

Atrocity in Charleston

‘Let this trauma drive the struggle for Black Liberation’

By Lamont Lilly

When nine defenseless people are killed in a church, it's not a "shooting," it's a massacre. When a 21-year-old white male who wears racist hate badges on his jacket walks into a church and murders nine unarmed Black people, that's not just a "hate crime" by a lone wolf. It's a terrorist attack by a white supremacist.

Unfortunately, the following description is exactly what happened on June 17 in Charleston, S.C., between 8:00 and 9:00 p.m.

According to witnesses and recent reports, the accused 21-year-old gunman, Dylann Roof, walked in to Emanuel A.M.E. Church around 8:00 p.m. Local police were called around 9:00 p.m. According to witnesses and on the scene survivors, Roof reloaded five times. Eight people died at the scene, including the church's pastor, Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney.

After a 14-hour hunt, Roof was finally arrested in Shelby, N.C., just a few miles west of Charlotte, N.C., which is the former home of police shooting victim Jonathan Ferrell.

We don't need to have a conversation about race. We need to have a conversation about revolution and Black Liberation. There's a difference, a political and very serious difference. Ironically, Charleston's historic Emanuel AME Church has a deeply entrenched history in the struggle for Black Liberation and people's resistance.

In 1822, Denmark Vesey, one of the church's original founders, was investigated and captured by slave authorities for his plan of organizing a slave revolt there in Charleston. After being sold out by an informant, Vesey and 36 other enslaved African descendants were hanged.

For the church's involvement in a plot

Continued on page 5



In the wake of horror, renewed resistance

Youth at 'Take Down the Flag' rally in Columbia, S.C. June 22.

WW PHOTO: BILL STARR



At Philadelphia march, People's Organization for Progress announced a July 25 "Million People's March Against Police Brutality, Racial Injustice and Economic Inequality" in Newark.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

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Tribute to an anti-racist fighter and thinker

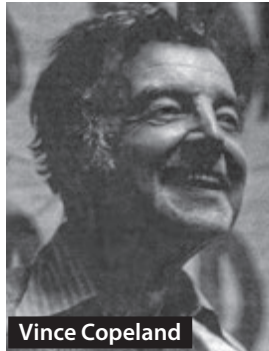
By Deirdre Griswold

The first known celebration of the end of slavery in the U.S. came on June 19, 1865, when Union soldiers landed in Galveston, Texas, with the news that the Civil War was over and those who had been enslaved were free. That glorious day became known as Juneteenth.

This Juneteenth also happens to be the 100th anniversary of the birth of a wonderful comrade and founding member of Workers World Party, Vincent Copeland.

Copeland put his revolutionary politics into action as a steelworker, union militant, activist and the first editor of Workers World newspaper. He was fired from Bethlehem Steel in 1950 after leading what the company called a “wildcat” strike. Some 16,000 workers then walked out, trying to get him back.

The big issue in steel then was the racist seniority system, by which the company could hire white workers off the street for better jobs and pass over Black workers with years of seniority in the most dangerous and difficult departments, the coke ovens and blast furnaces. Copeland helped build a Black-white caucus to fight for plantwide seniority. His pamphlet “Blast Furnace Brothers” showed how it could be done, even at a time when racism was rampant.



Vince Copeland

Harper’s Ferry & the unfinished revolution

Copeland later rediscovered an account of the 1859 raid on Harper’s Ferry, written by a survivor of that attempt to start the war against slavery. He republished it in the book “A Voice from Harper’s Ferry” by Osborne P. Anderson, “A Black revolutionary who was there.” Copeland’s introduction to the book, “The Unfinished Revolution,” has much relevance to today’s struggles against racism and white supremacy. Toward the end, Copeland writes about the revolutionaries of that era and this:

“By clearing the field of this ancient evil [chattel slavery], they laid the basis for the modern struggle against the modern evils.

“The fact that this modern struggle, the fight for socialism, is a long time coming; the fact that it must overcome mountains of miseducation, ruling-class racism and deceit, obscures, just as the pre-Civil War official philosophy and racism did, the inevitability of the coming revolution. It obscures the absolutely irreconcilable character of the class antagonisms that will and must be fought through to the end.

“The class antagonisms of today are very different from those of 1859 and 1861. The struggle this time will be led by the oppressed themselves — that is, by the Browns and the Andersons of the proletariat rather than by the Lincolns and Grants of the bourgeoisie. Where the heroes of Harper’s Ferry failed to effect the kind of revolution they wanted, their descendants will succeed.” □

vital component in the overall struggle to end capitalist oppression.

We invite you to donate to the Workers World Fund Drive, a bi-annual campaign to help print and distribute this pro-worker, pro-activist newspaper and maintain its website at workers.org. Send checks to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Include your name and address and put “Fund Drive” in the memo line.

Additionally, we encourage you to join the WW Supporter Program, set up 38 years ago to help us publish anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-LGBTQ oppression, working-class truth and to build the many campaigns needed to end capitalism and usher in socialism. Donate online at workers.org/donate/. Or send checks to the above address, with “WWSP” in the memo line.

We are grateful for your help in growing the revolutionary press in the U.S. □

Come out for Pride! Come out for Workers World!

June is Pride month, with rallies and marches all over the world commemorating the 46th anniversary of the historic Stonewall Rebellion. Workers World has a proud history of reporting on the living struggle for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer justice and equality. But WW also contributed theoretically to that struggle by publishing WW contributor and staff member Bob McCubbin’s book, “The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View” (World View Forum, third ed., 1993).

Drawing on the theoretical work of Frederick Engels and Dorothy Ballan to provide a dialectical materialist explanation of LGBTQ oppression, McCubbin showed how early communal societies accepted all forms of human interrelations, but after material surpluses developed and male supremacy arose, rigid rules governing gender and sexuality were adopted. That’s what we’re fighting to end today. That analysis drives WW’s view that the LGBTQ struggle is a

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. □

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,

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Sexual Minorities Archives: 'Queer Archiving = Queer Activism'

For LGBTQ Pride, WW Contributing Editor Minnie Bruce Pratt interviewed longtime anti-racist Transgender activist Ben Power Alwin, curator of the Sexual Minorities Archives in Northampton, Ma.

The SMA, begun in 1974 in Chicago as a Lesbian library, emphasizes “social and economic justice struggles, People of Color LGBTQ lives and experiences, and LGBTQ involvement in movements from the Gay Berlin homosexual movement in the 1800s to the Abolitionist and Women’s Suffrage movements in the U.S., to anti-war movements, the AIDS movement, Black Civil Rights movement, Labor movement, Feminist movement, Trans* movement, and more.”

Workers World: Tell us about the SMA motto: Queer Archiving = Queer Activism.

Ben Power Alwin: We believe every act of Queer archival preservation is Queer activism and rebellion. The predominant culture’s oppression of LGBTQ peoples is carried out by erasure of our history, literature and art. This silencing of the truth about our Queer lives and experiences allows a huge gap in knowledge, then filled with ignorant lies and stereotypes.

WW: What sparked you to do Trans* and anti-racist activism through archiving?

BPA: In my abusive home in Chicago, my uncle’s attic bedroom, where he kept hundreds of books in his own library, was my only refuge. Then in 1966, when I was 16, the Black Civil Rights movement became the first social justice movement in my life. I identified with the suffering of other minorities — I knew I was different, too. I went to the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago to protest in Grant Park against racism and the war in Vietnam. Cops started to riot, tear-gassing, billy clubs cracking skulls. After that, I reflected on ways to be an activist and survive physically, without getting jailed, because I thought then I wouldn’t be of use.

In 1975, working in the Lesbian Feminist Center on Halstead [in Chicago], I met J.R. Roberts, an anti-racist white woman compiling the first — and still only — bibliographic guide to the history of Black Lesbians. She founded there the New Alexandria Lesbian Library, and emphasized how saving materials about Lesbian lives was survival in a patriarchal world. This connected deeply to surrounding myself with books as part of my survival.

I decided archiving would be my primary activism. When the LFC closed, I

moved the collection into my Chicago apartment, then to Northampton.

I continue to be a street activist, but my most lasting activism is this quiet, radical archival remedy to oppression. We LGBTQ people have a right to our own history books, literature, music, art — our own lives. This is archival justice.

WW: What are some ways the SMA is used for activism?

BPA: We provide space for support groups — the East Coast FTM [female-to-male] Group met at the SMA for over 20 years, LGBTQ youth groups visit. People use the SMA to create presentations about our lives, and take those into the community as direct education about suppressed history. We hope to work with curriculum developers for school systems.

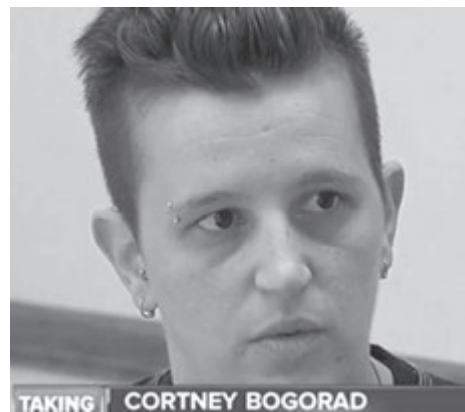
Fightback against racism

WW: As a dedicated white anti-racist, do you have thoughts to share with Trans* and Queer activists on the importance of the #BlackLivesMatter movement?

BPA: We are living in a historic moment of fightback against centuries of U.S. racism. Queer Women of Color started the Black Lives Matter movement. It is part of the LGBTQ community. I don’t see how as Queer people we can separate ourselves from it. Particularly white Queer activists — this is an opportunity for us to use any white privilege we have, or any energy from that, and channel it into BLM as allies to People of Color. Get involved in Black Lives Matter!

WW: You and the SMA recently faced eviction from your home of 32 years. What prejudices and economic pressures were behind that?

BPA: Increasing gentrification in Northampton has resulted in the greed of soaring housing prices. That, combined



male apparently because of her clothing and hairstyle.

While attempting to use the restroom after eating, Bogorad heard a man call out, “Whatever man is in the restroom come out now.” Before she could even find out what was happening, a male security guard barged into the women’s restroom,



Ben Power marches with Stonewall Warriors for CeCe McDonald, Chelsea Manning and justice for Trayvon Martin, Boston Pride, 2012.

WW PHOTO: STEVAN KIRSCHBAUM

with the landlord’s refusal to sell the Archives House to me, a Transman, forced the SMA out of its long-term home.

We are relocating to a beautiful “Pink Lady” Victorian house in Holyoke, Mass., a primarily working-class city that is majority People of Color, over 48 percent Latino/a, and majority female, over 53 percent, along with a dynamically growing LGBTQ population.

In the spirit of Leslie Feinberg, Sylvia Rivera

WW: Are you planning new projects related to the new location?

BPA: The SMA will shortly house a free LGBTQ lending library, Out Books On Wheels, with 3,000 volumes it delivers to LGBTQ people of all ages — at homes, community centers, hospitals and senior centers locally.

The Sylvia Rivera Room will open soon, named for the late Transgender civil rights pioneer and veteran of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion. The SMA wants this room to be particularly welcoming to the local Latino/a community. We’ve already had a visit from House of Colors, a majority Latino/a and African-American LGBTQ youth group, wanting to study there.

The Sylvia Rivera Room, in addition to containing extensive Transgender subject files, will also house the Leslie Feinberg Library.

Shortly before his death, Trans* activist and author Leslie Feinberg donated his personal research library to the SMA, to show support of community-based archives and libraries. Those 1,000 books — about sexes, gender expressions and sexualities within the context of nationality



PHOTO: NELSON ROMAN

House of Colors youth group visits the Sexual Minorities Archives.

and class — join the other 12,000 SMA books.

Accessible to the public, the Feinberg Library will give researchers and community scholars

a unique look into Leslie’s intersectional thinking and development as a social justice activist and author.

