yemen. Meanwhile, the U.S. and EU have pressed the U.N. to request Saudi Arabia not defend the TMC if it acts against the opposition.

Powerful global and regional capitalist forces are jockeying for position in relation to the people's uprising in Sudan. Media outlets representing the interests of international finance capital make this clear when they stress the opportunities in gold mines, rich agricultural land, water from the Blue Nile, Sudan's strategic location on the Red Sea, resort development potential along the shoreline, and potential tourist interest in well-preserved archaeological sites.

The natural features and resources of Sudan belong to the people of Sudan. It is for the people of Sudan to determine how their resources will be used, and it is their right to determine the outcome of the struggle for their lives and their future. □

## MOVE 9 women freed!

Continued from page 1

city officials or police were ever criminally charged in connection with the May 13 murders.

In earlier correspondence with The Guardian, Janine Africa wrote, "There are times when I think about Life and my son Phil, but I don't keep those thoughts in my mind long because they hurt. The murder of my children, my family, will always affect me, but not in a bad way. When I think about what this system has done to me and my family, it makes me even more committed to my belief." (May 25, 2019)

While neither woman made a public statement after their release, they did

send a thank you message to their U.S. and international supporters. It read in part: "The lawyers were sent to do a job and they did it! It is duly noted! But we cannot minimize the will of the people, which John Africa said is 'a powerful force.' All power to the people who pushed aside their personal concerns and safety to fight for MOVE's Freedom."

Three other MOVE 9 members Delbert Orr Africa, Charles Sims Africa and Edward Goodman Africa remain incarcerated. Merle Africa and Phil Africa died in custody. Find out more about the Move 9 and their fight for freedom at onamove.com and move9parole.blogspot.com. □

# 'Liberal' — to a point

The so-called liberal media in the U.S. — most notably the New York Times, the Washington Post and some television news sources — profess independence. But they dare not offend their ruling-class owners on key international issues.

Take, for example, the “reporting” we are handed each day on three important oil-producing countries: Venezuela, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

How often are we told that the Venezuelan opposition (which is now in disarray) arose out of a lack of “democracy” and “fraudulent” elections in that country? These phrases are repeated again and again, not just by the openly right-wing media here, but by those claiming objectivity.

They fail to mention the literally

dozens of elections that have taken place in Venezuela since the movement led by Hugo Chávez took power in 1998 — through an election. Nor do they seem to remember that the right wing of the Venezuelan military kidnapped Chávez in 2002, but he was rescued by a mass mobilization of the Venezuelan people. The U.S. government a month ago, with the help of the corporate media, was hoping to instigate the military against President Nicolás Maduro, but this time it didn't happen.

How often are we told that the Iranian people are ruled over by a dictatorial theocracy? The imperialist media make no mention of the horrors carried out by their predecessor, the bloody Shah, who was installed by a CIA coup in 1953.

A creature of the U.S. oil companies, he was overthrown in a popular revolution in 1979. That revolution led to the current government.

Venezuela and Iran are now considered “enemies” of the U.S.

But not Saudi Arabia.

Right now, the U.S. military is providing logistical and material support for Saudi Arabia's genocidal bombing of Yemen, a small country facing famine and genocide at the hands of this bloody Saudi/U.S. war.

Even when reporting on this ghastly situation, do the liberal media here remind their audience that Saudi Arabia is politically a total dictatorship of the Saud royal family? That 700 princes control the whole economy and politics of the

state? That there are no elections in Saudi Arabia? And that these theocratic princes have a great relationship with the government of the United States?

Take a look at the Wikipedia entry on Saudi Arabia and scan down to a discussion of the royal family. There is a photograph taken in 1985. Click on it and you'll see a lovely picture of Ronald Reagan and Donald Trump looking on as Ivana Trump shakes hands with King Fahd at the White House. Ivana has been replaced, but the reactionary international policies dictated by U.S. big business remain.

Why don't the Times, the Post, NPR and others mention that? □

## Free Assange and Manning!

By releasing the information provided by whistleblower Chelsea Manning, Wikileaks founder Julian Assange exposed the war crimes of the imperialist U.S. government. The most dramatic exposé was a July 2007 video of U.S. helicopter pilots shooting at Iraqi civilians, including Iraqi journalists working for Reuters.

