



UVA protest against police brutality. 6

ISIS, Netanyahu, Iran – U.S. imperialist plans unravel

By Fred Goldstein

Two deeply related issues that are of concern to anti-imperialists have been stirring U.S. capitalist politics.

The first is the speech by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu given to a joint session of Congress and his subsequent victory in the Israeli elections.

The second is the nuclear talks involving, on one side, the U.S., its imperialist partners plus Russia and China and, on the other, the Iranian government.

Along with the nuclear talks, another development that has drawn the attention of anti-imperialists around the world is Iran's recent intervention, along with the leader of the Iranian Quds forces and Iranian-allied militias, in the struggle inside Iraq against ISIS.

The controversy in the ruling class is generated by fear, on the part of the camp of the right wing and conservatives, that the Obama administration has used the nuclear talks to engineer a rapprochement with Tehran. On the other hand, it is obvious that the Obama administration and the active U.S. military high command are desperate to find some points of support to keep their military strategic situation from completely unravelling in the region, from Afghanistan to North Africa.

Hypocritical U.S. uproar over Netanyahu

The uproar caused by the rift between the Obama administration and the settler regime in Tel Aviv was inflamed by Netanyahu's desperate campaign speech pledging never to recognize a Palestinian state. He also tried to start a racist stampede to the polls by warning of Arabs heading "in droves" to vote.

The uproar in U.S. ruling circles belongs with one of the famous lines from the movie "Casablanca" where the police captain, while closing down a gambling house, says, "I'm shocked, shocked to find that gambling is going on in here!" Even as he utters this ironic line, an employee of the gambling establishment hands the captain his winnings.

Despite the fraudulent cry of outrage from the U.S. political establishment, Netanyahu's racist, chauvinist remarks are hardly a surprise. He is the head of



Activists with the revolutionary youth group FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) at the Spring Rising march in Washington, D.C., March 21. See page 8.

the Likud party, a party whose program clearly states:

"a. The Jordan river will be the permanent eastern border of the State of Israel.

"b. Jerusalem is the eternal, united capital of the State of Israel and only of Israel. The government will flatly reject Palestinian proposals to divide Jerusalem.

"c. The Government of Israel flatly rejects the establishment of a Palestinian Arab state west of the Jordan River.

"d. The Jewish communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza are the realization of Zionist values. Settlement of the land is a clear expression of the unassailable right of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel and constitutes an important asset in the defense of the vital interests of the State of Israel. The Likud will continue to strengthen and develop these communities and will prevent their uprooting." (Informed Comment, Aug. 4)

The Zionist ruling class of Israel always aimed to establish complete sovereignty over the West Bank, Gaza and all the land up to Jordan – even before it expelled the Palestinians from their homeland by force and violence, including the use of unspeakable terrorism.

The U.S. ruling class has always known this, but has never exposed it. The U.S. has carried on "negotiations" between the Israelis and the Palestinians with full knowledge that the Zionist leadership was pledged never to yield any genuine sovereignty to a Palestinian state.

Now Washington is stuck with a "partner" that openly acknowledges the fraudulent nature of any negotiation for a sovereign Palestinian state involving

ARCTIC WARMING 3

WORKERS' STRUGGLES 4

- On the picket line 4
- Oil strike ending? 4
- Fight for \$15 5
- Tell Boston mayor: Rehire the 4! 5

STOP RACIST KILLER COPS 6

- UVA student brutalized 6
- Black Lives Matter activists arrested 6
- People with disabilities targeted 9
- Community leader harassed by cops 11

WOMEN DEMAND LIBERATION 7

Donetsk rebellion 8

Austerity protests 9

Behind the Tunisia attack 11

SUBSCRIBE TO WORKERS WORLD

4 weeks trial \$4 1 year subscription \$30
 Sign me up for the WWP Supporter Program
workers.org/articles/donate/supporters_/

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Workers World 212-627-2994
 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl, NY, NY 10011 workers.org

Continued on page 10

Selma, Ala.

Lear workers demand rights

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Selma, Ala.

Among the many tens of thousands of people who marched in a sea of humanity across the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 8 were some of Selma's heroic freedom fighters of today.

They are the workers at Lear Selma, a plant owned by a Fortune 500 company that pays poverty wages and produces car seats for multinational auto giant Hyundai. Its nonunion assembly plant in nearby Montgomery, Ala., employs 3,000 workers.

Between Selma and Montgomery along U.S. Highway 80 — the route of the historic 1965 march following "Bloody Sunday," which forced the passage of the Voting Rights Act — are several small auto parts plants that supply Hyundai.

The largely female, African-American workforce at Lear Selma say that the chemicals used in the production of the foam cushions are making them sick. They charge the company with failure to provide sufficient ventilation and protective gear, resulting in chronic asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory illnesses.

In addition, production workers make \$12 an hour or less despite the fact that some have worked there for 10 years, since the opening of the plant. In 2008, they filed a lawsuit over wage theft, proving that the company had failed to pay them overtime. They are actively organizing to join the United Auto Workers union.

On March 7, a delegation of Lear workers, faith leaders and other supporters travelled Highway 80 to Hyundai's corporate headquarters in Montgomery to personally de-

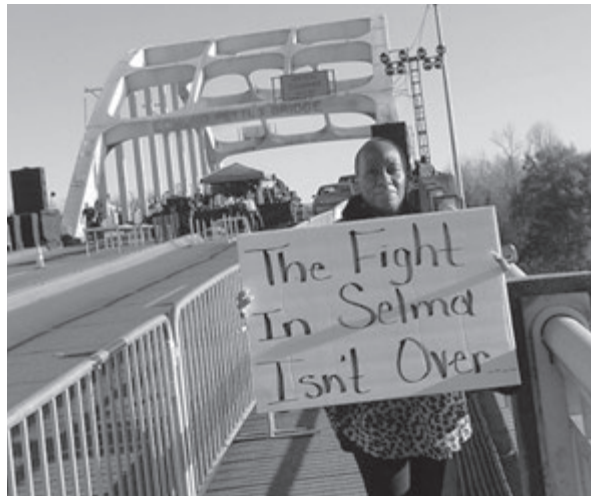


PHOTO: SELMA WORKERS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Kim King, a Lear Selma auto worker.

liver a letter detailing the hazardous working conditions and poverty wages paid by Hyundai's supplier. The workers were callously turned away by company security, which refused to even deliver the letter.

During the many workshops and programs held in conjunction with the 50th anniversary commemoration of the 1965 march, these courageous workers told their story, making it clear that the fight for jobs and justice continues today in Selma. In a town of fewer than 20,000, some 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. This includes many of the workers at Lear Selma.

For additional information, see the Facebook page, "Who Really Made Your Car?" □

The Black Lives Matter movement and supporting WW

The Black Lives Matter movement, which started in response to the killing of unarmed Michael Brown by a racist cop in Ferguson, Mo., is the latest heroic chapter in the centuries-long struggle to end the vile saga of racism and national oppression, including slavery, that permeates the history and everyday reality of life in the United States. WW writes about the struggle against racism in depth all year, every year. Our coverage of the Black struggle here and around the world is based on the principle of supporting national self-determination: Oppressed people have the right to fight to end all forms of inequality and injustice — "by any means necessary" — Malcolm X.

If you appreciate this coverage, it's time to join the Workers World Supporter Program. Please help us continue to publish anti-racist, working-class truth and build the struggles needed to make revolutionary change.

We invite you to sign up today! Write checks to Workers World. Send them to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor, New York, NY 10011. Include your name and address. Or donate online at workers.org/articles/donate/ It's also possible to contribute there by joining the Workers World Supporter Program and giving either a lump sum or a monthly donation. Be sure to check it out. **And thanks!**

WORKERS WORLD PARTY

Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

Workers built it all — it belongs to society, not to a handful of billionaires! But we need a revolution to make that change. That's why for 56 years WWP has been building a revolutionary party of the working class inside the belly of the beast.

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

workers.org/wwp

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

Bay Area
1305 Franklin St. #411
Oakland, CA 94612
510.600.5800
bayarea@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.286.6574
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
712 Main St #113B
Buffalo, NY 14202
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
312.229.0161
chicago@workers.org

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

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313.459.0777
detroit@workers.org

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

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

Huntington, W. Va.
huntingtonww@workers.org

Los Angeles
5278 W Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90019
la@workers.org
323.306.6240

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

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585.436.6458
rochester@workers.org

Rockford, IL
rockford@workers.org

San Diego
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300
Washington, D.C. 20037
dc@workers.org

WORKERS WORLD

this week

★ In the U.S.

ISIS, Netanyahu, Iran – U.S. imperialist plans unravel 1
Selma, Ala.: Lear workers demand rights 2
U.S. psychologists collude in torture 3
On the picket line 4
Oil strike breakthrough 4
Pennsylvania: Immigrants defend right to drive 4
Fighting for \$15 minimum wage in the South 5
What you can do for the Boston school bus drivers 5
Philadelphia: Textbooks sit in warehouses 5
San Francisco: Justice for Alex Nieto, killed by cops 5
Police violence sparks campus protests at UVA 6
Philadelphia: Black Lives Matter activists arrested 6
New York forum: 'Globalize solidarity with women' 7
Study exposes racism and why Black girls matter 7
NYC: Event marks women's global federation at 70 7
Protesting 12 years of U.S. war 8
Behind the police killings of people with disabilities 9
Oakland, Calif.: Black leader Jabari Shaw targeted 11

★ Around the world

Capitalists swarm in as Arctic warms up 3
Town rebels after Ukraine troops kill child 8
Austerity met with mass, militant protests 9
Instability in Libya and Tunisia caused by U.S., NATO 11

★ Editorial

Racist double standard 10

★ Noticias en Español

Desaceleración de economía capitalista mundial
arriesga trabajadores 12

Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 57, No. 13 • April 2, 2015
Closing date: March 24, 2015
Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Technical Editors: Lal Roohk, Andy Katz
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell,
Kris Hamel, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
West Coast Editor: John Parker
Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe,
Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein,
Martha Grevatt, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales,
Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash,
Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette,
Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac
Technical Staff: Sue Davis, Keith Fine, Bob McCubbin
Mundo Obrero: Ramiro Sebastián Fúnez, Teresa
Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus,
Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator
Copyright © 2014 Workers World. Verbatim copying
and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium
without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly
except the first week of January 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/email.php.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl.
New York, N.Y. 10011.

U.S. psychologists collude in torture

By Sue Harris

A Senate Select Committee on Intelligence report on the CIA's use of torture at Guantánamo Bay and other locations states that much of the torture was supervised and inspired by psychologists.

The American Psychological Association answered this report by stating: "The document's release recognizes American citizens' right to know about the prior action of their government and is the best way to ensure that, going forward, the United States engages in national security programs that safeguard human rights and comply with international law. The new details provided by the report regarding the extent and barbarity of torture techniques used by the CIA are sickening and morally reprehensible." (apa.org, Dec. 9)

Despite this pious disclaimer, James Risen's book, "Pay Any Price: Greed, Power, and Endless War," reveals that the APA had modified its ethics code to allow such interrogations. Despite many efforts by the Coalition for an Ethical Psychology and other organizations to ban psychologists' participation with the CIA, the APA leadership refused to interfere in the joint interrogations by the CIA and its psychologists.

A blurb for the 2011 book "Ethical Practice in Operational Psychology: Military and National Intelligence Applications," edited by Carrie H. Kennedy and Thomas J. Williams, illustrates these practices: "The field of operational psychology, and consequently its standards of practice, are evolving and expanding at a rapid pace. Now, more than ever, psychologists' expertise is employed on a day-to-day basis by members of the military, national intelligence, and public safety communities."

Risen reports that two psychologists, James Mitchell and Bruce Jessen, devised a list of coercive techniques to be used in questioning prisoners. They personally conducted interrogations in which they tortured CIA detainees, and then trained thousands of "technicians" to do the same.

Pay day from CIA

In 2005, the two formed Mitchell Jessen & Associates to specifically conduct work with the CIA. Between 2005 and 2009, their firm collected \$81 million from the CIA. The company had 120 employees and worked for a number of military installations.