Both Leslie and Sylvia fought hard for the inclusion and liberation of Transgender people, People of Color, and low-income people. At the SMA, we work in the spirit of Leslie and Sylvia whenever we prioritize the histories, literature and art of Queer and Transgender People of Color, who face not only the most severe discrimination, but also whose stories are typically omitted or erased within institutional archives and historical societies.

WW: How can people support the SMA?

BPA: We encourage people to contribute archival materials; work in the SMA as a researcher, community volunteer or student intern; or donate to the SMA’s nonprofit organization, the Sexual Minorities Educational Foundation.

Visit us at our new home.

Contact us at sexualminorities.archives@yahoo.com or find us on Facebook by entering “Sexual Minorities Archives.” Become part of the leadership by joining the SMEF Board of Directors. We extend a warm welcome to People of Color LGBTQs to join us! □

Gender bias behind Detroit outrage

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

We are taught, beginning in elementary school, that our rights are protected by the Constitution. Freedom of expression is one of these rights. Or are there exceptions? Can a person be legally dragged out of a restroom and physically removed from a public place because of gender expression or how they look?

Cortney Bogorad doesn’t think so and the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan has filed a lawsuit on her behalf. In January, she ate dinner at Fishbones, a popular restaurant near a casino in the trendy Greektown neighborhood. Bogorad identifies as female and does not consider herself transgender, but some misogynistic, anti-lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/queer bigot tagged her as

shouting at her to come out if she was a man. She stated that she was a woman but the guard refused to look at her ID.

According to Bogorad, the guard then pushed her out of the restroom. Once out of the restroom, she attempted to show her ID to someone who might have been the manager, also to no avail.

The guard then grabbed and lifted Bogorad by her sweater and bra and removed her from the restaurant by throwing her out onto the street. Her upper body was exposed to patrons and she suffered “physical damages including contusions, wrist injuries, shoulder injuries and scarring which required medical treatment,” the lawsuit states. (freep.com, June 11)

Detroit’s human rights ordinance prohibits discrimination in public accommodations, including on the basis of sexual

orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

This horrible incident comes in an atmosphere of right-wing backlash in anticipation that the U.S. Supreme Court will strike down Michigan’s ban on same-sex marriage. Another example is a bill just introduced in the state Legislature that will, unbelievably, require all marriages to be conducted by a member of the clergy. This will create hardships for same-sex couples in small towns where there may be no LGBTQ-welcoming religious congregations. And it creates difficulties for all who believe in the separation of church and state.

Bogorad’s lawsuit is a progressive and courageous action. However, to protect our rights, LGBTQ people must be where those rights were won in the first place — out in the streets! □

Boston protest demands:

'Reinstate our fired leaders!'

By Martha Grevatt

Boston school bus drivers held a militant picket line June 18 outside the headquarters of the notorious Veolia Corporation, which has renamed itself Transdev. "Reinstate our fired leaders now!" was the main demand. The drivers' union, Steelworkers Local 8751, has been fighting since October 2013 to get four fired leaders — President Andre Francois, Vice President Steve Kirschbaum, Financial Secretary Steve Gillis and Grievance Chair Garry Murchison — rehired.

Veolia, which the city of Boston hired in June 2013 to manage public school transportation, fired the four over completely trumped-up charges of leading an illegal wildcat strike. In fact, Veolia illegally locked out more than 850 drivers after they attempted to meet with management over unresolved grievances, including the company's demand that workers — many with 20, 30 and even 40 years of service to Boston's school children — reapply for their jobs.

This June workers let the company know that routine contract violations must stop. For example, every year as the school year comes to an end, management is supposed to work with the union to set up the "summer bid." Workers bid on jobs that are available during the summer; jobs are awarded based on seniority.

Instead of providing the union with information on the jobs that would be available this year, Veolia arbitrarily, without consulting the union, designated June 13 as the date for the bid. When the union objected and threatened a job action, the date was moved to June 20.

Workers were prepared to shut down the bidding process by refusing to sign up for any available job. Now the bid is June 27, two days before summer school begins.

In this way, without even having to go on strike, workers demonstrated their power to obstruct business as usual.

Union members are also demanding the company settle almost 700 unresolved grievances and a number of unfair labor practice charges, as well as offer a just settlement to the contract, which expired in 2014.

"We want justice now," 8751 members chanted on June 18. "If we don't get it, we'll shut it down!" President Francois warned: "This is just the beginning, Alex Roman," referring to Veolia's general manager.

School bus drivers' union members were joined by labor and community supporters, including UNITE HERE Local 26; Service Employees 1199; Charles Clemons, general manager of TOUCH 106.1 and USW 8751-endorsed candidate for District 7 Boston City Council; and Jean Claude Sanon, endorsed candidate for City Council. Also present were Sandra McIntosh, coordinator of the Coalition for Equal Quality Education; Workers World Party; Nkume Bojah Brock, from Mass Action Against Police Brutality; Nick Giannone III, of the Boilermakers Union and the Communist Party USA Boston; Boston International Workers of the World; and the Student Labor Action Movement.

Resolutions of solidarity have been sent to the union from United Auto Workers Local 2322 in New England and the Jeep unit of UAW Local 12 in Toledo, Ohio. □

In shooting of mentally ill woman

Supreme Court gives cops license to attack

By Edward Yudelovich

On May 18, the U.S. Supreme Court awarded immunity from liability to two San Francisco police officers who, in 2008, had entered the room of Teresa Sheehan, a mentally ill woman in a group home, and shot her five times.

In the 6-2 decision, the court granted the two officers qualified immunity from claims that they violated the Fourth Amendment when they entered the room.

It declined to rule on whether the officers failed to provide reasonable accommodations for Sheehan's disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sheehan survived the Aug. 7, 2008, shooting and filed a federal civil rights suit the next year. The suit was dismissed by U.S. District Judge Charles Breyer of San Francisco, but the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reinstated it, finding that the ADA applies to arrests. Sheehan had been diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder and lived in a group home in San Francisco's Mission District at the time.

When San Francisco appealed this decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, more than 40 civil rights and disability activist groups, including the People with Disabilities Caucus of the People's Power Assembly, protested, urging San Francisco officials to drop their appeal and warning that it imperiled the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, "the most comprehensive civil rights law for Americans with disabilities."

Decision a Pyrrhic victory

Leonard Feldman, the lawyer who argued Sheehan's case before the Supreme Court, found a positive side to the decision: "Mentally ill individuals confronted by police are entitled to the substantial protections of the ADA, and the Supreme Court's decision allows individuals like Sheehan to pursue claims against public entities when their officers ignore the statute's anti-discriminatory provisions."

However, this decision can also be viewed as a Pyrrhic victory, one that inflicts such a devastating toll on the victor that it is tantamount to defeat. Why? Let's look at the actual text of the court's decision.

"We reverse the judgment of the Ninth Circuit" and hold "that the officers are entitled to qualified immu-

nity because they did not violate any clearly established Fourth Amendment rights" of Sheehan.

Justice Anthony Scalia added in his opinion: "Today's judgment is a reward. It gives the individual petitioners [the city of San Francisco] all that they seek, and spares San Francisco the significant expense of defending the suit, and satisfying any judgment, against the individual petitioners."

No cop killings of the oppressed!

This decision is an attempt to break the shield which the ADA has provided the disabled to protect us from cops. The court has granted cops an official license to attack us under the guise of defending themselves against a "threat," an assessment they alone control. The court leaves cops free to continue to murder at will, without accountability, people with disabilities, people of color, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people.

Every 28 hours, someone employed or protected by the U.S. government kills a Black man, woman or child. (Malcolm X Grassroots Movement's 2013 report: "Operation Ghetto Storm") Every 56 hours, a person with mental health problems is shot and killed by police. (2013 report by the Treatment Advocacy Center and National Sheriffs' Association)

U.S. Supreme Court Justice John G. Roberts Jr. is now infamous for the statement: "We live in a post-racial society," which he made about the time his court gutted major provisions of the Voting Rights Bill in 2013. In the same way, the ADA has not been made safe by this decision, which is a warning to the disability rights movement. A response is in formation.

After the ADA was passed, and after the heroic 1969 Stonewall Rebellion inspired annual LGBTQ parades, Disability Pride parades took place around the country during the month of July, the anniversary of the ADA's passage. After several years without such parades, this year will mark the 25th anniversary of the ADA. Disability Pride parades and solidarity and protest events are scheduled around the country, including on July 12 in New York and on July 22 in Boston.

Yudelovich is an organizer of the Workers World Party People with Disabilities Caucus.

On the Picket Line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

Mothers strike detention camp

Every year, hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants are rounded up and crowded into prisons while they fight deportation proceedings, a process that can take years. In one such prison, the Berks Family Detention Camp near Reading, Pa., entire families are jailed, held in indefinite incarceration and forced to labor for as little as \$1 a day. Meanwhile, prisoners report that they and their children are locked down in crowded, cold, prison-like conditions; are verbally abused and threatened by guards; suffer from nutritional and medical neglect for physical and mental illness; and mothers are subjected to sexual assaults by guards.

On June 11, migrant rights organizations, including the Philadelphia-based Vamos Juntos, announced to a crowd of supporters and formerly detained individuals that mothers in the camp had launched a work strike "until they and their children are released and Berks is shut down," said Fernanda Marroquin of the Migrant Power Movement. Donations to the strike effort can be made online at bit.ly/1K10pMR. (endfamilydetention.com, June 11)

WP workers fend off corporate attacks

When billionaire Jeff Bezos acquired the Washington Post newspaper in 2013, he immediately set out to slash workers' wages, benefits and pension plans. Workers, represented by the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild (WBNG, an affiliate of the Communication Workers union), sprang into action to defend against Bezos' attack on quality jobs (see coverage in Nov. 14, 2014, issue).

After an eight-month struggle, the workers emerged victorious June 11, when a new two-year contract was signed that not only repels many of Bezos' attacks, but also provides historic pay increases. Whereas management initially sought to cut workers' wages by as much as 39 percent, WBNG's hard-won contract provides the largest pay increase — 2.5 percent the first year and 2 percent the second — in over 10 years. The union also forced the company to compromise on health care while securing paid vacation time and sick leave, as well as preventing unjust discipline by management. The only setback was that the traditional pension was frozen.

"Without a union to speak up on everyone's behalf, the company would have had the right to unilaterally impose its way not just with the pension but with many other unfavorable terms," said Guild Co-Chair Freddy Kunkle. The Guild also reports that 50 new workers signed union cards since the struggle began last October. (wbng.org, June 8, 11, 17)

Unionized workers make more

In the report "Virtual Labor Organizing" released June 11 by the nonprofit think tank Century Foundation, researchers examined differences in pay between unionized and nonunionized workers — which vary between 10 percent and 50 percent — across a variety of industries. For instance, a household with two unionized earners will make on average \$400 more per week — as much as half a million dollars over a lifetime — than a similar household with nonunionized earners. In the physical and social sciences, unionized workers stand to make a whopping 48 percent more than their unorganized counterparts, while in transportation, workers in unions make over 35 percent more than similar workers without unions. The data are clear: It's worth it to fight for a union and fight to keep it. (tcf.org, June 11)

Chipotle workers win benefits

Hourly workers at more than 1,800 Chipotle Mexican Grill restaurants rejoiced June 4 when the chain announced it would begin offering paid sick days and vacation time, as well as college tuition reimbursement, for all workers starting July 1. Despite the national struggle for a \$15-an-hour minimum wage and a union, benefits are often left out of the equation for hourly restaurant workers who must rely on public assistance to care for their families.

A study conducted by the nonprofit Restaurant Opportunities Centers United revealed that as many as 90 percent of restaurant workers do not get paid sick days. As a result, workers who cannot afford to miss a day's work often come to work despite being too sick to safely handle food. (ROCunited.org, June 8) The decision to extend benefits to all hourly workers at Chipotle will not only make the chain's restaurants safer and more sanitary, it will also provide millions of low-wage workers who touch, cook, prepare and serve food more dignity and fairness on the job. (nrrn.com, June 5) □

In reaction to racist terror

Angry protests erupt across the country

Many protests, vigils and marches were held to protest the horrendous massacre of nine Black people in Charleston, S.C., on June 17. Below are reports from activists who participated in a few of them across the country.

