



LGBTQ victory shows Mass struggle wins rights

By Martha Grevatt

June 26 was a day of huge celebrations. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality. Laws defining marriage as “between one man and one woman” came down faster than you could pull down a Confederate flag. The traditional fallback position of Southern segregationists — “states’ rights” — collapsed as lawyers for Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee pleaded desperately to be allowed to keep their bigoted laws.

Ironically, it was Reagan appointee Anthony Kennedy, writing for the 5-4 majority, who stated that “no longer can this liberty be denied.” Two years earlier, Kennedy had argued against striking down the portion of the federal Defense of Marriage Act that left defining marriage to the states. Clearly, this historic ruling — like *Roe v. Wade*, *Brown v. the Board of Education*, and the upholding of the Wagner Act in the year of the sit-downs — was only achieved through militant mass struggle.

This is more than a shift in social status. Couples like Michigan plaintiffs April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse can finally jointly adopt the four children they have been raising together. With two adopted by Jayne and two by April, one mother would have been a “legal stranger” to two of the children if the other died.

Economically, denying the right to marry amounts to paying workers in same-sex relationships less money — a kind of “two-tier” system. More than 1,000 federal benefits are tied to marriage, from getting a tax break to collecting a deceased spouse’s Social Security or veterans’ benefits. There are benefits at the state level, such as receiving a workers’ compensation payment for a spouse killed on the job. Work-related benefits — health insurance, bereavement pay, family and medical leave, etc. — are tied to marital status, or taxed as income in the case of domestic partner benefits.

The marriage fight was for the basic principle of equal pay for equal work. It is a crude, anti-working class formulation to suggest, as some “radicals” in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer movement do, that demanding the right to marry is “assimilationist.” Anyone with a progressive bone in their body should be celebrating with the happy couples.

The struggle is far from over

The marriage victory shows that struggle brings progress. With much more left to fight for, the ruling has buoyed and energized the LGBTQ movement to fight on.

In 2003, the Supreme Court overturned the 1986 *Hardwick* decision that upheld Georgia’s “anti-sodomy” law. No longer could two people of the same sex be arrested for a private intimate act. This was a huge victory but in no way ended LGBTQ oppression.

That is still the case, despite winning the right to marry. Only 19 states prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; three others only ban sexual orientation discrimination. There are still no federal civil rights protections for the LGBTQ community. The scenario of “married on Sunday, fired

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NYC PRIDE MARCH

Tens of thousands of people cheered their support for this Workers World Party banner carried during the June 28 Pride march in New York City.

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Seeking capitulation, regime change Bankers aim to strangle Greece

By Fred Goldstein

June 30 — As we go to press, rumors of a last-minute attempt by the Syriza government in Athens to ask the euro bankers for a third bailout have been rebuffed by German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Whatever the outcome, the fundamentals of the Greek situation will remain unchanged. The bankers of Berlin, Paris, Brussels, Rome and Wall Street are trying to extract blood from the Greek masses.

Tens of thousands of people demonstrated in Athens’ Syntagma Square on June 29 against the terms of the “Troika” — the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank and the European Commission. The demonstrators opposed the continuation of debt slavery imposed on Greece by the bankers of Europe.

After five months of negotiations between the left social-democratic Syriza government and the representatives of 18 other European governments, the Troika,

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End all forms of transphobia!



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Thousands rallied and marched throughout the Village June 26 for the 11th annual Trans Day of Action organized by TransJustice of the Audre Lorde Project, a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two-Spirit, Trans and Gender Non-Conforming People of Color Center for Community Organizing.

STOP THE WAR ON BLACK AMERICA!

- ⑦ Bigots torch Black churches
- ⑦ Down with Confederate flag 
- ⑦ Solidarity with Charleston
- ⑥ Right-wing terrorism

DEFEND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS!

- ③ Jennicet Gutiérrez disrupts Obama
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⑪ Haitians forced out of Dominican Republic
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Los Angeles PRIDE forum

Special to Workers World
Los Angeles



WW PHOTOS: MAGGIE VASCASSENNO

Rebecka Jackson, Shelley Ettinger, John Parker

“Liberation and solidarity in the age of the Black Lives Matter movement” was the topic of discussion during a June 13 Workers World Party Pride Month forum held in Los Angeles at the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice featuring Shelley Ettinger, Rebecka Jackson and John Parker.

Ettinger spoke about being in solidarity with those fighting for equal marriage rights while struggling around issues that impact the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities even more, like the Black Lives Matter movement. She gave the statistics of violence and murder against Black trans women and stressed that this type of solidarity was essential to the struggle to end this capitalist system, which is necessary to end all oppression by the repressive state.

Ettinger, author of the novel “Vera’s Will,” also attended a local book signing at the Book Soup bookstore during her Los Angeles visit.

Rebecka Jackson and John Parker gave reports on the “Peoples Tribunal Against Police Terror” in Baltimore on June 6, which was a resounding success with almost 200 people participating. The tribunal was organized by the Baltimore Peoples Power Assembly and the Baltimore Southern Christian Leadership Conference in response to the police murder of Freddie Grey in April and the further

police racist terror that included a military mobilization against the community.

Jackson reported on the proposals taken up by the tribunal and the speakers, who included family members of victims of police murder, and emphasized the importance of the tribunal and PPA in building the struggle against police brutality. She proposed that the Los Angeles Workers Assembly and other organizations working at the Harriet Tubman Center build a similar tribunal for Los Angeles.

Jackson, who works in the film industry, also spoke of plans to go back to Baltimore to work on a documentary about the community’s uprising after the murder of Freddie Grey. Parker, along with Jackson, helped with outreach for the Peoples Power Assembly in building the Baltimore tribunal. He played a video he had made documenting the housing situation in Baltimore with interviews of courageous youth doing cop watch programs to protect the community. Parker emphasized that these youth again demonstrate why the working class, especially the most oppressed, are the most determined and capable fighters against state violence and ultimately against the system of capitalism. □

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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

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. □

WORKERS WORLD PARTY

Who we are & what we’re fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

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Trans immigrant Jennicet Gutiérrez challenges Obama

By Teresa Gutiérrez

How should the progressive or the immigrant rights movement respond to the Democratic Party's policies and actions on immigration?

Jenicet Gutiérrez has shown how.

On June 24, Gutiérrez, a Mexican transgender woman, boldly and courageously took center stage at the White House when she called out her concerns on migrant detentions so that President Barack Obama could hear her.

Gutiérrez was attending a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer Pride event hosted by President Obama and Vice President Joe Biden at the White House. The people in attendance were LGBTQ advocates and activists, many of whom surely stood in front of the Supreme Court two days later to celebrate the victory of same-sex marriage rights.

As Obama began to deliver his speech, Gutiérrez interrupted him.

She declared: "President Obama, release all LGBTQ immigrants from detention. ... I am tired of the violence we're facing."

What ensued from the audience was unfortunate. Gutiérrez was booed and heckled by LGBTQ people who yelled out to Obama that they loved him and agreed with the President in having her taken out by security. Obama responded to her that she should be quiet because she was in his

house.

But Jennicet Gutiérrez did the right thing.

Many mainstream LGBTQ groups subsequently derided Gutiérrez for her disruption. But groups invited to the White House are by nature going to be adverse to such a disruption as they are social-democratic groups thoroughly tied to the Democratic Party. Most mainstream LGBTQ groups, unfortunately, remain loyal to the Democrats.

But the Democratic Party should be exposed for its complicity on immigration. It should also be taken to task for stalling for decades for even such a basic civil right as same-sex marriage.

Detention is big business

Despite some modest efforts, even by Obama himself and many Latino/a and African-American Democrats, their efforts on immigrant rights have been far from enough.

In fact, Obama has deported more people under his administration than any other U.S. president. Furthermore, because of their ties to the capitalist system, the Democrats are incapable of addressing the crisis of migration in a real way.

Not a single policy on immigration, for example, has dealt with the root causes of migration. These include pro-U.S. corporate economic policies, state-sponsored

repression in countries like Mexico, Honduras and Haiti, and Pentagon intervention abroad. As long as these policies hold, workers will be forced to migrate to the U.S.

In the U.S., the detention of immigrant workers continues unabated and is part of a cruel and unusual punishment.

"The detention of immigrants has become big business and a source of profit," said Silky Shah, co-director of Detention Watch Network, in a newly issued report. "Local quotas with private contractors and the infrastructure of detention itself have driven this market: all at a huge expense to families detained arbitrarily and to taxpayers footing the bill."

In fact, detaining entire migrant families has become an increasingly alarming practice. More and more families, including babies and children, are being held with their parents in detention cen-

ters.

For trans immigrants, detention can easily become a horror, as Gutiérrez pointed out.

During an interview with Fox Latino after her heroic White House action, Gutiérrez was asked to talk about the abuse she is fighting against. "I spoke to a trans woman from Guatemala who was detained for seven months in a Santa Ana [Calif.] ICE [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement] detention center and she was in so much pain [from] ... the inhumane treatment that she was receiving ... and this is the kind of consciousness I wanted to bring out to the President. These stories are not uncommon, yet we hardly hear of them in the media."

Gutiérrez, who is undocumented, is a founding member of "Familia: TQLM" [Trans Queer Liberation Movement], an immigrant rights organization. □



Jenicet Gutiérrez disrupting President Obama.



San Francisco

Anti-racist dyke contingent

A contingent of people in the Dyke March in San Francisco, June 28, called out to "Take back the Dyke March!" Holding signs supporting "Black Lives Matter" and declaring "Dykes Against White Supremacy," the organizers said they were "protesting the systematic displacement of our dyke and trans communities."

On the Facebook event page, they also said: "We are protesting the daily violence against QTPOC [queer trans people of color] and in solidarity with the #blacklivesmatter movement. We are protesting the growing amount of straight cis men [men whose gender identity that agrees with their birth sex assignment] who disrespect our radical queer space with their

cameras while being inclusive of all queer identified people."

The contingent added an extra leg to the march, breaking through police lines to march down along the "original" route past the Women's Building and the Elbo Room, and later rejoining the rest of the march.

— Story and photo by Terri Kay

LGBTQ victory shows mass struggle wins rights

Continued from page 1

on Monday" is not unrealistic. Imagine celebrating your nuptials on the weekend, and then reporting your new marital status to your boss the next day. This revelation could cost you your job. A married couple moving in together could face housing discrimination. Discrimination in accommodations could sour a honeymoon. Surveys show that this discrimination still goes on.

Right-wing legislators, hatefully attempting to undermine same-sex marriage, are passing misnamed "religious freedom" bills to let businesses and social service agencies discriminate against those who can finally marry.

Anti-trans bigotry is pervasive. Having to check a little box marked "M" or "F" becomes complicated when one's gender identity is not the same as one's sex assigned at birth. Most states will not change a birth certificate unless a person has fully completed sex reassignment surgery, and five states will not make the change even then. And what about people

who identify as neither male nor female? Checking the box is required in many facets of everyday life: applying for a job, college applications, seeing a doctor, getting a driver's license, registering to vote — and getting a marriage license.

According to the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 72 percent of hate crimes against LGBTQ people are committed against trans women; 90 percent of those are against trans women of color. Trans women of color are still being murdered — by bigots, by the state and as a consequence of working in the sex industry. They are often victimized a second time by the capitalist media, as in the case of Cemina Dove. After her mutilated body was found in a pool of water, the Cleveland Plain Dealer newspaper disregarded her chosen pronouns, even referring to the deceased body as "it."