Those of us who opposed and mobilized against the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq already knew the litany of U.S. war crimes, including the lie of “weapons of mass destruction” used to justify the invasion. The Wikileaks video, however, brought those crimes to light for anyone who doubted. And shooting Iraqi civilians was only one of many examples that Wikileaks exposed.

Even if that were all they accomplished, Manning and Assange would have helped the struggle of working-class and oppressed peoples worldwide against the U.S. empire. That alone has earned

them the support of revolutionaries and working-class organizers against the new imperialist attacks on their freedom.

The U.S. (in)Justice Department has now taken its aggression against Assange a big step further. It has brought 17 charges of violation of the 1917 Espionage Act against him — for being an honest journalist. In so doing, the U.S. government is now waging war against media freedom and against the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In effect, it is charging the media with treason.

Assange faces up to 175 years in prison, which is a de facto death penalty. And Manning is now in prison again for refusing to testify against Wikileaks. She previously did seven years in military prison before being pardoned.

But these attacks by the Republican government are against more than these two individuals, whom Democratic Party official leaders also call criminals. This administration is attacking the rights of

all media to tell the truth about the U.S. empire and those who manage it.

Even ruling-class media giants like the New York Times and the Washington Post, whose loyalty to the imperialist system is unquestioned, say they are threatened by the offensive on Assange and Manning.

According to these media, here is how the quest for truth is supposed to work in a capitalist democracy: Should the government commit a crime or make a serious error in judgment, it will likely try to keep it secret. Someone working for the government who knows of the crime may run the risk and tell it to media. Since these media are supposed to be independent of the government, they verify, publish or broadcast the truth about this crime or error.

The crime or error then can be debated, at least among the bourgeoisie and its representatives, who really run the society. The crime is also exposed for all the

people to know.

The media need to protect their sources, the whistleblowers or witnesses, by not identifying them. In recent cases, journalists have done prison time for refusing to name sources.

The case against Assange is an even more serious assault on press freedom and democracy, in that he is being charged with treason for publishing the truth about a criminal imperialist regime. It puts at risk any serious investigative media, including smaller left-wing media.

Any attack from an ultra-right regime on powerful media like the Times, the Post and CNN — which have resources to defend themselves — is also an attack on more progressive media. It leaves only one choice:

Defend Julian Assange and the right to publish. Defend Chelsea Manning and all whistleblowers who expose the imperialist U.S. regime! □

## Charged with espionage

# Veteran exposes drone war crimes

By Michael Kramer

U.S. Air Force veteran Daniel Hale was arrested May 9 in Nashville, Tenn., and charged under the Espionage Act for leaking documents that expose the U.S. drone warfare program and crimes the Trump and previous administrations have committed in Afghanistan, Somalia and Yemen.

The U.S. drone warfare program is run by the USAF, CIA, National Security Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and, of course, private contractors like Leidos. In 2018 that company had 32,000 employees and \$10.19 billion in revenue. The drone warfare program is a major money maker for the military-industrial complex (MIC).

Like so many working-class youth, Hale joined the USAF “out of desperation, because I was homeless.” (Washington

Post, May 9)

Hale served during 2009-13 and was assigned to work at the NSA. During 2012 he was stationed at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, where he was responsible for identifying, tracking and targeting drone attacks. After he was discharged, he worked as a defense contractor intelligence analyst at Leidos and was assigned to the NGA, a pattern typical of how the MIC web works.

According to his indictment, Hale, a member of About Face (previously Iraq Veterans Against the War), is charged with providing “Secret and Top Secret” documents to a reporter and an “online news outlet.” The documents concern the drone warfare program and so-called counterterrorism operations.

In October 2015 the online investigative website Intercept published “The Drone Papers,” and in April 2016

investigative reporter Jeremy Scahill published “The Assassination Complex: Inside the Government's Secret Drone Warfare Project.” Also in 2016 Hale was featured in the award-winning documentary “National Bird” on drone warfare whistleblowers.

Daniel Hale faces 50 years imprisonment for revealing that drone warfare not only kills a “target” but anybody nearby. He exposed the “kill chain” — when “intelligence specialists” like himself sit thousands of miles from battle as they analyze live drone video; communicate in instant-message chat with jet fighter pilots, operators of armed Predator and Reaper drones, and ground troops; and pass along secret “kill” orders from



Daniel Hale

PHOTO: DEMOCRACY NOW

higher-ups who authorize assassinations.

