



'OXI, NEIN, NO to Europe's banks Greek masses reject austerity

By Fred Goldstein

July 6, 4 p.m., EDT — By a vote of 61 percent to 39 percent, the Greek masses have given a resounding rebuff and political setback to the bankers of Europe, including the Greek ruling class.

The people used the referendum, called by the Syriza government on short notice, to tell the leadership of Alexis Tsipras to go back to Brussels and fight austerity. Whether Tsipras will do so or will make unwarranted concessions, as he has done in the past, remains to be seen. But the vote sent shock waves through the offices of the financial predators in Frankfurt, Paris, Brussels, Rome, Madrid, Lisbon, Amsterdam and elsewhere throughout Europe.

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The extortionists of the Troika — the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank and the European Commission — fear that the Greek spirit of "No" will spread to Spain, Portugal, Italy and beyond — to all the victimized populations who have suffered cruel austerity programs imposed by the very creditors defied in Sunday's vote.

Whatever happens in future negotiations between the Syriza government and the European powers, the bankers fear that the genie of resistance is out of the bottle and they won't be able to put it back in.

'I would climb from my grave to vote no!'

There was massive collective sentiment to stand up against austerity, no matter the price. The New York Times of July 4 recorded the spirit down below:

"For those who want to vote yes Sunday, think about Greece's dignity!" shouted Mr. Smailis, a clothing shop owner whose business has been ravaged by the crisis. "We must reject this and fight our creditors for a just outcome. If I was dead, I would climb from my grave to vote no!"

The arrogant threats, the economic sabotage and the open intervention in the Greek referendum by the euro bankers, including the Greek bankers, backfired. They completely underestimated the spirit of resistance in Greece. This behavior aroused in the people their history of resistance to the Turkish empire, to the British empire, to invasions by fascist Mussolini and Hitler's Nazi armies and to the fascist Greek colonels.

The Troika declared economic warfare on Greece. Instead of army divisions, they sent debt collectors from Frankfurt and Brussels to subdue the working class and the mass of the people. And the masses stood up and answered "No! We cannot be compelled to bow down to threats from Angela Merkel and the rest of the financial cutthroats."

Mass resistance vs. parliamentary victory

It should be clear, however, that the victory in the referendum is only a parliamentary victory. In order to consolidate and advance the gains demanded by the "No" vote, mass action on the ground against the direct interests of the capitalist ruling class will be necessary. The enthusiasm and energy shown both at the polls and by the tens of thousands who turned out to rally for "No" must be converted and mobilized in the streets, the factories, the campuses, the neighborhoods, the communities and the countryside. Otherwise, the expect-

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Team Solidarity, with its militant, class-conscious program and tactics, swept all 18 leadership positions by a landslide in the April 30th union election.

PHOTO: TEAM SOLIDARITY

BURNING THE FLAG OF SLAVERY



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WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK



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Detroit to Flint, Mich.

'Justice Journey' for water begins

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

The Water Justice Journey, a 70-mile, eight-day walk from Detroit to Flint, Mich., began July 3 with a gathering on the banks of the Detroit River, the main water supply to millions throughout southeast Michigan. The trek's first day ended just north of Detroit in busy downtown Ferndale, where the Detroit Light Brigade shined the message: "Clean, Affordable Water Now!" The People's Water Board organized the walk to force attention on the water crisis in southeast Michigan.



For 'Clean, affordable water.' Detroit, July 3.

WW PHOTO: MIKE SHANE

Tens of thousands of Detroit households, along with all 10,000-plus residents of Highland Park, face having their water service shut off. Without running water in their homes, parents are losing custody of their children to the state. Another crisis exists in Flint, where the water is undrinkable and unfit for washing and bathing.

This emergency situation was 100 percent preventable. The culprits are the banks, the corporations and the capitalist state. As Jerry Goldberg, representing the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs, explained at the sendoff rally, "The termination fees on interest rate swaps represent \$537 million of the \$1.1 billion borrowed for infrastructure repair and maintenance. Without this profit gouging by the richest banks, DWSD [Detroit Water and Sewerage Department] would be in sound financial condition."

Last summer Detroit's water shutoffs drew worldwide attention. Two rapporteurs from the United Nations came here and issued a report blasting DWSD and city officials for depriving Detroiters of the human right to water. Mayor Mike Duggan, rather than taking measures to block the shutoffs and restore service, dismissed the rapporteurs as misinformed.

To keep their water on, residents signed payment plans, but the terms set by DWSD made it impossible for most to keep up. Now all but a handful of those on payment plans could lose service, as shutoffs have started for anyone more than \$150 or two months behind.

Crisis expands beyond Detroit

With water quality among the best in the U.S., DWSD provides water to most of surrounding Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties and even communities as far

away as Flint. Part of the racist looting of Detroit's assets during the municipal bankruptcy was the plan to sell DWSD to the regional Great Lakes Water Authority, giving greater control outside Detroit to suburbs in Oakland and Macomb counties and in Wayne County.

The agreement to establish the regional authority has a provision to raise rates by over 10 percent in the suburbs and other cities. There is resistance to this plan, including a referendum petition to put the sale of DWSD on the ballot. A rate increase was rejected by the Detroit City Council on June 30.

Contained within Detroit city limits is the city of Highland Park. Like Detroit, Highland Park is overwhelmingly African American; the poverty rate hovers around 40 percent. That city had its own water pumping station until 2012, when the mayor shut it down for temporary repairs. But then he had the city connected to DWSD permanently, so Highland Park residents had to pay Detroit for water.

Now residents and small businesses, who were not billed for two years, are being hit with bills in the thousands and even tens of thousands of dollars. DWSD is threatening to cut off service to all of Highland Park, because the city allegedly owes Detroit millions of dollars. Highland Park City Council voted to raise water rates by 138 percent in June!

Flint, 70 miles north of Detroit, historically got its water from Detroit. Recently Flint began sourcing its water from the highly polluted Flint River. This has caused skin rashes, hair loss, autoimmune disorders and lead poisoning in children, along with unpayable rates.

Activists from Flint, Highland Park and Detroit are united and determined to go the distance, saying, "Water is a human right." □

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

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Kris Hamel, Monica Moorehead; Web Editor Gary Wilson

Production & Design Editors: Coordinator Lal Roohk; Andy Katz, Cheryl LaBash

Copyediting and Proofreading: Sue Davis, Keith Fine, Bob McCubbin

Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Fred Goldstein, Martha Grevatt, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Terri Kay, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, John Parker, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Gloria Rubac

Mundo Obrero: Redactora Berta Joubert-Ceci; Ramiro Fúnez, Teresa Gutierrez, Donna Lazarus, Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis

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WORKERS WORLD PARTY

Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

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

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

Baltimore
c/o Solidarity Center
2011 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
443.221.3775
baltimore@workers.org

Bay Area
1305 Franklin St. #411
Oakland, CA 94612
510.600.5800
bayarea@workers.org
Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.286.6574
boston@workers.org
Buffalo, N.Y.
712 Main St #113B
Buffalo, NY 14202
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org
Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
312.229.0161
chicago@workers.org

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

Denver
denver@workers.org

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

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

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

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

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

Pittsburgh
pittsburgh@workers.org
Rochester, N.Y.
P.O. Box 33447
585.436.6458
rochester@workers.org

Rockford, IL
rockford@workers.org

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

Tucson, Ariz.
tucson@workers.org

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

Boston school bus drivers step up the fight

By Joe Mchahwar

The struggle between the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, Steelworkers Local 8751, on the one hand, and the Boston city administration and the international union-busting corporation Veolia — now renamed Transdev — on the other, is being taken to new heights.

The union's new leadership, elected April 30, is bringing the demands of rank-and-file workers to the forefront. These demands center around 700 unresolved grievances, unfair labor practice charges against Veolia, winning a just contract and the company's GPS/telematics surveillance of drivers that breaks the existing contract. A key workers' demand is the reinstatement of four fired leaders who have been off the job for 22 months.

The four fired leaders — President Andre Francois, Vice President Steve Kirschbaum, Financial Secretary Steve Gillis and Grievance Chair Garry Murchison — were elected to these key positions by a wide margin in April.

Long hours of negotiations have transpired between the new leadership and Veolia, the city, and the Boston Public Schools. The union has brought its fighting spirit to the negotiating table, using struggle tactics to further its goals. Developments are coming by the minute, so the union hasn't had a moment to breathe between punches.

Bus yard rallies and picket lines, a regular occurrence, have brought the fight straight to Veolia's headquarters. An occupation of the Freeport bus yard by the entire executive board on June 22 lasted nearly nine hours — the last two while police were threatening to evict them.

"We were holding company officials in near round-the-clock meetings regarding mass noncompliance with the contract, including use of GPS and other telematic technology to route buses and pay drivers less, and Mayor Walsh's administration was scabbing out some of our work to non-union outfits," Gillis explained. "These meetings came in the wake of a Boston Globe investigative report about BPS/Veolia's record of late bus routes based on GPS routing, leading up to a scheduled contract negotiations session."



PHOTO: TEAM SOLIDARITY

Freeport is the same bus yard where Stevan Kirschbaum was framed up on four felony charges during a demonstration last year. Kirschbaum was declared innocent in court this year, winning his case with the help of fellow workers and solidarity from the community.

On June 25, the union held more spirited rallies in all four bus yards.

Then on June 27 Veolia issued what the union called "a declaration of war." The union received an illegal, fraudulent "last best offer" from the company, stating that if the membership did not accept this ultimatum by July 10 the drivers would not receive retroactive pay that had previously been agreed to. These pay increases date back to July 1, 2014, when the old contract expired.

This so-called offer, which violates several labor laws, includes the following concessions to management: introduction of spy cameras on the buses, elimination of one of two health care plans, increased discipline and erosion of language guaranteeing flat rate pay protection. Veolia, Boston Public Schools and Mayor Walsh also stubbornly refuse to reinstate the four illegally fired leaders.

So the company ultimatum was a shamelessly transparent attempt to entice and threaten members to accept a bad contract and turn their backs on their leaders.

City concedes two vital points, but not Veolia

Local 8751 has no truck with any of this. On June 29, another marathon session/occupation took place at City Hall with the mayor's lawyer, Paul Curran,

and Chief Operating Officer of BPS Kim Rice. That ended when the city made the following two concessions: they told the union the threat to take away retroactive pay was a mistake, and the Union Security Agreement protecting jobs, seniority and 40 years of collective bargaining gains would continue.

Expressing their rock-solid solidarity, community leaders who joined these negotiations included veteran City Councilor Charles Yancey; activist Chuck Turner; Sandra McIntosh, of Coalition for Equal Quality Education; Charles Clemons, of TOUCH 106.1 radio; Haitian community leader Jean Claude Sanon; and representatives of the International Action Center, Women's Fightback Network and Massachusetts United Against Police Violence.