Take a vow to fight racism and capitalism

The burdens of bigotry are compounded by the fact that under capitalism no one is guaranteed housing, health care

or an education — let alone a job with vacation or one that even pays enough to afford a honeymoon. Millions of LGBTQ people are struggling to get by. Even with the tax advantages that marriage affords, the court ruling will not lift a single low-wage worker out of poverty, or solve the high unemployment problem in majority African-American cities like Detroit.

A marriage license will not protect a Black gay man from being the next Michael Brown or Trayvon Martin; the child of a Black lesbian could be the next Tamir Rice. Undocumented LGBTQ immigrants — as Jennicet Gutiérrez courageously exposed — are as vulnerable as before.

There is a crisis facing all working-class and oppressed people in this country: the genocidal assault on the African-American nation. We are seeing an exponential spike in police murders; driving, walking and breathing while Black are dangerous activities. The "school-to-prison pipeline" is a new form of enslavement that profits the prison-industrial complex. Foreclosures have depleted the collective

wealth of Black people. Attacks on voting rights, life-threatening water shutoffs, gentrification and the list goes on.

But the ruling classes never plan for resistance. They always plan on the oppressed acquiescing to repression and terror. The capitalists haven't learned from Denmark Vesey, whose church was the site of that horrific massacre in Charleston. People fight back. "Black Lives Matter" isn't just a statement. It's a mass movement. It's a rebellion!

We cannot allow this movement to be isolated. We cannot allow the capitalist class to use racism to keep us all divided and exploited.

Same-sex couples everywhere are saying their vows of love. But would we have come this far, to a victory unimaginable just 10 years ago, without the solidarity of others? If we are committed to real liberation, let us take a solemn vow. We will put our bodies on the line in solidarity with the Black nation, with Latino/a, Asian, Native and Arab people, and with every nation on the planet oppressed by capitalism and imperialism. Until every last vestige of oppression and exploitation is gone: Stonewall means fight back! □

Baltimore

Water shutoff moratorium needed

By David Card
Baltimore

Baltimore is a city that has been in the headlines in recent weeks because of the Black Lives Matter movement and the righteous rebellion against police terror in the wake of the murder of Freddie Grey. However, what has been overshadowed since then is the continuing crisis of water shutoffs in the city.

Beginning in early April, the Baltimore City Department of Public Works began shutting off water to properties that were behind on their water bills. This list includes about 25,000 properties and \$40 million in unpaid water bills. While the debt may seem considerable to some, it

was discovered that roughly \$15 million of it was caused by fewer than 400 commercial properties.

It was also discovered that none of those commercial properties, some owing millions of dollars, had their water service turned off, while many poor and working people were forced to lose their water supply.

In response to this human rights crisis, the People's Power Assembly began a campaign to end the water shutoffs. Several caravans were set up to travel the city and organize the most impacted communities to fight back.

One of the major demands of the PPA was that the City Council hold hearings and enact a moratorium on any further

shutoffs of residential properties until the commercial properties had paid their bills. Hundreds of petition signatures were collected demanding an end to the shutoffs.

In early June, City Councilmember Carl Stokes introduced such a resolution that would put a moratorium on residential shutoffs until the commercial accounts had been paid. Hearings were scheduled for June 24.

On the day of the hearings, the People's Power Assembly and other Baltimore activists held a press conference and picket outside of City Hall.

Inside during the hearings, protesters urged support for Stokes' resolution, while also demanding that more be done to help the most economically oppressed sections

of Baltimore. Activists raised the connection of water affordability to the ongoing problem of gentrification.

As a proposed partial solution to the water crisis in Baltimore, the PPA brought the council's attention to a recent bill passed by the Philadelphia City Council that ties the price of water to the income of the resident.

Such a water affordability system would be a strong first step to ensuring access to water for everyone. It would also place the majority of the financial burden of paying for the water system on the wealthy and those most able to pay.

With the current level of technological development, clean water is a fundamental human right which should be freely accessible and available to all. □

Support fired Liberato workers:

'Their victory is for all of us!'

At a busy working-class corner — 183rd Street and Jerome Avenue — in the Bronx, N.Y., a loud chant is heard weekly at the entrance to Liberato Restaurant: "¡Liberato, escucha! ¡Estamos en la lucha!" (Liberato, listen! We are in struggle!) from chant leader Mahoma Lopez, organizer for the Laundry Workers Center. This chant took on more meaning June 22 after the June 20-21 firings by Liberato boss Edwin Roman of three of his workers.

Since April 2014, these now fired workers have been among 14 workers — primarily immigrants — demanding at least

a minimum wage. These workers have also demanded an end to the sexual harassment and unsafe working conditions by management at a food establishment where a 12-hour work day is common. The fired workers are active with the Laundry Workers Center, which was asked to support these low-wage workers. Since the firings, picket lines have doubled in size at the two Bronx Liberato sites.

The Liberato workers and the LWC have also used the courts to attack this wage theft. A July 27th court date has been set to challenge Liberato. Recently, Roman attempted to resolve the matter

out of court. His offer was found to be a bogus financial settlement that the workers found unreasonably low and unacceptable.

Meanwhile, Liberato's superexploitation has attracted larger picket lines as support grows for the fired workers. Expressing this fact as he spoke from the June 22 picket line was Larry Holmes, a leader of the People's Power Assembly, stating: "Liberato's boss feels he can do anything. His workers refuse to be silent and to be isolated. They send a powerful



June 22 protest.

message. We are proud to be supportive of the Laundry Workers Center, the hottest, most dynamic fighter in NYC!"

Holmes ended with the words: "The fight of Liberato workers — this struggle — is for every worker! Their victory is for all of us!"

— Story and photo by Anne Pruden



Pam Africa with leaders of the Madison-based Young Gifted and Black coalition and Rockford FIST at the Memorial Union at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, June 26.

Pam Africa on Wisconsin tour

By Workers World Milwaukee Bureau

Pam Africa, minister of confrontation for MOVE and chairperson of the uncompromising International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, toured Milwaukee and Madison, Wis., June 26-27, speaking and visiting with a variety of progressive and revolutionary activists.

During the tour, called "Conversations with Pam Africa: The MOVE 9, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Political Prisoners & State Violence," she spoke at the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America's national conference, the Nation of Islam Mosque No. 3 in Milwaukee, and a Young Gifted and Black coalition-sponsored event in Madison. Other stops included a Wisconsin Coalition to Normalize Relations with Cuba event for the Pastors For Peace caravan to Cuba and an interview with the people's radio station Riverwest Radio.

Everywhere Africa went, she declared her solidarity with those fighting all forms of austerity, including union busting in Wisconsin and worldwide. She made special mention of youth and students fighting against all forms of capitalist state violence, including racist police terror, starvation and imperialist wars. Africa's appeals for Mumia Abu-Jamal

were met with renewed vigor to fight for the life of this internationally renowned political prisoner, who the state is presently trying to murder through medical neglect.

At every tour stop Africa also described in detail the unrelenting war of Pennsylvania state officials against the MOVE organization, including the frame-up of the MOVE 9 in 1978, the suspicious deaths of two MOVE activists in prison and the bombing of the MOVE home on May 13, 1985, that killed 11 men, women and children. City officials allowed the fire from the bomb to rage, burning down 62 Black-owned homes in the immediate neighborhood.

A variety of organizations supported the tour. Sponsors Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement and the youth group Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) sent delegations from the Rockford, Ill., chapter to all tour events. Organizations such as the the Latin American Solidarity Committee and the Madison chapter of Socialist Alternative assisted in publicizing the tour through social media.

At the Nation Of Islam event, the speakers' panel included representatives from the Committee to Stop FBI Repression and Freedom Road Socialist Organization (Fightback), who raised the case of Palestinian freedom fighter Ramea Odeh. Other speakers included the Nation of Islam, the Pan African Revolutionary Socialist Party, Rockford FIST, Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement, Wisconsin Jobs Now and Workers World Party. □

Durham WWP launches political film series

Fifty community members were present as the Durham branch of Workers World Party launched the Liberation Sunday Film Series, a free monthly event consisting of a film screening and political discussion hosted by the Cuban Revolution Restaurant & Bar.

This month's film was "Cointelpro 101," a documentary on the FBI's counterintelligence program, which brutally repressed the movements for Puerto Rican independence, Native American sovereignty, Chicano/Mexicano and Black liberation, as well as the anti-Vietnam War movement and struggles for economic justice.

This government program of repression was carried out in secret for years by means of infiltration by informants, framing of political activists for crimes

they never committed, resulting in decades of incarceration, and often through outright assassinations.

— Patrick Snipes

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

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Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance LeiLani Dowell

The Struggle for Socialism Is Key Monica Moorehead

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Available at online and other bookstores.



COVER GRAPHIC BY SAHU BARRON

Detroit

Report confirms root of foreclosure crisis

By Jerry Goldberg
Detroit

A powerful report on Detroit's foreclosure crisis was published in the Detroit News June 25-27. (See tinyurl.com/ncymc9f.) The articles were the product of months of investigation by reporters Joel Kurth and Christine McDonald. They document what Workers World newspaper has stated for years: The banks are responsible for the destruction of Detroit's neighborhoods and the loss of 240,000 residents since 2005.

McDonald and Kurth set out the following facts:

1. More than one in three Detroit homes have been foreclosed in the past 10 years. Since 2005, 139,699 of Detroit's 384,672 homes have been foreclosed because of mortgage defaults or unpaid taxes.

2. There have been 65,000 mortgage foreclosures since 2005. This doesn't include so-called zombie foreclosures in which lenders initiated foreclosure, and may have evicted tenants, but abandoned proceedings before they were complete. Zombie foreclosures were more prevalent in Detroit than anywhere else in the United States.

3. Fifty-six percent of all mortgage foreclosures are now blighted properties or have been foreclosed again for nonpayment of taxes; 13,000 homes are slated for demolition at a projected cost of \$195 million.

4. Of the 84,000 properties on the city's blight list, 76 percent are foreclosures.

5. Homes sold for \$22,000 on average in Detroit in 2014, down 73 percent from the peak before the housing crash and the lowest among 50 big cities. Detroit's decline in property values cost homeowners an estimated \$1.3 billion in lost personal wealth.

6. Detroit's population fell by nearly 240,000 residents from 2000 to 2010, with the bulk of the population loss occurring after 2005.

How did the crisis happen?

Kurth and McDonald show how mass foreclosures in Detroit were a direct product of massive subprime lending in the city. Of all mortgages written in 2005 in Detroit, 68 percent were subprime, compared to 27 percent statewide and 24 percent in the U.S.

Subprime loans have interest rates at least 3 percent above benchmarks established by government and various lending indexes. In Detroit, however, the interest rates were far higher. Subprime loans were usually written with low initial teaser rates.

These low interest rates would soon adjust upward to an unaffordable payment for homeowners, leading to mortgage defaults and foreclosures. Many studies have documented how people of color and women were targeted for these predatory subprime loans.

In Detroit, which formerly enjoyed the highest rate of African-American homeownership of any U.S. city, \$4 billion in subprime loans were written in the four years before the 2008 housing and financial crash. In Detroit, 78 percent of foreclosed homes financed through subprime loans are now in poor condition or tax foreclosed.

All banks and lenders were active participants in the subprime market because the rate of profit on subprime loans when sold to investors was eight times greater than the comparable rate on traditional fixed-rate loans.

Federal government and tax foreclosures

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, government corporations operated by the Fed-

eral Housing Finance Agency, are listed as the foreclosing entity on 7,700 homes in Detroit, of which 46 percent and 58 percent are respectively blighted or abandoned.

The Federal Housing Authority was listed as the foreclosing entity on 2,453 homes in Detroit, of which half are blighted or abandoned. Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the FHA stand behind the banks that actually foreclose on homes, with the government then paying the banks the full value of the inflated mortgage after foreclosure.