South Carolinians responded to the racist massacre in Charleston with a renewed fight to remove the battle flag of the Confederacy from the grounds of the State Capitol in **Columbia, S.C.** The presence of the slaveholders' war flag and Confederate memorial belied the public grief affected by right-wing Gov. Nikki Haley and the state's Republican power structure for the martyrs of Charleston. The flag is but one of many monuments glorifying the Confederate slavocracy across this city and state.

On June 20, at least 2,000 people — Black, white, Native and Latino/a — filled the State House grounds in 100-degree heat to demand the flag's removal. The rally was built on social media in a few days. Organizations calling the rally included the NAACP and the South Carolina Progressive Network.

Another rally has been called for July 4, and there is talk of a mass march on Columbia, like the one on Jan. 26, 2000. That march of over 50,000 was the largest in the state's history. Mass protest forced the flag's removal from the roof of the State Capitol. But an act of the State Legislature removed it to the Confederate Soldiers' Monument, where it is even more visible. (The governor and other politicians finally came out in favor of removing the flag; see editorial, page 10.)

On the night of June 21, pro-freedom activists painted "Black Lives Matter" and "This is the Problem #Racist" on the base of a Confederate war memorial in **Charleston**.

Downtown rush-hour traffic in **Newark, N.J.**, on June 19 saw a strong rally denouncing racism and the murders at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston. Promptly called by the People's Organization for Progress, the late afternoon rally had multinational speakers from three religions, introduced by POP Chairperson Larry Hamm.

As many supporters gathered to denounce the murder of the Emanuel 9, passing drivers honked in solidarity. One speaker raised the racist nature of murders that loved ones had suffered in New Jersey as well. POP has called "A Million People's March Against Police Brutality, Racial Injustice and Economic Inequality" on July 25 to counter this starting at noon from the Lincoln Monument.

The Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly and the Baltimore chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference called a rally and vigil in **Baltimore** to address the "War on Black America, from Baltimore to Charleston" on June 19 at McKeldin Square, where most of the Black Lives Matter protests have taken place. The rally was in response to the racist massacre and the continued police killings of Black people across the country.



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

A multinational crowd came out in solidarity with the victims of racist terror. Emceed by the Rev. Cortly C.D. Witherspoon of the SCLC, the rally began by calling out the names of the nine victims. Lee Patterson, of Workers World Party, raised that racism isn't about misguided individuals but rather is a product of the capitalist system, which keeps workers divided to maximize profits. Sara Benjamin of the PPA encouraged the crowd to attend activities on June 20-21 to remember Black girls and women victims of police terror. Other speakers included representatives from Rev.com, Afro-American Organization of Unity and Fight Imperialism, Stand Together.

Prior to the horrific murders in Charleston, a press conference had been planned in **Philadelphia** on June 20 with Larry Hamm to announce POP's march on July 25. Close to 100 people attended the event, including Latino/a activists, white youth, Pam Africa, Ramona Africa, and militant Black activists in the Coalition for REAL Justice. Mothers of three victims of police brutality in the Philly area — Delphine Matthews, Ikea Manning and Tanya Brown-Dickerson — spoke, as well as members of the United National Antiwar Coalition and the International Action Center. Gabe Bryant, a REAL member linked with the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, gave a moving account of the life of one of the elder victims, who at 87 had survived decades of racist attacks and historic struggles. A group of Dominican youth of Haitian descent on their way to picket at the Liberty Bell joined the event and spoke of horrific conditions for Haitians in the Dominican Republic.

Younger participants decided to lead a five-mile march through the Black community, with the dominant chant "Justice for the 9 from Charleston." As the march went into the community, it stopped at several key intersections where impromptu rallies were held, with neighborhood people listening to the raps of Coalition leaders. While the impact of the march was very powerful there, the response was positive everywhere.

A more organized follow-up protest was called for June 27 with a march

through the heart of North Philly's Black community. At Broad and Cecil B. Moore Avenue, demonstrators will join the U.S. Social Forum's "March from Austerity to Prosperity."

The Buffalo Anti Racism Coalition held a rally and speak-out in solidarity with Charleston on June 21 in downtown **Buffalo, N.Y.** Demanding that the racist Confederate flag be taken down, the group set that hated rag on fire and chanted "White supremacy's got to go!" Activists from different struggles, including from Workers World and the International Action Center, spoke out about the causes and impact of racism on the lives of the oppressed and about organizing locally to fight back.

A number of vigils commemorating the victims of Charleston's racist massacre and expressing solidarity with Charleston's Black community were held in the California **Bay Area**. Both the University of California Berkeley Black Student Union and the Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland held vigils on June 18. Students and other supporters also conducted a march after the Berkeley vigil. There



PHOTO: ALICE LOAIZA

was also a vigil in San Francisco's Bayview district the next night.

On June 22, a vigil and march titled "White Silence = Violence" were held at Oakland's Lake Merritt. Highlighting the importance of white people speaking out against white supremacy and racism, the mostly white crowd marched around the entire lake chanting slogans like "White Silence = Violence, Black Lives Matter."

A United Hood March in **Seattle** protested the South Carolina massacre on June 19, Juneteenth, the date of Texas' emancipation from slavery. The march began at Seattle police headquarters and

marched all over downtown chanting "Black Lives Matter." The 200 marchers then held a rally at Myrtle Edwards Park at the waterfront. Called to show organized resistance to racist violence, it was also held to unite the community, including gangs that have often suffered the most from racist imprisonment and brutality.

Contributors to this article included Bill Starr, Anne Pruden, Steven Ceci, Betsey Piette, Ellie Dorritie, Beverly Hiestand, Terri Kay and Jim McMahan.



PHOTO: JAKEEM DANIEL

Atrocity in Charleston

'Let this trauma drive the struggle for Black Liberation'

Continued from page 1

to resist, it was burned to the ground by local authorities and vigilantes. Black Codes and Jim Crow laws were quickly enacted to restrict all forms of slave assembly, including churches statewide. Traveling passes became required, while the slave patrol became the first form of organized and paid U.S. policing. Black people were literally forced to worship underground in that church for over 30 years until 1865. Common sense says you don't fly a "Confederate flag" at half mast to commemorate a history like this.

Anyone who knows the history of the U.S. South is well familiar with the ruthless legacy of the state of South Carolina. Charleston was at one point the largest and most important slave port in North America. This same city and local municipality is directly responsible for the brutal death of Walter Scott just a few months ago. Scott was shot eight times in the back by a Charleston police officer. Only because that killing was captured on live video was truth able to reach the masses.

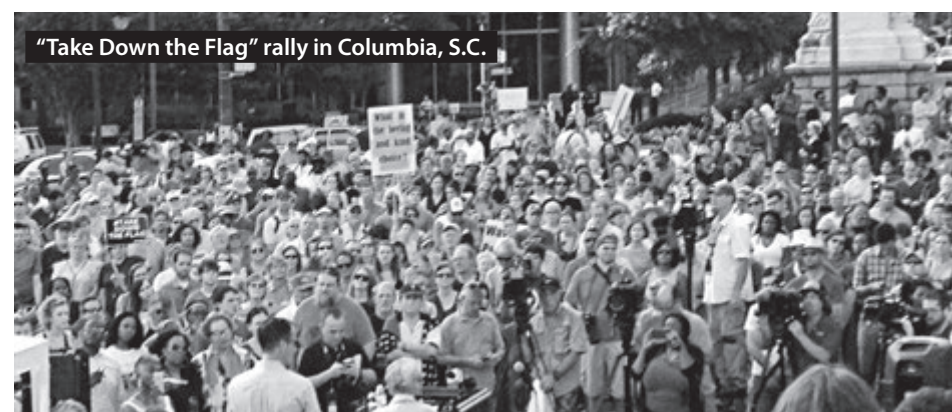
When Black youth from the oppressed communities of Ferguson, Mo., Baltimore

and Oakland, Calif., decided to stand on courage and rebel against police brutality, racism and the capitalist system, they were called "thugs," "rioters" and "hoodlums." For some reason, 21-year-old Dylann Roof, a well-trained white supremacist, is being referred to by corporate media as a "lone wolf" who must have been "mentally ill." That media completely fails to address the core issues, nor have they used the correct language.

Now is the time for the Black Church to return to its roots of organized resistance, of freedom fighting and liberation. As we also remember the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church that killed four little girls, let us channel this anger into movement building just as our ancestors did. Let this pain inspire us to rally our communities and organize every block. Let this trauma drive a new generation to pursue their freedom and complete liberation.

May the people rise above their oppressors.

Lilly is a leader of the Durham, N.C., branch of Workers World Party.



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

'This massacre can't be divorced from police brutality'

Below are excerpts from a talk given by Larry Hales at a Workers World Party forum in New York on June 19.

The days since the massacre in Charleston, S.C., remind me of the days before and after Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. We watched the news, watched the swirling mass on Doppler radar as it drew closer to land-fall. Do you remember telling yourself to breathe? This feels like that.

I refer to Hurricane Katrina — not the natural occurrence, but the neglect and circumstances of life for poor and oppressed people. That and the Charleston massacre and every day in between remind us of national oppression and white supremacy. This is but another in a long line of historical events directed at a people — a nation-within-a-nation besieged.

We all feel it, though not as personally as the family members. If you are Black, you feel it. If you are another oppressed person, you empathize, and as a person of conscience, you understand and burn with rage and sadness.

What do we make of this? As Marxists, we are social scientists. Marxism analyzes events and behavior from a dialectical materialist perspective to make sense of the world.

We have been watching the news, listening to newscasters, cops, special agents and so-called experts, pundits and politicians. Fox TV hosts reactionaries like Rick Santorum who deny racism and falsely say the massacre is a result of a "war on religion." Dylann Roof's vile words mean nothing to them — not that he outright stated he was at the church to kill Black people, or that he wore the symbols of apartheid South Africa and Zimbabwe, formerly white-ruled Rhodesia, or that his car's vanity plates were of Confederate flags.

We have heard the word "terrorism" on CNN, MSNBC and elsewhere. It is rarely used regarding white suspects. Credit this

to the Black political movement which has demanded it and pointed out that racist designations for oppressed people aren't usually applied to white crime. Questions have arisen over Roof's mental state, but he has no background of mental illness. The answers are all there. If racism is discussed, it is not always raised in Roof's case and not enough in a systemic way.

It is important to cut through the government- and media-engendered morass to give political clarity. Mental illness is examined whenever a white person commits a mass shooting. However, a person suffering from mental illness rarely commits a violent act. That explanation further stigmatizes people living with such diagnoses.

Mental illness in decadent capitalist society has to be seen against the backdrop of the U.S.'s violent history and the brutal means through which capitalist society was formed. The role of alienation should be part of the analysis in advanced capitalist society. Mental illness itself does not explain anything — the material conditions of life and subjective consciousness and their interplay must be examined to properly uncover reasons for these incidents. But the media will look for answers that leave U.S. imperialist violence off the hook.

U.S. imperialist violence

The gun control debate is reraised. It's simple — no guns, no mass killings, right? As if U.S. imperialism has not been responsible for heinous crimes against humanity, including aiding apartheid South Africa and white-ruled Zimbabwe, then Rhodesia. The former supporters of white rule are today trying to starve the people of Zimbabwe through sanctions designed to oust Robert Mugabe's government, which is an obstacle to neocolonial rule over Zimbabwe. U.S. imperialism is today engaged in such crimes and is arming other comprador regimes to carry out mass murder for monopoly capital's benefit.



People's Organization for Progress in Newark, N.J.