Like Chelsea Manning, Edward Snowden and other military veterans who testified at the Winter Soldier hearings on Vietnam (1967) and Iraq (2008), Hale spent years deep inside the MIC and was driven to expose what he took part in and what he saw.

Support Daniel Hale. He is guilty of nothing.

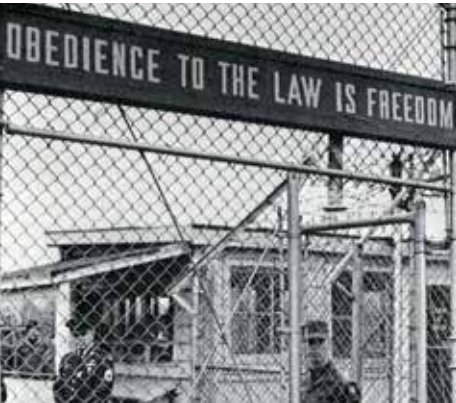
Indict and imprison the real war criminals!

*The writer is a member of Veterans For Peace.*



# 50 years ago, Fort Dix burned

## Imprisoned soldiers rebelled during Vietnam War



Sign hung above Fort Dix Stockade, 1969.

By John Catalinotto

*The following report is based on a chapter in Catalinotto’s book, “Turn the Guns Around: Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions” (World View Forum, 2017), which tells the story of the American Servicemen’s Union, an anti-war, anti-racist organization of U.S. active-duty service members during 1968-75.*

On the evening of June 5, 1969, hundreds of GIs imprisoned in the Army stockade at Fort Dix, N.J., rose up in rebellion. Half the stockade burned as these troops, many of them active opponents of the U.S. war in Vietnam, defended themselves against an attack by 250 military police.

Some of the most effective anti-war soldier organizers were being held in the Fort Dix Stockade during the first half of 1969: Henry Mills, Terry Klug, John Lewis, Bill Brakefield, Tom Tuck, Tom Catlow, Jeffrey Russell and Robert North. Lewis, Mills and North had organized meal strikes and other mass actions in the stockade in early 1969.

The stockade commanders considered the whole prisoner body to be a pack of trouble, and accordingly, they inflicted whole groups with collective punishment. For weeks building up to June 5, the anger of the GIs had been growing. Their issues: inadequate food, long confinements without trial, racism in the stockade system against Black and Puerto Rican GIs and interference with their mail. (The AWOL Press, vol. 1, No. 6)

On June 5, with temperatures in the sun over 90°F, the guards ordered the GIs housed in prison blocks 66 and 67 to stand in formation for hours that afternoon.

To this kind of provocation, the men’s reaction was destined to go beyond refusing to eat a meal. That evening, hundreds of prisoners smashed windows, threw beds and footlockers out of the barracks, and some set buildings afire. The stockade authorities sent in 250 troops armed with riot guns and tear gas. They beat Brakefield, a member of the American Servicemen’s Union (ASU) and an anti-war activist, until he was unconscious.

As soon as the union learned of the rebellion and of the brutal repression of our members and other GIs, ASU Chairperson Andy Stapp got to work building support for the prisoners and for any of the GIs facing new charges. The first step was to put the Army on the defensive for systematic, brutal treatment of the prisoners, most of whom were facing charges for the very low-level offense of Absent Without Official Leave (AWOL). The next step was to demand the right to investigate conditions in the stockade.

### ASU gets Army to answer

The following article appeared in the ASU monthly newspaper, The Bond, that July:

“On June 20, the Army answered the ASU. In a letter written for the Secretary of the Army by Col. James C. Shultz, Jr. (“Acting the Provost Marshal General”), the Brass denied that GIs in the Dix stockade had been abused, denied overcrowding, denied that MPs used “physical contact” with the prisoners (but admitted that nine prisoners had been hurt), denied that tear gas was used and refused to allow the ASU to investigate the stockade or see medical records.

“In addition to imprisoning and then further mistreating these citizen soldiers, the Army now proposes to try them for their resistance. Of the 150 involved in the rebellion, 38 have now been charged as a result of this resistance. Ten have been singled out for special charges of riot, inciting to riot, conspiracy to riot, arson, etc. Four of these are ASU organizers. One is Terry Klug who returned from Europe several months ago, where he worked with RITA — GI resisters.