McDonald and Kurth's series demonstrates the relationship between the mortgage foreclosures occurring in 2005 to 2010 and the property tax foreclosures that predominate today. Many of the banks sold homes after foreclosure at prices tens of thousands of dollars below the loan values and thousands of dollars below the values upon which the property taxes were assessed.

The purchasers of the homes, such as investors who purchased blocks of Detroit homes for a very minimal price, never paid the property taxes on these homes. Therefore many homes that originally were subject to mortgage foreclosures are now subject to property tax foreclosures as well. In the meantime, the homes remained vacant and were vandalized, and now are blighted and slated for demolition.

Had the banks worked with homeowners to modify their subprime mortgage loans, or reduced the amounts owed to the true value of the homes, the homeowners and their families would have been able to stay in their homes. The spiral of foreclosures and blight could have been avoided. Rational planning, however, never occurs to finance capital, whose only interest is maximizing profit with complete disregard to the human consequences.

Coalition demands moratorium

The Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs first raised the demand for a moratorium or halt on all foreclosures and foreclosure-related evictions in 2007, when the crisis was just starting to unfold.

A coalition member got invited to a televised town hall meeting on Michigan's economic crisis with liberal Democratic Governor Jennifer Granholm. The Moratorium NOW! representative explained to Granholm that under Michigan law she could declare a state of emergency and impose a moratorium to halt all foreclosures.

He told the governor about the 1930s' Michigan foreclosure moratorium that lasted for five years during the Depression. Foreclosures were banned then and courts were mandated to set payments based on families' ability to pay. The Michigan moratorium law and similar moratoria in 25 other states were upheld as constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Gov. Granholm's response to putting a moratorium on foreclosures: "The banks wouldn't like it." A bill calling for a two-year moratorium was then introduced by State Senator Hansen Clarke, but it was stonewalled in the Legislature by Republicans and Democrats alike.

The coalition has stated many times: Had a moratorium on foreclosures been implemented in 2007, 139,000 Detroit homes would have avoided foreclosure, the population would still be close to 1

million, and the homeownership rate in the city would not have plunged from the highest to the lowest in the country. Instead, as McDonald and Kurth point out, Detroit and Michigan political leaders refused to take on the banks in any way, shape or form.

The people's lost wealth

Kurth and McDonald's series estimated that the foreclosure epidemic caused by the banks' predatory lending practices has cost the city of Detroit approximately \$500 million, with \$195 million to tear down vacant homes and \$300 million in lost property tax revenue.

But that is a fraction of the actual cost.

Detroit's decline in property values cost Detroiters an estimated \$1.3 billion in lost personal wealth. When 240,000 residents are driven out of the city and the wealth of the remaining residents is decimated, their income tax dollars and the money they spend on purchases within the city are lost as well.

In addition, the same banks which caused the destruction of Detroit's neighborhoods then placed the city itself in predatory bond deals, often tied to interest rate swaps. The city lost approximately \$1 billion to the banks in these swaps, as has been outlined previously in Workers World.

Today, approximately 20,000 occupied Detroit homes are facing tax foreclosure, with 25,000 other families facing de facto eviction through water shutoffs.

The state, under reactionary Gov. Rick Snyder, is sitting on \$200 million in unspent federal Helping Michigan's Hardest-Hit Homeowners Funds — funding earmarked to help distressed homeowners stay in their homes. Rather than release these funds to pay off delinquent property tax and water bills, this money is being diverted to Detroit's "blight task force" to tear down homes instead.

The blight task force is run by Dan Gilbert, owner of Quicken Loans, a lender which has been charged by the Justice Department with fraudulent lending in connection with FHA loans and the responsible party for over 500 blighted homes resulting from Quicken Loan foreclosures.

Thus, the banks are being paid to tear down the blight they caused by their predatory lending policies, with funds that are supposed to be dedicated to preserving homeownership.

Take it from the banks, not the people

The Moratorium NOW! Coalition is demanding that there be an immediate moratorium on all tax foreclosures and water shutoffs in Detroit and that the federal Hardest-Hit Homeowners Funds be released and used for their stated purpose — to keep families in their homes by paying off delinquent tax and water bills.

Moratorium NOW! is also demanding the banks pay reparations to the city of Detroit for the destruction they caused, in the form of a \$2 billion payment which can be used to implement a jobs program putting young people to work rebuilding homes and neighborhoods throughout the city.

The coalition is asking activists from throughout the U.S. to come to Detroit this fall for a massive demonstration to Stop the Foreclosures, Stop the Water Shutoffs, and Save and Rebuild This African-American City.

For more information, go to moratorium-mi.org, email moratorium@moratorium-mi.org, or call 313-680-5508. □

SCOTUS ruling

New opening to battle housing bias

By John Catalinotto

The Supreme Court decided by a 5-4 vote on June 25 that housing discrimination doesn't have to be intentional to be illegal. This means that plaintiffs who believe that either government or private housing policies have discriminated against them in obtaining housing no longer have to prove that the discrimination was intentional. They still have to prove that the policies themselves caused the bias and that the result was discriminatory.

While this is an extremely limited decision with respect to eliminating bias in housing and it certainly does nothing to address the need poor people have to find decent housing, the opposite decision would have reinforced the power that rental and real estate agencies have to impose discrimination. There is an existing Fair Housing Act, passed in 1968, whose ostensible aim was to establish ground rules for more integrated housing. The court decision upheld the intent of this law.

Laws affecting housing are needed to eliminate the ability of landlords and real estate monopolies to deny housing to people based on racism, xenophobia or other forms of bias. A general solution to the housing crisis — and it is a crisis for all people without substantial incomes — requires unlimited availability of inexpensive housing, accessibility to good public schools in all neighborhoods and abundant jobs available within reasonable commuting distance.

The decision is not going to solve this general problem. Its progressive content is that it gives a tool to those who have been denied housing in cases where bias is disguised as a neutral rule, or where policies have a discriminatory impact but it is almost impossible to find proof that discrimination by a landlord, rental agency or housing authority was deliberate or intentional.

The ruling strengthens the ability of renters and homeowners to seek redress for discriminatory practices on the part of landlords, owners or housing monopolies. □

U.S. terrorism comes from the right

By Teresa Gutierrez

The capitalist media would have the people of this country believe that the main terrorist threat in the United States comes from terrorist attacks carried out by Muslims.

But a June 16 op-ed piece in the New York Times revealed that “headlines can mislead. The main terrorist threat in the United States is not from violent Muslim

extremists, but from right-wing extremists. Just ask the police.”

This usually buried fact comes from a 2014 survey conducted by the writers of the opinion piece with 382 law enforcement agencies of the Police Executive Research Forum.

The police themselves document that it is not Muslims who are the big threat, but right-wing anti-government extremists, the overwhelming majority of them

white men. Over 70 percent of the police surveyed report that anti-government extremism is one of the top three terrorist threats in their jurisdiction. In addition, only 3 percent of the police surveyed identified the threat from Muslim extremists as severe.

The study continued: “An officer from a large metropolitan area said that ‘militias, neo-Nazis and sovereign citizens’ are the biggest threat we face in regard to extremism. One officer explained that he ranked the right-wing threat higher because ‘it is an emerging threat that we don’t have as good of a grip on, even with our intelligence unit, as we do with the Al Shabab/Al Qaeda issue, which we have been dealing with for some time.’ An officer on the West Coast explained that the ‘sovereign citizen’ anti-government threat has ‘really taken off,’ whereas terrorism by American Muslims is something ‘we just haven’t experienced yet.’”

So there you have it, straight from the horse’s mouth: the real terrorists are not that racist image of Muslims promoted by Hollywood but rather white, racist, right-wing men.

This opinion piece is limited, however. It ignores the other blatant terrorists in our midst: the unbridled wrath of police in the oppressed communities, for example, who wage war with impunity against people of color. And then there is the terrorism of the Pentagon that has for decades carried out horrific crimes against the peoples of the world, also mostly with impunity.

However, this well-documented exposé about the terrorists in our midst is important to know about in the wake of the heinous racist assassination of nine Black people carried out by Dylann Roof in Charleston, S.C.

After Roof was captured, information came out about his worldview. He had posted a 2,000-word manifesto on his website where he identified himself as a “white nationalist.” He stated that he was “truly awakened” to his beliefs after reading material from the Council of Conservative Citizens, an infamous racist so-called hate group.

“I have no choice,” he wrote. “Someone has to have the bravery to take it to the real world, and I guess that has to be me.”

Roof is one of those extremists that the June op-ed article refers to, one of those white men shaped by racist websites that more and more promote a “white nationalist” agenda.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, which for decades has monitored and exposed “hate groups” and other extremists throughout the U.S., reports that “currently, there are 784 known hate groups operating across the country, including neo-Nazis, Klansmen, white nationalists, neo-Confederates, racist skinheads, border vigilantes and others.”

The SPLC, however, erroneously throws Black separatist groups into that mix. This is false, as the reaction of the oppressed to their oppressors is never equal to that of racism and white supremacy.

Nonetheless, “since 2000,” the SPLC states, “the number of hate groups has increased by 30 percent.”

They write that “this surge has been fueled by anger and fear over the nation’s ailing economy, an influx of nonwhite immigrants, and the diminishing white majority, as symbolized by the election of the nation’s first African-American president.”

The SPLC has determined that there is actually a “powerful resurgence of the anti-government Patriot movement” that was behind the Oklahoma City bombing. According to their studies, “the number of Patriot groups, including armed militias, skyrocketed following the election of President Obama in 2008 — rising 813 percent, from 149 groups in 2008 to an all-time high of 1,360 in 2012. The number fell to 874 in 2014.”

Dylan Roof’s horrible racist crime did not occur in a vacuum. A significant portion of the super-rich in this country are very fearful of the rising popular movements against low wages, racism, sexism, anti-LGBTQ bigotry and police brutality. They are throwing huge amounts of money behind right-wing politicians and media whose agenda is divide and conquer. Some of it trickles down to the far-right extremists and also feeds their paranoia and hate.

The source of this fear, instability and hatred — capitalism — must be abolished in order to root out the right-wing ilk. □

Billionaire racist rhetoric trumped

By Teresa Gutierrez

Billionaire mogul Donald Trump announced his bid for the 2016 U.S. presidential elections on June 15. Normally it would not be worth the cost of the paper this is printed on to mention this.

But Trump’s comments on immigration were so incendiary, racist and over the top that they launched a firestorm of protest.

And rightly so.

Trump delivered an outlandish and even stupid presidential announcement filled with right-wing rhetoric and erroneous, inflammatory comments on everything from China to President Barack Obama to the economy.

Only in the U.S., where money yields power more than intelligence or integrity, can someone so ridiculous fill the airwaves.

CNN’s Twitter feed was filled with outrage. Many people demanded to know why CNN was covering it.

CNN commentators responded with, “Well, that’s free speech.”

Of course if Workers World or some other left party held a presidential announcement, that would not fall under “free speech coverage.”

Trump stated: “The U.S. has become a dumping ground for everybody else’s problems. ... When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best. ... They’re sending people that have lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists.”

Immediately, Latino/a celebrity types and a slew of responses from the masses filled cyberspace. Wonderful “corridos” (Mexican ballads) were created criticizing Trump, denunciations were made, and a genuine backlash ensued.

Even representatives of the Mexican government, no friends of the Mexican people, were forced to comment.