Both Mitchell and Jessen had doctorates and experience in fields unrelated to torture and interrogation techniques. However, they had ties to the CIA and military experience, and had been recommended by their associates. Their winning recommendation for eliciting information from detainees was to use the concept of "learned helplessness," which was developed by E.P. Seligman in his research with dogs on classical conditioning.

In 2009, Democracy Now interviewed Salon national correspondent Mark Benjamin and Vanity Fair journalist Katherine Eban, both of whom wrote articles in 2007 on Mitchell and Jessen. Eban said, "Psychologists loaned their names and loaned their credentials and their Ph.D.s to this kind of activity and essentially were used by the Bush administration to provide a kind of 'get out of jail free' card for the people who were, you know, doing these interrogations." (democracynow.org, April 21, 2009)

Benjamin stated: "I don't think you can overemphasize the extent to which the Jus-

tice Department relied on the advice and consent and participation of these psychologists, not just in designing the program, but carrying it out and arguing that it was safe and that it wasn't torture. I mean, they were an absolutely vital part of this program, either in the room while these people were being tortured or watching on videotape. ... So long as there are trained psychologists from the SERE [Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Escape] program who are on site at these interrogations who are saying that these detainees can withstand this treatment, are not being harmed psychologically, then it's not torture."

Benjamin also noted that "over the last couple of days the Obama administration has announced that no one, not the people who carried out the torture program or the people who designed the program or the people that authorized the program or the people who said that it was legal even though they knew that it frankly wasn't, none of those people will ever face charges. The Attorney General has announced that not only that, the government will pay the legal fees for anybody who is brought up on any charges anywhere in the world or has to go before Congress."

Profit, greed and human needs

Mitchell and Jessen recommended inflicting terror and pain on their subjects in order to elicit information and to render them obedient and malleable to gain cooperation. The two have since retired, but their work continues, protected by the current administration and the APA despite sanctimonious disclaimers. How does this happen?

In the drive for quick profit that characterizes the capitalist system, every

technology and theoretical framework is molded to fit the purpose of those in power. For that reason, the most lucrative positions in the field of scientific research and engineering are in the military. The U.S. military funds much of the scientific and technological research both inside and outside of the walls of academia.

The skills of scientists, information technologists and engineers are also bent to fit the needs of other corporate industries such as pharmaceuticals, big oil and gas. There is no intellectual, theoretical or scientific pursuit that can escape the requirements of the profit system without risking loss of income and ostracism.

As a science, psychology is a relative newcomer. It has had to compete with other, more powerful fields such as medicine, for its place in the sun. Since the 1940s, the military has provided a safe haven for psychologists, employing them in its massive Department of Veterans Affairs system as well as in Selective Service, intelligence and combat.

After 9/11, when the "need" to get "good intelligence" from captured "enemies" became more urgent, there was a race to find a scientific cover story for both the effective extraction of information and ethical responsibility. The medical profession, for the most part, refused to participate, but the psychological establishment, which had a more dependent relationship with the military, was willing and able.

Human needs under the capitalist system are trumped by corporate greed. Despite its insincere recommendation for the investigation of its own practices, the American Psychological Association should be held strictly accountable for its official sanctioning of torture. □

Capitalists swarm in as Arctic warms up

By G. Dunkel
Anchorage, Alaska

Summer temperatures in Alaska have increased by 5 degrees Fahrenheit in the past 30 years, while median winter temperatures have gone up by 10 degrees. Southeast Alaska, during this past January and February, was consistently 8 to 10 degrees warmer than the northeast United States and had no snow whatsoever.

Merlin Koonooka, a Yupik elder from St. Laurence Island who spoke at the Alaska Anthropological Association's annual meeting March 4-7 in Anchorage, said that the whales and walrus his people hunt for their subsistence were doing fine, but the "rubble ice" that surrounded the island kept them "inaccessible" to hunters. The permanent ice that used to surround the island is gone, and the yearly ice comes later and is much thinner.

According to Koonooka, fishing lasted longer into the fall, and the composition of the catch has changed. His report agrees with a number of others from across the Arctic: Subsistence hunting has changed, but it is still possible.

Hunting is very important in the culture of Arctic Native peoples. It not only confers status, but sharing the results ties the community together.

International capitalists are intent on developing the Arctic because of the disappearance of the ice cover. (See a graphic depiction of the ice loss by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at tinyurl.com/klb7ogj.)

The passage through the Northern Sea Route, which is currently in the testing



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

stage, will cut one-third of the shipping distance from East Asia to Western Europe.

Given the volume of trade between these two areas, companies that can figure out how to do this safely will save billions of dollars. In 2013, the MS Nordic Orion became the first commercial bulk carrier to transit the Northwest Passage, saving 1,000 miles. (Reuters, Sept. 27) There will certainly be more shipping following the first commercial passage.

But beyond shipping, oil companies and mining companies are placing big bets on developing extractive industries in the Arctic. While the potential profits appear to be immense, the costs and the difficulties involved are also great.

Oil drilling among ancient cultures

Shell Oil spent over \$6 billion preparing to drill in the Chukchi Sea and Beaufort Sea. Its drilling platform called the Kulluk had to be removed before the ice formed, but in the process of towing it to Seattle, the tow rope broke and the platform got hung up on some rocks. It wasn't even able to drill a complete test well. (New York Times, Dec. 30)

Whether or not it gets to drill in 2015, Shell will have to spend over \$1 billion to preserve its leases.

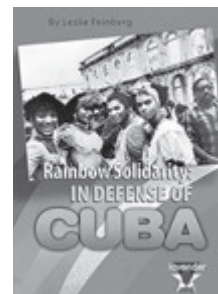
Nobel Drilling, a subcontractor of Shell, pleaded guilty in early December to eight felony counts for violating environmental and safety laws. The company received over \$12 million in fines and community service.

Reading the extensive New York Times coverage of this incident, you can see how absentee executives totally disregarded the conditions their employees and subcontractors faced. They disregarded some simple changes recommended for the tug towing the Kulluk.

The absence of ice, which has a dampening effect on wave formation, has meant that waves have grown much larger. Some of the waves the Kulluk encountered were 50 feet high.

The way that Shell, a huge corporation with very deep pockets, so carelessly treated the Arctic in order to potentially make big profits illustrates how any company, including smaller ones with shallower profits, would behave.

An oil spill in the Chukchi Sea could possibly wipe out the habitat for the whales and seals that a number of Inupiaq communities depend on along the shore of the Arctic Ocean. Some of these communities have histories that stretch back a thousand or more years.



Rainbow Solidarity in DEFENSE of CUBA

By Leslie Feinberg, author of Stone Butch Blues

This book is an edited compilation of chapters 86 to 110 from the Lavender & Red series in Workers World newspaper that began in 2004.

Available in bookstores or online at: www.workers.org/lavender-red/LavenderRed_Cubabook.pdf

On the Picket Line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

Protesters demand \$15 minimum wage in Philly

Philadelphia, named the poorest big city in the U.S. by a recent census report, has become the latest city to discuss a \$15-an-hour minimum wage. On March 4 more than 150 workers, activists and faith leaders, organized by 15NOW, packed Philadelphia City Hall to urge officials to legislate against poverty wages. Dozens of low-wage workers testified before the City Council about the urgent need to raise the minimum wage, which is a paltry \$7.25 in Pennsylvania. Despite a state law that makes it illegal for cities to raise minimum wages locally, supporters are hoping that such a resolution will trigger a legal and legislative challenge to the state. (Eyewitness report from Scott Williams)

Papa John's delivery workers in NYC to get \$2.1 million in back pay

A New York County Supreme Court judge on March 3 ordered the owner of five Papa John's restaurants in the Harlem section of Manhattan to pay out more than \$2.1 million in back pay and damages to hundreds of delivery workers. The court found that franchisee New Majority Holdings and owner/operator Ronald Johnson consistently paid workers less than the minimum wage, stole workers' wages and illegally withheld overtime. This judgment comes less than a month after a New York court ordered another Papa John's franchisee to pay out almost \$800,000 in back pay for stolen wages. Luis Juarez, a worker at a Manhattan Papa John's restaurant, urged more workers to stand up against wage theft, stating, "I ask my colleagues not to remain silent against injustice, and to demand payment for the hard work they do." (ag.ny.gov, Mar. 5)

Senate Republicans move to block pro-union regs

The U.S. Senate voted on March 4 to block a newly enacted National Labor Relations Board regulation which reduces the amount of time workers have to wait between signing union cards and holding union elections from a median of 38 days to 11. The regulation, which was first reported by Workers World on Dec. 28, is designed to prevent companies from using worker intimidation to influence union elections. The House of Representatives is expected to follow the Senate in blocking the regulation, but President Barack Obama has vowed to veto the block and uphold the NLRB ruling. (RHrealitycheck.org, Mar. 5)

Women's economic status: mostly worse or same after 10 years

The study "Status of Women in the States: 2015," published in March by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, reports that women workers' economic status has gotten worse or stayed the same in almost half the 50 states and the District of Columbia over the last 10 years. The IWPR used four indicators to evaluate women's economic status based on full-time, year-round work: the percentage of women in the workforce, the number of women in professional or managerial positions, women's median yearly earnings, and the gender wage gap. Women constitute the majority of the low-wage workforce, while higher paying technology and engineering jobs remain dominated by men. White women are paid on average 22 cents less than white men, or 78 cents, though the gap increases for women of color, with Latinas earning the least. The gap is closed for women in unions by almost 50 percent, or 10 cents. Women workers in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic states fared the best, while those in Southern states fared the worst. Based on current statistics, the survey estimates the wage gap will not close entirely until the year 2058. (RHrealitycheck.org, Mar. 12) That means we need to make some real changes mighty soon! □



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE
Philadelphia,
March 20.

By Berta Joubert-Ceci
Philadelphia

During a public hearing on March 20 on the reform of the driving-license law for undocumented people in Pennsylvania, people told their moving stories about the impact of not having drivers' licenses before a room full of immigrants and their close supporters.

Pennsylvania House of Representatives members Leslie Acosta and Mark B. Cohen heard depositions from lawyers, migrant organizations, religious figures and undocumented victims to consider an amendment to Act HR 1648.

The undocumented immigrant workers form an invisible sector of the U.S. working class that performs the most ba-

sic tasks, without which the rest of society could not live. Not only are their jobs invisible, but also their identities. Without personal documents, without their own Social Security numbers and without any official identification, they must negotiate an obstacle course that would daunt any U.S. citizen. And they must do this to support their families, a fundamental human right.

In the end, Acosta and Cohen thanked them for the depositions, admitting that the stories "opened their eyes" and promising they will do everything possible to push the legislation because it is "a matter of civil rights."

What were these stories?

In the first panel, attorney Don W. Pak spoke of the great economic benefits for the United States if these licenses were granted. In brief, the economy would

Oil strike breakthrough

By Martha Grevatt

March 22 — The U.S. oil refinery strike, which began Feb. 1, appears to be moving toward a resolution. The Steelworkers union has been negotiating to achieve an industrywide contract to cover 30,000 workers at Royal Dutch Shell, Marathon, BP, Motiva, Tesoro, LyondellBasell and other companies.

Shell, whose refineries are among the 15 on strike and whose official is the lead negotiator on the industry side, agreed to a settlement with the Steelworkers union. Union members at Shell, voting March 19, ratified the agreement with 93 percent in favor. Soon, Shell refinery strikers will be back on the job.

What made the Shell oil company yield some ground was the solidarity of the workers. Until the other companies agree to the pattern negotiated with Shell, workers at their struck refineries will keep walking the picket lines.

Local unions also have to negotiate new local agreements at each workplace. In Texas City, Texas, Marathon workers complain about the 20-plus givebacks the company is demanding from the union; LyondellBasell wants to scrap language on overtime that has been on the books for over 20 years. Management at the BP refinery in Whiting, Ind. — hit with pickets when the strike was expanded Feb. 7 — wants contract changes that undermine seniority rights and the right to refuse overtime and seniority, and weaken the union's ability to bargain collectively.

Safety was the number one strike issue from day one. Workers complained that having to stay on shifts 24 hours in a row or weeks without a day off created dangerous working conditions that have led to on-the-job fatalities and serious injuries. The Steelworkers issued a news release March 12 stating that Shell had agreed to "the immediate review of staffing and workload assessments, with USW safety personnel involved at every facility." The four-year contract demands joint review



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

Workers march in Findlay, Ohio, home of Marathon, on Feb. 24.

of repair and daily maintenance needs at each facility. When these are neglected it puts worker and community safety at risk.