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

We should address this issue and why reactionaries cling to the Second Amendment and hoard weapons stockpiles. Moreover, the right wing has supported disarming oppressed people who organize and arm themselves, from the Deacons for Defense and Justice, to Robert F. Williams and the Black Panthers, or even today's Huey P. Newton Gun Club or the Black Riders.

Historically, regulation of gun ownership has kept firearms from oppressed people. Even before the South's Black Codes were enacted, laws prohibited selling firearms to free Blacks and Indigenous people in the North. The Black Codes enshrined legal restrictions in the former slave states.

California's Reagan administration enacted the first state ban on firearms in 1967 in response to the Black Panthers. The 1968 federal law restricted Black handgun ownership in inner cities. White men can openly carry assault rifles, as happened recently in Hartsfield Atlanta airport, while 22-year-old African-American John Crawford was fatally shot for holding a toy gun in an Ohio Walmart. Little Tamir Rice, too, was shot for holding a toy pellet gun.

This massacre can't be separated from the issues of police brutality, mass incarceration or the political economy of racism as a whole — or from U.S. laws and institutionalized racism — or from how the capitalist media reinforce racist be-

liefs and empower white supremacy.

A good example is Charleston, which has built shrines to its racist past, with streets and parks named after slave-owning Confederates. Meanwhile, the Confederate flag flies on the State House grounds in Columbia. South Carolina's reactionary politicians stress the flag's importance to the state's history and culture. They won't break from the city's racist past, still separating even the poorest whites from oppressed people by promoting belief in superiority because of their skin color and "glorious heritage."

A main street in Charleston is named after John C. Calhoun, slave-owner and strong proponent of slavery. A white supremacist to the core, he and many others like him are hailed as heroes in a city where the tourist industry thrives off the history of Black enslavement and oppression.

Denmark Vesey, hero

However, there is the struggle against that history and the response to the imposed racist conditions. The Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church plays an important historical role in the Black struggle for liberation. The AME churches were created because of racism in Methodist churches.

Denmark Vesey co-founded this church, which merged with others in the Free African Society. He organized what would have been the largest revolt of en-

Continued on page 11

Baltimore events focus on

Black women and girls' lives matter!

By David Corbman
Baltimore

On the weekend of June 20-21, a group of primarily Black women, many from the Baltimore People's Power Assembly and their allies, held a weekend of protests for all the Black women and girl victims of police brutality and racist terror.

Led by a group of women of color, protesters gathered on June 20 in the neighborhood of Mount Vernon, a famous lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer neighborhood located in downtown Baltimore and across from where many homeless women receive services. There, in what was named "Rekia's Rally" after the unarmed Black woman Rekia Boyd, who was killed by an off-duty police officer in 2012, protesters spoke out against the silencing of the narratives surrounding Black women and girls and their own struggles against racist police violence.

Among the speakers in Mount Vernon



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

was Tawanda Jones, a local independent activist against police brutality. Jones became active against police brutality after the murder of her brother by Baltimore city police in the summer of 2013. She spoke of both her brother's story and her own of standing up to police brutality and harassment. A young trans woman who had been friends with Mya Hall — a Black trans woman shot dead earlier this year outside Fort Meade near Baltimore

— spoke on the issue facing the trans community in Baltimore city and beyond.

Protesters marched from Mount Vernon into West Baltimore, where they stopped at a prominent statue of the famous African-American jazz singer Billie Holiday. Poetry was recited and songs sung that described the struggle of Black women and girls.

From there, the march continued to the corner of Pennsylvania and North avenues, a site of major resistance during the Baltimore Rebellion. A speakout was held where community members were encouraged to tell their own stories of police brutality. A woman from the 1199 SEIU union spoke on the recent Juneteenth holiday — held every June 19 — which celebrates the liberation of African-American people from the chains of chattel slavery. She spoke also on the need for organized labor and com-

munity groups to join the fight against police brutality and racism.

The group concluded the march in the Charles Village neighborhood of Baltimore with a celebratory gathering dubbed Natasha's Jubilee, after Natasha McKenna, who was murdered by police in Virginia. There was music and crafts and the group Food Not Bombs gave free food to protesters and community members from the streets.

The weekend concluded with a solidarity event through spirituality, intended as a healing opportunity for the women and girl victims of racist violence. Food was distributed, professional massages given, and guided meditation and free yoga instruction were all provided.

Through all these diverse approaches to highlighting the issue of Black women and girl victims, the organizers hope to create a more diverse space within the Black Lives Matter movement to take up the cause of freedom for all people of color, including Black women and LGBTQ people.

The weekend's events were chaired by Lenora Knowles, Kira-Lynae Pindell, Sara Benjamin and Amorous Ebony. For more information, call 443-294-3902 or email BaltimoreSayHerName@gmail.com. □

Charleston massacre and the legacy of Denmark Vesey

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

The racist attack on the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston was a planned and premeditated assault on the legacy of struggle waged by the African-American people for two centuries in South Carolina.

Corporate media reports on the shooting seek to minimize its significance, featuring politicians and moderate elements in the community who express shock that such an incident would occur in a church in the state of South Carolina. The governor has said that South Carolina was a “loving community” and that the attack resulting in the assassination of State Senator Clementa Pinckney and eight other African-American church members, who were workers playing a leading role in community affairs, was somehow at variance with the social culture of the area.

State’s long history of racist terror

Yet South Carolina has a long history of slavery, Jim Crow, racial capitalism and terrorist violence against African Americans. The former British colony and slave state reaped massive profits through the exploitation of Africans, beginning in the colonial period.

However, Africans have resisted their enslavement since the 18th century, from West Africa all the way to the Carolinas, in the southeast region of what has become known as the United States.

According to an article published in the South Carolina Gazette on July 7, 1759: “A Sloop commanded by a brother of ... Captain Ingledieu, slaving up the River Gambia, was attacked by a number of the natives, about the 27th of February last, and made a good defense; but the captain finding himself desperately wounded, and likely to be overcome, rather than fall into the hands of merciless wretches, when about 80 Negroes had boarded the vessel, discharged a pistol into his magazine and blew her up; himself and every soul on board perished.”

There was much at stake for the slavocracy in South Carolina. A posting by the South Carolina Information Highway notes that in the history of the state: “The slave traders discovered that Carolina planters had very specific ideas concerning the ethnicity of the slaves they sought.

No less a merchant than Henry Laurens wrote: ‘The slaves from the River Gambia are preferred to all others with us [here in Carolina] save the Gold Coast. ... [N]ext to them the Windward Coast are preferred to Angola.’” (tinyurl.com/oeyruwm)

The site continues: “In other words, slaves from the region of Senegambia and present-day Ghana were preferred. At the other end of the scale were the ‘Calabar’ or Ibo or ‘Bite’ slaves from the Niger Delta, who Carolina planters would purchase only if no others were available. In the middle were those from the Windward Coast and Angola. ...

“Carolina planters developed a vision of the ‘ideal’ slave — tall, healthy, male, between the ages of 14 and 18, ‘free of blemishes,’ and as dark as possible. For these ideal slaves Carolina planters in the 18th century paid, on average, between 100 and 200 sterling — in today’s money that is between \$11,630 and \$23,200! Many of these slaves were almost immediately put to work in South Carolina’s rice fields. Writers of the period remarked that there was no harder, or more unhealthy work possible: Negroes, ankle and even mid-leg deep in water which floats in mud, and exposed all the while to a burning sun which makes the very air they breathe hotter than the human blood; these poor wretches are then in a furnace of stinking putrid effluvia: a more horrible employment can hardly be imagined.”

It is quite obvious from the web and social media posting of suspect Dylann Storm Roof that he was well aware of the long tradition of African people fighting their oppressors. It’s why he targeted the Emanuel AME Church, which was founded in the movement against slavery and for self-determination as early as 1818. Efforts by federal and state officials have sought to ignore any possible links by Roof to white supremacist organizations which exist today in South Carolina and neighboring North Carolina, where he was captured.

Attacks on Emanuel AME calculated and ideological

The perpetrator was an ideological racist who championed the system of settler-colonialism in Southern Africa and the United States. In a posting on the web, Roof wore a jacket with the insignia of the former apartheid regime in South Africa and the overthrown settler-colony

of Rhodesia. That country, founded in the attempted genocide, forced displacement and virtual enslavement of the people of Zimbabwe during the 19th century, won its independence in 1980.

The fact that this church, with such a valiant history of resistance to slavery, was targeted illustrates that this was an attempt to intimidate the African-American nation as a whole and its institutions. Despite the legacy of slavery and segregation, the people of South Carolina have engaged in political activity since the antebellum and Reconstruction period.

Church rooted in rebellion during slavery

Emanuel grew out of the resistance to slavery during the early 19th century. A co-founder of the church was Telemaque, better known as Denmark Vesey.

His plans for a major slave revolt in Charleston in 1822 sent shockwaves throughout the antebellum South and other slaveholding areas of the U.S. Vesey and his comrades were hanged after a secret trial, while the church was torched by the slave masters. The church operated underground for decades only to re-surface after the Civil War.

Vesey was first enslaved in the Danish colony of St. Thomas in the Caribbean in the late 18th century. He was reportedly taken to Haiti during the same period. There a revolution against French colonialism and slavery was carried out during 1791-1803, resulting in the first successful slave revolution against chattel bondage in history and the establishment of an African republic in 1804.

He and his master relocated to South Carolina before this revolution succeeded, during the latter years of the 18th century. South Carolina was a profitable state for the slave system, where due to

the intensity of agricultural production, Africans far outnumbered whites by the 19th century.

It is reported that the Africans organized by Vesey planned to burn down plantations and kill slave owners, thus liberating the enslaved and taking people to Haiti to join the independent Black government there. The plot was revealed to the ruling slavocracy, resulting in the arrest of Vesey and dozens of others, who were tried in secret hearings leading to the initial execution of 35 people, with many others later.

The Emanuel Church grew out of the movement for independent self-rule among Africans, as represented by the Free Africa Society, which created the conditions for the formal founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia during the period of 1787 to 1816. The founders of the church included Richard Allen and Sara Allen, along with Absalom Jones. Emanuel is reported to be the third AME Church founded in the U.S.; it was the earliest of such institutions in the South during slavery and its aftermath.

The act of racist terrorism on June 17, just one day after the 193rd anniversary of the Denmark Vesey plot being revealed to the ruling class, represents a profound provocation to African Americans and progressive forces in general. The Confederate flag, which still flies on the grounds of the state Capitol in Columbia must be taken down, as demonstrators called for on June 20.

A ruthless campaign against racism and racist organizations must be waged by the African-American people and their allies across the country. Until racism and national oppression are overthrown, there can be no real transformation of U.S. society from capitalism to socialism. □



Atlanta

At Big Bethel AME church in Atlanta.

PHOTO: -@BIGBETHELAMEC*

Time to arrest police who killed Tamir Rice

By **Susan Schnur**
Cleveland

It has been over six months since 12-year-old African-American Tamir Rice was murdered by a white Cleveland police officer outside a popular neighborhood recreation center. Despite ongoing demonstrations and numerous other actions, Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Timothy McGinty has continued to drag his feet on even sending the case to a grand jury.

In a brilliant tactical move on June 9, a group of Cleveland activists invoked a rarely used Ohio law to file affidavits asking Judge Ronald Adrine of the Cleveland Municipal Court to find probable cause to arrest Rice’s killers.

The law, Ohio Revised Code 2935.09, allows anyone with information about illegal activity to file an affidavit for an official to review. It was established in 1960 to give private citizens a way to hold law enforcement accountable when they feel police are not doing anything about a crime.

The list of charges against officers Timothy Loehmann and Frank Garmback includes aggravated murder, murder, invol-

untary manslaughter, reckless homicide, negligent homicide and a number of dereliction of duty charges.