Mexican Foreign Secretary José Antonio Meade called Trump “ignorant and prejudiced.” Interior Minister Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong said, “The remarks by Donald Trump seem prejudicial and absurd.” (Washington Post, June 17)

Unfortunately, the Mexican government, with total and absolute U.S. complicity, continues to deny justice to the families of 43 students from Ayotzinapa who disappeared six months ago, in a burning example of the tide of repression sweeping Mexico.

The protest to Trump’s remarks included the cancellation of the Miss Universe Pageant, to be aired on July 12, by the major Spanish language network Univision. Trump is part owner of the Miss Universe organization.

NBC, which airs the Trump-hosted “Celebrity Apprentice,” was forced to announce that “Trump’s opinions do not

represent those of NBC.” (deadline.com, June 25)

A Latino immigrant launched a petition campaign calling on NBC to cancel the Miss USA and Miss Universe pageants as well as “Celebrity Apprentice.” In just four days, the petition gained more than 200,000 signatures. On June 29, NBC announced it was cutting all ties with Trump, dropping both pageants and Trump as host of “Celebrity Apprentice.” (variety.com, June 29)

A tremendous show of solidarity was exhibited from Venezuela. Telesur English reported: “President Nicolás Maduro showed his solidarity with the Mexican people and lashed back at Donald Trump for his racist remarks. ... ‘I totally reject the statements of Donald Trump. Crook. Thief. How can you attack our brothers from Mexico, who have already been persecuted and exploited enough by your people. ...

“Venezuela raises its voice in defense of the people of Mexico, offended by this magnate, this ‘pelucón,’” said Maduro, using a local colloquialism that loosely translates as ‘elitist snob.’ ‘What indignation,’ he added. ‘Whoever messes with Mexico, messes with Venezuela.’” (June 19)

That is the future: a kind of leadership and solidarity that benefits the worldwide working class, instead of the racism and rhetoric of the U.S. ruling elite.

The Trumps of the world will soon see the end of the day when they can spew their garbage anywhere. □

Detroiters protest ICE fatal shooting

Members of the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality, Black Lives Matter Detroit, the Moratorium Now! Coalition, Michigan United and Washtenaw to Ferguson demonstrated on June 26 to demand full transparency in the fatal shooting of 20-year-old Terrance Kellom.

Kellom was killed on April 27 by Mitchell Quinn, an agent of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, who was part of a federal fugitive task force. The force entered Kellom’s home to apprehend him for an alleged armed robbery of a pizza parlor. Quinn’s excuse is that Kellom was wielding a hammer, an allegation his family denies.

The Kellom family lawyer claims the youth was shot several times, including once in the back. Community and family members want answers; they want to see the results of the Detroit police investigation and the autopsy report, which has been sealed. For now, ICE refuses to release its report on Kellom’s death.

In all likelihood there is collusion between all of these parties to construct a cover-up in another racist killing by the state. The murder of Kellom is one of three



police killings in Detroit this year. In addition, on June 24 two Black children were killed when a suspect lost control of his vehicle during a high-speed police chase.

The June 26 protest was held outside the offices of ICE. Demonstrators called for “no more killings, no more raids” by ICE targeting immigrants and resulting

in deportations as well for the killing of Kellom and others.

ICE was involved in the 2010 slaughter of Imam Luqman Ameen Abdullah, who was shot 20 times by federal agents. When his body was recovered, he was handcuffed.

— Story and photo by Martha Grevatt

As Black churches burn, where are the feds?

By Deirdre Griswold

The capitalist state in the U.S. coexists cozily with right-wing terrorists. This vile fact has once again been confirmed in the aftermath of the murder spree by racist terrorist Dylann Roof.

As of June 29, six Black churches in the South have either been destroyed or suffered severe damage from fires since Charleston. At least three are confirmed to have been caused by arson, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center. The loss to the people of these communities comes to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Worse, the torchings are a threat of further violence to a people whose painful history at the hands of white exploiters still resonates so strongly.

The first burning deemed by fire marshals to be arson destroyed the College Hills Seventh Day Adventist Church in Knoxville, Tenn., on June 22. The Knoxville fire department said the arsonist set multiple fires on the church's property. The church's van was also burned.

The very next day, a fire in the sanctuary of God's Power Church of Christ in

Macon, Ga., was also blamed on arson.

And the day after that, a fire was deliberately set at the Briar Creek Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., that destroyed an education wing meant to house a summer program for children. The gymnasium and sanctuary burned, causing an estimated \$250,000 in damage.

That same week, three other Southern Black churches — in Tennessee, Florida and South Carolina — also suffered fires, although two may have had natural causes. Investigations are continuing.

After what happened in Charleston, S.C., there can be little doubt that the arson fires were set by white supremacists, whose outpourings of hate in print and on the Internet call again and again for violence against people of color, using at best flimsily disguised language and at worst the vilest and most degrading terms.

One might think that mass murder of the type that happened in Charleston would immediately lead to arrests of those advocating race war against Black people. We have seen many examples in recent years of elaborate sting operations set up by the FBI and local police authorities to

ensnare Black militants on charges of plotting terrorist acts — which government agents had encouraged and facilitated.

But just as with the murders of the three civil rights workers in 1964 — James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner — by members of the Ku Klux Klan, the authorities have not intervened to stop such attacks, even though it is logical to assume that, in this day and age of wide surveillance, they have knowledge of them.

Such action by the state, however, would not fit in with its primary purpose — which is to facilitate the extraction of capitalist profits from the labor of millions of workers by protecting the status quo. And this status quo is becoming increasingly unbearable for millions, as the gap grows between the very rich and the rest of us. So the state becomes increasingly draconian, with mass incarceration, especially of Black and Brown people, and the training and equipping of local police forces for military-style combat — against the oppressed, not the racist terrorists.

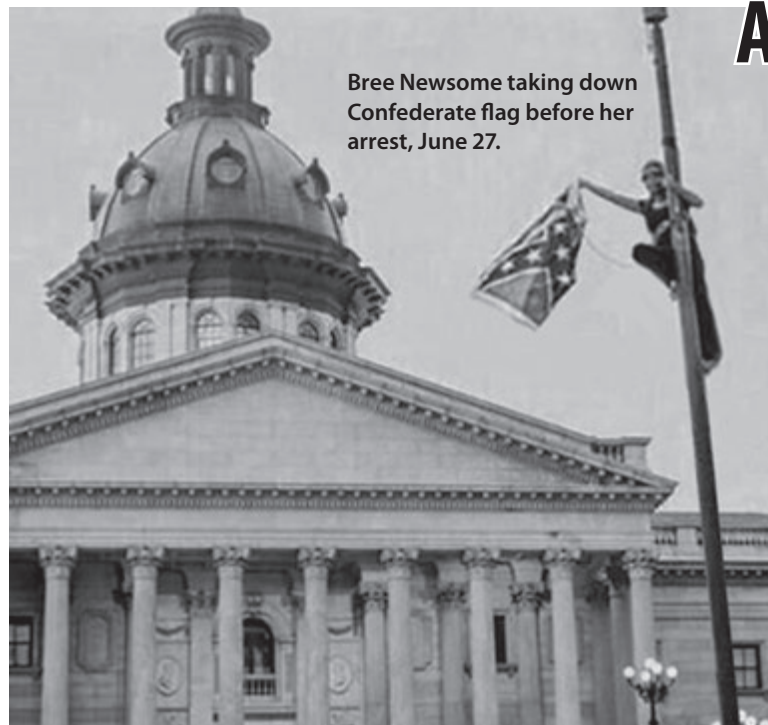
There is another aftermath of Charleston, however. It is the encouraging sight



of Black and white together demanding the Confederate flag and statues be removed. Southern whites are coming into the streets to stand with their Black neighbors, friends and co-workers. Unlike the racists, who mostly remain in the shadows while carrying out their fascistic acts, the Black and white people fighting racism are visible and vocal — and inspiring others with their courage.

Courage is something glaringly lacking in the bigots. Who but a coward would choose a Black church to carry out a murderous rampage? Roof knew no one there would be armed. And those who torched other Black churches did so in the dead of night.

But it is not just personal courage that these fascist elements lack. Their whole social outlook is based on craven capitulation to the capitalist ruling class. They fulminate against those who are the most oppressed, blaming them for all the ills of society — while doing the dirty work for those who lord it over the vast majority. □



Bree Newsome taking down Confederate flag before her arrest, June 27.

An eyewitness report from Columbia, S.C.

By Bill Starr
Columbia, S.C.

June 27 — As Bree Newsome climbed the pole in the early morning of June 27, James Tyson stood at the bottom and helped her take down the pro-slavery Confederate flag in front of the state Capitol here. A group of supporters had come with them from North Carolina. Newsome, who is Black, and Tyson, who is white, were arrested. They are environmental activists from North Carolina who have done a lot of protests involving scaling buildings. It was a cool operation, done with rappelling equipment. They are charged with defacing state property and face a possible three years in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

Both were released on bond; Michael Moore had offered to post it. The state put the flag back

up within an hour, in time for a pro-Confederate flag rally at 11 a.m. When I got there, a small group of anti-flag protesters were holding their ground on the monument, surrounded by about 50 Confederate flag wavers. But soon more anti-racists arrived and were able to occupy the center.

A young Black man arrived with a big U.S. flag and people cheered; that's the irony of the situation down here. But shortly afterwards, a young Black woman arrived with the Black Liberation flag, which provoked some great discussion.

By mid-afternoon militant Black youth and white supporters were surrounding the monument, while the Confederate flag supporters were driving around the Capitol with the secessionist rag on their vehicles. The overwhelming sentiment from those driving and walking by, Black and white, was to take the rag down. □

Standing with Charleston massacre victims

A protest and speakout against the Charleston, S.C., terrorist massacre and systemic racism was held in downtown Detroit on June 26. Called by the Moratorium NOW! Coalition, activists lined Woodward Avenue during the busy afternoon rush hour as Detroit Tigers Major League Baseball fans were pouring into nearby Comerica Park. Many drivers and passersby signaled their support. Pictured right on the microphone is Tachae Davis of the youth organization FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together), who called for an end to the killing of transgender women of color and all racist violence.

In Philadelphia, led by marchers holding signs bearing the names and photos of the nine Black men and women murdered in Charleston, S.C., a couple hundred protesters walked about four miles, despite rain, in outrage against violence by racists both in and out of uniform. Following a rally at the corner of Broad Street and Erie Avenue in the heart of North Philadelphia, marchers chanted “Justice for the 9 in

Charleston!” and handed out fliers to bystanders, some of whom joined the walk.

At Temple University, “Austerity to Prosperity” attendees at the U.S. Social Forum joined the march, increasing the number of banners, signs and participants. The protest ended across the street from City Hall at the statue of this city's most notoriously racist mayor, Frank Rizzo, where people with the by now wind-and-rain-damaged posters of the nine South Carolina victims lined up and Philly Coalition for Racial, Economic and Legal Justice member Erica Mines read each one of their names.

Kris Hamel and Joe Piette contributed to this article.



Philadelphia

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE



Detroit

WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL

Seeking capitulation, regime change

Bankers aim to strangle Greece

Continued from page 1

which calls the shots, has remained adamant. The financial vultures have demanded further austerity measures. Earlier versions of these measures — pension cuts, health care cuts, wage cuts, layoffs and tax increases — have already brought about mass suffering in Greece on a society-wide scale.

And now the imperialist bankers have cut off funds to Greece, forcing it to close its own banks for at least a week. The goal of the Troika is to bring about capitulation at the negotiating table as well as to accomplish regime change. If there is economic chaos, the Syriza government could be blamed. But if the government capitulates and enforces concessions, it can also fall. So, either way, the bankers want to teach Syriza and parties in other countries not to dare to challenge austerity.