Joint reviews of subcontracting matters, another issue in the strike, are also part of the new contract. The first refinery jobs to be contracted out were janitor positions; now, the practice has spread, shrinking the workforce dramatically. Health benefits remain intact; the union sought improvements while the industry wanted givebacks. Workers receive a three percent raise each of the four years of the contract.

While the oil industry has been the most profitable industry in the capitalist economy, the companies want more from the hides of the workers. This strike, the first national oil strike since 1980, has to be seen in the general context of capitalist austerity and a broad anti-labor offensive. Striking the oil companies at this time — when plummeting oil prices have the bosses in a panic and there are widespread layoffs and closings of refineries — was a bold move.

The solidarity shown by Shell workers is continuing, especially in Texas, where the largest number of struck refineries is located. Shell workers around the Houston area are now picketing with their sisters and brothers at Marathon and LyondellBasell. They are all in different units of the same local. "I went out to the Lyondell picket line and walked the last several hours with them," a ten-year worker at Shell's Deer Park refinery told this writer. "I really admire their spirit. I hope others will do the same. People are invited to walk with them and have some good conversation." □

Pennsylvania

Immigrants defend right to drive

gain \$1.75 billion in five years if the 10 million undocumented people could pay the \$35 for a driver's license and renew it annually. In addition, another \$15 billion would come from paying insurance, buying cars, etc., which would in turn open up jobs. He contrasted this with what the government spent on the bailout of General Motors: \$50 billion in 2009.

Immigration attorney Djung Tran stressed the vulnerability of these unlicensed drivers, who cannot obtain urgently needed medical care when victim of a car accident.

Érika Almirón, director of the immigrant organization Juntos, stressed the link between driving without a license and deportations. She added that specially marked licenses are no solution.

With a lump in his throat, Guatemalan Esvin Maldonado told about his difficulties and those of many of the 13,000 undocumented people in Franklin County, Pa., in his case having to go to work at 2:30 a.m. The lack of public transportation re-

quires them to drive without a license. This led to his 18-year-old son being deported, illustrating the great problem caused by the separation of families.

Celia Mota of the New Sanctuary Movement told how after her husband, who is a U.S. citizen, hurt his back, she had to drive without a license to take him to medical appointments, transport their children to school and deliver the clothes she makes, the basis for supporting the family.

María Serna, a Colombian immigrant who started the fight for licenses for immigrants six years ago in Philadelphia following a personal experience, told Workers World-Mundo Obrero, "The importance of this struggle lies in demanding justice for immigrant communities from those who deny us each day the right to an identity; to deny that we exist as human beings because we have no document to prove our existence. This makes us invisible to the society to which we belong and contribute." □

Fighting for \$15 minimum wage in the South

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

With fists pumping in the air, some 500 low-wage workers from across the South filled the sanctuary of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church here with a resounding chant on March 21 to open a one-day mobilizing conference. “I believe that we will win” was the defining slogan as fast food, Walmart, home health care, child care, college adjuncts, retail and auto parts workers gathered from as far away as Missouri and Texas, Virginia and North Carolina to build for the April 15 “Fight for \$15” day of action.

Many participants wore the brightly colored T-shirts of their area’s campaign to win economic justice and a liveable wage.

Underlining the confidence that they will win, program speakers listed the achievements of their young movement — such as legislation in states and cities across the country raising the minimum wage as high as \$15 an hour in Seattle and Los Angeles, and decisions wrestled from Walmart and others to raise beginning pay by a dollar an hour.

Most speakers were young people of color whose stories of hard work and poverty conditions resonated with an audience that cheered them on when they confessed to being nervous about speaking before such a large crowd.

Dozens came from the Ferguson and St. Louis area. Burger King worker Carlos Robinson connected the police terror to the poverty wages that propelled resistance among youth to the murder of Michael Brown last Aug. 9.

Three of the Memphis sanitation workers, whose 1968 historic strike won the support of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., were featured in a special panel that connected the fight against racism with the struggle for union rights, decent pay and safe working conditions.

Expressing their enthusiasm for the upcoming national day of action in April, when many tens of thousands of low-wage workers and their allies will march and rally in hundreds of cities, the conference spilled out of the church and took to the streets of Atlanta.

The activists took over Atlanta’s famous Auburn Avenue on the way to the McDonald’s next to Grady Hospital.



Atlanta, March 21.

The chanting crowd surged into the restaurant, demanding the fast food giant raise the workers’ pay to \$15 an hour. A 23-year-old McDonald’s worker, Robertson Anderson, jumped over the counter and marched out of the building to the cheers and applause of the jubilant

group. Anderson, who said he had not known about the campaign before, stated: “I do know one thing. Everyone deserves \$15 an hour.”

That’s the message sure to grow stronger across the South and the whole country on April 15 and beyond. □

What you can do for the Boston school bus drivers

By Joe Mchahwar

Victory may still be in the air with the “not guilty” verdict on March 5 in the trumped-up felony case against union leader Stevan Kirschbaum, but the uphill battle facing the school bus drivers in Boston is not over yet.

The four fired leaders of United Steelworkers Local 8751 — Vice President and Pension Administrator Steven Gillis, Recording Secretary and Charlestown Chief Steward Andre Francois, Steward and former three-term president Gary Murchison and Grievance Chair and founding member Kirschbaum — have been out of work since October of 2013. A new union contract hasn’t been negotiated since the last one expired on July 1. The city has also kicked middle school kids off the school buses and onto public transportation, putting union jobs and



Boston’s children in danger.

You can be a part of this struggle wherever you live. Call Boston Mayor Marty Walsh today! Keep calling 617-635-4500; fax statements and resolutions to him at 517-635-2851; and/or email mayor@boston.gov.

Sign the online petition at tinyurl.com/ngeu59j to send emails to the mayor, school department and city council. Tell them: “If you stand for union rights, prove it. Reinstatement the four fired leaders now!”

Say no to union busting! Justice for union drivers — safety for the children! □

Philadelphia

Textbooks sit in warehouses

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Under the profit-driven capitalist system, billions of people struggle just for food and other basic necessities, yet corporations will stockpile or destroy what people need before they allow a glut to push down prices — and profits!

This paradox of “hunger in the midst of plenty” surfaced recently with a textbook shortage in Philadelphia’s school district — the eighth-largest in the U.S.

In 2013, the average school here had only 27 percent of textbooks recommended by the district’s curriculum. Ten schools had no books at all while others had books deemed obsolete.

In 2013, Philadelphia’s School Reform Commission authorized just \$18 million for textbooks for 242 schools — roughly one-quarter of the amount needed. By year’s end, the book budget was eliminated. Budgets in 2014 and 2015 contained no allocations for books.

According to the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, teachers spent \$300 to \$1,000 of their own money supplementing their meager budgets for books and classroom supplies.

Now it seems, the books were available all along. Thousands of books, many still shrink wrapped, were recently discovered gathering dust in the blockwide basement of the school district’s headquarters and in empty classrooms, hallways and library shelves of Bok High School, closed in 2013. (Philly.com, Mar. 18)

This surplus came to light after one teacher, tired of using fundraising websites to buy books for her students, began asking questions. She’d heard about the warehoused books and wanted some.

In a district where nearly 60 percent of students read below grade level, the science, algebra and literature textbooks found piled in boxes could make a difference. The PFT is calling on its members to distribute the discarded books to classrooms where they are needed.

Three years of massive funding cuts and the layoff of over 5,000 Philadelphia school employees left the district without staff to inventory the textbooks.

In addition to books, pianos and band instruments were warehoused at Bok, items badly needed by schools that closed music programs for lack of supplies.

Profit motive is part of the problem

In response to the outcry over the stockpiled books, school district spokespeople responded that many of the texts were “outdated.” But, parents and teachers asked, aren’t older literary classics and math and science books better than no books at all?

The answer lies with the profit motive driving Common Core testing. While basic subjects like science, math and literature have not changed, the questions found on standardized tests have. CTB McGraw Hill, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and Pearson Education, who write and grade these tests, also publish the books that students need to prepare for them. Test questions are often taken verbatim from these textbooks.

In 2013, Houghton Mifflin earned \$1.38 million from textbooks that students needed to pass its tests. McGraw-Hill, which produces the branded math curriculum used by most of Philadelphia’s K-5 schools, is part of a Pennsylvania consortium given a \$186 million federal contract to write and grade standardized tests.

In 2013, more than half of Philadelphia students scored less than proficient on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment tests because they lacked access to the books containing the standardized answers.

Textbook shortages are not unique to Philadelphia. School districts in New York City, the District of Columbia, Chicago, Los Angeles and other major cities also lack money to buy books. Students should not suffer from a failed system that puts profits before people’s needs. Make the greedy corporations pay! □



PHOTO: JUANA TERESA TELLO

Workers World received news early in the morning on March 23 that protesters seeking justice for the police killing of Alex Nieto had chained themselves to the headquarters of the San Francisco Police Department in protest, effectively shutting it down.

On March 21 people had gathered at the top of the hill in Bernal Heights Park for a one-year community commemoration at the site where young Nieto was killed by San Francisco police in 2014. Nieto’s father and mother were both present. The authorities had decided in February not to charge the police who killed Nieto.

An altar decorated with white, pink and red flowers marked the spot where Nieto was killed. Aztec dancers performed a ritual dance at the commemoration. After the ceremony, people marched in a “trail of tears” down the hill and into the Mission district to the Mission Cultural

Center for Latino Arts for a film premiere of “Amor for Alex.”

Along the way, the dancers stopped at many intersections to perform their dance, blocking traffic for up to 15 minutes at each stop. When they got to the house where young Amilcar Pérez López, a Guatemalan immigrant, was killed by the SFPD in February, the crowd again stopped to pay respects at the altar marking the spot where Pérez López was killed.

When the march finally arrived at the cultural center, they were met by another large group of people that had gathered to watch the Nieto film. The dancers again performed their dance, joined by other dancers, blocking several lanes in the busy Mission district for over half an hour during the performance, with large crowds watching in support.

—By Terri Kay

Police violence sparks campus protests

By Monica Moorehead

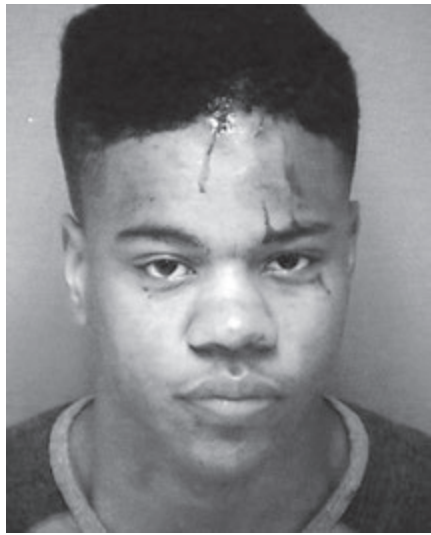
Martese Johnson, a 20-year-old African American, has been added to the already too-long list of victims of brutal, racial profiling by the police. Unlike the stolen lives of Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Ramarley Graham, Jessie Hernandez and countless other youth of color, Johnson survived to bravely tell the world that his Black life matters.

Johnson is a University of Virginia (UVA) junior and an elected representative to the Honor Committee, where he serves as vice chair for community relations at the school. He was violently attacked by three white police agents of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) in the early morning of March 18 outside the Trinity Irish pub, adjacent to the campus.

In Virginia, there are 100 statewide agents who have been assigned full police powers to deter underage drinking and enforce liquor laws in the state's bars and restaurants. The campus administration requested that the agents monitor underage drinking mainly among fraternity houses, where women are routinely sexually assaulted during parties.

In this instance, Johnson was arrested on misdemeanor charges of "obstruction of justice" and "public intoxication" after he was refused entrance to the pub.

The ABC claimed that Johnson attempted to show a fake ID to get into the pub. Johnson's lawyer, Daniel Watkins, refuted that argument at a March 19 press conference. The ABC also claimed that Johnson was "belligerent" and "intoxicated" following his arrest.