Referred to as the Cleveland 8, the signers of the affidavit are the Rev. Jawanza Colvin, pastor of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church; the Rev. R.A. Vernon, pastor at The Word Church; Edward Little Jr., a criminal justice consultant; Rhonda Williams, director of the Social Justice Institute at Case Western Reserve University; Bakari Kitwana, author; Joseph Worthy Jr., executive director of the Children’s Defense Fund; Julia Shearson, executive director of the Cleveland chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations; and Rachele Smith, a community activist.

It took Judge Adrine, who is African-American, only two days to find probable cause for all the charges, except aggravated murder.

“The video in question in this case is notorious and hard to watch,” Judge Adrine wrote in his order. “After viewing it several times, this court is still thunderstruck by how quickly this event turned deadly,” he said, adding that Officer Loehmann fired his gun before the car he was

riding in had even come to a stop.

However, Judge Adrine lacks the authority to arrest or officially indict the cops. Only the county can do that. And Prosecutor McGinty restated on June 11 that the case will go to a Cuyahoga County grand jury. It’s important to remember that in Ferguson, Mo., and New York City, grand juries failed to indict police accused of murder.

Black political clout in Cleveland

Cleveland is the largest city in Cuyahoga County. County politicians have continually worked to weaken the political clout of Cleveland, which has been a source of Black political strength since the 1960s.

According to U.S. Census data estimates for 2013, Cleveland is 53.3 percent Black, 37.3 percent white and 10.0 percent Latino/a, with the rest Asian or Native American. Cuyahoga County is the direct opposite, with 64.6 percent white, 32.2 percent Black, 5.2 percent Latino/a, and the rest a mixture of Asian and Native American.

There is a striking division of duties between Cleveland’s Municipal Court and

Cuyahoga County’s Court of Pleas. Cleveland Municipal Court can handle only misdemeanors, while Cuyahoga County Court handles all the felonies.

Out of the 34 Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas judges, 31 are white.

It was Cuyahoga County Judge John O’Donnell who acquitted Officer Michael Brelo after he fired most of the 137 bullets that killed, execution-style, Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell in 2012. Some 77 demonstrators were arrested protesting the verdict.

The ruling by Judge Adrine that there is probable cause to indict Loehmann and Garmback represents a reaction by Black officials to the racism and lack of respect shown to Cleveland and its residents. Gains have been made by cities like Cleveland and Detroit as a result of the mighty Civil Rights and Black Power movements. All the victories wrenched from the capitalist ruling class have been steadily eroded and are now under complete attack.

It is the duty of all anti-racist fighters to support all methods of fightback chosen by the African-American community. □

Haitians in DR threatened with removal

By G. Dunkel

Some 500,000 undocumented immigrants in the Dominican Republic were under threat of removal, beginning the middle of June. Some estimates put the number as high as 750,000.

The Dominican Republic is one of the more prosperous states in the Caribbean, officially classified by the World Bank as upper-middle income. Haiti, which shares the island of Hispaniola with the DR, is classified as low income. Most of the undocumented in the DR come from Haiti.

The DR's Specialized Border Security Corps has been trained and financed by the U.S. Border Patrol as part of the so-called global war on terror. (tomdispatch.com, Nov. 19, 2013)

The undocumented Haitian immigrants can be divided into two categories. Between 200,000 and 285,000 of them are Haitian Dominicans, born in the DR to Haitian parents or with Haitian grandparents, who had Dominican citizenship until a court ruling in 2013 declared they were stateless. The rest are workers born in Haiti who came to the



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Dominican-Haitian solidarity protest in Times Square.

DR to toil as cane cutters, construction workers, nannies, restaurant workers and other occupations. Many, but not all, are undocumented.

The outcry, both international and domestic, over declaring hundreds of thousands of Dominicans stateless was so great that the government came up with a procedure that would allow stateless individuals to become Dominican citizens. But the procedure was so complicated and arduous that only 25 percent of those

at risk even attempted it. Only 9,000 or so managed to fill out the required forms. And only 300 permits were issued by the deadline of June 15. (AlJazeera, June 17)

Dominican President Danilo Medina claims that his administration doesn't intend to engage in mass deportations. However, officials have said that after 48 hours' notice, undocumented Haitians can be deported.

Some journalists speculate that deportations will pick up next year when the DR will be holding elections. Such "ethnic cleansing" has historically been popular among right-wing Dominican politicians.

In both Santo Domingo, the capital, and Santiago, the second-largest city, the cops used teargas and baton charges against people who were upset that the registration centers were closing, after waiting

in long lines. These protests, caught on YouTube, didn't draw much press attention but they did reflect a growing anger among those who are affected by the decision to render them stateless.

A February demonstration in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, of thousands of people raised this court decision on the status of Haitians in the DR.

There have also been protests in the United States. The group "Black Lives Matter in the Dominican Republic," which has both Haitian and Dominican members, has been organizing in the New York City area. It has held two demonstrations, one in Times Square on June 15 and the other in the Bronx, near Fordham University, on June 20. A group of Haitians joined a press conference in Philadelphia protesting the Charleston massacre to explain their cause.

While the main reason for the Dominican ruling class to start expelling Haitians and Haitian Dominicans appears to be ideological, it is also undoubtedly intended to make the remaining Haitian workers fearful and tentative when it comes to pushing for higher wages and better working conditions. □

Hondurans, Guatemalans protest capitalist corruption

By Ramiro S. Fúnez

Thousands of demonstrators in Honduras and Guatemala are protesting their respective governments over corruption scandals involving the misappropriation of public funds.

Both waves of protests, which began several weeks ago, are demanding the immediate resignation of right-wing presidents Juan Orlando Hernández of Honduras and Otto Pérez Molina of Guatemala. The Central American heads of state have been linked to bribery rings involving their respective country's social security programs and private corporations, among other acts of corruption.

Although each of these uprisings has its own unique form, due to differences in the political actors involved, they are similar in content. The political actors exist within the same economic environment. Ultimately, the ongoing protests in Honduras and Guatemala are national struggles against political corruption, a phenomenon inherent in the global economic system of capitalism.

Scandals exposed

Protests in Honduras began in early June when the political news channel Globo TV revealed that corporations linked to an embezzlement scandal involving the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS) provided funds for Hernández's National Party during his 2013 presidential campaign.

Private medical companies like Dimesa, based in the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa, helped finance Hernández's campaign using profits made from backroom deals with IHSS officials. Dimesa has held a contract with the IHSS since 2011. Social security officials knowingly approved the purchase of overpriced medical equipment and low-quality medicines in exchange for bribes.

Approximately \$330 million were stolen from the IHSS, significant portions of which were siphoned into Hernández's National Party campaign, Al Jazeera reported in a June 1 article. Additionally, thousands of Hondurans have died and are still dying as a result of the extraction of IHSS funds originally intended for medicine and equipment.

Protests in Guatemala were ignited by two major scandals. The first involved a multimillion-dollar customs fraud exposed by a United Nations report released in April. Guatemalan government officials were reported to have been accepting bribes in exchange for lower customs duties for private corporations. The second involved Guatemalan Social Security Institute (IGSS) officials who signed a \$15 million contract for dialysis with a company that has no experience, the June 12 New York Times reported.

Social security officials in Guatemala, just like their counterparts in Honduras, are reported to have received millions of dollars in kickbacks. Protesters consider Molina involved in both acts of malfeasance.

Honduran prosecutors investigating the scandal have since meted out minor forms of justice. From the National Party, former IHSS director Mario Zelaya, Dimesa investor Shukri Kafie and National Congress Vice President Lena Gutiérrez have all been charged with corruption and public health crimes. National Congress President Mauricio Oli-

va, also a member of the National Party, is currently being investigated for his involvement.

Guatemalan prosecutors have done the same. Former Vice President Roxana Baldetti stepped down from her position in May at the request of the Attorney General's office, following accusations of her involvement in the customs bribery scandal. Her former secretary, Juan Carlos Monzón Rojas, who ran the operation, has been formally charged and has been given fugitive status. Several other government officials have also been arrested in connection to the IGSS case.

Despite these meager concessions, the masses are continuing to rise up. Thousands of protesters in Honduras and Guatemala have taken to the streets daily to demand that their respective country's president step down. Solidarity protests have also been organized in several other countries, including Mexico, the United States and Canada. Demonstrators are continuing to organize larger actions by the day as neither Hernández nor Molina have announced plans to resign.

Overall, the mass uprisings in Honduras and Guatemala must be understood as being similar in content. Although the corruption scandals that sparked the anti-government mobilizations involved different political figures and institutions, they both took place in countries deeply entrenched in the global economic system of capitalism. The expansion of profits for private interests is as central to capitalism as it is to the corruption scandals in Honduras and Guatemala.

Both Central American nations are under the control of right-wing political parties working in favor of the global ruling economic class, which seeks the expansion of profits at the expense of millions of people. The everyday super-exploitation of workers and farmers leads inevitably to corruption and bribes. It all boils down to profit.

Just as corruption in Honduras and Guatemala should be understood as being integral to the global economic system of capitalism, the anti-corruption protests must also be understood as necessary mass reactions. □

Israeli gov't targets dissident IDF veterans

By Michael Kramer

"Cases of abuse toward Palestinians, looting, and destruction of property have been the norm for years, but are still explained as extreme and unique cases. Our testimonies portray a different and much grimmer picture." (breakingthesilence.org.il)

June 21 — Along with the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, Palestinian and Israeli political activists, and progressive cultural workers, a movement of Israeli military veterans known as Breaking the Silence (BtS) has become a target of the recently elected Israeli government. This reflects the coming to power of the most right-wing, fascist and racist trends in the Zionist movement. At this time the Zionists are

attempting to cut off the funding that BtS receives from various donors.

Breaking the Silence is an organization of Israeli military veterans formed in 2004 during the Second Palestinian Intifada, which has nongovernmental organization status. Its focus is limited but important: exposing the everyday lives of Palestinians and the occupying army of Israel's soldiers — the settler state calls it the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) — who oppress Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. As an organization, it does not take positions on the worldwide BDS movement, Zionism or the relationships among Israel, NATO and U.S. imperialism.

BtS collects and publishes testimonies of soldiers, conducts tours where the IDF is operating in Palestine, and holds public

meetings, lectures, photo exhibits both in Israel and other countries, including the United States. More than 1,000 Israeli soldiers and veterans have taken part in its activities.

This month the Israeli government has been unable to stop BtS exhibits in Cologne, Germany, and Zurich, Switzerland. The Israeli Ambassador to Germany attacked the exhibit as anti-Semitic, but the Cologne Municipality did not buy his argument.

The globalization of the veterans' movement for peace and justice is in its early stages, but it is ready to give solidarity and other assistance to Israeli veterans who struggle for these same things.

Kramer, a veteran of the IDF, is currently chapter president of Veterans For Peace/Chapter 021.

In London, Glasgow

Huge protests hit British austerity

By Kathy Durkin

A show of strength by 250,000 protesters challenged the British government's pro-banker program at an "End Austerity Now!" march and rally in London on June 20. Signs saying "No cuts" and "Austerity kills" peppered the march, as participants blew whistles and chanted. A simultaneous demonstration took place in Glasgow, Scotland.

The People's Assembly Against Austerity, a large coalition that includes labor unions, organized the London demonstration. After gathering at the Bank of England, protesters marched through the city, ending up at Parliament Square. There, speakers deplored the Tory government's five years of devastating cuts in social programs, layoffs of public sector workers, privatization of schools and health care services — and its plans to increase the suffering.

Many stressed that even though the Conservatives won the national elections in May, they had a poor showing, with merely 24.6 percent of the popular vote — meaning they had no mandate to institute even more austerity. Criticism was leveled at the super-rich whose wealth has increased since austerity was implemented. Also protested were Westminster's plans to overturn the Human Rights Act and squelch workers' rights.

Len McCluskey, general secretary of Unite, Britain's largest labor union, pledged to continue the fight to protect

communities from austerity measures.