Less than an hour later, however, Veolia reinstated the threat, overriding what BPS and City Hall conceded to. Veolia's double-cross was not only a slap in the face to the union, but to its community supporters. Veolia is refusing to bargain in good faith, which constitutes an unfair labor practice.

But it proves the Marxist truth: Capitalists tell the government what to do, not the other way around.

In an attempt to further intimidate the workers into accepting its rotten "offer," Veolia mailed a five-page letter, in Haitian and Cape Verdean Creole, Spanish and English, to workers' homes.

"Veolia is running amok with a series of warlike communications and actions," said Kirschbaum. These include threatening hundreds of workers, laid off for the summer, with discharge if they do not report for a "mandatory recall" to bid on summer work.

The new player in negotiations is Veolia's vice president for labor relations, Thomas P. Hock, notorious for his role in the Bay Area Regional Transit strike of 2013 during which two workers died. Hock, whose Cincinnati-based law firm has engaged in professional union bust-

ing in mass transit for 40-plus years, is president and founder of Professional Transit Management. PTM's Northeast regional manager is also Veolia's General Manager Alex Roman. In addition to breaking unions, PTM is the subject of numerous complaints of racist discrimination and sexual harassment.

Solidarity in action

Despite having to fight for its own survival, Local 8751 continues to uphold its rich legacy of politically active unionism. Local 8751 poured out for the Haitian flag day parade on May 17, proclaiming support for Fanmi Lavalas candidate for the Haitian presidency, Dr. Marcis Narcisse. On June 13, they marched in Pride, showing the unwavering support for the lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer community from one of the first unions in the United States to win contractual anti-discrimination rights for lesbian, gay and bi workers. Trans rights will be included in the new contract.

One day after Local 8751 picketed Veolia headquarters on June 18, they were in the streets again for Juneteenth to "Say no to racism, police murder and violence, racist terror from Boston to Charleston to Baltimore to Ohio!"

This is the activism the company-friendly former union officials tried to use against the Francois-Kirschbaum slate in the election. "It backfired," said Kirschbaum. "Team Solidarity, with its militant, class-conscious program and tactics, swept all 18 leadership positions by a landslide. Our record of struggle provided the best antidote for the poison of red baiting!"

The situation is changing day by day, but the rank and file are ready to strike and have spoken as one: "No amnesty, no contract, justice — no work!"

Veolia has made a calculated effort to bleed the four fired leaders dry. The workers and leadership haven't blinked in the face of this onslaught. Their reserves are running low, however. These leaders need solidarity and financial support now more than ever. Anything supporters can contribute will be repaid in the struggle tenfold. To send money online, go to tinyurl.com/mzbfdu. Or send checks to Friends of the School Bus 5, P.O. Box 141, Stoughton, MA 02072. □

Protests challenge deportation of Haitians

By G. Dunkel

July 1 saw protests in Miami, Philadelphia and New York City against the Dominican Republic's policy of deporting Dominicans of Haitian descent.

The protest in New York, held in front of the Times Square Dominican Consulate, was called by two Dominican organizations: We are All Dominicans and Black Lives Matter in the Dominican Republic. The speakers connected the racist way Dominican immigrants to the United States are treated, noting that Dominicans in the U.S. are considered Black, to the racist way Haitians and the descendants of Haitians are treated in the Dominican Republic.

The New York demonstration was composed predominantly of Dominicans, with some non-Dominican progressives and some Haitians. A longtime Haitian activist explained: "The Haitian community in New York needs a firmer mobilization over the issue of expulsions in the DR. But splits in the Lavalas movement in Haiti are reflected here and also

the community is politically exhausted, concentrating on solving its personal problems flowing from its status as 'immigrants oppressed by racism.'"

The protest in Philadelphia on July 1 was called by a group of Haitian organizations: the Haitian Coalition of Philadelphia, Haitian Professionals of Philadelphia, Haitian Clergy of Philadelphia and the United Kingdom Youth Ministry. They marched along Market Street to the Liberty Bell site chanting, "One island, one blood!" and "L'Union fait la force!" — a Haitian slogan meaning "Unity is strength."

In Miami, the demonstrations began with the chant "Enough is enough!" The Miami demonstrators also called the Dominican Republic's deportation policy racist.

"We will not stop until justice is done, and this is injustice," North Miami Councilmember Alix Desulme said. The protesters later went to the Dominican Consulate in Miami, where they left a resolution demanding that the Dominican Republic change its immigration policy. □



WWW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Oil strike wins improved safety language

BY Martha Grevatt

Members of Steelworkers Local 13-1 begin returning to work at Marathon Oil's Galveston Bay Refinery (GBR) on July 6. After 143 days on the picket line and two contract rejections, on June 23 the Marathon strikers voted by a slim margin to accept a contract with improved safety language. The 1,200 workers were the last to ratify a contract in a strike that hit 15 facilities of several oil companies.

Involving 7,000 workers at its peak, the strike began Feb. 1, with safety as the overriding issue. The United Steelworkers International called the unfair labor practice strike after the lead industry negotiator, Shell, refused to bargain in good faith over job elimination and excessive overtime that was causing frequent injuries and even fatalities.

Between March and May, locals in the Midwest, Southwest and on the West Coast ratified local contracts. The corresponding return-to-work agreements delay, over a period of weeks, the time from when the strike pickets came down to when union members were back on the job. Some Marathon strikers will not start earning a paycheck until July 18.

The safety record of GBR, located in Texas City, near Houston, explains why the strike there lasted the longest. There have been 35 fatalities in 35 years, including 15 workers killed in a 2005 explosion. The union then negotiated stronger safety protections from BP, the own-

er of GBR at the time. Marathon's desire to gut these protections, using the reasoning that, "It wasn't us, it was BP," is a major reason why Local 13-1 rejected the company's two previous offers by a wide margin.

Just last year, an explosion at GBR left a worker critically injured. During the course of the strike, picketers observed several fires and there have been two incidents this year that led to the release of 128,000 pounds of toxic silica and aluminum oxide into the local community.

The company's callous disregard for workers' lives was clearly demonstrated in March during a union memorial on the tenth anniversary of the fatal explosion. Marathon called the police to prevent mourners from placing 35 crosses—for 35 workers killed in 35 years—on refinery grounds. In a tearful ceremony, unionists read the names of the dead and planted crosses on a nearby highway median. Hours later, Marathon managers ripped the crosses out of the ground.

Marathon's hard line was met with strong solidarity throughout the long strike. Supporters braved bitter February cold to march on company headquarters in Findlay, Ohio. Union members amassed outside a shareholder meeting and three speakers inside confronted the company on its gross disregard of worker safety.

As they go back into the refinery, these union members will maintain a watchful eye on a management all-too-willing to cut corners when it comes to worker safety. □

San Francisco protesters tell mayors: Stop police violence!



PHOTO: PETER MENCHINI

Activism intervened during the 83rd U.S. Conference of Mayors, held at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square Hotel. Hosted by the city's Mayor Ed Lee, the gathering was held June 19-22. Attending were more than 250 mayors, their families and a number of corporate sponsors. Making an unannounced guest appearance was President Barack Obama.

Local activists took the opportunity to raise a number of issues, particularly the Black Lives Matter movement and militarization of the police and their excessive use of force. Also brought up were homophobia, transphobia, gentrification and the environment.

The weekend was packed with related actions sponsored by many groups, including Occupy SF, Code Pink and the Anti-Police-Terror Project. The APTP called for a disruption as the mayors were about to board buses to attend a

Saturday night "Color of Life Global Celebration" at the California Academy of Sciences. Protesters demanded that the mayors demilitarize their police departments and that there be total control of the police by the communities they are supposed to serve.

As the mayors' buses pulled up, police, who outnumbered the demonstrators, held a line and kept them from crossing the street to reach the buses. Yet they allowed other passersby and hotel guests to get through. Then extremely aggressive police grabbed and shoved demonstrators who tried to step off the sidewalk.

To avoid the demonstrators, mayors' security staff pulled some of them off the buses and escorted them through the hotel. But the political messages reached many despite attempts to stifle them.

— Report by Terri Kay

On the picket line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

Milwaukee bus drivers stage walkout

Contract negotiations between the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 998, representing over 1,000 public bus drivers and mechanics, majority African American, in the Milwaukee (Wisc.) County Transit System, came to a halt June 29, when 93 percent of the membership voted to reject the company's latest concessions offer and 92 percent voted to authorize a strike. At issue are management's plans to hire several hundred part-time drivers, with no benefits and an exemption from paying union dues under the state's "right to work" law. Also, management won't increase the length of bathroom breaks during workers' routes, and workers are demanding no cuts in their pensions and no more out-of-pocket costs for health care.

The walkout, which began July 1 and lasted 72 hours, was met with large, enthusiastic rallies organized by the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association and supported by the Public Museum Employees Local 526, the Milwaukee County Labor Council, the state AFL-CIO affiliated unions, Defeat Right to Work in Wisconsin, Fight for 15 and the Transit Riders Union, among others. The All People's Church organized a free solidarity ride program to help commuters during the walkout. (fightbacknews.org, July 2)

One step forward, one step back for Calif. farmworkers

Two lawsuits brought by California farmworkers against the state's Occupational Safety and Health Administration were settled June 11. The suits charged CalOSHA with failing to protect farmworkers from extreme heat conditions on the job, resulting in multiple worker deaths. At a press conference, family members of the deceased, alongside United Farm Workers President Arturo S. Rodriguez, announced sweeping changes to CalOSHA's inspection and enforcement procedures. Changes include more frequent and comprehensive inspections of outdoor working conditions, with specific attention to repeat violators of safety laws. A pilot program was set up so workers can anonymously report violations in the field. (ufw.org, June 11)

However, another court decision threatens the ability of farmworkers to bargain collectively with employers. On May 18, the state's Fifth District Court of Appeals ruled that farmworkers' "mandatory mediation law" was unconstitutional. The law, passed in 2002, provides for a state mediator to institute terms for a binding union contract when management walks away from the bargaining table. Without this law, management is under no legal obligation to bargain in good faith with workers over issues like job safety, pay, hiring and firing. UFW vowed to appeal the ruling. Not surprisingly, the case is supported by some of the U.S.'s most powerful conservative, anti-union organizations. (inthesetimes.com, June 17)

New labor regs take effect

A National Labor Relations Board regulation went into effect April 14 that is designed to shorten the time workers wait between petitioning for union representation and holding elections. Before this, organizers had to wait over a month before an election could be held, giving employers time to use intimidation tactics and propaganda campaigns to upset election results. "Delay hurts because they can fire one more worker, or engage in five more captive-audience meetings or three more supervisor one-on-ones per person," said Kate Bronfenbrenner, Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations.