“Another is Tom Tuck, a Black GI who earlier led the ‘Dirty Dozen’ at Fort Knox, Ky. Bill Brakefield received sanctuary at City College in New York last fall when he refused orders for Vietnam. Jeff Russell joined the Union while confined in the stockade.

“It should be made perfectly clear that the Army has no right to try them. It has no more right to try them than General Motors has a right to try workers who go on strike against them.

“The ASU is not only busy publicizing the vicious injustice of this Brass attack, it is rallying support among civilians as well as GIs to fight back.” (The Bond, July 22, 1969)

If Mills and Lewis escaped being arrested and charged, it was only because they weren’t housed in Cell Blocks 66 and 67. The two had been organizing effective mass actions — like meal strikes — against the stockade authorities, but none of the strikes had turned into a spontaneous general rebellion as on June 5.

The charges against the thirty-eight, and especially against the five GIs singled out for general courts-martial and possible heavy sentences — including the ASU organizers and their closest allies — were extremely serious. Klug faced more than 56 years in prison.

For the 21-year-olds at Fort Dix, it was mind-boggling to think they were facing decades in prison merely for rebelling against injustice.

For the ASU national organizers in their NYC office, there was only one guilty party: the U.S. Army. Sure, someone set the stockade on fire, but it was a building that shouldn’t have been there in the first place. And it was holding the wrong prisoners.

The Pentagon officers were dropping napalm bombs on villages all over Vietnam and setting people on fire every day. The GIs knew that, and you could tell from their letters that many of them hated it. The ASU members especially hated it, and it was understandable that

some took direct action to express their feelings.

The ASU started to organize defense for the Fort Dix 38 just as it had for the Black GIs at Fort Hood, Texas, who were protesting riot-control duty in Chicago the prior summer. Union organizers decided to first build solidarity among other GIs and with the civilian anti-war movement, then get publicity out to all the anti-war media to build support and break the story into the corporate media.

The ASU had an advantage in the summer of 1969: A majority of the population had turned against the war, with an even larger majority in the Northeast. Also, Fort Dix was only 36 miles from Philadelphia and 72 miles from New York City. Unlike Fort Hood, Fort Dix was not in rural Texas where the anti-war and anti-racist GIs could be isolated from their supporters.

The government still had its repressive state power right there at Fort Dix, but there were thousands of young revolutionaries and hundreds of thousands of sympathizers who would, when they heard the truth about the stockade, support the Fort Dix 38.



From left, Bill Brakefield, Jeffrey Russell, Terry Klug, and Tom Catlow faced heavy charges related to burning down the Fort Dix Stockade on June 5, 1969.

### Special message from defendants

During that summer of 1969, when the Richard Nixon administration was making the first tentative moves to pull U.S. troops out of Vietnam, the ASU published a special message from the GIs among the Fort Dix 38 who were closest to the union and faced general courts-martial and the most consequential charges. Here are excerpts from some of their statements published in a special flyer by the ASU:

“Jeffrey Russell: ‘On June 5, the prisoners were made to stand at attention for four hours in the boiling sun. The same day two prisoners were beaten by guards. Twice that day the people’s personal items had been torn through and scattered. After lunch cell blocks 66 and 67 were uprooted and the people were forced to change cell blocks. The people stood in the sun for three hours before they were moved. ... Other guards said that this was part of a plan to force the people to riot. ... The riot that came on June 5 was a glorious retaliation, by the people, against

the Nazi repression and the mercenary Army... The people chanted, “Vietnam, we won’t go.”

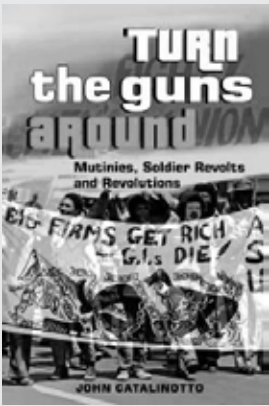
“Carlos Rodriguez Torres: ‘The next thing I tell you is absolutely true and I can use the person’s name because it was me. ... Sgt. Himan put his hands on me and I tried to protect myself. SP4 Miller started punching. Next thing I know all six are trying to put me down and tie my hands behind my back and begin to put on pressure. More punches on my back, sides, head and, next thing I know, Sgt. Himan, to prove he is the man he isn’t, puts my head on the floor, left side up, and leaves an imprint of his boot and bump on the other side. They kicked me in the back of my head, and put a foot on the back of my neck and applied pressure.’