Activists with Podemos, an anti-austerity party in Spain, joined to show solidarity. The Greek Solidarity Campaign was there. Anti-nuclear and anti-war groups were well represented. Placards showed the presence of UNISON, Britain's largest public sector union.

British Chancellor George Osborne will reveal the new budget on July 8, which slashes \$19 billion from the welfare bill. This comes on top of the \$55 billion already reduced from social programs; more cuts are planned through 2019. Women and people with disabilities are among those hardest hit. Further cuts will hurt the poorest people.

Glasgow says 'No to austerity'

At the same time, "Scotland United Against Austerity" turned out thousands at a rally in Glasgow's George Square. The action was organized by the Scottish Trades Union Congress, with the People's Assembly.

The crowd cheered Jeane Freeman of Women for Independence, who asserted that austerity was a choice, not a necessity: "Austerity is a comprehensive attack on the rights of men, women and

London



strikes or curtail union funding. STUC General Secretary Grahame Smith and Pat Raffery, Scottish secretary of Unite, boldly stated that "bad laws" are made to be broken. (Guardian, June 20)

Smith said that austerity was "all about ideology" and "protecting the position of the already privileged in society." He described its impact as "growing queues at food banks, people being thrown out of their houses" and an "unprecedented decline in real wages." Smith has committed the labor movement to be a "leading partner" in an anti-austerity coalition.

The People's Assembly is calling for nationwide protests on July 8, when the new austerity measures are revealed. The coalition opposes all budget cutbacks, layoffs and privatization, and strongly opposes racist scapegoating of migrants. □

In U.S.-Saudi-backed maneuver

Yemeni peace talks sabotaged in Geneva

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

After nearly a week of discussions in Geneva, Switzerland, United Nations talks to end the fighting in Yemen have adjourned with no resolution to the months-long war.

These talks broke down after the Yemeni politician backed by the Saudi Arabian and Gulf Cooperation Council, the ousted fugitive President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, demanded he be re-installed as Yemen's head of state before the Saudi bombing of the country is halted. The bombing has taken place daily since March 26.

Between 2,500 and 4,000 people have been killed in the bombing and in fighting on the ground. Humanitarian organizations report that some 500,000 have been forced to leave their homes.

Efforts by the Islamic Republic of Iran and popular organizations from other countries to provide relief assistance have been thwarted by the Saudi-GCC alliance, backed by Washington. The Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency are assisting the Riyadh alliance through refueling and information sharing.

Although the administration of President Barack Obama has engaged in talks in Oman with the Ansurallah (Houthis) Movement, which is now in control of large areas of Yemen, the U.S. has come down solidly in favor of the Saudi aggressors. Since the withdrawal of its Special Forces and diplomatic personnel from Yemen in late March, Washington has

sought to maintain its influence through the Saudi-GCC forces.

Bombing must stop

The Ansurallah insist that peace cannot be achieved until the U.S.-backed Saudi-GCC coalition halts the bombing of the country, which has gone on for three months.

Iranian television reported on June 21, "According to media outlets, in their latest acts of aggression against Yemen on Sunday, Saudi fighter jets bombarded a Yemeni military base in the district of Harad in the northwestern Yemeni province of Hajjah. The Saudi warplanes had also attacked the district of Abs in the province earlier in the day. ...

"Saudi Arabia also pounded residential areas in Yemen's northwestern province of Saada. There have been no reports on the number of casualties or material damage caused in the latest attacks. Reports also said that a number of Yemeni people were injured in Riyadh's air blitz on the town of Saqayn in the northern Yemeni province of Saada." (Press TV)

U.S.-supported air strikes killed at least 15 people and injured many more throughout Yemen on June 21, according to a report from the Ansurallah-allied Saba news agency. The dead included five women and two children in bombing attacks on Saada and Marib provinces.

Forces opposed to the Ansurallah reported that they beat back an assault by the Houthis and their allies in the southern city of Dhalea on June 21 in fierce battles that left 17 Ansurallah fighters

and two locals dead. (Times of Malta, June 22)

In the southern port city of Aden, four local people died in clashes. Residents living in Aden said the Saudi-GCC coalition delivered artillery, including mortar batteries, to anti-Ansurallah militias.

Along with these attacks are ongoing al-Qaeda provocations against areas controlled by Ansurallah forces and their allies in the military who are still loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

A series of car bombings targeting Ansurallah forces has escalated over the recent period. The Associated Press reported an "Islamic State-claimed car bomb exploded outside a mosque in Yemen's capital [June 20], killing at least two people and wounding six amid the country's raging civil war, authorities said. The bomb targeted the Qabat al-Mahdi mosque in Sanaa's old city, where Shiite rebels known as Houthis and others pray, security officials said. The Islamic State group claimed the attack on a Twitter account associated with the extremists, saying it targeted Shiite Houthis, who the Sunni extremists view as heretics." (June 21)

Attacks on Shiite mosques have occurred in the capital of Sanaa in Yemen as well as in eastern Saudi Arabia. In response, the Ansurallah have taken the war into Saudi Arabia, attacking military bases and border checkpoints.

Press TV also reported that the war is being taken to the imperialist-aligned forces: "In response to Saudi aggression against Yemen, Yemeni forces, backed by popular committees, targeted Riyadh's

military bases in the southwestern Saudi province of Jizan, inflicting losses on the Saudi military equipment in Jizan and capturing three military bases there."

Washington still labels Iran as a threat

These developments took place during the same week the State Department issued a report still charging Iran with supporting "terrorism," despite a recent agreement involving Tehran's nuclear program. Such an analysis indicates that hostilities toward Tehran will continue and even escalate over the next year.

The Obama administration says publicly that it is willing to hold talks with current leaders in Iran, but hostility persists on the ground in the region.

Although it appears that the U.S. and Iran have a common adversary — the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria — the State Department claims that Iran's role in Iraq risks escalating divisions based upon sectarian interests. In addition, Washington is bombing Syria under the guise of combating ISIS, yet it is committed to overthrowing the government of President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus.

The Obama administration report covers 2014 but shows that its hostility toward Iran continues to the present. Developments in Yemen illustrate that U.S. imperialism regards Tehran as an obstacle to its strategic objectives in the Middle East.

Until imperialism is defeated in the Middle East, the ruling classes in the U.S. and Europe will continue to divide and conquer the people of the region. □

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

No more Dylann Roofs!

The senseless and unspeakable massacre of nine Black people, ranging in ages from 26 to 87, in an historic church in Charleston, S.C., on June 17 is yet another grim reminder that racism, rooted in white supremacist ideology, is alive and well in the United States. This massacre should put to rest once and for all the false notion that the 2008 election of the first African-American president, Barack Obama, ushered in a post-racial society.

The unprecedented epidemic of police killings of Black and Brown people, especially youth, is the most glaring refutation of this illusion.

Dylann Roof, the fascistic 21-year-old terrorist who worships the colonial regimes of apartheid South Africa and Rhodesia — now Zimbabwe — was never a “lone wolf,” despite the corporate media’s portrayal. Racists like him are not born; they are socialized by their environment.

Like some other unemployed white workers, he caved in to white supremacist ideas that people of color, especially Black people, are to blame for whites not having a job or an education, and for other social ills suffered under capitalism.

While this racist propaganda emanates directly from terror groups like the Ku Klux Klan, League of the South, American Freedom Party, Council of Conservative Citizens and others, it mainly serves the interests of the majority white bosses and bankers. The capitalist class fears that anti-racist solidarity will strengthen all working-class nationalities to smash capitalism. It consciously seeks to divide and conquer by promoting racism, sexism, anti-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-queer bigotry and the criminalization of working-class immigrants.

Similar white supremacist groups based in Europe, like the Jobbik Party and Golden Dawn, are spewing extreme racist and anti-Semitic views to blame immigrants from Africa and the Middle East as well as Jewish people for the austerity crisis.

As the eight-year-long capitalist economic crisis of no jobs and austerity continues to deepen its tentacles across the globe, building anti-racist solidarity becomes more and more decisive.

A hopeful sign is that white youth, many of whom were politicized during the Occupy movement beginning in 2011, have now joined ranks with the Black Lives Matter, anti-police upsurge, led by Black women and Black transwomen.

The massacre of the Charleston 9 — Rev. Clementa Pinckney, Cynthia Hurd, Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Tywanza Sanders, Ethel Lance, Susie Jackson, Rev. Daniel Simmons, Depayne Middleton-Doctor and Myra Thompson — has revitalized the struggle against the Confederate flag, which still flies on the grounds of the state Capitol in Columbia. Just 15 years ago, 50,000 mostly Black people demonstrated in Columbia against this symbol of slavery and bigotry.

Workers World applauds the 2,000-person “Take Down the Flag” protest that took place in Columbia three days after the massacre. The majority of those attending were white. And in other cities, Confederate flags were burned in solidarity protests to demand justice for the martyred Charleston 9. “Black Lives Matter” has been spray painted on Confederate statues.

These massive protests are what has forced right-wing politicians, including South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, to publicly come out against the flag. For the same reason, Walmart, one of the largest low-wage

conglomerates worldwide, announced it was removing merchandise with Confederate symbols from its stores. Amazon, Sears, eBay and other corporations were forced to remove these offensive symbols.

However, from the police killings of Michael Brown, Shantel Davis, Tamir Rice and Walter Scott to the racist vigilante murders of Trayvon Martin and the Charleston 9, it cannot be left to the Black community to fight racist violence in isolation. It will take more than just sympathy with the victims and survivors of racist violence to counter political reaction. All progressive formations — from the unions to organizations of women, LGBTQ activists, students, environmentalists, social justice, faith-based and anti-war advocates and others — must develop concrete anti-racist solidarity with the Black community and other people of color. This will signal a giant step forward in bringing down capitalism, which thrives on racism, poverty and war. No more Dylann Roofs! □

Lugansk communist:

‘We fight first and foremost for peace’

By Greg Butterfield

Excerpts from a Workers World interview with Ekaterina Popova, a leader of the Communist Party, Lugansk Regional Committee in the Lugansk People’s Republic. Popova is a founding member of the Forum of Communist, Socialist, Workers, Environmental and Anti-Fascist Forces. She helped to organize the Donbass International Forum titled “Anti-Fascism, Internationalism, Solidarity” held on May 8 in Alchevsk.

Popova was born in a small town in the Donetsk region of the Ukraine when it was part of the USSR. In kindergarten, Vladimir Lenin’s portraits were still on the wall and the children studied the cultures of the other Soviet republics.

“I had time to get an old Soviet school uniform and a badge with the image of a young Lenin, but in the year I was supposed to become a Pioneer, the Pioneers stopped taking new members.” The Soviet Union had collapsed. At first taken in by anti-communist propaganda, Popova explained her path: “The words of corrupt politicians and media don’t conform with the reality of people’s lives. Sooner or later everyone realizes that. Eventually I understood.”

While still a university student, Popova joined the Lenin Communist Youth Union of Ukraine and then the Communist Party of Ukraine. “One teacher later told me: “The victory of socialism in our country will not be achieved by those who remember the Soviet Union, but by the generation that was born and grew up under capitalism. Because socialism is not nostalgia for the past, [but] the choice of those fed up to the limit with the capitalist world.”

“The main cause of the Donbass uprising in spring 2014,” she said, “was the reaction of residents of Eastern Ukraine to what took place in Kiev. The people of the Lugansk and Donetsk regions did not want to live in a country of victorious fascism.” Referring to the terrible events of May 2014, she continued: “We did not want to burn alive like the Odessans in the House of Trade Unions, did not want

Charleston

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

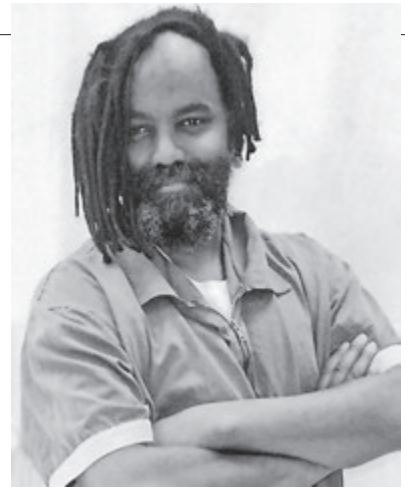
Printed from a June 22 audio commentary posted on prisonradio.org.