Origins of vicious bankers' debt cycle

The bankers have justified their austerity demands on the grounds that such measures will pave the way for economic growth and an end to the economic crisis. This fantasy was dreamed up by the bankers to make their greed and lust for profit seem as if they sought benefits for Greece.

The Greek people have already had austerity. Instead of growth they got a Great Depression in which the economy shrank by 25 percent, the unemployment rate rose to 27 percent and youth unemployment to 50 percent, with 50 percent of Greeks living at the poverty level or below, and 25 percent of businesses having gone bankrupt — all to pay the bankers their pound of flesh.

The so-called Greek bailout began in 2010. Bankers and investors had earlier bought Greek government bonds to make a profit on the interest they would receive. When the economic crisis hit in 2008, it caused a decline in government revenue. In order to pay back the bankers and other bondholders, the capitalist Greek government had to borrow more money from bankers — to pay back bankers.

Soon the financiers cut off Greek borrowing in the bond market, forcing the government to ask for a bailout in 2010. It was the bailout conditions imposed by the Troika — the IMF, the ECB and the EC — that led to the economic catastrophe that struck the Greek working class and the middle class.

The Troika lent the Greek government 110 billion euro. But by 2012 the government, due to high interest payments and economic collapse, was still deep in debt. It had to ask the bankers for another bailout of 130 billion euro — which came with more austerity conditions.

So the Greek governments of the last five years have been imposing austerity measures on the masses in order to pay back interest on loans. The high payback on the loans created more debt. This required more borrowing, which in turn



June 29 anti-austerity protest in Athens.

required more payback.

Of all the hundreds of billions that the Greek government borrowed, it is estimated that only about 10 percent of the money ever got to the government to pay for expenses; the other 90 percent went to financial institutions.

Tsipras's partial capitulation not enough for Troika

The Syriza government, led by Alexis Tsipras, has made numerous concessions to the demands of the Troika in the past month. But those concessions were not enough for the bankers. To try to improve the government position, Tsipras has called for a July 5 national referendum on whether or not to accept the Troika's proposals. The referendum is supposed to be a simple "Yes" or "No" vote on the proposals.

The origins of the referendum go back to the breakdown of negotiations on June 23. On June 22, a proposal from Syriza to a Eurogroup summit meeting of ministers was in direct contradiction to Tsipras' post-election pledges to defy the austerity measures and demand debt relief, as well as in opposition to the left wing of his party.

At that meeting Syriza's proposal included 7.9 billion euro in savings to meet the demands of the Troika. Among the concessions were a pledge to end early retirement next year; raising the retirement age to 67 in stages; phasing out supplementary payments to poor pensioners; raising pension contributions by workers to 2 percent; and raising pensioners' health care contributions to 5 percent.

The Troika dismissed any idea of debt relief but promised to "consider it" sometime down the road.

Once the terms of the proposal got back to Athens, a revolt began within Syriza and important members of parliament said they could not support it. But before Syriza could get a chance to reject the concessions put forward by Tsipras — because they went too far — the bankers rejected the proposal because it did not go far enough. Tsipras had to walk out of the

negotiations; there have been none since.

As the deadline of June 30 for a payment of 1.8 billion euro to the IMF approached and the government could clearly not pay it, Tsipras called for the referendum on July 5 to "strengthen his negotiating position."

Referendum vs. leadership

Having a referendum on the austerity terms proposed by the Troika is no doubt an appealing idea. To put the bankers' terms up for a popular vote puts the question out there.

Whatever anyone thinks of Syriza, now that the referendum has been proposed and assuming that it comes off, everyone must campaign for the strongest possible "No" vote. The bankers show their contempt for bourgeois democracy by opposing the referendum.

But there is another side to the story. In the first place, there was already an election against austerity on Jan. 25, and Syriza won that election handily. The popular mandate to oppose austerity has already been given. The Syriza government has been on record both before and after the elections as opposing austerity. It was opposed to the debt and to being forced into onerous anti-working-class concessions.

And there is another danger. All of European and Greek capitalism can start a campaign of fear that could swing the referendum in a "Yes" direction.

The Tsipras wing of Syriza has repeatedly underestimated the resistance of the bankers. It has talked over and over about an "honorable settlement," it pledged to find a compromise, it talked about "our common European home," and so on, ad nauseam.

Instead of taking an adamant stand against the bankers and preparing for battle, the Tsipras leadership has fought this struggle without clear resolve, without any plan and without an aggressive posture toward the bloodthirsty, predatory bankers who have been abusing, oppressing and exploiting the Greek workers and the population in general.

In politics, if you are going to war, you had best be prepared for battle. The Troika was fully prepared, but Syriza was divided and irresolute.

To be sure, the relationship of forces was highly unfavorable to the Greek government. It is impossible to overlook the power of European and U.S. finance capital.

The first thing to be done was to reject the terms or rules of the struggle imposed by the enemy. But Syriza declared in advance its intention to remain with the euro and to come up with a settlement that honored the eurozone.

Even for a capitalist government, such as Syriza is despite its leftist rhetoric, sticking to the eurozone framework dominated by German imperialism is a losing proposition. Not being prepared to break sends a message to the bankers that you have already given in most of the way. After all, if Syriza is determined to remain in an arrangement where Greece has no sovereignty over its own currency and the bankers who are trying to skin it alive are also in charge of its currency, then Syriza has ceded the most favorable terms to the financial predators.

Finance capital and social democracy

The current predicament of the Greek working class is the result of the relationship of forces between the big European powers and U.S. bankers, on the one hand, and Greece, a small imperialist country that is also a semi-colony of Germany and other powers, on the other.

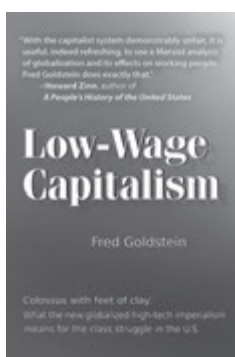
Tsipras's call for a referendum is an abandonment of the responsibility to lead. The Syriza government was elected to fight austerity. That is what it should do — not push its responsibility onto the population. It must also be said that failing to vote "No" in the referendum is also an abandonment of responsibility.

There are many other ways to call out the popular masses to demonstrate support and strengthen your negotiating position. That is what Syriza should have been doing since last January.

Furthermore, it is clear what the Troika's negotiating position is going to be if further negotiations take place over a deal. The bankers will demand capitulation, concessions, hardships for the masses, payoffs for themselves, etc. Everything that has occurred in the last five months shows that the next phase of the struggle calls for defiance, mass mobilization and the willingness to do whatever it takes to break the stranglehold of the bankers.

The struggle so far shows the inherent contradiction of trying to fight finance capital while remaining in a framework defined by and governed by finance capital. This is the inherent contradiction of every left-wing social democracy.

The struggle is far from over, however. The very greed of the bankers has the capability to further destabilize the situation and set off an even bigger and more revolutionary struggle — a struggle which must be directed at Greek capitalism as well as European finance capital. □

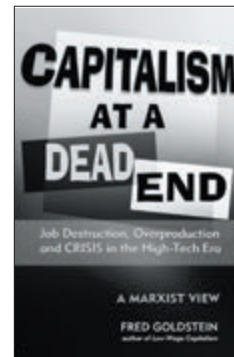


Low-Wage Capitalism describes in sweeping detail the drastic effect on the working class in the United States of new technology and the restructuring of global capitalism in the post-Soviet era. It uses Karl Marx's law of wages and other findings to show that these developments are not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval.



El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

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



Capitalism at a Dead End

Job destruction, overproduction and crisis in the high-tech era

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com

Available at all major online booksellers.

YEMEN

Bombings kill more as hunger, thirst spread

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

Warplanes deployed by the Saudi Arabian monarchy, the Gulf Cooperation Council and their allies, all backed by U.S. imperialism, are continuing the war aimed at regime change in Yemen into the fourth month.

Since March 26 when the bombing of Yemen started, some 2,600 to 4,000 people have died, according to various sources. Telecommunications infrastructure, airports, ports, residential areas, hospitals and power stations have been targeted.

On June 29 Press TV wrote, "Saudi military aircraft conducted attacks against a residential area in Sarwah district of Yemen's central province of Ma'rib. ... Nine members of a family lost their lives and three others sustained injuries. ... Six civilians, among them two women and three children, were also killed as Saudi warplanes struck Shibam Kawkaban district in the western Yemeni province of al-Mahwit. ... Saudi jets carried out over twenty aerial attacks against Sahar and Majz districts of Yemen's northwestern province of Sa'ada."

U.S.-backed forces aim to destroy

On June 28, at least three people, including a child, were also killed when Saudi war planes struck the Fallah district in the northwestern province of Sa'ada and fighter jets pounded a neighborhood in the Saqin district in the same

province, destroying two schools.

The Saudi-GCC backed fugitive and ousted President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi's regime-in-exile announced in late June that there was no need to resume talks after the unsuccessful negotiations in Geneva. After delays in the talks due to obstacles placed on Ansurallah Movement (Houthis) representatives reaching Switzerland, the negotiations failed as a result of the obstructive posture of the Western-allied forces.

Hadi took the position that if he was not reinstated as the leader of the underdeveloped Middle Eastern state, then there was no basis for the cessation of the bombing and ground offensives launched against the Ansurallah as well as civilians in the country. The Ansurallah have taken large sections of Yemen since last year, forcing Hadi to flee to the southern port city of Aden and later to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he remains.

The West and its surrogates present the war as a proxy conflict between Saudi Arabia and GCC on one hand and the Islamic Republic of Iran and their allies, namely the Ansurallah in Yemen, on the other. Efforts by the United Nations to reach a political settlement, for example, by convening the June meeting in Geneva, have led nowhere.

After the talks failed, an Omani plane carrying Houthi delegates back to Saana from Geneva was denied the right to land, since the U.S.-backed Saudi-GCC bombers control the airspace. The plane returned to Muscat, Oman.

At present the U.N., while periodically condemning the airstrikes, has imposed no sanctions against the U.S. and the Saudi-GCC alliance, which is attempting to bomb Yemen into submission. Despite the war being waged for months, the Ansurallah Movement, allied with a coalition of other forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, has largely maintained its positions on the ground.

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's June 29 statement strongly objected to the imperialist-backed-coalition air strike, which severely damaged a U.N. Development Program facility and called for a return to negotiations.

Population conditions worsen

Humanitarian aid groups say that the situation is growing worse every day, with shortages of food, water, medicines and other essential services. Millions of people in Yemen need assistance.

A June 29 statement taken by the relief organization Doctors Without Borders from Jasmin Mohammed Ali, 26, a teacher in the primary school in Qatabah, and her sister Asia Mohammed Ali, 25, provides a glimpse of their daily lives in Qatabah since the Saudi-GCC bombing began.

Ali said, "Because of the ongoing crisis, the school I work in is closed; it has been closed for three months. Recently, the school (which was luckily empty at the time) was affected by the airstrikes as it is close to the central security office which was targeted; all the windows of the school were shattered.

"There isn't any running water anymore in Qataba as the main water facility for the town and the surrounding villages stopped working due to a fuel shortage. We have no water in our house and cannot fill up the tanks either. ... Airstrikes and shelling [are] making us terrified and we can't sleep well." (msf.org)

The U.N. special envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed of Mauritania, warned on June 24 that the war-ravaged nation was one step from widespread famine, where 31 million people are in desperate need of food, water, medicines, clothing, blankets and other basic services.

The fighting is continuing to spread into Saudi Arabia where the Ansurallah and other loyalists are conducting cross-border raids that have killed and injured Riyadh's soldiers and other security forces.