Martese Johnson, brutalized by Alcoholic Beverage Control police, Charlottesville, Va., March 18.

The co-owner of the pub, Kevin Badke, stated that Johnson was "cordial" and "respectful" and was not intoxicated when he was refused entrance to the pub because he did not verbally give the zip code that exactly matched that on his Chicago ID. (abcnews.go.com, March 22) Moments later, Johnson was attacked by ABC agents.

A video was taken of Johnson, with his head bloodied, forced to lie on his stomach with three police officers' knees on his back, and being handcuffed. He said repeatedly, "I go to UVA," and, "This is racist," as horrified onlookers saw the assault. Johnson was so badly hurt that 10 stitches had to be applied to his head.

As the images of the police assault went viral on social media, especially on

Twitter under the #BlackLivesMatter, at least 1,000 angry students spontaneously gathered outside of the bar in solidarity with Johnson. The protest mushroomed to such a degree that an emergency meeting was held at Newcomb Hall on UVA's campus between mainly Black students, local police chiefs and even Virginia's Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran. The students wanted to know why three white ABC officers brutalized Johnson. When they did not get the answers they sought, more than 100 of them stormed out of the meeting shouting "Black lives matter!"

The students marched to the African-American Affairs Office across campus, chanting "No justice, no peace! No racist police!" Johnson was marching with them and spoke at their rally.

Not an isolated incident

Aryn Frazier, an activist in the campus-based Black Student Alliance, stated at the same rally, "These incidents are not isolated. Not in Charlottesville, not in New York and not across the nation. Instead, they are products of a very sick justice system. Though what happened to Martese is horrible, it has been a problem in Charlottesville long before this. If we don't do something right now, we are going to have it long after." (Washington Post, March 20)

What happened to Johnson is part of the ongoing racist legacy of the UVA, which was founded in 1819 by Thomas Jefferson, a slaveholder. The school was built on the backs of enslaved African people. In 2007, the university's govern-

ing board approved a resolution of "regret" for the school's superexploitation of slaves.

But as the treatment of Johnson shows, the legacy of white supremacy is alive and well on UVA's campus and in the Charlottesville community. For instance, in 2004, the Charlottesville police asked Black men to "voluntarily" provide their DNA samples as part of a search for a serial rapist.

Black students also point to the double standard of treatment by the police and the media, as in the cases of two missing youth. Hannah Graham's case gained much notoriety. She was a white student who was missing for five weeks in 2014 until her body was found. A similar case in 2012 concerning a missing local Black teenager, Dashad "Sage" Smith, has gone virtually unnoticed.

Due to the pressure of the growing protests by Black students and their allies, the school administration has called for an investigation of the ABC's intimidating tactics.

The Johnson incident brought to light what occurred in April 2013 with another UVA student, Elizabeth Daly. The ABC confronted her at gunpoint for supposedly illegally transporting beer. It turned out to be sparkling water. She won a lawsuit against the ABC and was granted \$200,000.

Black students, who are about 6 percent of the UVA's 16,000 undergraduate student population, have complained of being racially profiled in the bar area known as the "The Corner" and also in the fraternity house section. □

Black Lives Matter activists arrested

By Scott Williams
Philadelphia

Philadelphia Police Chief Charles Ramsey and District Attorney Seth Williams planned to address a local Town Hall on March 19 with the intention of whitewashing recent police killings which have led to the movement against police brutality rocking the city and the country.

Before the event could start, however, around 40 demonstrators from the Philadelphia Coalition for REAL (Racial, Economic and Legal) Justice as well as Action against Black Genocide, the Trayvon Martin Organizing Committee and others confronted these establishment figures with chants of "No justice, no peace, no racist police!"

When the protesters stepped in front of the speakers, top civilian affairs police started aggressively pushing them. The scene erupted as more police attacked protesters, trying to start fights. Leading activists, including some who had not even been at the front of the crowd, were arrested.

This explosion of violence by the police was posted immediately on the Internet. Media from across the U.S. showed that the people of Philadelphia have a serious problem with police racism and corruption.

The Black Lives Matter Movement in Philadelphia has been taking on one of the country's most notoriously racist, corrupt and violent police organizations. Earlier that day, DA Williams had announced that the city would not be pressing charges against any Philadelphia police officers in the Dec. 15, 2014, police killing of Brandon Tate-Brown.

The incident, involving two cops who shot Tate-Brown in the back of the head

after pulling him over in the middle of the night — he was "driving while Black" — led to organizing by the Philadelphia Coalition for REAL Justice, along with Tate-Brown's mother, Tanya Brown-Dickerson.

Police Chief Ramsey, who is currently President Obama's "Top Cop" and leader of Washington's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, has refused to release the tapes in the case of Brandon Tate-Brown. He also refuses to identify the police officers who killed Tate-Brown. Rather, Ramsey has attempted to pacify the movement through "soft" policing: using informants, a strong police presence and civilian affairs officers who try to befriend demonstrators. This is so he won't have to arrest demonstrators and can keep his image as a progressive police chief.

While he has built the image of the ultimate "good cop," Ramsey's history is quite the opposite. As police chief in Washington, D.C., Ramsey led illegal mass arrests of thousands of protesters in 2000, 2002 and 2003. Since taking over the Philadelphia police in 2008, he has trained 1,500 in the use of AR-15 assault rifles. That means the Philly police are ready at any moment to wage war against this majority-Black city, which the Philadelphia Inquirer describes as "the poorest big city in America."

Arrests in tradition of racist Rizzo

The Philadelphia police are historically a violent, criminal organization that crushes its opposition. Frank Rizzo, the right-wing police chief-turned-mayor in the 1960s and 1970s, used terror against the Black Panthers, anti-war activists and anyone building a strong political movement on the left.

Rizzo's legacy is not a thing of the past. In the 1980s, the Philly police framed



Activists celebrate release from jail; Scott Williams, second from right.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Mumia Abu-Jamal and tried to legally lynch him through the courts. In 1979 and 1985, the Philly police laid siege to the MOVE organization's headquarters. On May 13, 1985, they shot over 1,000 rounds of ammunition and dropped explosives on the MOVE house from helicopters, eventually killing 11 people and burning down 65 houses in West Philadelphia.

The vicious machinations of the Philadelphia police did not end 30 years ago. Heavy repression in the buildup to the 2000 Republican Convention, the November 2011 eviction of Occupy Philadelphia and the current attack on the Black Lives Matter movement proves that the Philadelphia police — no matter how progressive their leadership wants to appear — is still a wildly repressive, anti-democratic organization.

In response to the latest incident, the Philadelphia Coalition for REAL Justice immediately released a statement con-

demning the police violence. "This is just another example of cops abusing their power. We have the right to peacefully assemble and question those in positions of power. Tonight, Philly police responded with arrests and threats of arrest," said Deandra Jefferson.

The Philly Coalition for REAL Justice is demanding the release of the name of the officer who shot Brandon Tate-Brown and of the police tapes that show the killing, as well as that all charges be dropped against those arrested.

The movement against racist police brutality will continue until the killer cops are jailed and justice is won for Brandon Tate-Brown and all victims of police brutality. Now the struggle includes justice for the "Philly 10" and all those whose democratic rights are stolen and abused by police.

Williams is one of the 10 people targeted and arrested by Philadelphia police at the March 19 Town Hall. □

New York forum

'Globalize solidarity with women'

By Monica Moorehead
New York

Workers World Party held its annual International Working Women's Month forum here on March 21 at the Solidarity Center. The main theme of the program was "Globalize Solidarity against ALL Forms of Women's Oppression: Why is this important?"

The dialogue began with a panel of women activists involved in important battles for justice and liberation in the U.S. and worldwide. The commonality that each woman expressed in her own way was the necessity to struggle against the profits-before-people capitalist system.

The speakers included Alicia Boyd, from The Movement to Protect the People, describing the fight against gentrification in Brooklyn, N.Y.; Maritza Chávez, from the Laundry Workers Center, affirming women's right to equality; and LeiLani Dowell, of Workers World Party, explain-



Some of the participants and organizers, March 22.

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

ing the origins of women's oppression and why Black women and trans women's lives matter.

Also, Alexia Filpo, from the People's Power Assembly, spoke on the upcoming April 2 opening session of the Peo-

ple's Tribunal against police brutality and structural racism; Fatin Jarara, from Al-Awda Palestine Right to Return, on the significance of the case of Rasmia Odeh, a Palestinian activist unjustly sentenced to 18 months in prison; and Joan

Salvador, from Gabriela Philippines, on the central role of women in the liberation struggle in her country.

Mother Tongue musicians, Nat and Wes, performed, and the forum was chaired by Claudia Palacios. □

Study exposes racism & why Black girls matter

By Dolores Cox

All human life matters. But throughout U.S. history, that reality has been overshadowed by the doctrine and practice of white supremacy, the law of the land. Racial hatred victimizing people of color has always permeated U.S. society and dictates its policies, public discourse and individual behavior.

Black children become targets at an early age. Public schools are one institution where the lives of Black children, particularly girls and youth, have not mattered sufficiently enough to protect them from an oppressive, punitive educational system.

Black school girls are in crisis due to both race and gender. A December report authored by Kimberle Crenshaw, entitled "Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Overpoliced, and Underprotected," published by the African American Policy Forum and Columbia University, exposes the crisis.

The report focuses on excessive disciplinary action by public school officials in the form of suspensions and expulsions of Black girls in New York City and Boston school systems. In those schools, suspension rates were more than 10 times higher for Black girls than for white girls. Nationally, suspension of Black girls was six

times higher than for white girls.

In New York City, 90 percent of girls expelled were Black. In Boston, it was 63 percent. Black girls' disciplinary cases were even higher than for Black boys in that city. This racial inequality and disparity affects the lives of Black girls in a multitude of ways, one of which is being in the school-to-prison pipeline. The arrest rate for Black girls was 90 percent higher than for white girls. Statistically, Black girls are the fastest growing population in the juvenile "justice" system.

The AAPF report highlights proven negative impacts on the lives of Black girls and youth caused by zero-tolerance disciplinary policies, and reveals that routine punishment of Black girls is being ignored legislatively and by communities.

Testimonies reveal effects of racism

Testimonies of Black girls in New York City and Boston schools in the 2012-13 school year reveal their concerns. They feel that punishment takes priority over education, teachers and counselors are disinterested and don't care about them, the curriculum lacks relevance, the teachers lack cultural competence and the policies are unfair. They perceive their teachers as not valuing them or acknowl-

edging their achievements, and say they lose confidence and become discouraged. These factors impede learning.

Regarding their safety and security, Black girls relate that they feel metal detectors are intimidating, and search rituals make them feel violated and like they're in jail or treated like animals. They fear they may be arrested and actually go to jail due to school administrators referring them to law enforcement.

Many school-age Black girls also experience a high incidence of interpersonal burdens. Most live in segregated and/or poor neighborhoods of racially traumatized communities where Black people are concentrated and don't have access to high quality education, jobs, adequate housing, food or safety. Additionally, the girls are often burdened with family obligations and caretaking responsibilities, which serve as obstacles to school performance, coupled with racial and gender disparities that create opportunity gaps later in life.

Harsh punishment in school at an early age often leads to poor attendance or dropping out, which results in such long-range ramifications as low-wage jobs, unemployment, poverty and diminished life opportunities. Unemployment rates for young Black women are twice as high as

for young white women. Also, Black women workers earn 64 cents on the dollar, while white women earn 78 cents.

Advocates for Black girls state that structural factors contributing to this crisis have to be acknowledged, actively addressed and ameliorated. Administrators and lawmakers must increase their willingness to revise and develop new intervention approaches and policies. This includes a commitment to change security protocols to ensure the protection of girls. Recommendations also include public discourse: town halls, community gatherings and listening sessions to break the silence.

The needs and challenges girls face cannot be ignored. Studies of and reports on Black boys facing racial and class gaps must be expanded to include Black girls. Increased resources must be provided for research and supportive programs to lessen their vulnerabilities. More attention must be given to improve girls' quality of life and eliminate racial bias.

Information in the AAPF report was obtained from the federal government's "My Brother's Keeper" Task Force Initiative (2014), Institute for Women's Policy Research, U.S. Census Bureau, Office of Civil Rights Data Collection and the U.S. Department of Education.