“William Brakefield: ‘What we want as a union has been said before. We want the rights afforded human beings, and not what being slaves of capitalist exploiters forces us to accept; we don’t want “yes-sir-ing” or any more “sir-ing” of officers, which is equal to “yes mista bossman” and “nosa mista Charlie”... We want freedom for those of us who wish not to serve the nation in times of unjust wars or in any war the United States wages if we choose not to serve. ... We want the plague against the Black man removed from the army forever, especially against the Black Panthers and the Black Muslims.’

“Terry Klug: ‘We as 38 GIs who have already served much time in Pig concentration camps for crimes against nature and mankind — such as going home to be with our wives, girlfriends and families, for refusing to go to Vietnam and participating as human beings in an imperialistic and inhuman war against brave men and women fighting for their own freedom, for speaking out against the fascism that presides in our military and, indeed, throughout our entire governmental system, and for the crime of being Black or Puerto Rican. ... May our many comrades who are presently and fortunately on the outside take up the fight with us so that we together, as one strength, as one righteous force, may bring an end to the evil that is warping our country and bringing destruction and suffering on our brothers of the world.’

Klug’s supporters outside got his message. The ASU, the Fort Dix anti-war coffeehouse, Students for a Democratic Society, YAWF and the Rainbow Coalition — which included the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords Organization, the Young Patriots, the Resistance and the Committee to Free the Ft. Dix 38 — all began to start organizing for a mass demonstration set for Oct. 12, 1969.

*Look for a report later in the year about the Oct. 12 women-led demonstration and the resolution of the charges against the rebellious soldiers.*



### Turn the Guns Around: Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolutions

by John Catalinotto

Draftees and enlistees — eighteen-year-olds from the South Bronx, factory workers from Buffalo, miners’ sons from Kentucky, unemployed youth from Watts — hate the military and the Vietnam War. They throw a wrench into the Pentagon’s war machine, becoming leaders of the anti-war movement and organizing a union in the conscript military to battle war, racism and their officers.

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# Niños migrantes mueren en detención

## Niños ciudadanos mueren de pobreza

Por Sam Ordóñez

23 de mayo, 2018, un agente de Customs and Border Protection mató con un tiro a la cabeza a Claudia Patricia Gómez González, migrante del pueblo Maya Mam. Una semana después, murió en detención Roxana Hernández, una mujer trans hondureña.

El día 20 de mayo de este año se reportó la muerte en detención en la frontera estadounidense de Carlos Gregorio Hernández Vásquez, del pueblo Maya Achi y con 16 años de edad. Es el tercer niño migrante muerto este mes en detención o menos de un mes después de salir de detención, sumándose a Wilmer Josué Ramírez-Vásquez, con 2 años y medio de edad, muerto el día 14. Juan de Leon Gutierrez, del pueblo Maya Ch'orti', de 16 años, murió el 30 de abril.

En diciembre murieron Jakelin Caal Maquin, del pueblo Maya Q'eqchi', 7 años; Felipe Gomez Alonzo, del pueblo Maya Chuj, 8 años. El día 22 de mayo, CBS reportó que había muerto otra niña a finales de Septiembre 2018, pero hasta ahora no se había reportado. (22 de mayo, CBC News)

El aniversario de la muerte de Claudia Patricia Gómez González es un recordatorio de la guerra abierta contra los migrantes por parte del gobierno estadounidense.

Es una guerra de muchos años, y que se ha luchando en varias frentes, pero que

explotó en el escenario mediático el año pasado cuando se revelaron los campos de concentración en la frontera y la política de separar a las familias que cruzaban la frontera.

En respuesta a estos crímenes de lesa humanidad, el pueblo de los Estados Unidos tomó las calles y se puso a luchar. Muy pronto, el gobierno estadounidense tuvo que reunir a las familias, pero los migrantes siguen acorralados debajo de puentes. Siguen muriendo niños en detención.

### Niños migrantes y niños futuros

Mientras mueren niños migrantes en la frontera, la alianza de neo fascistas, evangélicos, y grandes empresarios conocidos como el partido Republicano ha avanzado una serie de leyes a nivel estatal que efectivamente prohibiría el aborto, en algunos casos con pena de muerte.