This war remains largely hidden from the U.S. public where the corporate media have deliberately ignored the massive Saudi-GCC aerial bombings and ground operations carried out by militias supported by Riyadh, as well as the role of the Pentagon in engineering the crisis. The State Department claims it wants a peaceful resolution to the war, but continues to rationalize Washington's intelligence coordination and refueling of Saudi-GCC forces.

The assault on Yemen represents yet another failed and deadly war initiated and expanded by successive U.S. administrations whose aim is to control the Middle East at any cost to the population in those states. □

Global warming kills thousands in Asia

By **Chris Fry**

For the last two months, the Indian subcontinent has suffered through the grip of an unprecedented heat wave. Thousands of people have perished in both India and Pakistan. Ramzan Chippa, who runs a volunteer ambulance service in Pakistan, told a reporter: "Most of the bodies we are recovering are people dying in the streets. They're just dropping dead. Graveyards have filled up." (nbcnews.com, June 28)

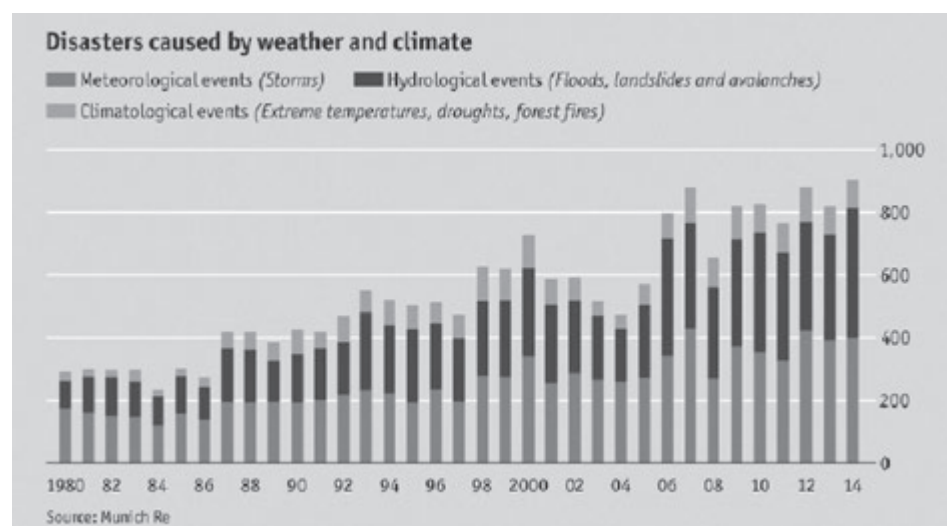
In India, temperatures as high as 117 degrees Fahrenheit caused 2,200 deaths. The Economist magazine of June 27 wrote that "the number of extreme weather and climate-related events is rising. Serious storms have more than doubled in frequency since the early 1980s. Floods and heat waves have more than tripled."

The paper referenced a study published by the Lancet Commission on Health and Climate Change, which suggested that earlier estimates by the World Health Orga-

nization and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change regarding the future effect of global warming on health are undercounts "because they failed to take into account vulnerabilities caused by aging, migration and population growth."

Local scientists point out that other factors in addition to the temperature make this heat wave particularly deadly. "The heat index was higher than the actual temperature because the air pressure was quite low and the humidity was very high in that area," said Muhammad Harif, director of Pakistan's National Weather Forecasting Center. "The low pressure, which is very unusual in the month of June in that part of Pakistan, totally cut off the sea breeze and made the heat unbearably high." (bbc.com, June 26)

Scientists in the region say that the same climate change that has accelerated extreme weather events like floods, droughts, cyclones and wildfires has certainly intensified heat waves. "Warming has occurred, at a country scale, across



most of South Asia over the 20th century and into the 2000s," states a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Struggles have broken out in India and Pakistan, with people demanding that both governments provide more emergency assistance. Local utility company blackouts have prevented relief for many thousands. (tribune.com.pk, June 27)

Capitalism in its early stages was a driving force for technical and industrial development, such as factories, railroads, steamships and so on. This came at a terrible cost, with the slaughter of Indigenous populations, the enslavement of millions of African people and the harsh, brutal exploitation of labor, including child labor, to feed the industrial machines and enrich the capitalist barons.

In the current era of imperialism, with everything dedicated to servicing finance capital and the transnational monopolies, technological development is often throttled back when it comes into conflict with vested interests.

For example, some \$6.4 trillion is spent each year in the global energy markets, most of it on fossil fuels like coal, oil and

natural gas. They have produced the bulk of the carbon dioxide gas emissions that are sharply raising the planet's temperature through the "greenhouse" effect.

Alternative technologies like solar, wind and geothermal energy generators have been around for some time. But the bankers and corporate tycoons who rule over the global economies refuse to allow the mass conversion to those technologies, as it would cut into some of the fabulous profits that come from the current systems.

Simply put, they make far too much money from oil bomb trains, polluting oil wells, fracking and coal strip mining to be moved by the devastating effect this is having on the world and its people.

This leaves the oppressed and workers around the world taking the brunt of climate catastrophes like this terrible heat wave, with even worse to come. While many valiant efforts are being made to mitigate global warming, the fundamental task has to be uprooting this capitalist system based on production for private profit and replacing it with social ownership — socialism — so that economic life can be organized to benefit the health and welfare of the world's people. □

Anti-fascists show solidarity with Charleston

On June 30, an international group of anti-fascists held a flashmob in the Donetsk People's Republic against the Confederate flag and racism, and in memory of the nine African Americans massacred in Charleston, S.C. They included a



U.S. activist of Serbian origin, anti-fascist volunteers from Germany and Russia, and members of Union Borotba (Strug-

gle) of Ukraine and Donbass. The action was attended by local media.

— **Greg Butterfield**

PHOTO: BOROTBA

WORKERS WORLD editorial

Ruling on ACA subsidies

Some 6.4 million people breathed a sigh of relief on June 25. On that day, the Supreme Court ruled 6-3 in the *King v. Burwell* case to uphold the Affordable Care Act's subsidy provision. The law provides federal subsidies in the form of tax credits to low-income individuals so they can purchase health insurance on state or federal exchanges.

Have the justices, especially the conservatives, suddenly developed compassion for the millions who would lose health insurance without the subsidies? Hardly. Chief Justice John Roberts' majority opinion said the ACA was enacted to "improve health insurance markets," reported the June 26 *New York Times*.

A slew of briefs supporting subsidies were submitted by hospital corporations seeking reimbursements for care, and health insurance companies concerned that without them millions of people would drop the policies. The court decided subsidies make good business sense.

The ACA was intended to insure many of the 47 million without coverage, those foregoing medical care or becoming bankrupt to obtain it. It contains some good provisions, such as requiring insurance companies to cover people with pre-existing conditions and provide free preventive health services for women. States were mandated to expand Medicaid to all adults earning up to 133 percent above poverty line or face financial penalties. Federal subsidies would be extended to other low-income individuals to purchase insurance policies.

Conservatives have repeatedly tried to overturn the ACA in Congress and fought the law in the courts ever since Congress passed it on March 23, 2010. The law survived a legal challenge when the Supreme Court affirmed it on June 28, 2012.

However, the high court handed the right wing a victory when it gutted a crucial ACA provision in the 2012 decision, which allowed states to opt out of expanding Medicaid without penalties. Today, 21 reactionary state legislatures, many in the South, refuse to expand this vital government program — even refusing billions of federal dollars to cover the costs. This has left millions of low-income individuals, many African American, without desperately needed medical coverage.

A Catch-22 in the ACA left workers earning below the poverty level and eligible for Medicaid — but denied it — ineligible for insurance subsidies.

Unsurprisingly, the pro-corporate Supreme Court has sabotaged campaign finance laws, opposed women's health care in employer insurance plans, set back workers' rights to sue bosses for wage discrimination and gutted part of the historic Voting Rights Act. The court issued two reactionary decisions on June 29, one allowing the use of a pain-causing execution drug, the other blocking a plan to limit toxic emissions from power plants.

Health care for people, not for profit!

Millions have gained health insurance under the ACA, many through Medicaid in Washington, D.C., and the 29 states that expanded the program. However, 36 million people are still uninsured — including those excluded from Medicaid — largely because of the expense. Without insurance, medical costs are prohibitive for many. Moreover, the ACA does not cover undocumented immigrants.

Even though the ACA is a progressive measure, it is still based on the capitalist for-profit system. Individuals have to buy policies in the marketplace. Deductible costs are too high, say many workers. Co-payments are increasing. Employees covered in company plans complain of expensive co-payments.

The United States is the only highly industrialized country without universal health care. Yet, this is the wealthiest country — that is, the capitalist class is the richest, but not the majority of the population. This country's medical care is the most expensive. But it fails compared to that in 10 other countries in "access, equity, quality, efficiency and healthy lives," said the Commonwealth Fund in June 2014.

This is because U.S. health care is an industry increasingly privatized by corporations and aimed at maximizing profits. Patients are asked about their insurance first — even in emergencies. Ability to pay factors into getting quality care, maybe any care.

The struggle must continue to block conservatives' attempts to undercut the ACA, Medicaid or Medicare — and to demand Medicaid expansion in every state. "Improved Medicare for all," raised by single-payer advocates, should be supported.

Ultimately the slogan "Free health care for all!" should prevail. It's the capitalist system and the profit motive which stand in the way of this worthy goal.

Cuba has the model health care system. Quality, humane, free medical care is provided for everyone, paid for by the government. There is no health care industry, no profit motive. Health care is a basic human right and a top priority on the socialist island. □

Paris taxi drivers battle Uber

By G. Dunkel

Taxicab drivers in Paris, Marseilles and Lyons, France, joined by drivers from Brussels, Belgium, disrupted traffic on June 25 and fought with police in their battle against the multinational car-service corporation, Uber.

To understand why workers have targeted Uber, you have to know how Uber works and how Uber's owners exploit those who drive under Uber's control.

Uber is a San Francisco-based multinational company that lets people arrange their ride through their smart phones. The person connects with Uber, which connects with a driver and car. Uber charges the customer less than do most local taxi or car services, while dumping these costs onto its drivers and a greater risk onto its clients.

Founded in 2009, Uber now operates in more than 250 cities in 50 countries. According to Uber's co-founder and chief executive, Travis Kalanick, the company had 26,000 drivers in New York City alone; 15,000 in London; 22,000 in San Francisco; 10,000 in Paris; and 20,000 in Chengdu, China. Last December, the *Financial Times* estimated Uber's worth as between \$35 and \$40 billion.

Since Uber's drivers are "independent" contractors and allegedly not employees, Uber doesn't need to buy auto insurance, nor to get taxi licenses, nor to buy gaso-

Free Leonard Peltier!!

Following are excerpts from a statement written by Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier on June 26, 2015. Peltier has been falsely imprisoned for 40 years. In a July 5, 2007, Workers World article, Brenda Ryan wrote: "In Native American history, June 26th is a day of anguish. On that date in 1975, two FBI agents in unmarked cars drove onto a ranch on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. More than 150 agents, vigilantes and law enforcement surrounded the property and opened fire. In the resulting shootout, a young Native man and two FBI agents were killed."

"This assault has not ended. For 31 years, Leonard Peltier, a Lakota/Anishinabe organizer of the American Indian Movement (AIM), has been in prison, falsely accused of killing the FBI agents. U.S. prosecutors have publicly admitted that they do not know who actually fired the shots that killed the agents, but they have refused to consider Peltier for parole or to turn over thousands of pages of documents that could prove his innocence." Go to Int'lLeonardPeltierDefenseCommittee.com/ny72uf to read the entire statement and for more information on the struggle to free this heroic freedom fighter.