Event marks women's global federation at 70

By Sue Davis
New York

NYC

The call for international solidarity in the fight for women's equality and justice was loud and clear on March 17 as representatives of the Women's International Democratic Federation (Federación Democrática Internacional de Mujeres) held its annual meeting at the Church Center of the United Nations in New York City.

The accomplished actor, educator and activist, Vinie Burrows, the WIDF-FDIM representative to the U.N., opened the meeting with a short video and led a rousing cheer celebrating the freedom of the Cuban 5, whom the U.S. unjustly imprisoned for so many years.

Alicia Campos Perez, a member of the Cuban Women's Federation and a coordinator of the American and Caribbean Regional Office of the WIDF-FDIM, chaired the meeting. She noted that the organization,

founded in 1945 by socialist and communist women, was marking its 70th anniversary dedicated to international solidarity and the struggle for peace. WIDF-FDIM's mission is "to promote the presence of women in decision making at all levels, combating discrimination and violence against women, and denouncing inequality practiced against women." She added, "We have a long way to go to achieve those goals."

Campos introduced a panel, entitled "Beijing + 20, Women and Work: Equal Pay for Equal Work," who assessed women's progress in their countries 20 years after the U.N.'s Fourth World Conference on Women held in China in 1995.

'A strong women's movement is a must'

Maria Gabriela announced that the Angola Women's Organization is countering economic inequality with a national educational campaign at the community level. Viviane Prado, representing the Bra-

zilian architects union, noted that women are fighting an uphill battle for equal wages there. Delia Selene de Dios, of the National Union of Mexican Women, stressed that the Mexican economy is going backwards because the current neoliberal government is in service to the world banks. She condemned the "feminization of low-paid work."

Pointing out that the U.S. prison population is the largest in the world, Berta Joubert-Ceci, of the Women's Fightback Network at the International Action Center, noted that poor women of color, jailed mostly for crimes of survival, are the fastest growing segment of prisoners and often encounter widespread sexual abuse and inadequate medical care like many incarcerated women. She denounced the latest U.S. hostility toward Venezuela, saying, "This country, with so many crimes against women, dares to attack the Bolivarian Revolution!"

Joan Salvador, of the organization Gabriela in the Philippines, pointed out that 69 percent of those not in the labor force are women; that the minimum wage is \$10 a day, with women earning 35 percent of what men make; and that women contract workers earn a dollar a day. "No wonder there are 12 million Filipino migrant workers all over the world," she stated.

Two women were recognized from the floor: Layla Naffa Hamarneh, of the Arab Women's Organization of Jordan, who thanked everyone for their support of the Palestinian struggle. Cheers erupted when she said, "We stand united behind Palestine and all liberation movements." Bathabile O Dlamani, of the Department of Social Development of the Republic of South Africa, said, "WIDF must work to make the Commission on the Status of Women vital again. A strong women's rights movement is a must. We cannot allow the CSW to talk about us without us." □

Protesting 12 years of U.S. war

By Workers World Staff

Antiwar actions called Spring Rising, focusing on the 12th anniversary of the criminal U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq and continued war in Afghanistan, were held in Washington, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Minneapolis and other cities around the United States. Spring Rising was initiated by Cindy Sheehan, anti-war activist and mother of U.S. Army Specialist Casey Sheehan who was killed in Iraq.

In **Washington** there were four days of actions, including a teach-in, political lobbying and a bus tour of sites of war contractors. The culminating action was on March 21, with a rally of several hundred people, some carrying U.S.-flag-draped coffins, that gathered in front of the White House and marched to the Capitol, with stops at the offices of defense contractors.

Groups that sent delegations to D.C. included Code Pink, Answer Coalition, United National Antiwar Coalition, Veterans for Peace, World Can't Wait, World Beyond War, Fight Imperialism, Stand Together and the International Action Center.

IAC participants came from New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Durham, N.C., and linked the continuing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to the U.S. support of armed fascist, right-wing and mercenary forces in Ukraine, Venezuela and Syria, as well as to racist and militarized police repression at home.

Anti-war demonstrators rallied March 21 at Powell and Market streets in **San Francisco** and then marched through the downtown area to commemorate the 12th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Demonstrators raised a number of demands: "Stop President Obama's AUMF" (the proposed new three-year authorization for the use of military force); "End U.S. war and occupation;" "In the Middle East and Central Asia — U.S. out!;" "No to U.S. sanctions and intervention" against Iran, Venezuela, Korea, Cuba, Mexico, Russia, Philippines, Haiti and everywhere; and "Free Palestine —



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

End U.S. Aid to Israel — Fund People's Needs, Not Endless War."

The protest was initiated by the Answer Coalition and endorsed by many groups, including the Arab Resource and Organizing Center, the Bay Area Latin America Solidarity Coalition, BAYAN USA, Haiti Action, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, the Middle East Children's Alliance, the Palestine Youth Movement and Workers World Party.

Indicting 'Hellfire Reaper' brass

Two actions in **central New York** protested the anniversary of the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. On the morning of March 19, seven members of the Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars were arrested after trying to deliver a "citizen's indictment" for war crimes to

Hancock Air Base commanders. Demonstrators also blockaded the main gate of the base with giant books, including "Living under Drones: Death, Injury, and Trauma to Civilians from U.S. Drone Practices in Pakistan," a report from New York University and Stanford law schools.

Soldiers dragged the books away as "evidence," opening the possibility that their anti-U.S. war information could be introduced at future activist trials.

"Hellfire" Reaper drones targeting Afghanistan are piloted out of Hancock by soldiers in the 174th Attack Wing of the New York Air National Guard. Drone pilots, sensor operators and maintenance technicians are also trained at the base. Common Dreams estimates that over 2,500 people have been killed by U.S. covert drone attacks in Pakistan, Somalia,

PHOTO: ELLEN GRADY



PHOTO: ALYSSA EISENBERG

Syria and Yemen. (commondreams.org)

On Feb. 17, the Obama administration okayed the widespread export of U.S. armed drones, as U.S. defense corporations push for bigger profits in the global drone market.

The Upstate Coalition has waged a nonviolent campaign against drone warfare at the base since 2010; there have been over 160 anti-Reaper arrests at Hancock in the last five years.

In the afternoon people assembled at a downtown **Syracuse, N.Y.**, street corner and held up signs protesting past and present wars, including Obama's request for new war powers from Congress. One speaker talked of being in Baghdad in 2003 as part of a U.S. peace delegation and confronting U.S. Marines who entered the city during the U.S. "Shock-and-Awe" offensive.

A Syracuse University student denounced extensive military funding at the school, including the new Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism and the drone-radar defense contractor, Syracuse Research Corporation.

As a steady stream of workers driving home honked in support of the rally, a military veteran spoke of the dreadful effects of war on U.S. soldiers. In addition to post-traumatic stress disorder, he named sexual assaults on 25 percent of women soldiers by other U.S. soldiers and homelessness. Twenty-five percent of homeless people are vets, who are disproportionately people of color.

From reports by Sara Flounders, Terri Kay and Minnie Bruce Pratt.

Town rebels after Ukraine troops kill child

By Greg Butterfield

The town of Kostyantynivka in north-eastern Donetsk exploded in rebellion March 16 after Ukrainian occupation troops driving a tank veered into oncoming traffic, smashed a traffic light and hit pedestrians on the sidewalk.

Polina, 8 years old, was killed instantly. Her mother was hospitalized in critical condition, while her younger sister escaped serious injury, shielded by the stroller she was riding in.

Witnesses at the scene said the Ukrainian troops — those loyal to the coup government in Kiev — were drunk.

As news of the tragedy spread, hundreds of residents poured into the streets, demanding the withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from the city.

Kostyantynivka is part of the independent Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) and participated in the May 11, 2014, independence referendum. It has been occupied by forces loyal to the far-right junta in Kiev since last summer.

The DNR and neighboring Lugansk People's Republic encompass the Donbass mining region, formerly part of southeastern Ukraine, and are often referred to as Novorossiia.

Thirty people overturned a police car at the scene. Then residents marched to a hostel where the occupation troops are barracked. They threw stones, smashed windows and set fire to tires in front of the building. (TASS, March 17)

Meanwhile, dozens of protesters seized a local administration building, where

they raised the black, blue and red flag of the Donetsk People's Republic. "The people of Kostyantynivka want Novorossiia to send troops," a local man named Alexander told the Russia Today news agency.

The U.S.-backed junta of oligarchs, neo-liberal politicians and neo-Nazis moved quickly to suppress the revolt. The four soldiers from the tank were spirited out of town. The Ministry of Internal Affairs gave police authority to use deadly force against the protesters. A squadron of the fascist Right Sector was dispatched to the city to mete out punishment. (Sputnik, March 17)

By the morning of March 17, the spontaneous uprising was quashed. An unknown number of people were arrested. Locals reported that sporadic gunfire continued throughout the day.

"Police identified and detained a number of persons who actively participated in massive unrest and set fire to motor vehicles in the town of Kostyantynivka on March 16. Restrictive measures against them are still being taken," reported Olga Yurasova, press secretary for the Ukrainian-controlled regional police force. (Tass, March 18)

One of those "disappeared" was Denis Chubaka, a local journalist and Communist Party leader. Chubaka was one of the first people on the scene after the crash, and his photos of the aftermath circulated on social media and news reports worldwide. He was "abducted by unknown persons in military uniforms" on his way to work March 18. (Fort Russ, March 19)

Despite the repression, and despite be-

ing denounced by Kiev as "terrorist collaborators," more than 100 people came out again May 18 to the site of Polina's death, creating a makeshift memorial of flowers and toys.

The police chief announced the arrest of two more men on March 20, Novorosinform reports. Those detained face up to eight years in prison.

'Interrupted Flight': Donbass children remembered

On March 17, hundreds of people gathered in Lenin Square in Donetsk, the capital of the DNR, for a rally entitled "Interrupted Flight" to remember Polina and other children killed in Kiev-Washington's war against the people of the Donbass mining region.

People lit memorial candles at the base of the monument to Soviet leader V.I. Lenin and held signs denouncing NATO and the European Union for backing fascism in Ukraine. A giant screen over the square showed photos of children killed in the war.

As of Feb. 6, according to the United Nations, at least 59 children had been killed and more than 150 injured since the Ukrainian regime began its so-called Anti-Terrorist Operation. The U.N. records nearly 6,000 total deaths, but admits this number is unrealistically low.

German intelligence services estimated the real number of deaths at nearly



PHOTO: DENIS GRIGORYUK/ANTIMAJDAN

50,000. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung, Feb. 8)

DNR officials, denouncing the behavior of the Ukrainian occupation troops as a violation of the latest ceasefire agreement that took effect Feb. 15, said that an offensive to retake Kostyantynivka would be considered if the repression continues.

Col. Cassad, a respected commentator on military matters in Novorossiia, explained: "The epicenter of the unrest was located in an area full of junta forces. ... So without outside help, the unrest couldn't lead to the deposing of the junta's power in Kostyantynivka and to the spreading of resistance to the neighboring cities.

"The Right Sector militants and highly motivated military forces were brought into the city, after which the sweep and arrests followed. ...

"Nevertheless, these protests showed that the occupation regime is based on naked violence, and if the junta suffers a military defeat, then our soldiers will be met as liberators in the settlements where the junta regime is removed." (Colonel Cassad Blog in English, March 18) □

Austerity met with mass, militant protests

By G. Dunkel

The European Central Bank decided a few years ago that to properly enforce its policy of harsh austerity on countries like Greece, Ireland, Italy and Portugal, it needed a spanking new, luxurious headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany, that cost \$1.4 billion.

When Blockupy and other progressive anti-capitalist organizations issued a call to stop this travesty of economic justice, 6,000 people — mostly youth, judging from the videos on YouTube, the French TV blog francetvinfo and RT — came out March 18 to actively try to stop the ceremonies.

According to an extensive eyewitness caption by P.M. Cheung on Flickr, at least a thousand of the early protesters were from outside Germany. Some 200 protesters complained that they were injured, and 150 cops went to the hospital. RT reported that the cops said 200 of the 350 people arrested were Italian.

The Blockupy protests began a little before 6 a.m. and lasted until late morning.