Para justificar este ataque patriarcal, han asignado un gran valor a la vida de los niños que podrían existir en el futuro. Se supondría que también serían los primeros en denunciar la muerte de niños que ya existen, pero ellos son los que tomaron una política fronteriza que desde su inicio era racista y la elevaron al nivel de crimen de lesa humanidad.

A la misma vez que avanzan su ataque contra los derechos reproductivos, buscan intensificar la represión de migrantes y endurecer aún más las condiciones en la frontera. En la Casa Blanca, se habla

abiertamente de perdonar a los oficiales que sean convictos criminalmente por cumplir las órdenes racistas del presidente.

Está muy clara cómo piensan los oficiales del gobierno estadounidense: para ellos los migrantes, aunque sean niños, no cuentan como personas, y se les trata peor que a animales. Para ellos un feto a las seis semanas tiene derecho a la vida, sagrada e inviolable aunque muera la mamá, pero una vez nacido el niño, si es migrante, sólo tiene derecho a morir.

### Los Estados Unidos y el odio hacia los niños

El hecho de que los niños muertos son migrantes es le conviene al gobierno estadounidense porque por racismo hay una parte de la clase obrera que no se rebela al enterarse. Pero no son solamente los niños migrantes los que son abusados y condenados a la muerte por el gobierno.

De los países ricos del mundo, los Estados Unidos es el único que no garantiza licencia de maternidad pagada. Además, ya es caro tener un niño por las características generales del sistema de salud. ¿Como se espera que una madre trabajadora pueda cuidar a su bebé si tiene que ir a trabajar dentro de una semana para poder pagar el hospital?

En los Estados Unidos cuando un niño tiene alguna deuda en su cuenta de almuerzo, hay varias respuestas que recibe. A veces, tiran su comida en la basura en frente de todos sus amigos.



En diciembre murieron Jakelin Caal Maquin, del pueblo Maya Q'eqchi', 7 años.

Otras, se le niega comida caliente y se tiene que conformar con pan. Muy pocas veces se le trata con cariño y compasión.

Si un niño no puede pagar el almuerzo escolar, es porque viene de una familia pobre, y por lo tanto en muchos casos es la única comida que reciben. Tanto odio hay por los niños a nivel institucional que cuando un empresario en Rhode Island ofreció pagar la deuda de todos los niños de un colegio, el distrito escolar rechazó la oferta. (thehill.com, 8 de mayo)

Cada invierno, salen noticias de escuelas públicas que no pueden calentar los edificios porque no tienen fondos. Los Estados Unidos tiene uno de los niveles per cápita más altos de jóvenes encarcelados, y la mayoría de ellos por crímenes no violentos.

Algunos niños ni siquiera llegan a ser encarcelados, particularmente los niños negros. Uno de muchos ejemplos que tuvo la atención mediática nacional fue el caso de Tamir Rice, un niño de 12 años disparado por la policía.

Como el racismo pervade la fábrica de los Estados Unidos, el odio es más fuerte hacia los niños no blancos. Para ellos, las generaciones de discriminación se sumen a la destrucción continuada de los servicios sociales del país.

Los colegios en comunidades de color han vivido décadas de un proceso de militarización. El edificio lleno de policías, los detectores de metales y otras políticas que hacen que los colegios parecen cárceles. □

# ¡Justicia reproductiva y de género ahora!

Se ha lanzado un nuevo ataque violento por la derecha al acceso al aborto en los EE.UU.

La Legislatura del Estado de Alabama aprobó la ley más punitiva y restrictiva de los Estados Unidos el 14 de mayo, imponiendo una prohibición total de abortos en el estado, incluso en casos de violación o incesto. La única exención posible, muy difícil de obtener, es si un embarazo pone en peligro la salud física o mental de una mujer. El proyecto de ley hace que realizar o intentar realizar un aborto sea un delito grave.

Alabama se une a otros siete estados, hasta ahora, en aprobar leyes que desafíen de manera desafiante la protección constitucional al aborto garantizada en el fallo de 1973 de Roe v. Wade por la Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos. Roe limita el aborto solo después de que un feto es "viable", aproximadamente a las 20 semanas de embarazo.

Algunas de las nuevas leyes realmente prohíben el aborto a las cuatro semanas, antes de lo que la mayoría de las personas podría sospechar que estaban embarazadas.