This year I am most concerned with our children and the taking of their own lives. This is very sad to me, as it is to you, and I know there are many reasons for them to feel such despair and hopelessness. But I can only ask and encourage all of us to double our efforts to show them love and support, and let them know that we will always look after them and protect them. That includes asking big brothers and sisters to look after the younger ones. They are our future and have to be protected and to learn to be the protectors. This is not something we can live with, we need to all work to change this.

And this year it is even more urgent that we come together to protect our sovereignty. There are so many issues to face and fight. We continue to fight for our

Black Hills and to stop the XL pipeline from poisoning our water and our land, and I stand with the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota Nations, and all people of like mind in this fight.

The destruction of our Mother Earth by the heavy and toxic Tar Sands oil, fracking, gas and oil drilling and uranium mining is unacceptable to me and to us. We are supposed to be protecting these things even as others try to push us aside. I honor all of our relatives who are on the front lines of this fight.

And after all that I have seen in these 40 years behind bars, I was still shocked to see what they are trying to do to the Apache people at Oak Flats. This cannot be tolerated. It is not only a blatant money grab at the expense of a tribe's Sacred site, but it is an effort to push us back in the direction of termination by ignoring our rights as sovereign nations. This we will not tolerate. Nothing is sacred to these people and they will continue to try to bulldoze us out of the way without even a single thought to our coming generations if we do not continue to stand up and oppose them. We must be ready for anything or we will lose all that we have gained in the last 40 years.

The continued use of racist mascots is something that we can never accept as Indigenous peoples and we need to all continue to push to end that racist practice.

Time is something I have learned a lot about in these years in prison. And now I can see that time is slipping away from me and I know that if I do not get out under this President I will almost certainly die here in prison.

I have been able to survive with the hope you have given to me and your prayers and I am grateful for that support from all of you.

I continue to pray for the family of my brother Joe Stuntz [killed by the FBI] and for all those who paid such a dear price in those bitter times 40 years ago.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse.

**Doksha,
Leonard Peltier**

line, nor pay benefits.

Regular taxi drivers have little enough protection and benefits. Those working through Uber have it worse. Uber needn't comply with regulations like wage-and-hour standards. Uber needn't reimburse its workers for out-of-pocket costs, such as bridge and turnpike tolls, that drivers pay for while providing service to Uber's customers. That's why Uber's rides are cheaper.

Other companies also disguise their workers as "independent contractors." Uber competitor Lyft and Instacart, a grocery delivery service, both use driver-contractors. Microsoft, Google and Oracle all use tech-contractors. Construction and trucking companies also make extensive use of "independent" contractors. Since there is no central register of such contractors, the extent and impact of their use is hard to evaluate.

Before the extensive use of independent contractors, employers used the threat of layoffs and replacements from the "reserve army of the unemployed" to discourage workers from demanding higher wages and better working conditions or from forming unions. When most of the work formerly done by workers is performed by "independent" contractors, the boss can maneuver so each contractor competes with all the others. The contractor has no fixed jobs and no guarantees, but remains connected to the employer only so long as

there is work to be done.

In the United States, a former "independent" contractor of Uber's sued in California to challenge her status and won a judgment from California's Labor Department that she did indeed work for Uber. Uber will tie the issue up for as long as possible with legal appeals.

According to French law, Uber is not permitted to provide service. Uber has told its drivers in France that the company will pay any fines they get. That is Uber's standard practice when challenging restrictions.

To protest Uber's challenge to their rights as workers, French taxi drivers, with some help from their Belgian co-workers, concentrated on blocking the main routes to the airports. French TV showed well-dressed business people, some in suits, some in high heels, running through the traffic jams pulling their suitcases in order to make their planes.

The taxi drivers explained that Uber drivers pay no license fees, carry no insurance protecting their passengers, and don't have to pass tests on local geography.

The drivers resisted the French cops trying to clear their blockades and overturned and burned some Uber cars, after confronting their drivers. (Radio Canada, June 25)

Drivers in Quebec also went out on a one-day strike on June 25, but took no steps to block traffic as in France. □

Report from Santo Domingo

Gov't scapegoats Haitian workers

PHOTO: HAITI LIBERTÉ

By a foreign resident

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Another human tragedy against the Haitian people is in the making as officials in the Dominican Republic prepare to deport tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of Haitians. Families are being ripped apart as Haitian workers are expelled.

For the past year, the government of President Danilo Medina of the Dominican Liberation Party and conservative political forces have been whipping up a campaign of hysteria against Haitian workers in the DR.

Haitians in the DR are largely employed in public and private construction (80 percent of the labor force in construction), in agriculture (95 percent of the workforce in agriculture) and in domestic services. They are often paid off the books and receive the lowest of wages while employers avoid paying the monetary deductions required for medical care, pensions and other protections.

For example, Haitian construction workers can be paid 450 pesos per day or less. They work from 7 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. At current exchange rates, this converts to 83 U.S. cents per hour.

Agricultural workers can earn 250 pesos (\$5.50) per day or less. Domestic service workers labor six days per week and can receive 5,000 pesos (\$111) per month.

Some businessmen call immigration agents at the end of a pay period and have their workers deported, so as to avoid paying Haitian workers any salary at all.

Intimidation, threats of deportation

Minister of the Interior and Police José Fadul has announced repeatedly that soldiers and immigration agents will conduct deportations of Haitians after June 17, when all foreigners were required to register under the Foreigner Regularization Plan.

Thus far, 288,466 persons of the 768,783 immigrants counted in the national census of 2012 have registered. Of the total number, 668,145 are Haitians. All but a tiny minority face deportation. The DR has a population of 9,700,000.

Additionally, another 209,912 Dominicans of Haitian descent face deportation. These Dominicans were born in the DR and have lived and worked here for decades, since before a new Constitution was established in 2010 by the capitalist

politicians. It consciously redefined Dominican citizenship so as to exclude persons of Haitian descent.

According to Fadul, only 4,600 immigrants have “completed” the required documents of the Regularization Plan — less than 2 percent of the applicants, who now have 45 days to complete their registration. If the remaining 98 percent of the applicants do not fulfill the requirements of the Regularization Plan, they too face deportation.

Requirements of the Regularization Plan include passports, birth certificates, identity cards, proof of employment (wage receipts or letters from employers), apartment/home rental leases, letters from neighborhood associations, bank accounts, credit cards, vehicle registration papers, receipts for personal property, and so on — unobtainable requirements for a poor, impoverished population that is subjected to constant discrimination and superexploitation.

Fadul has publicly admitted that business people have refused to issue certificates to their Haitian employees, which means that the majority of Haitians face deportation even if they have applied for regularization.

Another barrier is the cost of obtaining notarized documents — 500 pesos or more per document, or a whole day’s pay. Lawyers charge 10,000 pesos or more — one month’s salary — to help process the applications. Some applicants have had to make up to 10 visits to the offices of the Registration Plan and wait in line from sunrise to sundown, surrounded by riot police they often have to bribe in order to be permitted to register.

How can undocumented workers and their families afford all these accumulated costs? They can’t. The Registration Plan is a calculated long-term strategy to deport Haitians and to steer the attention of the other people in the Dominican Republic against Haitians, falsely blaming them for the ongoing poverty in the DR.

Fadul repeats every week that thousands of military troops have been mobilized, readied and assigned to immigration authorities, that buses have been purchased and provided (pictures of the buses appearing in the press) to implement the impending deportations. Military installations such as Fort Beller in Dajabón and others are being readied as detention centers.

According to Fadul, Haitian deportees



Brooklyn, N.Y. demonstration denounces expulsion of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent from the Dominican Republic, June 26. The protest took place in the heart of the Haitian immigrant community.

will be taken to Haiti through four border points: Dajabón, Jimaní, Pedernales and Elías Piña, where Haitian authorities will receive them.

Under daily psychological pressure, intimidation by Dominican authorities and violent racist attacks, thousands of Haitians have already left in fear of being deported and losing their personal belongings. Immigration police continue detaining and deporting at will, separating families that have lived here for decades. Many adults expelled are facing permanent separation from their children.

Racist violence against Haitians

This April, it was alleged that Haitians had murdered a Dominican youth in the city of Moca. As a consequence of the anti-Haitian hysteria, mobs of Dominican youth attacked and expelled 500 Haitians from Moca.

This racist attack was recorded and shown on Dominican television, and is posted on YouTube under the title “Sacan haitianos a la fuerza en Moca y destruyen sus pertenencias” — “Haitians are expelled by force in Moca and their belongings are destroyed.”

The mob attacks in Moca galvanized both racist and anti-racist forces in the DR, propelling many Dominicans to denounce racist mob violence against Haitians on the major TV stations and in the newspapers, and forcing authorities to arrest some of the individuals involved in these attacks.

Another horrendous racist crime that demonstrates the effects of the government campaign against Haitians is the lynching of “Tilile” (Jean Claude Harry), a shoeshine worker with a wife and children. He was lynched in a public park in Santiago in February, his body beaten and his hands and feet bound by rope. Santiago is the second-largest city of the DR.

Even though this atrocity was widely condemned by Dominicans and Haitians, it shows the real threat that Haitians face.

Increasing poverty alongside capitalist growth

According to the World Bank, “In the last 20 years, the DR has been one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America, with an average GDP growth of around 5.5 percent between 1991 and 2013. Despite this phenomenal econom-

ic performance, poverty today is higher than in 2000. Poverty increased from 32 percent of the population in 2000 to nearly 50 percent in 2004, following the financial and economic crisis of 2003, to gradually decline to 41 percent in 2011.”

The World Bank notes that Haitian workers on average earn 60 percent of what Dominicans earn. Haitians in agriculture receive 50 percent of what Dominicans are paid. “Haitian immigration benefits the economy of the Dominican Republic, offering companies a young workforce and relatively low wages,” says the World Bank in its March 30 report “Haiti and Dominican Republic: more than sum of the parts.” Is it any wonder that the bourgeoisie is so happy, with the record profits extracted from both Haitian and Dominican workers?

In the DR the majority of the workforce is classified as “informal.” Informal workers are not registered as employees of a company and thus don’t receive medical coverage, pensions or other worker protections.

There is no national minimum wage. In fact, there are 13 different minimum wage scales pertaining to different sectors of the economy: agriculture, construction, small, medium and large commercial enterprises, free trade zones, government employees, etc. Some 65 percent of the working population make less than 10,000 pesos per month (\$56 per week) and real unemployment is estimated to be above 20 percent.

If not for the remittances sent by Dominican workers abroad, amounting to \$4.6 billion in 2014 (an average of \$474 for every person in the DR), these economic conditions would have caused a social explosion.

Unity, international solidarity needed

As can be seen in the current crisis, racism and national oppression not only enslave Haitians but also fortify the oppression of Dominican workers as well, for both are exploited by the same capitalists. What the current juncture needs is for a united struggle of both Dominicans and Haitians to emerge against the capitalist system, which enslaves all the workers. And at this moment of crisis, international solidarity in defense of the Haitian workers in the DR would be very timely and helpful. □

— Terri Kay

Solidarity caravan for Cuba

By Cheryl LaBash

“The blockade has not been lifted. We cannot miss that point,” emphasized Gail Walker, Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization director and daughter of Pastors for Peace founder the Rev. Lucius Walker. She spoke June 24 at the Florida Avenue Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., to begin the 26th Friendship Caravan. The program included a video message from Kenia Serrano Puig, president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship of the Peoples, and a greeting from Pastor Earl Trent Jr., an early caravan supporter.