After just three weeks from the start date, average waiting times have been decreased by 14 days compared to the same period in 2014. (Labor Notes, June 19) No wonder a big business coalition, led by the Chamber of Commerce, has filed a lawsuit challenging the new regulation.

A June 11 report by the Century Foundation notes that the regulations have the potential to encourage innovation in the unionizing process: "We believe a new online tool designed to take employees through a step-by-step labor organizing process could be effective in increasing unionization." For a new generation of tech-savvy, low-wage workers, unionizing may soon be easier.

Millions more to receive overtime pay

President Barack Obama announced on June 30 a proposal to extend overtime pay to as many as 5 million salaried workers. Since the 1938 passage of the so-called Fair Labor Standards Act, employers have been required to pay salaried workers one-and-a-half times their regular hourly wage when they work more than 40 hours a week. Regarding the salary cap, this provision has failed to keep up with inflation, thus excluding pay at time-and-a-half for millions of workers. Currently, only workers who make less than \$23,660 yearly are entitled to overtime rates. This salary is so low that as income for a family of four it is well below the federal poverty line.

The Obama administration's proposal would more than double the salary cap. Thus, workers making less than \$50,440 a year are eligible for the overtime rate effective in 2016. Notably, women workers comprise 56 percent of those who will benefit from this reform. The U.S. secretary of labor has the authority to change overtime provisions without congressional approval. (whitehouse.gov and dol.gov, June 30) □

ADA at 25

Victory for disability rights, motivation to fight still harder

By Edward Yudelovich

July marks the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The entire month has been declared Disability Pride Month in the U.S. A Disability Pride parade being organized for July 12 in New York by a coalition of disability rights groups has also been endorsed by several city agencies and elected officials. A Disability Pride event is also scheduled for Boston on July 22.

How do disabled activists view this momentous anniversary and the perspective for the disabled liberation movement? WW canvassed a number of members of the Workers World Party People with Disabilities Caucus. Here are their views.

Fighting right wing to pass ADA

Brian Shea, a long-time disability civil rights activist and founder of the WWP Disabilities Caucus, said of the ADA at a WWP forum on July 28, 2012:

“The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted by Congress and signed into law in 1990. It is a civil rights law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability. The ADA defines disability as ‘a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.’ ...

“The right wing attacked this law even before it was passed. Outright bigots, such as Sen. Jesse Helms from North Carolina, tried to stop the momentum for passage of the ADA. They whipped up a frenzy and fear around people with AIDS, who are protected by the ADA. Helms and others tried to add to the ADA draconian restrictions on food service workers, concerns about sanitation or what illnesses could be contracted from food handlers that were unscientific. But activists organized to fight back — and stopped this.

“The ADA represented significant gains. But it is important to remember that, like any other piece of legislation, it reflects the strength of the class struggle at that time. The right wing was able to whittle away some of the ADA’s important provisions, gutting much of Title 1 of the law, which prohibited discrimination in employment.

“The ADA was won by fierce and protracted struggle by people with disabilities and their supporters. As with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the struggle now is to protect its gains, get it fully implemented and expand its scope,” Shea concluded.

Because of the pressure of the disability rights movement, on Sept. 25, 2008, amendments to the ADA were passed. They emphasize that the definition of disability should be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals to the max-



PHOTO: ALBERTO CARDONA

Activists with disabilities build solidarity in Dorchester, Mass. last August.

imum extent permitted by the terms of the ADA and generally shall not require extensive analysis. Important changes were made to the definition of the term “disability,” rejecting several Supreme Court decisions and portions of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s ADA regulations. These changes make it easier for an individual seeking protection under the ADA to establish that he or she has a disability.

In a March 24, 2014, talk at a WWP International Women’s Day forum, wheelchair user **Joyce Kanowitz**, a senior and a poet, asked:

“What is disability? How is it seen? With derision, compassion, bewilderment. Disability is the inability to live freely without restraints, either physical or mental.

“Many disabilities go unnoticed or are assumed to be something they are not, like deafness. I’m going to steer away from the traditional view of disability and include in my list other forms not generally recognized as inhibiting mind and body. They are homelessness, incarceration, obesity, old age and various conditions of chronic health problems.

“Before the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed, there was no access for the disabled on public transport. **Betsey Gimbel**, a courageous WWP Disability Caucus leader and secretary of Disabled in Action, who used a wheelchair, took on the city of New York to change this. She was undaunted by resistance from the bureaucrats. After several years, wheelchair lifts and ramps were installed on city buses and elevators in some subway stations.

“Another fiery advocate for political change, who also uses a wheelchair, is Workers World Party founding member **Rosie Neidenberg**, who struggled and fought not for herself but for revolutionary change for others. In the 1950s she audaciously interrupted a red-baiting House Un-American Activities Committee hearing and today at the age of 94 still works faithfully every week on mailing

out Workers World newspaper.

“We have a disabled caucus which meets fairly regularly. You are welcome to join us here and at our demos. We need solidarity and unity in all of our struggles. It makes us strong. If you look at some of the photos of demos, you will see people in wheelchairs in the forefront.”

Bill Bateman of Providence, R.I., diagnosed with bipolar depression, commented: “The ADA on paper was a huge victory for access to public places, public transportation and healthcare — physical and mental. However, like so many 20th century legal victories, many of its promises have become hollow and unkept due to lack of funding and unrelenting pressure from the ruling class and right wing to limit their scope and effect, and require a 21st century infusion of revolutionary energy from the masses.

“To that aim, a two-part Providence-Boston Plan is being launched which will include a 21st century Economic Bill of Rights to guarantee funding of all human needs and a new Freedom Charter calling for special measures to guarantee the rights and power of people of color, whose legal victories in the 20th century are clearly no longer respected and upheld by the ruling class and forces of racism.”

Joyce Chediak, who is hearing impaired and dyslexic and has provided care for several family members with disabilities, commented:

“Full civil rights for people with disabilities is not just the concern of the individuals with disabilities. It is also a concern of their families and especially of women. When people with disabilities are denied the equality of opportunity, economic self-determination, full participation in life and independent living as outlined in the ADA, it is usually a female family member who steps in to fill the need as best she can.

“This phenomenon has become so common among women in their 40s, 50s and 60s that sociologists use the term ‘sandwich generation’ to describe the squeeze many women feel as they exhaust themselves caring not only for their children, but also for their aging parents, siblings and friends with disabilities.”

Jesse Lokahi Heiwa of Philadelphia recently suffered a stroke. A queer person of color active for social justice and a caregiver to an elder, he says: “The passage of the ADA was a result of the movement of people with disabilities boldly acting on behalf of their own lives and each other’s. This movement is a key component of what a socialist society would look like: inclusive of all, involving all, for all the people. While much has been done, there

is much more to achieve. Join and move forward together. Venceremos.”

Rene Imperato, a Vietnam veteran with several disabilities, including post-traumatic stress disorder, commented: “The safety of disabled people of color and disabled lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people, especially those who use crutches and wheelchairs, is compromised by their skin color and their expression. All people have the right to self-defense by any means necessary. However, often disabled people have more limited options in how physically we can defend ourselves, especially disabled people of color and disabled LGBTQ people, who are the most targeted.

“The scandalous non-application of the ADA at special events like concerts and sporting events is a fraudulent violation of the disabled’s right to equal access. We demand that all wheelchair ramps be inspected and be replaced or retooled when they no longer function.”

Johnnie Stevens helped repair a school for disabled children in Puerta Esperanza, Cuba, while on a work brigade after hurricanes Gustavo and Ike. Stevens’ disability — dyslexia — made his videographic assignment, which required precise logging of seconds, minutes, hours, megabytes and terabytes, much more difficult and time-consuming. But the Cubans were patient. He completed the video and received an award.

Stevens submitted an excerpt from a post by **Vilissa Thompson**, “#Charleston-Strong: Thoughts from a disabled Black South Carolinian,” about the massacre of nine African Americans last month in a Charleston church:

“These past two weeks have been very emotional for me, and as always, writing about my feelings and thoughts has been therapeutic. ... My heart was troubled by the growing number of ‘excuses’ people and the media were making about the shooter’s actions. He was taught to hate; he was taught to think of Black people as disposable; he saw Black people as inferior, not human; he saw Black people as ones who were ‘taking’ his white women and staining the integrity of the nation. He was not mentally ill, as some always claim when white men conduct domestic terrorist acts on [U.S.] American soil. He was of sound mind, he was well aware of the devastation he would be inflicting on those families, the church community, the city of Charleston, the state of South Carolina and the nation. He knew the level of fear and pain he had the power to create, as well as the power to not create. He chose to express his hatred for Black people that day, and it was deliberate.”

The great Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s produced legislation like the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 and the Voting Rights Bill of 1965. Some of these “inalienable” rights of African Americans should have been made legally secure 100 years earlier, after the Civil War and the passage of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments.

Today, a mass struggle aims at obliterating the racist Confederate flag. The ADA, a concession wrested from the 1%, must also be enforced and expanded with relentless, continued mass struggle, just as a union fights to enforce a contract won from the bosses through struggle.

Edward Yudelovich, a WWP People with Disabilities Caucus organizer, has an emotional disability.

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes

Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy

Black Youth: Repression & Resistance LeiLani Dowell

The Struggle for Socialism Is Key Monica Moorehead

Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights Imani Henry

Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Global Justice! Saladin Muhammad

Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior Mumia Abu-Jamal

Racism & Poverty in the Delta Larry Hales

Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions Pat Chin

Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation Consuela Lee

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

Available at all major online booksellers.



GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

On U.S. bases, schools, roads and parks -

Symbols, names reinforce institutional racism

By Sara Flounders

Following the June 17 racist massacre in South Carolina, a groundswell of activists has pushed to eliminate the glorification of Confederate history throughout the South and nationally.

In the midst of national outrage at the Confederate flag, a symbol of white supremacy and racist terror, flying at the state Capitol building in South Carolina, and as calls to remove Confederate flags and symbols glorifying slavery grew, the Pentagon officially announced that the 10 U.S. military bases named in honor of Confederate generals would not be renamed.

This Pentagon reaction shows just how deeply racist symbols, rooted in a culture of white supremacy, are consciously kept alive and defended at the highest levels by the U.S. ruling class and its military machine. The timing and the tenor could only give aid and comfort to die-hard reactionaries and the most powerful and entrenched institutions in the South.

The naming of U.S. military bases, highways, schools and the erecting of statues in national, state and local parks are not the actions of a “lone wolf” or backward white workers. The naming of major sites is decided by the local ruling class and by top officer corps of the military, intended to reinforce a very public message of who and what acts deserve honor and emulation.