The cops — 7,000 were assigned — used mass baton charges with 50 to a few hundred men, coordinated by drums, to deploy tear gas and pepper spray. Also appearing on a five-hour RT video were a water cannon, at least one armored personnel carrier with a bulldozer blade and helicopters that appeared to be firing tear gas grenades.

The protesters responded to the cops with paving stones, set seven cop cars on fire, brought umbrellas to deal with the pepper spray, masks for the tear gas and set fire to the barricades they built in the roads leading to the ECB headquarters. A police station in the Zeil neighborhood was attacked and damaged.

The German Left Party endorsed the demonstration and condemned the police violence. The German Communist Party and its youth organization took part in the Blockupy actions and defended them. In the later transnational demonstration that filled Frankfurt's main square, more than 20,000 people came from all over Europe.



Solidarity with Greece

According to P.M. Cheung, this demonstration had the slogan, "Let's Take Over The Party! There is nothing to celebrate in the Crisis Regime." The protest was also directed against the austerity policies of the Troika, which, in addition to the ECB, include the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund. Cheung also pointed out, "The protesters, on numerous signs and banners, denounced the inhuman refugee policy, increasing social injustice and called for a struggle against capitalism."

There were contingents of Turkish women and of Kurdish women and a few signs in Greek.

Alexis Tsipras, the Greek prime minister, is visiting Berlin, beginning March 22. Syriza, the party he heads, was elected on a platform of softening the harsh austerity that the Troika have imposed on Greece — austerity firmly supported and inspired by Germany.

Currently there is a serious run on Greek banks, and tax revenues have fallen so low that the Greek government might not be able to meet its next payroll. The German bankers lose out if Greece stops using the euro, which would destabilize that currency, which has already fallen with relation to the dollar.

Greece leaving the eurozone would likely mean it would pull out of the European Union, creating chaos and uncertainty. But German bankers want every last euro that Greece owes.

This demonstration indicates there is a

huge amount of solidarity with Greece in Europe. European workers see defending Greece as defending their own interests.

Hundreds of thousands march for dignity in Spain

Hundreds of thousands of people came from all over the different nations and provinces of the Spanish state on March 21. They gathered in Columbus Square in Madrid, the capital, to make the following demands: "For food, jobs, housing and dignity!" Seven years ago, such demands might have only impacted a small minority of people. But this March 21, millions have had no jobs for two to five years, have been refused hospital care and/or have lost their homes to the banks, unable to pay their mortgages.

A demonstration making similar demands for dignity a year ago was much larger. Even so, organizers say this year's march was a half million. One slogan raised at this year's protest was to prepare a general strike for next October.

In an appeal to the demonstrators, the organization Red Network (Red Roja)

wrote in a March 21 communique that the people must demand no payment of the debt and that:

"We need to unite, to organize neighborhoods, towns, businesses and schools, and strike a blow together, all at one time. Only through the unification of our struggles, only if the people who are working and suffering get organized, can we bring about policies that work in our own favor.

"The vote is not enough. The people need to organize. The people need to rule. That would be Dignity."

Montreal students against austerity

For Quebec, it wasn't that cold — negative 32 degrees Fahrenheit, with a 10-mile-per-hour wind and only light snow. Some 5,000 students came out March 21 to an "illegal" march to protest the "effects of austerity and the oil industry," according to Camille Godbout, the spokesperson for the Association of Solidarity of Unions and Students (ASSE), which called the action.

Godbout told the La Presse Canadienne that 45,000 students will walk out over the next two weeks and that 145,000 are considering what to do. The ASSE has called for protests in Montreal every other Saturday.

Eighty-five thousand students have voted to support a province-wide strike. The effects of budget cuts have left many students angry.

The ASSE is part of a broader coalition called Let's Refuse Austerity, which consists of unions and community groups. This coalition is planning to call a province-wide general strike on May Day.

John Catalinotto contributed to this article.



Behind the police killings of people with disabilities

By Edward Yudelovich

In a Jan. 29 letter, Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacy said her office found "there is insufficient evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt" that police officers Armando Corral, Leonardo Ortiz and Michael Ayala "did not act in self-defense and in defense of others" during the Dec. 13, 2013, fatal shooting of 51-year-old Brian Beard, a National Guard veteran with disabilities, including diagnosed paranoia, schizophrenia and post-traumatic stress syndrome. (Los Angeles Times, Feb. 23)

The DA's decision not to press charges came despite Los Angeles Police Department Chief Charlie Beck's 2014 statement that the officers' use of force was "not justified," and despite the LA City Council vote that taxpayers — not the cops who killed Beard — pay a \$5 million federal civil rights settlement to Beard's family.

Beard's 80-year-old father, Billy Beard, watched on TV the car chase and police shooting that killed his unarmed son after Brian called him from his car during the chase. "They shot my son in cold blood," Billy Beard said after the city's vote to pay the settlement. "I would not trade my son's life for every nickel in

LA. He means that much to me. I could not believe what I saw." (LA Times, Aug. 20)

The police say that after Beard got out of his car, one officer said he believed he saw Beard reaching for his waistband. The cop fired a beanbag, causing Beard to stagger and bend over. The cops then fired 21 shots, according to Beck's internal investigation. Lacey's letter noted that Beard was hit with 13 rounds — three of which were fatal and, based on the bullet trajectories, were fired when Beard was on the ground. News footage shows a "DP" plate, for disabled person, on Beard's Corvette.

Why do cops kill so-called 'mentally ill' people?

Was this an isolated incident? Or is it part of U.S. law enforcement policy for treatment of people with emotional, psychological and mental disabilities? "At least half of the people [annually] shot and killed by [U.S.] police ... have mental health problems," stated a 2013 report by the Treatment Advocacy Center and National Sheriffs' Association, which assessed 1980-2008 data. ("Justifiable Homicides by Law Enforcement," tacerports.org) Why?

On May 1, 2013, Wendy Brennan, National Alliance on Mental Illness of New York City executive director, testified at an NYU Langone Medical Center forum that "there is a strong belief ... that people with serious mental illness are dangerous and [commit] ... a significant amount of the violence in this country. ... A 2006 American Journal of Psychiatric study [said] only 5 percent of violent crimes ... can be attributed to people with mental health problems."

In July 2012, the American Psychiatric Association stated: "This position statement was proposed by the Workgroup on Violence Risk of the Council on Psychiatry and Law. ... [M]ost psychiatrists ... assess the risk of violence to others. While psychiatrists can often identify circumstances associated with an increased likelihood of violent behavior, they cannot predict dangerousness with definitive accuracy. ... [S]ome individuals assessed to be at low risk will act violently while others assessed to be at high risk will not."

Studies have shown that the so-called mentally ill are much more likely to be crime victims than perpetrators. Despite this, the first question often asked at medical facilities of people with this dis-

ability is "Do you own a gun?"

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the case of Sheehan v. San Francisco after a woman with psychological disabilities, Teresa Sheehan, was shot and almost killed by the police. She successfully sued the city for violating her civil rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Now San Francisco is asking the high court to add to its abysmal record on people with disabilities by reversing this decision and sanctioning a police exemption to the ADA.

The gravest danger related to so-called mental illness has become the abuse of this large and uniquely stigmatized section of the disabled community. However, we are dangerous to the system that devalues people of color, women, lesbians, gay, bi, trans and queer people and people with disabilities. Why? Because in the spirit of heroes like Carrie Buck and Teresa Sheehan, we will resist and build a world that values everyone, based on the premise: from each according to our abilities, to each according to our needs.

Edward Yudelovich, an organizer of the Workers World Party People with Disabilities Caucus, is a person with an emotional disability. A fuller version of this article appears at workers.org.

WORKERS WORLD editorial

Racist double standard

For most people, it should be enough to point out that Black people are 21 times more likely to be shot by cops than white people. That pretty much proves the cops mete out violence with a racist double standard. For anyone who still has doubts about that overwhelming bias, another simple comparison should finish the argument.

Although we know police lie a lot to protect their interests, for this comparison it's unnecessary to go far beyond the cops' own reports.

In 2013, an African-American woman named Miriam Carey was driving in Washington, D.C., with her 1-year-old daughter in the car. She allegedly drove into a security checkpoint. After a chase, U.S. Secret Service and Capitol Police officers fired a volley of shots at the car. They hit Carey with five bullets, killing her. By some miracle, her daughter wasn't hit.

In mid-March, someone in or near Mesa, Ariz., went on a shooting rampage, wounding six people and killing one. Ryan Giroux, who police and others identified as a skinhead neo-Nazi, was the cops' only suspect. He was suspected of murder, armed robbery, kidnapping and aggravated assault.

If you see the pictures of Giroux, whose facial tattoos allegedly identify him as a neo-Nazi, you might think the cops would fear this person who their superior officers said had just shot six people. Whether he really did what the police claim is unproven as of March 24. We can assume that the cops sent to hunt down Giroux believed he might well be dangerous, certainly more dangerous than the dental hygienist gunned down in Washington, D.C.

But despite this, the SWAT team sent after Giroux did not gun him down in a hail of machine-gun fire, but hit him once with a stun gun.

What this difference in police procedures shows is that even in a case where the suspect is charged with or suspected of violent crimes, including murder, and is considered dangerous, the cops have ways to capture him without killing him. We can only suppose those were their orders and they obeyed.

That neo-Nazi Giroux could be brought in alive and well — while Carey was killed and people of color are routinely gunned down and killed by cops around the country — shows the systemic racism so endemic to police throughout the U.S. □

WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

"By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds insight on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity."

— Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, Available online and at bookstores. PentagonAchillesHeel.com

U.S. imperialist plans unravel

Continued from page 1

Israel. Netanyahu has blown their cover.

What has been offered to the Palestinians in the past by Tel Aviv and its U.S. brokers has been something resembling an apartheid-like bantustan, crisscrossed by Israeli-only highways, Israeli checkpoints and Israeli domination of the air space and the economy. This has been the version of a "Palestinian state" that they have put on the table — and that has been rejected by the Palestinian leadership.

The Zionist leadership would never agree to any genuinely sovereign Palestinian state, for the simple reason that it would become a beacon for the material, political and social support of the entire Palestinian diaspora, for the entire progressive, anti-Zionist Arab population and would eventually challenge the very existence of the Zionist state.

Washington's political rift with the Netanyahu leadership, however, should not be mistaken for any military/strategic divergence. Washington and the Pentagon have reiterated during this entire political crisis that the \$3 billion a year in military hardware and strategic coordination of intelligence, spy satellites, etc., will continue without a hitch. Israel is, and always has been, tied by an umbilical cord to U.S. and Western imperialism. It is the only reliable military ally in the oil-rich and geostrategically vital Gulf region. Tel Aviv has proven this time and again.

ISIS brings havoc to Washington's position

Now, in light of the advance of ISIS in Syria, Iraq and other parts of the Middle East, and in light of the nuclear talks with Iran, a sharp divergence in political strategic interests has emerged between the Obama administration and the Netanyahu administration.

But a deep difference also exists between the Obama administration and significant sections of the U.S. ruling class. The Washington Post, Henry Kissinger, Gen. David Petraeus (retired and disgraced) and many other pundits are baiting the Obama administration for supposedly catering to Iran. They point to the fact that the Iranian Republican Guard commander, Maj. Gen. Qasem Saleimani, is helping direct the struggle in Iraq to oust ISIS from Tikrit.

John McCain, Lindsey Graham and other militarists are denouncing this as collaboration between Washington and Tehran. They say that it is part of an

Obama administration ploy to improve Iran's position in Iraq in order to facilitate the nuclear negotiations, and that it could be a prelude to a realignment in the region.

From the vantage point of the anti-imperialist movement in the U.S., it is not possible to grasp the diplomatic and political implications of the Iranian military intervention in Iraq. Only time and events will reveal its full significance. But for now there is an alternative interpretation of events.

First of all, ISIS is a mortal enemy of the Shiite religion and of Iran. Second, Iranian forces are operating in alliance with Baghdad in order to diminish U.S. imperialist influence and to strengthen Iranian influence in the country. And third, Iran is operating as an independent country, and its forces are taking advantage of the desperately weak position of the U.S. military on the ground in Iraq. (Of course, it would be highly detrimental if the Iranian forces lent themselves to anti-Sunni reprisals of any sort and did not reach out to the Sunnis in the struggle against ISIS.)