The caravan will travel eight routes through 50 cities to collect material aid and energize a final push to end the illegal and genocidal U.S. blockade of Cuba. Then 50 caravanistas will travel to Cuba without U.S. government license — at this

point reduced to choosing which of 12 categories describes your travel, and promising to maintain itinerary records for five years for government inspection.

A new medical student and others applying for admittance to the Cuban international medical program will be among the caravanistas who will celebrate the graduation of the largest U.S. graduating class from the Latin American School of Medicine in Havana. IFCO processes the U.S. applications for Cuba’s medical school scholarships. Find information on meetings and financial donations at www.ifconews.org, on Facebook at IFCO/Pastors-forPeace or Twitter at #CubaCaravan2015.

This writer will be the caravan speaker in Boulder, Co.; Santa Fe and Albuquerque, N.M.; and El Paso and San Antonio, Texas. She will be in Cuba supporting a 2015 Detroit graduate from the Latin American School of Medicine later in July. □

San Francisco

‘No human being is illegal’

The Haiti Action Committee held a rally in San Francisco on June 24 at the United Nations Plaza to protest the mass expulsions of Haitians by the Dominican Republic. Pierre LaBossiere of the HAC spoke about how second and third generation Dominicans who are classified as Haitian have been stripped of citizenship and declared “migrants.” Other speak-

ers decried how vigilante mobs and legal authorities alike are pushing people out of their homes and taking their property. Anyone who is Black and under the age of 85 may be classified as Haitian, even if they were born in the DR and have no ties to Haiti. They are being expelled from the country and made stateless.



NO al genocidio de civiles en la República Dominicana. Las Vidas Negras Importan en la República Dominicana.

Haitianos, expulsados de la República Dominicana

Por: Un residente extranjero en Santo Domingo.

Otra tragedia humana en contra del pueblo haitiano se está fabricando, a medida que los funcionarios de la República Dominicana (RD) se preparan para deportar a decenas de miles de haitianas/os, si no cientos de miles. Familias están siendo destrozadas con las expulsiones de estas/os trabajadores.

Durante el último año el gobierno del presidente Danilo Medina del Partido de la Liberación Dominicana y fuerzas políticas conservadoras han puesto en marcha una campaña de histeria en contra de las/os trabajadores haitianos en la RD.

Las/os haitianos en la RD laboran en la construcción pública y privada (80 por ciento de la fuerza laboral en la construcción), en la agricultura (95 por ciento de la fuerza laboral en la agricultura) y en los servicios domésticos. A menudo se les paga “fuera de los libros de contabilidad” (recibiendo los salarios más inferiores), mientras los empleadores evitan pagar las deducciones monetarias mandatorias para seguros médicos, pensiones y otras protecciones.

Por ejemplo, a los trabajadores haitianos de la construcción se les paga “450 pesos” o menos por día. Trabajan de 7 am a 7:30 pm. Utilizando la tasa de cambio actual, eso se convierte en 83 centavos de (U.S.) dólar por hora.

Trabajadoras/es agrícolas haitianas/os pueden ganar “250 pesos” o menos por día (lo cual se convierte en 5,5 dólares por día). Las/os trabajadores del servicio doméstico laboran 6 días por semana y pueden recibir “5.000 pesos” por mes (111 dólares al mes).

Algunos empresarios inescrupulosos llaman a los agentes de inmigración para que deporten a sus trabajadoras/es, y así evitan pagar ningún salario.

Intimidación y amenazas de deportación

El Ministro de Interior y Policía, José Fadul, ha anunciado frecuentemente que soldados y agentes de inmigración realizarán las deportaciones (usan la palabra “repatriaciones”) de haitianas/os comenzando después del 17 de junio, fecha en que las/os extranjeros en la RD tenían que registrarse bajo el Plan de Regularización.

Hasta el momento 288.466 personas se han inscrito de las/os 768.783 inmigrantes contados en el censo nacional de 2012 (de ellos 668.145 eran de Haití). Todos menos una pequeña minoría enfrentan deportación. La República Dominicana tiene una población de 9.700.000.

Además de las personas mencionadas, otras/os 209.912 dominicanos de descendencia haitiana también enfrentan ser deportados. Estas/os dominicanos nacieron en la RD, han vivido y trabajado aquí por décadas, desde antes de que la nueva Constitución de 2010 fuera establecida por los políticos capitalistas, redefiniendo conscientemente la ciudadanía dominicana, a fin de excluir a las personas de descendencia haitiana.

De acuerdo a Fadul, sólo 4.600 inmigrantes han “cumplido” con los requisitos del Plan de Regularización, es decir menos del 2 por ciento de las/os solicitantes, que ahora tendrán 45 días para completar su registro. Si el 98 por ciento restante de las/os solicitantes no cumplen con los requisitos del Plan de Regularización, también enfrentarán deportación.

El llamado “Plan de Registro” tiene requisitos irrealizables.

Los requisitos del Plan de Regularización incluyen: pasaportes, certificados de nacimiento, tarjetas de identidad, prueba de empleo (recibos de salario o cartas de empleadores), contratos de alquiler, cartas de juntas de vecinos, estados de cuentas bancarias, tarjetas de crédito, documentos de matriculación de vehículos, recibos de bienes muebles, etc. - requisitos inalcanzables para una población empobrecida que es sometida a la discriminación y súper explotación cotidiana.

Fadul públicamente admitió que muchos empresarios se han negado a emitir certificados a sus empleadas/os haitianas/os, lo que significa que la mayoría de las/os haitianas/os podrían ser deportadas, incluso quienes solicitaron la Regularización.

Otra barrera es el costo de obtener documentos notariales (500 pesos o más por documento = sueldo de un día de trabajo). Los abogados cobran 10.000 pesos o más (un mes de sueldo) para ayudar a procesar las solicitudes. Algunos solicitantes han tenido que regresar hasta 10 veces a las oficinas del Plan de Regularización, para entonces esperar en fila desde la subida del sol hasta el oscurecer, rodeados por la policía anti-disturbios que a menudo tienen que sobornar a fin de que les permitan registrarse.

¿Cómo pueden las/os trabajadores indocumentados y sus familias pagar todos estos costes acumulados? No pueden, el Plan de Regularización es una estrategia de largo plazo, calculada para deportar a las/os haitianas/os y desviar la atención del pueblo dominicano en contra de las/os haitianas/os, culpándoles falsamente por los problemas de pobreza en curso en la propia RD.

Fadul señala que miles de efectivos militares han sido movilizados, preparados y asignados a las autoridades de inmigración, que autobuses han sido adquiridos y entregados (imágenes de las mismas aparecen en la prensa) - todo para implementar las deportaciones inminentes. Instalaciones militares como la Fortaleza Beller en Dajabón y otras están siendo preparadas para servir como centros de detención.

Según Fadul, las personas deportadas se llevarán a Haití a través de cuatro puntos fronterizos:

Dajabón, Jimaní, Pedernales y Elías Piña, donde supuestamente las recibirán las autoridades haitianas.

Bajo la presión psicológica cotidiana y la intimidación de las autoridades, incluyendo ataques violentos racistas en contra de haitianas/os reportados por los

medios de comunicación, miles se han marchado bajo el temor de ser deportadas/os y perder sus pertenencias. Todo esto mientras la policía de inmigración continúa deteniendo y deportando a su discreción, muchas veces separando familias que han vivido aquí por décadas. Algunas/os adultos expulsados enfrentan la separación permanente de sus hijas/os.

Violencia racista contra las/os haitianas/os

En abril de 2015 en la ciudad de Moca se denunció que haitianos habían asesinado un joven dominicano. Como consecuencia de la campaña anti-haitiana, multitudes de jóvenes dominicanos atacaron y expulsaron a 500 haitianos de Moca.

Este ataque racista fue grabado y mostrado por la televisión dominicana, y se publicó en Youtube bajo el título “Sacan haitianos a la fuerza en Moca y destruyen sus pertenencias”. Se puede acceder en: tinyurl.com/pr3dc59.

El ataque de la turba en Moca galvanizó a los sectores racistas al igual que a los anti-racistas en la RD, impulsando que las/os dominicanos denunciaran la violencia en contra de los haitianos por los principales canales de televisión y en los periódicos. Todo esto forzando a las autoridades a detener a algunos de los individuos implicados en estos ataques.

Otro crimen racista horrendo que demuestra los efectos de la campaña del gobierno en contra de las/os haitianas/os fue el linchamiento en un parque público de Santiago de “Tilile” (Jean Claude Harry), un trabajador limpiabotas, el cual estaba casado y tenía hijos. Lo encontraron el 12 de febrero de 2015 ahorcado de un árbol, su cuerpo golpeado y sus manos y pies atados con soga. Santiago es la segunda ciudad más grande de la RD.

Aunque esta atrocidad fue ampliamente condenada tanto por dominicanos/os como por haitianas/os, sí muestra las amenazas verdaderas que enfrentan las/os haitianas/os.

Crecimiento económico capitalista mientras aumenta la pobreza

Según el Banco Mundial (30 de marzo): “En los últimos veinte años la República Dominicana (RD) ha sido una de las economías de más alto crecimiento en Latinoamérica, con un crecimiento promedio del PIB en torno al 5,5 por ciento entre 1991 y 2013. A pesar de este fenomenal desempeño económico, la pobreza hoy en día es más alta que en 2000. La pobreza aumentó del 32 por ciento de la población en 2000 a casi 50 por ciento en 2004, tras la crisis financiera y económica de 2003, para descender gradualmente al 41 por ciento en 2011”.

Según el Banco Mundial, las/os trabajadores haitianos ganan en promedio el 60 por ciento de lo que las/os dominicanos ganan. En el sector agrícola las/

os haitianos reciben el 50 por ciento de lo que se les paga a las/os dominicanos. “La inmigración haitiana beneficia a la economía de la República Dominicana, ofreciéndole a las empresas una mano de obra joven y salarios relativamente bajos”, dice el Banco Mundial en su informe “Haití y República Dominicana: más que la suma de las partes”.

No es extraño que la burguesía esté tan feliz con las ganancias récord extraídas de las/os trabajadores haitianos y dominicanos.

En la RD la mayoría de la fuerza laboral se clasifica como “informal”. Las/os trabajadores informales no están registrados como empleados de una empresa y por lo tanto no reciben cobertura médica, pensiones u otras protecciones.

No existe un salario mínimo nacional. De hecho, hay 13 escalas de salarios mínimos diferentes correspondiendo a diferentes sectores de la economía: agricultura, construcción, empresas pequeñas, medianas y grandes, zonas francas (de libre comercio), empleadas/os del gobierno, etc. El 65 por ciento de la población trabajadora activa gana menos de 10.000 pesos al mes (56 dólares por semana) y el desempleo real se estima en más del 20 por ciento.

Si no fuera por las remesas enviadas por las/os trabajadores dominicanos desde otros países, que ascendieron a 4,6 mil millones de dólares en 2014 (un promedio de \$474 dólares por cada persona en la RD), las condiciones económicas hubieran causado una explosión social.

Necesaria la unidad dominico-haitiana, y la solidaridad internacional

Como se puede ver en la crisis actual, el racismo y la opresión nacional no sólo esclaviza a las/os haitianas/os, sino que también fortalece la opresión de las/os trabajadores dominicanos, porque ambos, trabajadoras/es haitianas/os y dominicanos, son explotadas/os por los mismos capitalistas.

Lo que la coyuntura actual necesita es que surja una lucha unida de las/os trabajadores dominicanos y haitianos en contra del sistema capitalista que esclaviza a todas/os los trabajadores. En este momento de crisis, gestiones de solidaridad internacional en defensa de las/os trabajadores haitianos en la República Dominicana serían oportunas y muy útiles. □