These outrages would be comparable to Germany naming military bases, along with schools, parks, roads and thousands of statues with the likes of the war criminals Adolf Hitler and Nazi generals after Germany’s defeat in World War II.

These U.S. military bases project U.S. global power and train an officer caste in global domination.

Fort Hood, Texas, is the largest military base in the U.S., named after a Confederate general, John Bell Hood.

Fort Rucker, Ala., named for Confederate Col. Edmund W. Rucker, is where all of the Army’s aviation training has taken place since 1973.

Fort Bragg, N.C., named to honor Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg, is home to the 82nd Airborne Division and Special Operations Command Center.

Fort Benning, Ga., named for Confederate Brig. Gen. Henry L. Benning, is home to the formerly named School of the Americas, which provides military training tactics of torture, assassination and subversion for Latin American military officers.

Fort Gordon, Ga., is home to the U.S. Army Signal Corp and the former base of a military police school. The base is named after Confederate Lt. Gen. John Brown Gordon, head of the Ku Klux Klan in Georgia. Gordon was a vicious segregationist who fought Black Reconstruction following the U.S. Civil War with racist terror. He applauded slavery as “the mightiest engine in the universe for civilization, elevation and refinement of mankind.” (“John Brown Gordon: Soldier, Southerner, American” by Ralph Lowell Eckert, pg. 13)

The other five bases named for Confederate generals are Camp Beauregard and Fort Polk in Louisiana, and Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Lee and Fort Pickett, all in Virginia.

Many other military bases have buildings, streets and centers honoring these same generals and others. This trend escalated in the 1960s, 100 years after the Civil War. Bestowing honor on Confederate generals was the ruling class’s aggressive response to the militant Civil Rights and Black Liberation movements. At the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., a barracks built in 1962 was named in honor of Gen. Robert E. Lee, head of the Confederate Army.

New York City’s only U.S. Army base, Fort Hamilton, named its central street, “General Lee Avenue.” It runs for about a half mile in the borough of Brooklyn.

Racism – for thousands of miles

Thousands of miles of highways, streets, roads and central boulevards are named to honor generals and politicians who fought to maintain slavery. For Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy, there are 468 miles of roads bearing his full name.

A June 27 New York Times article pointed out that an Internet search of just a few notorious Confederate names turns up hundreds of roads throughout the entire U.S., not only in the South.

In Alexandria, Va., a suburb of Washington, D.C., there are major streets named for Confederate Gens. Lee, Beauregard, Pickett, Bragg and James Longstreet. The highway is named for Jefferson Davis. A statue of Jefferson Davis also stands in the National Rotunda of the Capitol in Washington.

The sheer number of state, county and local parks named for defenders of racism has been the focus of a growing number of local grassroots struggles.

Following a determined campaign, the majority Black city of Memphis, Tenn.,



PHOTO: ERIC ANDERS NILSSON

Activists gathered to denounce racist violence and to burn Confederate and Nazi flags on June 28 in Journal Square in Jersey City, N.J., organized by the Jersey City Peace Movement and Action 21-NJ.

in February 2013, rushed to rename its three city parks before passage of the “Tennessee Heritage Protection Act of 2013,” which prohibited changes to any of the monuments, memorials or buildings, etc., named after historical figures, organizations or events — which meant preserving Confederate names.

The Memphis City Council resolution changed the name of Confederate Park to Memphis Park; Jefferson Davis Park to Mississippi River Park; and Nathan Bedford Forrest Park to Health Sciences Park. Nathan Bedford Forrest, a Confederate general, was the founder of the terrorist KKK and its first “Grand Wizard.”

Challenging racist symbols

In Tennessee, the Forrest High School in Marshall County is named after Forrest along with a state park and the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps building at Middle Tennessee State University.

The local white power structure in Jacksonville, Fla., in opposing desegregation, adopted Forrest’s name for a “white only” high school in 1959 and the name Jefferson Davis for a middle school in 1961. These schools, now with a majority Black student body, were renamed in 2013 after parents organized a national petition on Change.org. There are still seven other schools named for Forrest.

A study by the website Vocativ, using Federal data, found at least 188 public and public charter schools nationwide

named for prominent Confederate slaveholders. Not all of these schools are in the South. The list includes 78 schools named for Gen. Robert E Lee, including two in California and one in Michigan. At a growing number of schools there are demands to rename them.

Momentum and rage are growing. The Black Lives Matter movement has surged forward with its own immediate actions.

Three statues of Confederate generals were spray-painted with messages of “Black Lives Matter” at the University of Texas, Austin. In downtown Charleston, S.C., near the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the site of the racist massacre, two Confederate statues were deservedly defaced. The same message was painted on Confederate memorials in St. Louis, 10 miles from Ferguson, Mo., and in Baltimore; Asheville, N.C.; and Richmond, Va.

In an action watched around the world, a Black woman, Bree Newsome, a Charlotte, N.C., educator and activist, scaled a 30-foot flagpole to take down the hated Confederate flag on Capitol grounds.

Challenging and rooting out all of these racist symbols will help to educate a new generation to just how deeply rooted and constantly reinforced institutionalized racism is in class society in the U.S. Through struggle, activists will learn that it takes more than a name change to change a society built on glorifying racist terror. □

An open letter on racism, solidarity & ‘Confederate

By Bill Starr

My family lived in South Carolina before the Revolution. My great-grandfather and his kin wore gray. That flag offends me. So do Confederate Memorial Day and all Confederate monuments. Not because they’re “bad for business.” Because they’re wrong.

South Carolina had a Black majority

In 1860 most of the people of South Carolina were Black and enslaved. The Articles of Secession of every Southern state make clear they went to war to preserve and extend slavery.

Most Southern whites did not own slaves. But those who did were the richest people in the United States. They got rich by torture and murder — by working human beings to death to produce the

most cotton possible.

Cotton was the world’s most profitable commodity and the biggest U.S. export. The average life expectancy of a slave was 21 years.

The war was for slavery and Confederate soldiers were used

The Union government, to its shame, would have accepted slavery in the South. That wasn’t enough for the slaveowners. They wanted a slave empire across the entire continent. They started the Civil War and drafted hundreds of thousands of poor whites to fight for them. Confederate soldiers died by the hundreds of thousands and killed by the hundreds of thousands. They were murdered by the slaveowners as surely as the millions of Black people worked to death in bondage.

Black mass action finished the Confederacy

Black people themselves acted to end the carnage. Half a million left the plantations and escaped to Union lines, paralyzing the Southern war economy.

Nearly 200,000 Black soldiers fought for the Union, including five regiments from South Carolina. Sixty-eight thousand died. Confederate war criminals like Nathan Bedford Forrest murdered captured Black soldiers in cold blood.

Reconstruction was for ALL poor people ...

Emancipation and Reconstruction brought democracy to South Carolina. Elected Black war heroes like Robert Smalls and Prince Rivers created the first public schools in this state for people of all races. But democracy in South Carolina was drowned in blood by Red

Shirt terrorists waving the Confederate battle flag.

Where are the monuments to real freedom fighters like Smalls, the South Carolina Volunteer Infantry of African Descent, Denmark Vesey and Starling Carlton, a white South Carolinian executed in 1859 for helping an escaped slave? Where are the monuments to the millions who died in slavery?

The Confederate battle flag was raised over the Statehouse in 1962 to defend a system where Black people were not allowed to vote, use restaurants, water fountains, swimming pools and parks and were required by law to ride in the back of the bus and give up their seats to white passengers. Today that flag still stands for racism and for keeping South Carolina a low-wage, “right-to-work” state.

Due to mass outrage

NASCAR bans Confederate flag

By Monica Moorehead

The horrific massacre of nine African Americans — Rev. Clementa Pinckney, Cynthia Hurd, Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Tywanza Sanders, Ethel Lance, Susie Jackson, Rev. Daniel Simmons, Rev. DePayne Middleton Doctor and Myra Thompson — on June 17 by white supremacist Dylann Roof in Charleston, S.C., has triggered an unprecedented anti-racist response to pro-slavery symbols — especially the putrid Confederate flag, which still flies in front of the State House in Columbia.

Activists have taken to the streets to remove as well as burn the Confederate flag in protests not just relegated to the Deep South, but virtually around the U.S. They have also painted Confederate statues with the slogan, “Black Lives Matter,” the clarion call of the new phase of the Black Liberation struggle against all forms of terror from police brutality to racist vigilantism.

The power of mass protest against the Confederate flag is starting to have a profound impact on popular culture, including in sports. Take NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing), one of the most lucrative, influential professional race car events in the South and the country. The company was founded in Daytona Beach, Fla., in February 1948 by Bill France Sr., who in 1968 commissioned the building of the Alabama International Motor Speedway in Talladega, Ala.

France supported the 1968 presidential candidacy of George Wallace, the arch-racist, pro-segregationist Alabama governor. From its inception, NASCAR flew the Confederate flag on its grounds at all its events.

Due to the tremendous pressure of the anti-racist struggle, Brian France, current NASCAR CEO and grandson of its founder, announced June 29 that the Confederate flag will no longer fly during NASCAR events. This is a major development in the sports world, considering that the Confederate flag has been embedded in NASCAR culture since day one.

France stated, “We want to go as far as we can to eliminate the presence of that flag. ... I personally find it an offensive symbol, so there is no daylight [on] how we feel about it and our sensitivity to others who feel the same way. We’re working with the industry to see how far we can go to get that flag to be disassociat-

ed entirely from our events.” (grantland.com, June 29) France also denounced the Confederate flag flying in front of the State House in Columbia, S.C.

Dale Earnhardt Jr., whose late father is legendary driver Dale Earnhardt Sr., agreed with NASCAR’s decision, stating in the same article, “I think it’s offensive to an entire race. It belongs in the history

books and that’s about it.”

The next step for NASCAR to take is to ban fans from flying their individual Confederate flags in the stands during weekend races. The Daytona International Speedway, which hosts NASCAR’s national races publicly asked their fans on July 2 not to bring Confederate flags to events so they would be more “inclusive.”

In a separate action, NASCAR officials denounced the virulently racist, anti-immigrant remarks made by Donald Trump, billionaire and presidential candidate. They also announced that NASCAR will boycott the Trump National Doral Miami resort for its postseason Camping World Truck Series and Xfinity series banquet scheduled for later this year. □

Slaveowners’ flag burned

Baltimore

By David Card

This July 4, while millions were preparing for fireworks and celebrations, the Baltimore People’s Power Assembly held a rally to combat the racist legacy of slavery. Committed activists gathered in a park in the Charles Village neighborhood of Baltimore to speak out against racism, demand that Confederate monuments be removed, and finally burn the Confederate flag.