A young white man, barely at the age of his majority, walks into Charleston’s most storied Black church, and before he leaves, a new history is written.

Attending the Wednesday night [June 17] Bible study, he sits for nearly an hour, but his mind isn’t on the life of Jesus nor his disciples. It’s on murder, mass murder. When the door shuts behind him, nine Black souls, elders mostly, had been slain, Bibles in hand.

The man, or boy more than man really, hadn’t come to learn about religion, for he had a belief, white supremacy, or the profound hatred of Black people.

White supremacy is the mother’s milk of Charleston, of South Carolina, of the South, of America. For surely as slavery funded and built America, the underlying principle was the devaluation, exploitation and oppression of Black life. It’s the only thing that makes the church massacre in Charleston even remotely intelligible.



Nine Black people were sacrificed to the blind idol of white supremacy for the same reason that thousands of Black men and women were lynched on American elms and pines — as sacrifices to an idea to perpetuate a system of economic injustice.

Dylann Roof, the 21-year-old accused of this massacre, had no friends to speak of; no place to stay other than an associate’s couch; no job; and a tenuous relationship with his parents. Isolated, alienated, alone in the world, his sole remaining possession was his whiteness, the only thing that gave his existence meaning. That was the energy that fueled the massacre in Charleston, South Carolina.

It now sits like an incubus in the American soul, seething hatred and fear, waiting for more Black lives to consume. □



visiting groups of neo-Nazis to smash our monuments and mock our history.

“The communists have always been on the side of working people. We do not divide the people of Ukraine into Russians and Ukrainians. We recognize only the division between rich and poor, fascists and anti-fascists.

“Before the war, we were sure that the crisis could be solved by political means, through negotiations. But unfortunately, Kiev did not want to hear the voice of Donbass. When the war started, we did everything possible to alleviate the plight of the population suffering from the fighting. We helped with the delivery of humanitarian goods, and our members continued to work in the municipal councils of towns and villages of the region.

“Our comrades who found themselves in parts of Lugansk controlled by the Ukrainian army likewise did their utmost to protect the people. Many communists were not only accused of separatism, but also physically massacred, tortured, illegally held in custody.

“And every day of the war, on both sides of the border that divides the Lugansk region, the communists fought first and foremost for peace.

“Today there are three urgent problems facing the people of Lugansk and Donetsk that can only be solved with the active intervention of the international community.

“The first problem is the cessation of all hostilities by Ukraine in the Donbass region. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian side constantly violates the Minsk cease-fire agreement.

“The second problem is the blockade of the territory of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions not under the control of the Ukrainian army, resulting in hundreds of thousands of people experiencing enormous difficulties in purchasing food and medicine.

“The third problem is the Ukrainian government’s failure to fulfill its obligations regarding social payments and benefits guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine, including pensions, to resi-

dents of Donbass.

“Without solving these three problems, the residents of Donbass are doomed to starvation and extinction. That’s why it was so important for us to hold this solidarity forum, which outlined specific steps to provide real, effective assistance to Donbass.

“I think the international forum will go down in the history of our region because it’s the first such event in our land. And I think it is very important and significant that it was organized by communists.

“The forum gave new hope to residents of Donbass. People have seen that they are not alone in their struggle — the workers of the world support them.

“In addition to the organizations participating in the forum, we hope other political parties, social movements and independent activists who stand in solidarity with the residents of the Donbass, but for whatever reason could not take part in the forum on May 8, will join to put international pressure on the Ukrainian government to force it to comply with its peace commitments, [in] dissemination of reliable information on the implementation of international agreements and post-war reconstruction in the Donbass, organizing solidarity campaigns with the Donbass, [and] public events on the processes taking place in Ukraine.

“All the ordeals which the Lugansk region has passed through showed that the communists will fight for justice, for building a better, fair society, for the triumph of humanism and democracy, for the victory of socialism.

“Let’s be honest: In a sense, Lugansk and Donetsk are objects rather than subjects of large-scale international geopolitical processes. Do the leading international players want a socialist Donbass? I think the answer to this question is obvious.

“But this doesn’t mean that we do not have a chance or that we should stop fighting for the victory of our ideas. Our task is to do everything possible to ensure the triumphant march of socialism all over the world starts with Donbass.” □

Black and Brown unity in Alabama

By Minnie Bruce Pratt
Columbiana and Gadsden, Ala.

“Forward ever, backward never! Not one step back!” shouted over 100 people in Columbiana, Ala., on the morning of June 20 at the first annual march for restoration of voting rights. The Alabama NAACP and the Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice called the action.

The Black and Brown unity crowd was protesting the U.S. Supreme Court strike-down of part of the 1965 Voting Rights Act last year, as well as the growing right-wing assault on voting access in the U.S. Speakers made clear these attacks are racist in intent. One said, “The Klan doesn’t wear white robes anymore. They wear black robes and they are in the courthouse.”

Columbiana is the county seat of rural Shelby County, now a “white-flight” suburb of Birmingham complete with McMansions, horse farms and up-scale housing developments with names like “Old Ivy.”

Its all-white Board of County Commissioners won the suit to gut the Voting Rights Act by removing Section 4, which had mandated that states with a history of racist discrimination in voting must have any voting law change OK’d by the federal government.

Marchers saw the attack on voting rights as an attempt to wipe out hard-won victories of the Black Civil Rights Movement, known worldwide through the Selma struggle, only 60 miles to the south.

NAACP Shelby County President Rev. Kenneth Dukes had stated previously: “Shelby County has become the new Selma. Not because of the brutality. But because we’re still here fighting for the same things, fighting the same battle.” Dukes is a bus driver for the Montevallo school district.



WW PHOTO: MINNIE BRUCE PRATT

Black and Brown unity at Voting Rights March, Shelby County, Ala.

Ben Monterrosa, of the California-based, Latino/a-focused *Mi Familia Vota*, thanked all those who had “fought the fight” for many years for voter rights. He stressed: “We can not depend on the courts or elected officials — but on ourselves. Strength in unity!” Other speakers emphasized the importance of wresting back local community control of decisions about education, health care and jobs.

As the march wound through the tiny town to the courthouse on a street lined with police cars, we sang civil rights protest songs updated to “Ain’t gonna let the Supreme Court turn us around” and “We shall overcome — today.” Marchers included American Federation of Government Employees members; the Montgomery Mu Nu alumni chapter of the traditionally Black men’s fraternity Omega Psi Phi; representatives from the traditionally Black Alabama Education Association; NAACP Women in Network members; and officers from Birmingham,

Calera, Jemison, Montevallo, Troy and elsewhere.

ICE out of Alabama!

That afternoon, 90 miles north in Gadsden, over 50 people protested in front of the Etowah County Jail/ICE Detention Center. The demand was “No more cages in Alabama!” The county has a contract with U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement to jail more than 300 men detained because of their immigration status.

The protest, “Chant down the walls,” was part of a series of concerts and demonstrations at detention centers begun in Los Angeles by the National Day Laborer Organizing Network. On the parking lot in front of the jail, *Los Jornaleros del Norte* (Day Laborers of the North), part of NDLO, played traditional Mexican ballads about worker struggles as well as spirit-lifting salsa.

On this blazing hot afternoon, protesters sang and called out to the incarcerated

men in spite of the phalanx of police in front of the fortress-like building. Caroline Earhart, a member of the Huntsville Visitation Committee, held up a sign with the names of those who are now her friends inside the jail, and was greeted by thank-you signs in one high-up window: “Caroline, thank you from Robelto.”

The men have come from all over the world and all over the U.S.; some have been jailed for many years. At the Detention Center they live in extreme social isolation, in conditions among the worst in the U.S., including no access to exercise facilities, recreation or educational programs, according to Detention Watch Network. In addition to DWN, groups participating were the Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice, Southerners on New Ground and Birmingham Quaker meeting members. The Adelante Worker Center near Birmingham called the protest.

Kenyan citizen and former Etowah detainee Sylvester Owino spoke at the rally, saying: “I spent nine years in immigration detention before finally winning my release in March. I am coming back to Alabama to let other detainees know that they are not alone, and we all must keep fighting. I also want the public to know more about the abuses that go on inside the Etowah Detention Center and the way those of us caught up in the immigration detention system are treated as less than human.”

As recently as 2013, Gadsden was counted as one of the 10 poorest cities in the U.S., but the County Jail/Detention Center stands out on the aging street as impressively new and modern.

The name of the street where the jail was built underlines how racism buttresses the U.S. prison system, both governmental and for-profit. The Etowah Detention Center is located on Forrest Avenue — named for Nathan Bedford Forrest, founder of the white supremacist Ku Klux Klan after the U.S. Civil War. □

The massacre and police brutality

Continued from page 7

oppressed peoples in the country in 1822. It was brutally thwarted, and the leaders, including Vesey, were tortured and hanged. Racist whites burned down the church. Black churches were banned in 1834. The slave masters’ religion justified their institution of slavery, while enslaved people’s beliefs spoke to them of the righteous cause to win freedom by any means necessary. The idolization of white supremacists and the history of struggle coexist — one officially accepted by the powers that be, the other begrudgingly allowed.

The June 17 violence is not isolated. It can’t be divorced from police brutality, not from South Carolina’s fatal police shooting of Walter Scott on April 4, nor from a state trooper’s shooting of Levar Jones on Oct. 24, 2014 — and not from oppression in general. Some will say it is an isolated act, with reactionary politicians condemning this mass murder and the assassination of Rev. Clementa Pinckney, a state senator, who introduced anti-police brutality legislation.

The repressive state and the media propagate racist views of Black people. The capitalist system has profited from racism through mass incarceration, including prison construction, exploiting prison labor and operating industries surrounding prisons. Localities also raise revenue through oppressing Black people as in Ferguson, Mo.

Finance capital profits from this oppression and from destroying the safety net. The campaign against social programs is a racist one, whipping up a myth of Black “overuse of benefits.” This isn’t true, but if it were, so what?

U.S. capitalism grew from the free labor of African peoples, the stealing of Indigenous peoples’ land, and extracting surplus value from the labor of oppressed and white workers over centuries. Social safety net benefits are a pittance of what we are owed.

Dylann Roof got his inspiration from a racist society. Massacres in Sand Creek, Colo., Greenwood in Tulsa, Okla., Rosewood, Fla., and Wilmington and Greensboro, N.C., are as American as apple pie. The media help spread the hatred, as in Baltimore, where coverage whipped up bigoted whites who yelled racist taunts at people protesting Freddie Grey’s murder. Meanwhile, the media disregard the oppressive living conditions that propelled rebellions in Ferguson and Baltimore.

The answer to racist violence, systemic racism and white supremacy is struggle — against fascist terrorists like Dylann Roof, austerity and capitalism itself. We must support Charleston’s Black community, raise up the struggle to politically disarm racists and neofascists, and relieve them of their weaponry. We must continue to fight state repression and war and, ultimately, to overturn the repressive, white-supremacist capitalist system. □

Monthly protests continue

Wayne Jones, another Black victim of police

By Travis Boothe
Martinsburg, W.Va.

On June 12, roughly 80 community members and activists converged on downtown Martinsburg, W.Va., to protest the racist and brutal murder of local resident Wayne Jones. Jones, who was Black, was shot in cold blood by five members of the Martinsburg police force on March 13, 2013. There have been ongoing protests since then.

The police managed not only to shoot him twice with a Taser but also beat him ruthlessly before unleashing a hailstorm of 23 bullets into him, the first entering his skull. Upon questioning, the police stated that they suspected Jones had a knife. Naturally, not a single knife was ever produced.