No one knows at this point what the results of the nuclear negotiations will be. But it is clear that, so far, both sides have made compromises. The Obama administration is being attacked, not just for compromises in the military sphere, but for not insisting that Iran stop its support for its allies in the resistance front — Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas. This is labelled as not requiring an end to "support for terrorism."

The administration is also being criticized for not guaranteeing the rights of the reactionary, pro-Western, bourgeois moderates inside Iran, as it did during the so-called Green uprising of 2011. This is labelled as lack of support for "human rights."

The right wing has no answer for the crisis on the ground. Even the Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Martin Dempsey, said that the Iranian intervention could be "a good thing" if it does not lead to sectarian strife. Dempsey, of course, cannot afford the luxury of attacking Iranian intervention when this intervention may be what stands between victory and defeat for forces backed by the U.S. and Baghdad. McCain and Graham can criticize from the sidelines, but they are not in command, nor have they said what should be done at the moment on the battlefield.

The Obama administration is between a rock and a hard place. It has pledged to destroy ISIS. But it knows the U.S. cannot send in massive U.S.

troops, while the other Arab governments are sitting on their hands.

Washington's crisis goes beyond Iraq

The crisis of Washington goes beyond Iraq. The head of the CIA, John Brennan, in a foreign policy briefing recently cautioned against an early overthrow of the Assad government in Syria because if Assad were to fall, "ISIS would march to Damascus." (Mideast Eye, March 14)

Of course, the Pentagon plunged into Syria with its proxy forces, but they were defeated by Syrian military forces. Now ISIS has taken large parts of Syria. This is not to mention that Washington and the West, after bombing and destroying much of the region, have lost control in Libya, Yemen, parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and are generally on the defensive.

U.S. imperialism and its allies have created a widespread social foundation for the growth of ISIS and related organizations. This was as much as admitted by none other than Obama himself.

In an interview with Vice News, Obama said: "Two things: One is, ISIL is a direct outgrowth of Al Qaida in Iraq that grew out of our invasion. ... Which is an example of unintended consequences." (RT, March 17)

Of course, Obama was telling the truth in order to blame George Bush. He neglected to mention that 12 Muslim countries have been bombed by the U.S. in the last two decades, including the ruthless drone campaign conducted by his own administration.

The bombings plus the hopelessness, poverty and complete bankruptcy of all the bourgeois and feudal regimes in the region, in addition to endless imperialist aggression, have created a worldwide basis for ISIS, which is growing in scope.

In this context, the struggle over the nuclear negotiations is more than a struggle over centrifuges and inspections, although those core issues are vital. The broader issue is that Washington would like to pull Iran further toward the imperialist West, while the right wing thinks it cannot be done.

Hopefully, the maneuvers of the Obama administration as well as the war plans of the right wing will be frustrated. The best outcome would be if Iran could fully retain its anti-imperialist independence and still get out from under the onerous sanctions imposed by Washington and its imperialist allies, while retaining its peaceful nuclear program. □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination

Larry Holmes

Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery

Sam Marcy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance

LeiLani Dowell

The Struggle for Socialism Is Key

Monica Moorehead

Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights

Imani Henry

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

Saladin Muhammad

Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior

Mumia Abu-Jamal

Racism & Poverty in the Delta

Larry Hales

Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions

Pat Chin

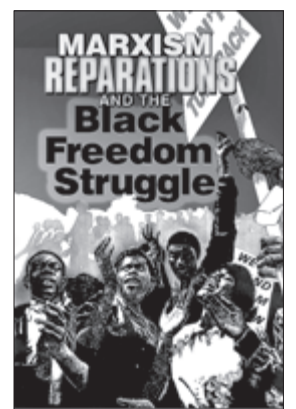
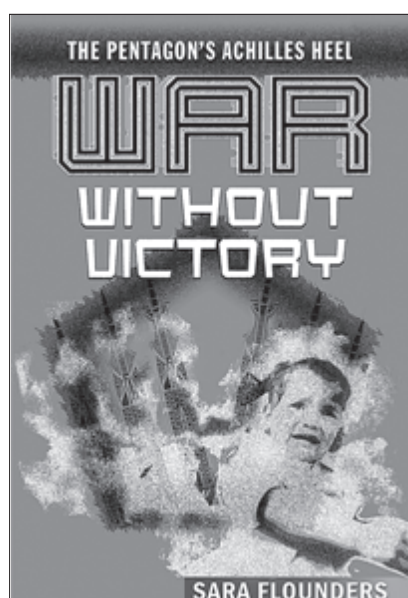
Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation

Consuela Lee

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

John Parker

Available online and at bookstores.



COVER GRAPHIC BY SAHU BARRON

Instability in Libya and Tunisia caused by U.S., NATO

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

Just two days before the 59th anniversary of Tunisia's national independence from France in 1956, gunmen took over the Bardo Museum in Tunis, a major tourist destination. The resulting police response led to the deaths of 24 people, 20 of them foreign nationals from Poland, Germany, Spain, Italy and other states.

News reports say that at least two groups, including the Islamic State known as ISIS, have claimed credit for the March 20 attack. This high-profile incident has been utilized in the West to escalate the so-called "war on terrorism" in North Africa.

Although often cited by the Western media as the most stable state among those that had upheavals and regime changes in 2011, Tunisia has experienced political unrest and assassinations. Two leading left-wing politicians, Mohamed Brahmi and Chokri Belaid, members of the same Popular Front alliance, were killed by gunmen just months apart during 2013.

After Brahmi's assassination, the country erupted in mass demonstrations, led by youth and workers, demanding the resignation of the government. Although then-Prime Minister Ali Larayedh refused to resign, a post-uprising government dominated by the Ennahda Party did eventually dismiss

the cabinet, setting the stage for new elections and the appointment of a so-called "technocratic" administration.

The suspect in both killings of leftists was said to have been Boubacar Hakim, who was sought in connection with the illegal transport of weapons from Libya. ISIS forces are said to have training camps in Libya while engaging in several high-profile attacks in the capital of Tripoli, as well as in the eastern and southern regions of the country.

Two men involved in the recent museum incident were killed when security forces stormed the building. One of the gunmen involved in the attack, Yassine Abidi, was reported to have been known to intelligence services, though they claim he had no formal links to a particular organization.

The Tunisian government claims that the two had gone to neighboring Libya for military training. (New York Times, March 22)

Imperialists brought down Libya

Extremist organizations based in Libya are a direct outcome of the foreign policy of Washington, London, Paris, Ottawa and their allies, which coordinated the advances of these groups across Libya through massive aerial bombardments that lasted over eight months.

Between Feb. 17 and Oct. 31, 2011, NATO planes flew some 26,000 sorties and dropped approximately 10,000

bombs on Libya. Tens of thousands were killed and millions more were displaced amid the destruction of the national infrastructure and the plundering of the country's wealth.

Yet the imperialists who carried out the destruction of Libya and empowered the extremist groups now wreaking havoc on the country are never cited for their culpability in current Western media reports, which ponder how stability can be restored to the oil-rich state on the Mediterranean.

These armed rebel groups are spreading out from Libya into other states in North and West Africa.

EU denies plan for military intervention

The European Union has reportedly been deliberating over whether it should establish another military force to supposedly secure the Libya-Tunisia border and challenge ISIS and other rebels operating in both countries. The EU plan would involve a stronger naval presence in the region, as well as the deployment of ground troops backed by air power.

However, the EU announced on March 20 that it would continue to seek a political solution to the Libyan crisis and did not plan to send troops. But U.N.-brokered talks between the two competing rebel regimes in Libya have failed to bring about the creation of a government of national unity.

Adherents to the former Jamahiriya political system under Col. Moammar

Gaddafi are barred from participation in the current U.S.-imposed political arrangement in Libya. Neither of the two factions working with the imperialists — one based in Tripoli and the other in the eastern city of Tobruk — represents the aspirations of the workers and youth in the country or throughout Africa. Under Gaddafi, African unity to raise up the masses had been the focus of Libya's foreign policy.

A progressive national unity government cannot be imposed by the imperialist powers. It can only come about through the advancement of the revolutionary democratic forces in the country and the establishment of a political system that places the interests of the majority in Libyan society above those of the propertied classes allied with multinational oil interests and financiers. Such a system of national self-reliance and regional integration was the basis of the Jamahiriya, which was destroyed by the imperialist intervention.

The EU, along with NATO and led by the U.S., created the current chaos in Libya. Sanctions, massive bombings and ground interventions leading to direct occupation by proxy forces have created the political crisis throughout the entire region of North Africa and the Middle East. Any real reversal of the situation must stress the necessity of genuine political independence and territorial sovereignty designed to break with the legacy of imperialism. □

Black leader Jabari Shaw targeted

By **Terri Kay**
Oakland, Calif.

A combined task force of Oakland Police Department officers, FBI and U.S. marshals on March 9 chased respected Black community leader Jabari Shaw, causing a crash that injured Shaw's four-year-old daughter and the driver. Shaw's friend Mary Valencourt, who was driving, and little Anniyah each have multiple fractures in their legs and other serious injuries.

Police later claimed it was a case of mistaken identity. The task force of officers had originally approached the car in plain clothes with weapons drawn. The terrified driver, Valencourt, fearing for their lives, took off and the still unidentified officers pursued. When those in the fleeing car finally saw some red and blue police lights inside one of the cars, Valencourt tried to stop, but the car was pushed into a paratransit van.

The victims say the officers violently pulled them from the car, including Shaw's young daughter, without regard to aggravating injuries caused by the crash. Officers put guns to the heads of both Shaw and Valencourt. Shaw has muscles torn in his chest and sprains in the rotator cuff in his shoulder.

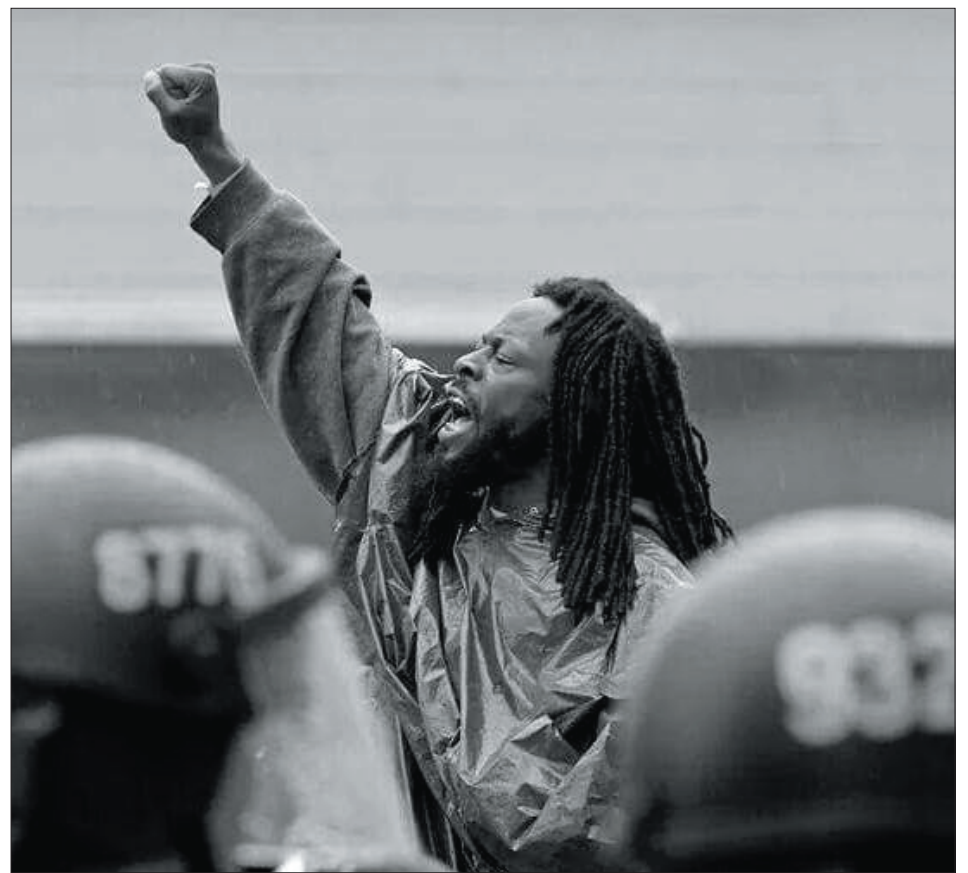
Shaw says he is still having a hard time breathing normally.