Thrust into the national spotlight again after the racist massacre of nine Black people in a church in South Carolina on June 17, the Confederate flag has been the object of many progressive protests around the country. It has also attracted support from reactionaries and racists.

In Dundalk, a suburb of Baltimore, many Confederate flags were displayed at a local “heritage festival” on July 3 — to the horror of Dundalk’s Black residents. There have also been reports of an increase in Confederate flags flying on trucks throughout the region. These events represent, however, only some of

the latest in the racist campaign of terror against Black America unleashed by the terrorist attack in Charleston.

In light of these national tragedies, the Baltimore PPA demanded at the rally that the city government remove all monuments in the city that honor the Confederacy. This city is 70 percent Black and historically one of the largest free Black cities during the era of slavery. That it still has nine monuments that honor Confederate figures is a disgrace and offensive to the Black community.

Maryland has many great Black daughters and sons who deserve to be honored in Baltimore, such as Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass.



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Lee Patterson reads an excerpt from Frederick Douglass’s writings before burning the Confederate flag on July 4.

Before burning the Confederate flag, activists highlighted the criminal nature of racism in the United States by reading an excerpt from Frederick Douglass’ famous speech, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?”

The action concluded with activists dousing the racist flag with lighter fluid and setting it alight to the sound of vengeful and hopeful cheers. □

Septima Clark’s role in civil rights education

South Carolina

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Since the massacre of nine African Americans at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, we have reviewed the legacy of the Civil Rights struggle in Charleston, S.C., starting with Denmark Vesey and his comrades being targeted by the slavocracy for plotting insurrection in 1822.

A list of notable organizers in the African struggle against slavery and institutional racism from South Carolina must include A.M.E. Bishop Henry McNeal Turner (1834-1915). Turner rose to prominence as a soldier in the Union Army during the Civil War, a politician during Reconstruction and a proponent of Pan-Africanism during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Leading role of Septima Clark

An often overlooked figure in the African-American movement was Septima Poinsette Clark. Born on May 3, 1898, in Charleston, she studied education and became a teacher.

Clark joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which during the early 20th century was considered a dangerous militant organization by the Southern ruling class. Legalized segregation was the law of the South and many areas of the North of the United States.

An entry published by biography.com says that “Clark qualified as a teacher, but

Charleston did not hire African Americans to teach in its public schools. Instead, she became an instructor on South Carolina’s Johns Island in 1916. In 1919, Clark returned to Charleston to teach at the Avery Institute. She also joined with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in trying to get the city to hire African-American teachers. By gathering signatures in favor of the change, Clark helped ensure that the effort was successful.”

Septima Poinsette married Nerie Clark in 1920. He died of kidney failure five years later. She then relocated to Columbia, S.C., the state capital, and continued her education career.

There she joined the local chapter of the NAACP. Clark worked consistently with the organization along with attorney Thurgood Marshall, a leading activist who later was named a justice of the Supreme Court. In 1945, they initiated a legal case demanding equal pay for African-American and white teachers. Clark later described the case as her “first effort in a social action challenging the status quo.”

After winning the case, her salary as a teacher increased threefold. Similar cases were filed in various states throughout the South during the 1940s.

Clark then went back to Charleston in 1947, securing another teaching position and continuing her activism in the NAACP. Nonetheless, in 1956, the racist state government in South Carolina made it illegal for public employees to hold memberships in civil rights orga-

nizations. A principled organizer and fighter in the anti-racist movement, Clark refused to resign from the NAACP and consequently was fired from her job after decades of service.

Civil rights and mass education

Despite these setbacks, Clark continued her pioneering work in the Civil Rights Movement, which was gaining mass support during the mid-to-late 1950s. She realized the necessity of adult literacy in the struggle for voting rights and advancement within the labor market.

After being terminated as a public school teacher in South Carolina, Clark went to work for Tennessee’s Highlander Folk School, an institution that trained organizers in the labor and the Civil Rights movements. She was no newcomer to the Highlander School, having led workshops there during breaks from teaching in South Carolina. Rosa Parks, popularly known as “the Mother of the Civil Rights Movement,” had attended workshops conducted by Clark in 1955 prior to the beginning of the Montgomery bus boycott later that same year.

Clark was appointed as the director of the Highlander’s Citizenship School program. This program assisted working people and farmers in learning how to instruct others in their communities in the fields of basic literacy and mathematics. As a result of these projects, more people were able to register to vote, since Southern states often utilized literacy tests to exclude Afri-

Continued on page 10

te heritage’

And Black freedom struggle did more

The Black freedom struggle of the 60s did not just sweep away segregation. It brought us Medicare, Medicaid, Title I, better Social Security benefits and a higher minimum wage. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was organizing a poor people’s march on Washington, D.C., for economic human rights when he was murdered.

Some say the flag issue is a diversion when jobs are scarce, wages are low and textile jobs are gone. Damn right! It is a diversion for working-class white people to fly a racist flag rather than uniting with Black people to fight for economic justice. But that starts with saying “No” to racism.

There is no honor in fighting for an unjust cause, no glory in being used. The only honor is in fighting for what is right.

Starr is a WW contributing writer.

Cuba eliminates mother-to-child transmission of HIV

By E. Catalinotto, Certified Nurse Midwife

Cuba became the first country certified by the World Health Organization as having eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis.

“Cuba’s success demonstrates that universal access and universal health coverage ... are the key to success, even against challenges as daunting as HIV,” said Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, director of the Pan American Health Organization, WHO’s Regional Office for the Americas, in a June 30 news release. “This is a celebration for Cuba and a celebration for children and families everywhere.”

Globally, about 1.4 million women living with HIV become pregnant each year. Without treatment, up to 45 percent of their babies will become infected. Medication for mother and newborn can bring that down to about 1 percent.

This writer — who provided prenatal care to HIV-positive women and was involved in research to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV during the ear-

ly 1990s in the United States — was not surprised to see Cuba’s achievement. The Cuban medical system has an excellent record of providing the best care available to everyone by focusing on the population’s needs, with no focus on profits.

AIDS was first identified in 84 Cubans who were among 300,000 military personnel returning from Africa in the 1980s, where they played a crucial role in defeating apartheid forces in Angola. A nationwide screening program began in 1986, when Cuban scientists developed their own HIV test, despite the economic and information blockade that hinders scientific exchange. (American Journal of Public Health, May 1991) Eighty percent of the sexually active population, about 3.5 million people, were screened; 268 HIV-positive individuals were identified.

Testing and tracing of sexual contacts followed standard public health procedures, but more thoroughly than in other countries, according to the Health and Human Rights Journal, September 2009. One of those first measures was quaran-

‘A human life is worth more than all the gold of the richest man on earth.’ Che Guevara’s comment fits Cuba’s socialist medical system.

tine (1986-1989), later replaced by outpatient treatment, education and patient peer groups. Since 1988, HIV education has also been part of Cuba’s school curriculum starting in the fifth grade.

The quarantine period was not directed at gay and bisexual men — who were then only 21 percent of those who tested positive. Women formed the same percentage of the infected. Currently, men who have sex with men are a majority of HIV-positive people in Cuba.

After the development in 1996 of highly active anti-retroviral treatment (HAART), Cuba bought ART drugs for all children with AIDS and their mothers, at a cost of \$14,000 per person per year. The Cuban medical organizations and government prioritized this expense despite Cuba’s deep economic crisis in the mid-1990s after the collapse of the USSR and as the U.S. blockade deepened under President Bill Clinton. Since 1998, Cuba



has been producing its own low-cost generic HIV medications.

In addition to this latest achievement in mother-child health, Cuba has the lowest infant mortality rate in the Americas. It also leads the world in numbers of health care workers sent to respond to the Ebola epidemic.

“After the devastating [2010] earthquake in impoverished Haiti, Cuba sent the largest medical contingent and cared for 40 percent of the victims. Following the Kashmir earthquake of 2005, Cuba sent 2,400 medical workers to Pakistan and treated more than 70 percent of those affected.” (Guardian, Dec. 3, 2014)

While the U.S. and Europe suck health care workers out of poor countries, Cuba established the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM) and has graduated more than 20,000 doctors from over 123 countries since 1998.

Cuban immunologists have made several vaccination breakthroughs — for meningitis B, hepatitis B and lung cancer. (Wired Magazine, May 11, 2015) Cuba also launched a vaccination campaign against malaria, which affects mainly children, in 15 West African countries and restored the sight of 3.5 million people in Latin America. (Huffington Post Aug. 8, 2014) □

Cuba on diplomatic relations with U.S.

End the blockade ▶ Return Guantánamo ▶ Stop subversive efforts ▶ Respect Cuba’s sovereignty & social system

Statement by the Revolutionary Government of Cuba, July 1

After re-establishing diplomatic relations with the United States, the lifting of the blockade, among other aspects, will be indispensable for the normalization of relations. On July 1, 2015, the President of the Councils of State and of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, and the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, exchanged letters through which they confirmed their decision to reestablish diplomatic relations between the two countries and open permanent diplomatic missions in the respective capitals as from July 20, 2015.

On that same day, the official ceremony to open the Cuban Embassy in Washington will be held, which will be attended by a Cuban delegation presided over by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, and made up by outstanding representatives of the Cuban society.

As Cuba and the United States take this formal step, they ratified their intention to develop respectful and cooperative relations between both peoples and governments, based on the principles and purposes enshrined in the United Nations Charter and International Law, particularly the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations.

The Government of Cuba has decided to re-establish diplomatic relations with the United States in the full exercise of its sovereignty and with an invariable commitment with its ideals of independence and social justice, and of solidarity with the just causes of the world, while reaffirming each and every one of the principles for which our people have shed their blood and run every risk under the leadership of the historical Leader of the Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz.

The re-establishment of diplomatic relations and the opening of embassies completes the first stage of what will be a long and complex process towards the normalization of bilateral relations, in which it will be necessary to solve a number of issues derived from policies that were implemented in the past that are still in force

and affect the Cuban nation and its people.

There could be no normal relations between Cuba and the United States as long as the economic, commercial and financial blockade continues to be fully implemented, causing damage and scarcities to the Cuban people. The blockade is the main obstacle to the development of our economy; it is a violation of International Law and affects the interests of all countries, including those of the United States.

In order to normalize relations, it will also be indispensable for the United States Government to return to Cuba the territory illegally occupied by the Guantánamo Naval Base; cease the radio and television broadcasts, which violate international regulations and are harmful to our sovereignty; stop the implementation of programs aimed at promoting internal subversion and destabilization and compensate the Cuban people for all the human and economic damages caused by the United States policies.

As the Cuban Government recalls the issues that are still to be resolved between our two countries, it recognizes the decisions adopted so far by President Obama to remove Cuba from the list of State sponsors of international terrorism; to encourage the Congress of his country to lift the blockade and to begin taking steps to modify the implementation of aspects of this policy by making use of his executive powers.