In fact, there was not a single warrant for Jones’ arrest, nor did he have a single felony to his name. What justification could be given for this use of violence and terror?

Jones was a person of integrity and kindness, choosing to volunteer time to serve his community in many functions,

such as working at the local free clinic. He was an avid reader, choosing to spend a large portion of his time reading at the local bookstore, just a few buildings down from where he would be gunned down.

The local community demands the resignation of key municipal officials, citing a failure to maintain objectivity in dealing with the police case. Activists, still angry and disillusioned with a racist system that fails to produce justice for such an outrageous crime, vowed to continue to march and protest every month until justice has been achieved.

Among the community, there was a full understanding that what occurred in Martinsburg is not simply an isolated incident, but rather part of a full-on epidemic, like the killings of Freddie Grey in Baltimore and Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. Their shouts of “Black Lives Matter!” and “Justice for Wayne Jones!” sent a clear message to the Martinsburg police. We cannot allow such a blatant disregard for human life to continue to occur. We must shut this racist system down! □



Estatua de Denmark Vesey en Charleston, S.C.

Ecuador debate Ley de Herencias

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Una vez más la derecha nacional con apoyo internacional arremete contra otro país latinoamericano que busca, como muchos otros en la región, un cambio en beneficio de las masas más excluidas. Esta vez le ha tocado al Ecuador.

Antes de que el presidente ecuatoriano Rafael Correa saliera rumbo a Europa para asistir a la II Cumbre CELAC-UE, sometió el proyecto de Ley de Redistribución de la Riqueza conocida como Ley de Herencias, al Congreso donde será discutida por 30 días antes de ser aprobada. Ésta nueva ley aumentaría los tributos a quienes hereden sobre \$35.400 dólares en patrimonio. Actualmente, los herederos pagan gravamen a partir de los \$68.000, bajo una ley que data de 1927.

El proyecto, que está avalado por el partido de Correa, Alianza PAÍS, tiene como propósito garantizar el cobro justo de impuestos y que los ricos paguen lo debido. Es un impuesto progresivo, donde se aplicaría un porcentaje que va desde 2,5 por ciento, hasta un 77,5 por ciento según el monto de la herencia.

Dice el mandatario: “Por supuesto, mete el dedo en la llaga, la excesiva concentración de la riqueza, pero calculamos que eso afectará a menos del 2 por ciento de la población. De esta minoría absoluta son los dueños de los medios de comunicación, son los dueños del poder económico y hoy tenemos graves disturbios en Ecuador” (teleSUR)

Según un estudio citado por el presidente Correa, “Tres de cada mil ecuatorianos reciben una herencia cada año y tres de cada 100.000 reciben un patri-

monio mayor a 50.000 dólares. Entre 2010 y 2014 solo cinco ecuatorianos, de los 16 millones de habitantes, heredaron más de un millón de dólares”.

Este proyecto ha despertado a la derecha opositora que no solo quiere derrocar el proyecto de ley, sino que pretende derrocar al gobierno de Correa y el programa de la llamada Revolución Ciudadana de Alianza PAÍS. Tienen también la vista fija en las elecciones presidenciales del 2017 y aspiran a debilitar el apoyo de las masas al gobierno actual.

Desde el lunes 8 de junio, y parece que aprovechando la ausencia del Primer Mandatario, la extrema derecha, junto con los medios de comunicación corporativos nacionales e internacionales ha desatado una ola de protestas principalmente en Quito pero también en otras ciudades ecuatorianas en contra del gobierno. Han tratado de montar una campaña de desinformación al pueblo aduciendo que la nueva ley le afectaría a todo el pueblo, incluyendo a la clase media y a la clase trabajadora. Desinformación que el gobierno ha tratado de combatir explicando la ley en detalle.

En ocasiones, esta turba derechista, de políticos de derecha, empresarios y gente rica, se ha tornado violenta, agrediendo a manifestantes pro gobierno que también han salido a las calles para defender su proceso. Una fuerza policial que se interpone entre los dos bandos, ha evitado más confrontaciones directas.

La Revolución Ciudadana, como todo proceso político, tiene contradicciones, errores y fortalezas. Sin embargo, el movimiento progresista a nivel internacional debe tener claras las prioridades.

Es el pueblo quien es el soberano y quien tiene que decidir por sí solo cuál será su destino. Y hasta ahora, las masas están defendiendo el proceso de la Revolución Ciudadana. Un retroceso, sería una ganancia para la derecha y los planes imperialistas liderados por Estados Unidos.

No sorprende un artículo sobre el canciller del Ecuador Ricardo Patiño, publicado en Cubadebate el 6 de junio, justo antes del comienzo de las protestas opositoras el 8 de junio. En él, se responde a unas alegaciones enviadas el 4 de junio en un tuit por Roberta Jacobson, la subsecretaria de Estado adjunta de EUA para Latinoamérica. El tuit lee “Llamado al gob. de #Ecuador para que respete la libertad de expresión y la #libertaddeprensa como derechos democráticos fundamentales”. (twitter.com/whaastsecty)

Parecería que Jacobson, a nombre del imperio, preparaba sutilmente el escenario que se desarrollaría días después. “Al tachar de “ofensivas” las alegaciones del Gobierno de Washington, el canciller ha indicado que, en lugar de contestarle, el Gobierno de Quito enviará al Departamento de Estado de EUA una documentación que pone de relieve la libertad de expresión en los medios de prensa ecuatorianos”. Agregando que EUA no tiene la moral para una acusación cuando continúa encarcelando en Guantánamo. Dijo que se enviarán miles de copias a todas las víctimas de EUA, incluyendo a víctimas y familiares de aviones teledirigidos, y de la invasión de Irak.

El lunes 15 de junio, el pueblo ecuatoriano asistió masivamente a una concentración frente al palacio de Carondelet en apoyo al gobierno de Rafael Correa quien

había regresado unas horas antes al país. Muestras de apoyo también inundan las diferentes redes sociales.

Más tarde esa misma noche, el presidente Correa se dirigió al pueblo en un mensaje transmitido por televisión informando que retiraría temporalmente el proyecto de Ley de Herencias para evitar más violencia y tener un clima de paz para la visita del Papa Francisco el próximo julio.

Mientras tanto abrirá un debate nacional en todos los sectores sobre el proyecto de ley para aclarar las dudas que puedan existir, sobre todo las que pueda tener el pueblo pobre, dado la enorme campaña de desinformación montada por los medios corporativos de la derecha.

Preguntando “¿se puede llamar democracia cuando menos del dos por ciento de las familias ecuatorianas acumula la riqueza?”, (teleSUR) desafió a la derecha a que si quiere derrocarlo, que lo intenten por los medios establecidos en la constitución, utilizando el referendo revocatorio. Para esto, deberán recoger 1,8 millones de firmas, un 15 por ciento de las/os votantes, ante el Consejo Nacional Electoral.

Según Rolando Segura, enviado especial de teleSUR a Quito, en un reportaje del 19 de junio, dijo que además del número de firmas, “la derecha deberá mostrar ante el órgano electoral (compuesto por 148 organizaciones políticas con plena participación de indígenas, afroecuatorianos, mestizos y movimientos populares) las supuestas fallas de la gestión de Correa y argumentos viables de los errores que pudieran provocar un referendo revocatorio de su mandato”. □

La atrocidad en Charleston:

‘Que este trauma impulse la lucha por la Liberación Negra’

Por Lamont Lilly

Cuando nueve personas indefensas son asesinadas en una iglesia, eso no es un “tiroteo”, es una masacre. Cuando un hombre blanco de 21 años de edad que lleva insignias de odio racista en su chaqueta, entra en una iglesia y asesina nueve personas negras indefensas, no lo llamaría un “crimen de odio” por un “lobo solitario”. Es un ataque terrorista por un supremacista blanco.

Desgraciadamente, la siguiente descripción es exactamente lo que ocurrió el 17 de junio en Charleston, Carolina del Sur, entre las 8:00-9:00 p.m.

Según testigos e informes recientes, el pistolero de 21 años, Dylann Roof, entró a la Iglesia Emanuel A.M.E. alrededor de las 8:00 de la noche. Se llamó a la policía local alrededor de las 9:00 pm. De acuerdo con las/os testigos y las/os supervivientes, Roof recargó su arma cinco veces. Ocho personas murieron en el lugar, incluyendo el pastor de la iglesia, el reverendo Clementa C. Pinckney.

Después de una búsqueda de 14 horas, Roof fue finalmente arrestado en Shelby-Carolina del Norte, a unas pocas millas al oeste de Charlotte-Carolina del Norte, lugar donde había sido asesinado

Jonathan Ferrell por la policía.

Echándole más leña al fuego, la bandera en el jardín del Capitolio de Carolina del Sur - la bandera de la Confederación - está ahora ondeando a media asta para “conmemorar” las nueve víctimas, muertas a manos de un terrorista racista. Este gesto no es nada menos que una bofetada en la cara a la dignidad humana - es como echarle ácido a una herida abierta de injusticia y desigualdad.

No necesitamos tener una conversación sobre la raza. Necesitamos tener una conversación sobre la revolución y la Liberación Negra. Hay una diferencia política muy importante. Irónicamente, la histórica Iglesia Emanuel AME de Charleston tiene una historia profundamente arraigada en la lucha por la Liberación Negra y la resistencia del pueblo.

En 1822, Denmark Vesey, uno de los fundadores de la iglesia, fue investigado y capturado por las autoridades de esclavos por su plan para organizar una revuelta de esclavos allí en Charleston. Después de ser traicionado por un informante, Vesey y otros 36 descendientes de africanos esclavizados fueron ahorcados.

Por esa participación, la iglesia fue quemada hasta sus cimientos por autoridades locales y vigilantes. Los Códigos

Negros y las leyes Jim Crow fueron promulgados rápidamente para restringir todas las asambleas de esclavos, incluyendo las que se celebraran en todas las iglesias del estado. Se impusieron Pases de Viajeros, mientras que la patrulla de esclavos se convirtió en la primera forma organizada y pagada de fuerza policial en los Estados Unidos. Las/os negros fueron literalmente obligados a practicar su culto clandestinamente en esa iglesia por más de 30 años, hasta 1865. El sentido común dice que no se ondea una “bandera confederada” a media asta para conmemorar una historia como esta.

Cualquiera que conozca la historia del Sur de los EUA está bien familiarizada/o con el cruel legado del estado de Carolina del Sur. Charleston fue en un momento el puerto más grande e importante de esclavos/os en América del Norte.

Esta misma ciudad y municipio local son directamente responsables de la muerte brutal de Walter Scott hace apenas unos meses. Un policía de Charleston le disparó ocho veces por la espalda. Solo porque ese asesinato fue capturado en video pudo la verdad llegar a las masas.

Cuando las/os jóvenes negros de las comunidades oprimidas de Fergu-

son-Misuri; Baltimore-Maryland y Oakland-California decidieron levantarse valientemente y se rebelaron contra la brutalidad policial, el racismo y el sistema capitalista, fueron llamados “malhechores”, “alborotadores” y “rufianes”. Por alguna razón, Dylann Roof, un muy bien entrenado supremacista blanco, está siendo pintado por los medios corporativos como un “lobo solitario” que debía estar “enfermo mentalmente”. Estos medios han fracasado en abordar las cuestiones básicas, y tampoco han utilizado el lenguaje correcto.

Ahora es el momento para que la Iglesia Negra vuelva a sus raíces de resistencia organizada, de la lucha por la libertad y la liberación. Mientras recordamos también el atentado en 1963 de la Iglesia Bautista de la Calle 16 en Birmingham-Alabama que mató a cuatro niñas, canalicemos esta ira construyendo el movimiento tal y como lo hicieron nuestros antepasados. Hagamos que este dolor nos inspire para reunir nuestras comunidades y organizar cada bloque. Hagamos que este trauma conduzca a una nueva generación para que persiga su libertad y su completa liberación.

¡Que el pueblo se levante contra sus opresores! □