Police filed no charges against either Shaw or Valencourt. Despite this, Shaw points out the OPD continues to refer to him in news articles as "the suspect."

According to a public statement on the matter by the Community Ready Corps, "Increased collaboration between OPD and federal agencies like the FBI and U.S. Marshals is part of the militarization of local law enforcement."

Mayor Libby Schaaf is working hard to portray her aggressive policing strategies as "cracking down on crime" and "helping Oaklanders sleep better at night," but this incident reveals what the "Black Lives Matter" movement has been saying all along: Police are dangerous and have no respect for Black lives. Not even the lives of Black children.

Jabari Shaw is a well-known leader in Oakland's Black community and easily identifiable. The mistaken identity claim is almost laughable. He points out that he walks to the store a block away from his home every day and was sitting on his front porch for an hour before the three got in the car. He asks, why couldn't they have approached him then? Why too, if they saw his daughter getting in the car with them, did they



Jabari Shaw

decide to approach with guns pointed?

Shaw was involved in the Justice for Oscar Grant movement, Occupy Oakland, Occupy for Prisoners and the Justice for Alan Blueford Coalition among other activities protesting police violence and defending education rights. A proud father, he almost always has his children with him as he works to support the community. He was a leader of the Black Student Union at Laney College and is now working on his bachelor's degree at San Francisco State University. He is also known for performing rap and spoken word, having been fea-

tured in an MTV video called "Burn" about the Oscar Grant movement by Killer Mike.

For more information, see the video, "Servant of the People: The Community Work of Jabari Shaw," by Earl Black with the date August 2012 (tinyurl.com/om5qurf). A community fundraiser at Oakland's Eastside Arts Alliance on Sunday, March 29 at 1 p.m., will raise support for the Shaw family and the other two victims of police violence to help with their mounting medical bills. See the Facebook page at tinyurl.com/nstsp98.



Desaceleración de economía capitalista mundial arriesga trabajadores

Por Fred Goldstein

Los grandes medios de difusión capitalistas han estado comentando recientemente acerca de la caída de los precios del petróleo crudo y la gasolina. Promueven la idea de que esto ayudará a las/os trabajadoras y desempeñará un papel en la reactivación de la economía.

Los economistas de las grandes empresas, por otro lado, están preocupados de que la caída en los precios del crudo represente una desaceleración mundial capitalista que amenazará la recuperación anémica que toma lugar en EUA.

Lo que los economistas saben es que la caída en los precios del petróleo es un síntoma de sobreproducción capitalista. La industria del gas y del petróleo estaba persiguiendo súper ganancias cuando, antes de junio pasado, el crudo estaba a un precio todavía de \$115 el barril y la gasolina a \$4 por galón.

Han estado perforando profundamente y fracturando hidráulicamente sacando gas natural y petróleo en todas partes, desde los campos de los agricultores hasta el Océano Ártico derretido, con el fin de sacar provecho a los altos precios. Cuando el humo se disipó en los últimos meses, el mundo estaba inundado de gas y petróleo, pero la economía capitalista mundial había comenzado una desaceleración.

“Gran parte de la mejora en la demanda ha sido impulsada por las ganancias del refinamiento y las compras de crudo para mantenerlo almacenado, en lugar de un aumento en el uso de combustible por los consumidores”, dice la Agencia Internacional de Energía. (Bloomberg News, 18 de marzo)

Baja de precios y sobreproducción capitalista

Lo que los economistas saben es que el descenso en el precio del gas y del petróleo es una señal de sobreproducción capitalista mundial, que puede conducir a una disminución de las ganancias, reducciones en la producción, una mayor disminución de los salarios y más despidos - y hasta una crisis económica total. Les preocupa que después de millones de millones de dólares de estímulo económico del gobierno, con dinero prácticamente gratis dado a los banqueros y ejecutivos con tasas de interés de casi cero, no hay bonanza económica ni aumento de la inflación. Esto es lo que pasaría si hubiera una recuperación normal.

La caída en los precios del petróleo no se puede aislar de la disminución general de los precios de las mercancías a nivel mundial. Según los Índices del Fondo Monetario Internacional sobre los Precios de los Productos Primarios del 12 de marzo, los precios de las mercancías básicas han caído no sólo del petróleo, sino de una

amplia gama de mercancías no combustibles en los últimos cuatro cuatrienios.

Por ejemplo, China tuvo su crecimiento económico más lento en 24 años en año 2014. Sus importaciones de petróleo para enero descendieron un 8 por ciento respecto al mes anterior. El ‘Market Realist’ del 24 de febrero reveló: “Una inesperada caída en la mayor parte de las importaciones de mercancías de China indica que la mayor economía del mundo sigue perdiendo impulso”.

Desaceleración capitalista mundial

Siete años después de que la crisis financiera y económica mundial golpeará al mundo capitalista, y cinco años después de la llamada “recuperación”, el capitalismo se encuentra todavía en un callejón sin salida - atrapados en una situación de desempleo masivo, supresión de salarios y lento o ningún crecimiento. El descenso de los precios de las mercancías se deriva de la desaceleración global capitalista.

Los 19 países de la eurozona y Japón están luchando para mantenerse fuera de la recesión. El capitalismo estadounidense está luchando, sin éxito, para entrar en modo de crecimiento fuerte. Rusia se encuentra en una recesión. Brasil, la séptima economía más grande del mundo y la más grande de América Latina, ha desacelerado a un cuatrienio de casi ningún crecimiento. Sudáfrica creció sólo un 1,5 por ciento en el 2014. El capitalismo indio está luchando para mantenerse en su tasa de crecimiento del 7,5 por ciento, mientras que pobreza alcanza a cientos de millones allá.

No es de extrañar que los precios de las mercancías bajen, mientras la capacidad mundial de producción se expande y la demanda mundial de las/os trabajadoras y de la clase media se contrae.

El FMI ha reducido su estimación de crecimiento económico mundial para 2015. El informe de marzo 12 muestra una caída de los precios en los últimos tres o cuatro cuatrienios en cada categoría económica: agricultura, alimentos, aceites vegetales, carne, materias primas agrícolas, metales, etc. Los precios disminuyeron en todo, desde el cobre al mineral de hierro, carbón, madera, cereales, cordero, azúcar y algodón.

Este es un signo seguro de sobreproducción capitalista creciente - disminución de la capacidad de las masas para comprar los productos que crean, presión competitiva sobre los capitalistas para contener los aumentos de precios con el fin de proteger su cuota en el mercado, y crecimiento en la relación de los medios no utilizados de producción y servicios.

El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

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

lowwagecapitalism.com

Por qué caída de precios son amenaza: la visión marxista

De lo que Wall Street y los ejecutivos están preocupados es que el aumento en la desaceleración de los precios, que significa desaceleración de la inflación, se convierta en una disminución absoluta y desencadene una crisis global.

¿Por qué este declive señala peligro para las/os trabajadoras? Porque en el sistema capitalista global, una caída de los precios en condiciones de sobreproducción y bajos salarios señala una disminución de las ganancias. Y una disminución de las ganancias es un presagio de reducciones salariales, despidos y ataques a las/os trabajadoras en general.

Si los precios empiezan a bajar, a los patronos se les priva la posibilidad de aumentar los precios a fin de mantener sus márgenes de ganancias. Si no pueden hacerlo subiendo los precios, la única manera que les queda como explotadores capitalistas, es para bajar los salarios, acelerar la producción, reducir los ganancias o deshacerse de las/os trabajadoras. En lugar de aumentar los precios, bajan los costos. Y el único costo que controlan y pueden bajar es el costo de la mano de obra. Si tienen pérdidas, cerrarán el negocio.

Para las/os trabajadoras, lo mejor es entender el peligro desde el punto de vista de la economía clasista: la teoría marxista del valor del trabajo.

¿Cuáles son los precios y cómo se establecen? El capitalista fija el precio. No hay garantía de que el producto o el servicio serán vendidos a ese precio. Pero así es cómo el precio se marcó.

En condiciones normales, el patrono, o corporación multinacional, fija el precio con el fin de recuperar todos los costos de producción o servicio más una ganancia. La ganancia consiste en el tiempo de trabajo no remunerado de las/os trabajadoras.

El trabajo impagado resulta del hecho que el patrono paga a las/os trabajadoras lo suficiente para vivir (y tal vez menos) y se queda con los ingresos de todo el valor nuevo que las/os trabajadoras crean en el proceso económico. Las/os trabajadoras aplican la fuerza de trabajo a los elementos materiales de la producción. (Marx llamó éstos capital constante). Estos elementos de producción representan antiguo valor ya creado por otras/os trabajadoras.

Al crear productos nuevos, las/os trabajadoras agregan un valor nuevo. El valor que las/os trabajadoras necesitan para vivir se crea sólo en una parte de la jornada de trabajo. Pero las/os trabajadoras tienen que trabajar todo el día - o toda la semana o el mes entero, dependiendo del arreglo de trabajo.

El dueño entonces vende todo lo creado, paga a las/os trabajadoras sus salarios y se queda con el resto del dinero el cual incluye el valor del trabajo no remunerado. Esa plusvalía va al dueño cuando el producto se vende con una ganancia.

El dueño también debe pagar los demás costos de producción, además de los sal-

arios. Estos costos no se puede evitar: materiales, tecnología, transporte, etc. Los precios de estos productos han sido establecidos por otros capitalistas y no se les pueden cambiar. Así que después de vender toda la mercancía, cuyo valor ha sido creado por el trabajo de las/os obreros, el dueño tiene que pagar a todos los proveedores que le venden cosas. Lo que queda es la ganancia - o el valor, en dinero, del trabajo no remunerado de las/os trabajadoras.

Pero supongamos que el precio fijado por el dueño para sacar una buena ganancia sea demasiado alto para encontrar compradores. Supongamos que las/os trabajadoras y la clase media no pueden pagar el precio fijado por el dueño. Entonces el dueño tiene que bajar el precio. Pero el dueño todavía tiene que pagar al propietario, los banqueros, los proveedores, etc. Si el precio es tan bajo que impide las ganancias y el dueño tiene que utilizar lo que se supone fueran las ganancias o plusvalía, entonces los costos deben ser bajados. Hay que bajar los salarios y despedir a las/os trabajadoras o, en casos drásticos, hay que cerrar la empresa.

Poca necesidad de contratar trabajadoras/es

El ‘Toronto Globe and Mail’ del 23 de enero lo resumió así: “La conclusión dicen los economistas, es que la economía mundial todavía tiene un exceso de capacidad. Si bien muchas economías, especialmente en el mundo desarrollado, se despojaron de una capacidad sustancial durante una profunda corriente descendente de recesión, hay más capacidad de producir que demanda para los productos. El FMI estima que las economías avanzadas del mundo todavía están operando alrededor del 2,5 por ciento por debajo de su capacidad - y el crecimiento mundial crónico por debajo de lo normal significa que la demanda no ha sido suficiente para cerrar la brecha.

“El exceso continuado de capacidad ha significado poca necesidad de contratar a más trabajadoras/es. La Organización Internacional del Trabajo informó esta semana que el mercado de trabajo mundial todavía no se ha recuperado por completo lo que había perdido en la crisis del 2008-09. Dijo que el empleo mundial es de 61 millones de empleos por debajo de su línea de tendencia a largo plazo, lo que refleja la brecha que se abrió durante la crisis y nunca se ha cerrado. La tasa mundial de desempleo de 5,9 por ciento es todavía más alta que los niveles previos a la crisis (5,5 por ciento en 2007), y la tasa global de participación en la fuerza laboral se mantiene por debajo de los niveles previos a la crisis, lo que indica que casi 40 millones de personas más en todo el mundo han abandonado totalmente la búsqueda de empleo”.

El movimiento internacional de trabajadoras/es debe prepararse para resistir una nueva ronda de ataques indicada por la creciente sobreproducción capitalista. La caída de los precios de las mercancías puede ser el presagio de ese ataque. □