Ha habido una avalancha de indignación, protesta y análisis sobre estos violentos ataques legislativos. Algunos críticos ven la campaña como un avance republicano hacia las próximas elecciones nacionales del 2020.

Pero las razones son mucho más profundas: siglos más allá de los cimientos del poder y la explotación en los Estados

Unidos.

Las leyes se están aprobando para fortalecer la misoginia, la supremacía blanca y el odio hacia las personas LGBTQ y las personas con discapacidades.

Sobre todo, las leyes se están aprobando como un arma brutal en el ataque continuo y renovado contra los trabajadores de los Estados Unidos y sobre la creciente solidaridad que se está formando en la clase obrera multinacional, multi-género y multigeneracional.

No es casual que el ataque al acceso al aborto esté sucediendo cuando las mujeres y las personas no conformes con su género están liderando las acciones de las masas de militantes y de las bases populares. Durante el último par de años, millones de maestros, enfermeras, trabajadores de tecnología y trabajadores de comida rápida de los Estados Unidos, a menudo encabezados por mujeres de color, salieron en huelgas de las escuelas, hospitales, oficinas de Google y restaurantes de McDonald's.

Estos trabajadores llevaron los problemas de justicia reproductiva y de género a la línea de piquete como problemas de trabajo, desde el acoso sexual hasta el acceso a los anticonceptivos en la cobertura de salud, los permisos familiares y la igualdad salarial. Y ataron estos temas a la necesidad de acabar con la opresión basada en la raza y el origen nacional.

Dejuana Thompson, fundadora de Woke Vote Birmingham, expuso el profundo racismo en las leyes recientes, y

dijo al Birmingham News el 19 de mayo: "Los republicanos del [Birmingham Southern] publicaron una declaración que equipara el bombardeo [de 1963] de las cuatro pequeñas niñas [negras] en la histórica Iglesia Bautista de la calle 16 con la sentencia de profesionales médicos que practicaban abortos. ... Nosotros, como organizadores, no nos callaremos sobre este tipo de historia revisionista y el intento de borrar la experiencia de la mujer negra en este país. ... [el hecho de que] los cuerpos de las mujeres negras se usaron como cultivadoras y luego se descartaron como herramientas".

Desde que el Congreso terminó con el uso de dinero federal para abortos en la Enmienda Hyde de 1976, los límites actuales al acceso al aborto han afectado a las personas pobres de color, y a las mujeres negras, morenas e indígenas, muy duro. La lucha para sobrevivir financieramente como familia se ha intensificado, mientras que las nuevas leyes contra el aborto en realidad amenazan con sanciones penales por los esfuerzos para obtener alivio.

Si bien el acceso al aborto a menudo se expresa como una cuestión de derechos de las mujeres, el ataque afecta a cualquier persona con útero. Devin Cole de Social Trans Initiative, en camino a una protesta el 19 de mayo en Mobile, Alabama, aclaró esto en Facebook: "No todas las personas que quedan embarazadas son mujeres, no todas las personas con útero son mujeres y no todas las mujeres tienen una útero. "Debemos

exigir justicia reproductiva para todos: mujeres, transexuales, personas no binarias con útero e intersexuales".

La lucha por el acceso al aborto es una parte de la lucha por la justicia reproductiva y de género, por el derecho de las personas a elegir cuándo, dónde o si tener hijos, y también por el derecho a tener los recursos para refugiarse, alimentar, vestir, educar y educar, criar a sus hijos.

La lucha por el acceso al aborto es también otro eslabón en la lucha en curso contra el trato que el capitalismo da a las personas como propiedad. Como Jenny Arras dijo a Birmingham News: "Esta ley es peligrosa. ... Dice: "Haremos de sus cuerpos y lo que llevan dentro, nuestra propiedad".

Como comunistas, luchamos siempre contra las garras mortales del capitalismo que llegan a nuestras vidas. Luchamos por el derecho de los trabajadores y oprimidos a la dignidad, la alegría y la autodeterminación, especialmente para las personas de color.

Para contrarrestar la campaña llena de odio sobre el acceso al aborto, luchamos ferozmente por la justicia reproductiva y de género.

Ahora es la oportunidad de ser parte de las acciones de la clase trabajadora al organizar Días de Solidaridad de los Trabajadores Internacionales (worker-solidarity.net) para contraatacar con protestas, mítines y reclamos de "¡Justicia reproductiva y de género ahora!" □