Likewise, as part of the process towards the normalization of relations, it will be necessary to build the foundations of a kind of relations that have never before existed in the history between our countries, particularly since the military intervention of the United States, 117 years ago, during the independence war that Cuba waged for almost three decades against the Spanish colonialism.

These relations should be based on the absolute respect for our independence and sovereignty; the inalienable right of every State to choose its political, economic, social and cultural system, without any form of interference; and sovereign equality and reciprocity, which are principles of International Law that can not be relinquished.

The Government of Cuba reiterates its willingness to maintain a respectful dialogue with the Government of the United States and develop civilized coexistence relations, based on the respect for the differences that exist between both governments and cooperation in areas of mutual benefit.

Cuba shall continue to be involved in the process to update its economic and social model in order to build a prosperous and sustainable socialism, to move towards the development of the country and to consolidate the achievements of the Revolution.

Havana, July 1st, 2015



On July 26, 1953, revolutionaries stormed the Moncada Barracks in Santiago, Cuba. Less than six years later, Fidel and his guerrillas ousted the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship, marching into Havana during the first days of January 1959.

That same year, Workers World newspaper began to publish. After years of anti-communist reaction, the Cuban Revolution helped revive interest in revolutionary socialism in the U.S. It found an eager supporter in this newspaper. The more outrageous the anti-Cuba propaganda of the big business press, the harder Workers World fought to tell the truth about this great victory over U.S. imperialism.

When, on Jan. 3, 1961, the U.S. announced to the United Nations that Washington was breaking diplomatic relations with Cuba, Workers World’s first editor, Vince Copeland, led a protest inside the U.N. chamber. His booming voice could be heard on WNYC radio shouting that Ambassador James Wadsworth “speaks for the bankers, not the people.”

Anti-Cuba propaganda turned into sabotage and an outright CIA-directed invasion that April. Workers World closely covered the efforts of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, the Committee to Defend Francisco Molina and other orga-

nizations in solidarity with the Cuban people. And when the Kennedy administration threatened a nuclear attack in 1962, Workers World’s front page demanded “Hands off Cuba!”

Cuban troops helped liberate Angola from racist colonial rule. Tens of thousands of Cuban medical workers have gone to Africa, Latin America and Haiti to fight disease. Cuba even offered to send doctors to U.S. regions shattered by Hurricane Katrina. But Washington said “no.”

In the early 1990s, Cuba endured great economic hardship after the USSR fell and the U.S. tightened its blockade of the socialist island. Workers World helped build the Peace for Cuba International Appeal, which brought thousands to New York City’s Javits Center in January 1992, calling for an end to the blockade, the travel ban and all intervention against Cuba.

The brutal blockade has failed to overturn the Cuban Revolution. Now Washington is discussing normalizing diplomatic relations with Havana. Workers World supports Cuba’s precondition that the U.S. close its illegal base at Guantánamo and the torture prison there and return Guantánamo to the Cuban people.

Assata Shakur, an African-American freedom fighter, has lived in exile in Cuba

Wall St. seeks neoliberal 'solution' for Puerto Rico

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Puerto Rico Governor Alejandro García Padilla surprised people when he said in a televised message June 29 that Puerto Rico's public debt is "unpayable" and "that it is not about politics. It is mathematics." That he suddenly accepts what the independence and progressive movement of the islands — Puerto Rico is an archipelago — has been saying for quite some time is puzzling. What's behind it?

As a mere administrator of the colonial government, García Padilla responds, not to the needs of the people, but to his masters in Washington and Wall Street. When he says the debt is unpayable, it is not to protect the people, but the U.S. bondholders.

The enormous crisis of Puerto Rico, framed within the crisis of capitalism at a dead end on a global scale and in particular in the United States, has launched a complex scenario. Its goal is to collect from the Puerto Rican people every cent of the municipal bonds sold by successive governments to administer Puerto Rico and pay its public agencies' budgets.

The debt, now about \$72 billion, represents more than \$20,000 per person in Puerto Rico, more than the median income, which is \$19,520 per year. ("Puerto Rico's Fiscal Crisis Is America's Colonial Crisis" by Angelo Falcon) The money borrowed by the government has been used only for local debts or to pay the huge interest that benefits those who hold Puerto Rico's bonds. Even though Moody's and other agencies have been progressively lowering the qualifications of these bonds to "junk" status, the big bondholder firms have sought these bonds because they are tax-free and have the highest return.

Beside the returns to bondholders, the commissions and fees Wall Street charges are astronomical. A Forbes article in 2013, "How Wall Street Profited

from Puerto Rico's Misery," reported: "The fees charged were higher than those assessed on other financially troubled U.S. states and cities. In fact, according to Reuters, banks such as UBS were paid gross spreads averaging 31 percent higher than spreads charged to Detroit."

The article concludes with what we can now conclude: "To understand how Puerto Rico is in such dire straits, simply follow the money to Wall Street."

Today, the Puerto Rican government is bankrupt and there is no economic growth, despite desperate measures implemented to balance the budget since even before the economic crisis of 2008. These measures include imposing a sales tax in 2006, layoffs of public employees in 2009, pension reform in 2013, and the recent gas tax and the Sales and Use Tax (IVU), among others. Nothing has improved the economy, and the government is unlikely to continue payments on the debt.

Krueger Report: IMF neoliberal prescription

All García Padilla accomplished was to prepare people for the imposition of disastrous neoliberal measures detailed in the Krueger Report. The 30-page report provides a detailed study of the economy of the colony and its practices for 10 consecutive years. It was written by Anne O. Krueger, Ranjit Teja and Andrew Wolfe, former economists in none other than the International Monetary Fund.

While the purpose of this "Puerto Rico, a way forward" study is to find ways to extract more profits from the U.S. colony, by necessity it had to address the real crisis of the country: colonialism, even though it wasn't expressed so clearly. It reflects the colonial reality that leaves Puerto Rico unable to solve its financial problems with a sovereign policy.

But what are these recipes to get Puerto Rico out of this quagmire? The report notes that these difficult measures have had no popular response, especially from the trade unions.

Some measures in Krueger's five-year plan are elimination of the minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour — the report says it is too high for Puerto Rico and must

be lowered until the situation there approaches that of the poorest state in the USA — plus elimination of the year-end or Christmas bonus; reduction of holidays from 30 to 15 days; redefining overtime based on 40 hours a week and not, as now, after eight hours per day; "reducing onerous requirements for proving just cause in layoffs"; reducing the number of teachers and closing schools; reduction of funding for the University of Puerto Rico, and so on.

The plan also includes privatization of public agencies, such as the Electric Power Authority and other government agencies that are efficiently generating income as the State Insurance Fund.

Two new things in the proposal are the request to the U.S. Congress to allow Puerto Rico to use the bankruptcy law to "renegotiate" the debt, something now impossible; and the suspension of the Jones or Cabotage Act, which forces all items that arrive at the island, wherever they come from, to be transferred by U.S. vessels and with U.S. personnel — which more than doubles the products' price.

Without intending to, the report eliminates some of the pro-statehood arguments that have been used to try to convince people that statehood status will improve conditions and increase rights. When some of these measures are mentioned in the report, such as the reduction of vacation time and the requirements to validate unjustified layoffs and redefine overtime, the report argues that they should be at the levels in the "mainland," where workers have already lost so many labor rights.

In Puerto Rico, despite its colonial status, the trade union struggle has achieved some progressive rights that have been lost in the "mainland."

Another comparison the report makes is about education — that the budget for the University of Puerto Rico must be reduced because of its very low cost and that tuition should become more expensive, as in the U.S.

Resistance is education and struggle

Workers World/Mundo Obrero spoke with Luis Pedraza Leduc, spokesperson for the Labor Coordinator and coordina-

tor of PROSOL, the Solidarity Program of UTIER (the Electrical Industry and Irrigation Workers Union, which represents some of the workers at the Electrical Power Authority). Pedraza Leduc attended the meeting the governor convened on June 29, where mayors, legislators, various sectors of society and the unions heard the report by Ann Krueger. Pedraza Leduc mentioned the role played by Law 66, which the Krueger report supports. This "Law of Fiscal and Operational Sustainability of the Government of Puerto Rico allows the government to make the necessary adjustments to address the fiscal crisis facing the country." (aldia.microjuris.com) It has been the basis for attacking the unions.

Pedraza Leduc says: "The approach is to extend Act 66; this means no collective bargaining and eliminating benefits. In our case for PROSOL, which represents the employees of the Highway Authority, a public corporation, on Monday, June 29, we opened a demand for a court injunction against this law. We say that the law is unconstitutional because it goes against the constitutional right to collective bargaining and therefore to free association.

"This is a measure that we are taking from the legal standpoint. The other more urgent action that the UTIER and the union movement is taking, which is what we will be doing in all sectors, is to hold a discussion with delegates and with the union rank and file about all these issues. We need the people to immerse themselves in and discuss everything that is going on so that we have a base of support for struggle actions. Because it is not a struggle that can be decided on the level of legality or discussion with these people, because they (government and consultants) have already decided."

This week several meetings will be held to do just that.

Puerto Rico is at a crossroads, where the Puerto Rican progressive movement, both on the islands and in the Diaspora, requires extensive discussions and mobilizations. Borinken's (Puerto Rico's) future is at stake.

Joubert-Ceci is a Puerto Rican living in Pennsylvania.

**And support
Workers World!**

for 31 years. Washington wants her sent back to the racist hellholes of mass incarceration here. We support Cuba's insistence that its sovereignty be respected, including the right to give shelter to those fleeing repression.

Our readers are familiar with Workers World's support for the IFCO/Pastors for Peace caravans that carry medical and other essential supplies to the island and the yearly Venceremos Brigades. You know our role in the campaign to free the Cuban 5 heroes.

We hope you will help us keep up this tradition of standing firmly with Cuba and its people. Donations from our supporters have been a big factor in getting our pro-Cuba writings in print, distributed and posted online at workers.org.

We invite you to donate to the Workers World Fund Drive, our biannual fundraising campaign. Send checks to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor, New York, NY 10011, with your name and address. Indicate for "Fund Drive."

Also, please join the 38-year-old WW Supporter Program and make a regular donation, no matter how modest. Go to workers.org/donate/ or send checks to the above address; write "For WWSP."

We appreciate your help in growing the revolutionary media in the U.S. □

México's teachers struggle for justice

By Judy Greenspan
Cuernavaca, México,

"To be a teacher and not to fight is a contradiction in our fundamental way of teaching." That statement, repeated all over, is the essence of the struggle of the teachers in Mexico unfolding throughout the country. In Mexico, tens of thousands of public school teachers (K-12) are fighting against the latest reform measure of the federal Department of Education.

A recent law passed in Mexico now requires all public school teachers to take a federal exam to supposedly measure their teaching competence. "La Reforma" (the reform) is in reality an online evaluation by the top office of education, and if teachers "fail," they will be fired. The teachers of this country have a long rich history of militancy and struggle. This latest "reform" is an attempt to crush the movement of the public school teachers and strengthen the campaign to privatize education. Private school teachers, of



Teachers protesting in Cuernavaca, México.

course, do not have to take this "evaluation" exam.

Over the past month, the National Coordination of Education Workers (CNTE) has led massive demonstrations, involving occupations and the blocking of major highways, that have rocked cities in every state of this country. On July 1, a national day of protest took place demanding that "La Reforma" be overturned.

Several marches have been held in Cuernavaca, the capital city of the state of Morelos. On two occasions, teachers left the schools to demonstrate in the streets. On the national day of protest, nearly

2,000 teachers filled the streets surrounding the main plaza of Cuernavaca. Their chants were "¡Urgente! ¡Urgente! ¡Evaluar al presidente!" (Urgent! Urgent! Evaluate the president!) and "¡Peña entiende, la educación no se vende!" (President Peña must understand, education is not for sale!) The protest signs exposed the mandated reform as a punitive fraud — an attempt to crush the militant movement against the privatization of education of Mexico. Many teachers have expressed their anger over being scapegoated for systemic problems in the education system and have refused to take the exam.

The education secretary, Emilio Chuayfett, has admitted that his plan is not going well in many states around the country. Teachers from Oaxaca, Chiapas and other states have set up tents in La Plaza de la Revolución in this country's capital, Mexico City, to protest the "evaluation." The CNTE in Morelos has vowed to continue the fight for justice for the teachers of Mexico. □

WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

WORKERS WORLD

editorial

Stop racist executions!

The Supreme Court has backed the use of an execution drug used in U.S. prisons over the objection of death row inmates. By a vote of 5-4, the court's five right-wing justices on June 29 gave the stamp of approval to death-penalty states to utilize midazolam during executions. Their ruling in *Glossip v. Gross* endorses painful deaths and has been widely denounced by progressive forces everywhere.

Four Oklahoma death row prisoners had brought the lawsuit seeking to stop the use of midazolam. One inmate has since been executed. While the drug is supposed to decrease pain during executions, the prisoners say that it does not — and cited three excruciating executions in 2014 that used the drug. Plaintiffs claimed the state's three-drug protocol violates the Eighth Amendment's ban on "cruel and unusual punishment." Absurdly, the high court also ruled that the prisoners had to take responsibility to find an available alternative to this drug.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote the main dissent, joined by Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer and Elena Kagan. In the *Glossip v. Gross* section of the Supreme Court's blog, Sotomayor stingingly criticizes the ridiculous "available-alternative requirement." "Petitioners contend that Oklahoma's current protocol is a barbarous method of punishment — the chemical equivalent of being burned alive. But under the court's new rule, it would not matter whether the state intended to use midazolam, or instead have petitioners drawn and quartered, slowly tortured to death or actually burned at the stake."

Justice Breyer, joined by Justice Ginsberg, challenged the death penalty itself, saying it likely violates the Eighth Amendment barring "cruel and unusual punishment." In a 46-page document, he raised what death penalty opponents have been saying all along — that it is "unfair, cruel and unusual infliction of a serious punishment on an individual."

Breyer cited the executions of innocent people, the 154 exonerations since 1973, and the arbitrary nature of death sentences, with "race, gender, geography and resources" as determining factors in who is sentenced to death. The preponderance of executions has occurred in 62 counties, out of 3,000 countrywide. The document admits that racial discrimination and politics are rife throughout the capital punishment justice system.

Between 1976, when the Supreme Court legalized capital punishment, and this June 19, there have been 1,411 executions, says the Death Penalty Information Center. Some 1,147 have occurred in the South, most in Texas, with 526. Oklahoma is second with 112, Virginia third with 110. In recent years, the use of this cruel punishment has decreased and 19 states plus Washington, D.C., have abolished the practice. But it still goes on.

Activists influence court

Doubtlessly, the Supreme Court's liberal grouping has been influenced by the growing, strong movement against capital punishment, active all over the country. Human rights and civil rights organizations and activists, legal associations, community and anti-racist groups, criminal justice reformers, academics and major media have called for an end to executions. They don't want more hu-

mane methods of capital punishment: They want an end to it altogether.

Workers World agrees that capital punishment should be abolished in every state and at the federal level. It is a form of torture that has been outlawed in more than 100 countries. The United States stands out as an advanced industrialized country that still puts people to death. What kind of government continues to kill prisoners and tortures them in the process?

No millionaires are sentenced to death, though their crimes, from fouling the environment to maintaining unsafe workplaces, and mass layoffs, directly and indirectly take the lives of so many workers.

In addition to its function of repressing the working class, the U.S. capitalist state is especially brutal because racism and national oppression are embedded throughout the criminal justice system, from the disproportionate rate of arrests and incarcerations of African Americans and Latinos/as to the imposition of the death penalty. While African Americans make up around 15 percent of the U.S. population, some 490 have been executed since 1976, more than a third of those put to death.

This terrible reality shows the racist character of the death penalty — known as "legal lynching." This atrocity is a holdover from centuries of national oppression, the enslavement of African people, followed by Jim Crow racism and segregation. It still has a grip on many state governments.

Death penalty abolitionists have a lot of work ahead, especially in the upcoming election period when reactionary politicians will use the death penalty, especially in the South, to whip up racists' support. But, it is ever more important now to forge ahead to end this anti-human crime!

Abolish the death penalty! □

Septima Clark & civil rights education

Continued from page 7

can Americans from the franchise.

By 1961, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which was founded by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other ministers in 1957, adopted the education project. Clark soon joined the SCLC as its director of education and teaching. Under her direction, more than 800 citizenship schools were established.

Clark became the first woman to occupy a seat on the board of the SCLC. She had to deal with an organization which was male-dominated and still burdened with paternalism.

Another leading African-American woman organizer, Ella Baker, who had also worked with the NAACP during the 1930s and 1940s, served as the first executive director of the SCLC but left the organization after differences with its leaders. Baker convened the Southwide youth conference in April 1960 at Shaw College in Raleigh, N.C., which led to the founding of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

Significance of Septima Clark today

A pioneer in mass education, Clark's work linked adult literacy to the struggle for civil rights and political representation.

Call for mass actions to stop Saudi bombing of Yemen

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

July 6 — The Pentagon-backed and -coordinated bombing campaign has killed thousands and wounded thousands more in Yemen since the air war by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council began on March 26. The Pentagon is providing intelligence, refueling technology and diplomatic cover to the Riyadh-based alliance.

The alliance attacked the General People's Congress headquarters of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh on July 6 in the capital, Sana'a, "killing employees and guards and destroying the building," reported party official Faeqa al-Sayed. The bombing occurred while a meeting was going on with U.N. envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed elsewhere in Sana'a. This was reported by the GPC's news site, almotamar.net.

Al-Sayed said the bombings were "an attempt to derail the U.N. envoy's mission." Ahmed's job is ostensibly to create conditions for a humanitarian ceasefire so negotiations for peace can take place there.

An alliance between the General People's Congress and the Ansurallah (Houthis) has been fighting forces backed by ousted fugitive President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who is based in Riyadh.

Hadi insists that there can be no ceasefire until an agreement is reached to return him to power. Recent talks in Geneva failed because the U.S.-backed Saudi regime did not hold discussions aimed at a resolution of the political crisis.

Furthermore, the pro-Hadi Saudi-GCC alliance is demanding that U.N. humanitarian relief can only be guaranteed if the Ansurallah and GPC forces are withdrawn from the vast territories they now control in Yemen.

U.S.-backed fighter planes bomb South

Human Rights Watch reported on June 30 that several airstrikes on Ansurallah-held areas in Saada City between April

6 and May 11, destroyed markets, homes, a school and a gas station — and killed at least 59 people, in violation of international law. A strike on a residential neighborhood on May 5 killed 27 members of the al-Ibbi family, including 17 children. With the U.S. providing technical assistance and political support for the war, Washington is just as responsible for these atrocities as are their regional allies.

On July 6, the Saudi-GCC alliance bombed a marketplace, killing many civilians in Yemen's South. The Associated Press reported that day, "A massive airstrike by the Saudi-led coalition targeting rebels hit a local marketplace in Yemen, killing over 45 civilians. ... More than 50 civilians were also wounded in the strike in Fayoush, a suburb just north of the southern port city of Aden." An eyewitness, Abu-Ali al-Azikbi, saw "dozens of dead strewn about and a sea of blood, while the wounded were being evacuated to nearby hospitals."

Millions are facing critical food shortages and death due to the bombing of civilian areas and infrastructure, such as ports, and the imposition of a blockade preventing goods from entering the underdeveloped Middle Eastern nation.

Since the bombing began, 20 million Yemenis have been without access to safe drinking water, while more than 1 million people have been driven from their homes. The United Nations has announced the highest-level humanitarian crisis in Yemen where more than 80 percent of the people desperately need assistance.

No U.N. sanctions imposed on U.S.-backed GCC

This war has been described as an indirect conflict between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Middle Eastern countries aligned with Washington and Wall Street. However, Tehran's efforts to provide humanitarian assistance or work toward a peace settlement have been rebuffed by Saudi Arabia and the U.S.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab and African Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says that the only solution to this war is a ceasefire and the adoption of a framework for dialogue between the parties.

Press TV quoted Amir-Abdollahian, "Since the onset of the foreign military strikes on Yemen, Iran has unequivocally announced that the Saudi military action is a strategic mistake, the only outcome of which will be the slaughter of the people of Yemen and the spread of terrorism and insecurity in the sensitive Persian Gulf region." (July 6)

Despite Tehran's diplomatic overtures, the U.N. refuses to impose sanctions or other punitive measures against the Saudi-GCC alliance, surrogate rebel forces and U.S. supporters,

Saudi-owned Al Arabiya TVA claimed that Tehran was coordinating Ansurallah military activities in Yemen through military advisers, some of whom were killed fighting in Yemen. But Amir-Abdollahian denied that Iran has military advisers there. He stressed, "Riyadh's war crimes against innocent Yemeni people have no justification." (Press TV, July 4)

This war of destruction and genocide is part of U.S. imperialism's broader strategy to dominate the regions of the Middle East and North Africa. Developments in Yemen cannot be viewed independently of what has taken place in Iraq, Syria and Egypt where Washington's interventions have left a trail of destruction, dislocation and death. □

U.S.-NATO ramps up threats on Russia's borders

By Greg Butterfield

Following a symbolic vote in the U.S. House of Representatives on June 10 to ban support for Ukraine's fascist Azov Battalion, both the Obama administration and Senate Republicans signaled their continued commitment to the far-right regime in Kiev — and to pushing forward the dangerous military confrontation with the Russian Federation.

In Tallinn, Estonia, U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter announced plans on June 23 to “pre-position” heavy weaponry in six Baltic and Eastern European countries — Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Poland and Romania — as part of the expansion of a NATO “Rapid Response Force” from 13,000 to 40,000 troops.

That would mean stationing hundreds of Pentagon tanks, Bradley armored infantry vehicles, self-propelled howitzers and other weaponry near the borders of the Russian Federation, with additional heavy weapons stored in Germany. (RT.com, June 23)

Earlier, at a meeting of NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force in Germany on June 22, Carter said, “U.S. support would include intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets — which can include drones or manned aircraft — as well as special operations forces, logistical expertise and high-end U.S. military assets.” A cyberwarfare center is envisioned. (Reuters, June 22)

Along with a spate of recent war games near Russia and the deployment of U.S. and other NATO warships to the Black Sea, the Pentagon calls the latest provocation a matter of “strengthening collective defenses” in response to Russia's alleged aggression in Ukraine.

Moscow, however, calls it a flagrant violation of the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, which codified agreements made during the breakup of the Soviet Union against NATO's eastward expansion.

General Yuri Yakubov, coordinator of the Office of the Inspector General of the Russian Defense Ministry, denounced the U.S. plan as “the most aggressive step” since the Cold War, RT reported.

Rep. Conyers exposed fascist role

The anti-Azov amendments to the 2015 Defense Appropriations Act, initiated

by senior Congressional Black Caucus member, Rep. John Conyers of Michigan, embarrassed both the White House and Republican leadership, as well as the coalition of oligarchs, neoliberal politicians and neo-Nazis running Ukraine. It marked the first time since the U.S.-backed coup in February 2014 that any official body in Washington had dared to invoke the fascists' role in the Kiev regime.

Since April, U.S. Army troops stationed in Lvov, in western Ukraine, have been training Azov troops and other members of the far-right National Guard to continue the brutal war against the independent Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics of the Donbass mining region. Residents of the Donbass overwhelmingly voted for independence from Ukraine in a May 2014 referendum.

According to official United Nations figures, more than 6,400 people have died in Donbass since Kiev began its so-called Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) in April 2014. But most observers believe the number of deaths is far higher.

Despite a ceasefire agreement signed in February, known as Minsk 2, the Ukrainian Armed Forces and allied far-right volunteer battalions continue to violate the truce on a daily basis, targeting residential areas with artillery and other weapons.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko bragged on June 26 of a buildup of 60,000 troops in the “ATO zone,” signaling that a new offensive is in the offing soon. (Sputnik News, June 26)

War criminal McCain visits Nazis again

Carter's trip to Germany and the Baltics was preceded by one by Sen. John McCain, who headed a Senate delegation to Ukraine June 19-21. McCain — who infamously shared a platform with Oleh Tyaniuk, leader of the neo-Nazi Svoboda party in December 2013 — once again demonstrated his support for Ukrainian fascists with a visit to the Denpro-1 volunteer battalion in Dnepropetrovsk. (RT.com, June 21)

The tour was billed as bolstering congressional support for \$300 million in military equipment to Ukraine, including heavy weaponry, as part of the National Defense Authorization Act.

According to the Associated Press,

Greek masses vote 'No!' to austerity

Continued from page 1

ed gains may not be realized at all — or worse.

At this writing, German Chancellor Angela Merkel has taken a hard line on future negotiations. Alexis Tsipras has met with the leaders of the Greek bourgeois parties to come to an agreement on proposals to bring to Brussels. These are the parties that brought austerity and economic ruin to Greece at the command of the Troika. Tsipras also forced his finance minister, Yanis Varoufakis, to resign, as an open concession to the Troika.

This potentially dangerous development can only be countered by a militant anti-austerity mobilization. The referendum showed that the foundation for struggle is strong and the willingness to sacrifice is profound. The masses refused to be intimidated by the forced closing of the banks or by the endless threats of being set adrift economically outside of Europe, to sink into further suffering. Workers defied bosses who told them they would be fired unless they voted

“Yes” to the Troika's financial extortion.

The landslide victory for “No” came despite threats that medicine would be cut off; that gasoline deliveries would stop; that hardships far worse than the already existing austerity would face the population if they defied the creditors.

The overwhelming majority said, “Enough is enough!” They voted against the continuation of unemployment, which is at 25 percent, with youth unemployment at 50 percent. They voted against the poverty of 30 percent of the population; against further attacks on pensioners; against a 25 percent decline in the economy and thousands of bankruptcies and layoffs; and against the privatization of state assets handed over to the bankers and the oligarchs.

Now is the time for the left in Greece to expand the spirit of resistance underlying the Greek “No” to austerity, “No” to the financial oligarchy, “No” to capitalist exploiters. And the anti-austerity message must be spread far and wide, from Europe to Puerto Rico to Detroit. □

McCain also sought to “shame Washington's European allies for not providing Ukrainian forces with sufficient help” to defeat the anti-fascist rebellion in Donbass. (June 19)

McCain said that only dependence on Russian gas stopped the European Union from taking a harder stance against Moscow. Meeting with Poroshenko in Kiev on June 20, he claimed, “The United States will supply natural gas to Ukraine and other parts of Europe in two years,” RIA Novosti reported.

Under pressure from Washington, European Union foreign ministers have extended economic sanctions on Russia through Jan. 31, 2016.

Any differences between the Obama administration and McCain's crew are strictly tactical in nature. Obama has been more cautious about openly arming Kiev, preferring to use NATO vassals in Eastern Europe and other allied regimes as conduits for weaponry, while providing Ukraine with so-called non-lethal military aid. But the White House is just as committed to continuing the war in Donbass.

Bipartisan support for war

The Donetsk People's Republic announced on July 2 that local elections would be held Oct. 18, in keeping with provisions of the Minsk 2 ceasefire agreement, and under the supervision of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international observers.

Donetsk officials decided to proceed with the elections despite unilateral moves by Kiev to make constitutional changes affecting Donbass without consulting the people there, in violation of Minsk 2. “The Kiev regime has de facto exited the Minsk peace process,” noted Donetsk leader Alexander Zakharchenko.

Poroshenko denounced the election plan, quickly joined by U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden, who claimed they “threaten the Minsk dialogue.” (TASS, July 3)

Zakharchenko acidly responded: “The U.S. vice president has most likely not studied the issue thoroughly. I doubt that he has even read the Minsk package of measures. And Poroshenko is distorting the facts as usual,” Donetsk News Agency reported.

“If Biden is really concerned about the future of the Minsk accords, then he should make Poroshenko and [Parliament Speaker] Groysman implement them. If Biden does not make Poroshenko establish dialogue, then it means that he supports him. And then the U.S. will bear responsibility for disrupting negotiations and for the inevitable collapse of Ukrainian statehood,” Zakharchenko concluded.

Rep. Conyer's anti-Azov amendments shed light on a corner of the massive, bipartisan campaign driving “the New Cold War” to force pro-Western regime change in Moscow and the breakup of the Russian Federation. But to stop this dangerous gambit, a mass anti-war movement is urgently needed. □

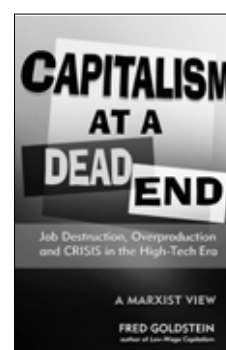
SOLIDARITY with Greek workers



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Demonstrators from the International Action Center, the Peoples Power Assembly, the revolutionary youth group FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) and Baltimore Workers World Party stood in solidarity with the Greek workers in the struggle against austerity. Outside of the Bank of America building downtown they spread awareness of what was happening in Greece and why Baltimore's workers should care.

—David Card



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

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40 años del incidente en Oglala:

¡LIBERTAD PARA LEONARD PELTIER!

Por Leonard Peltier
publicada el 1 de julio 2015

A continuación presentamos algunos extractos de una declaración escrita por el prisionero político e indígena americano Leonard Peltier el 26 de junio del 2015. Peltier fue falsamente encarcelado por 40 años. El 5 de julio del 2007, en un artículo de Workers World/Mundo Obrero, Brenda Ryan escribió: "En la historia del pueblo indígena en EUA, el 26 de junio es un día de angustia. En esa fecha, en 1975, dos agentes del FBI en vehículos no identificados entraron a un rancho en la reserva indígena de Pine Ridge. Más de 150 agentes, vigilantes y policía rodearon la propiedad y abrieron fuego. En el tiroteo resultante, un joven indígena y dos agentes del FBI murieron.

"Este asalto no ha terminado. Por 31 años, Leonard Peltier, un organizador Lakota /Anishinabe del Movimiento Indio Americano (AIM), ha estado en prisión, acusado falsamente de matar a los agentes del FBI. Los fiscales estadounidenses han admitido públicamente que no saben en realidad quién hizo los disparos que mataron a los agentes, pero se han negado a consider-

ar la libertad condicional para Peltier, y entregar miles de páginas de documentos que podrían probar su inocencia".

Para leer la declaración completa del Comité Internacional de Defensa de Leonard Peltier, y para más información puede visitar tionyurl.com/ngy72uf

Este año estoy más preocupado por nuestros hijos y el manejo de sus propias vidas. Esto es muy triste para mí, como lo es para ti, y sé que hay muchas razones para que ellos se sientan con desesperación y desesperanza. Pero sólo puedo pedir y alentar a todos a redoblar nuestros esfuerzos para mostrarles amor y apoyo, y hacerles saber que siempre vamos a cuidarles y protegerles. Eso incluye pedir a los hermanos y hermanas mayores que cuiden de los pequeños. Ellos son nuestro futuro y tienen que ser protegidos y aprender a ser los protectores. Esto no es algo con lo que podemos vivir, tenemos que trabajar para cambiar esta situación.

Y en este año es aún más urgente que nos unamos para proteger nuestra soberanía. Hay tantos problemas para hacer

frente y luchar. Nosotros continuamos la lucha por nuestra región en Black Hills y para impedir que el oleoducto XL envenene nuestras aguas y nuestras tierras, y yo estoy con las naciones Lakota, Dakota y las Nakota, y con todas las personas que estén en esta lucha.

La destrucción de nuestra Madre Tierra por el pesado y toxico aceite de las arenas bituminosas, la fracturación hidráulica y la extracción de gas, petróleo y uranio es inaceptable para nosotros. Debemos estar protegiendo estas cosas aunque los demás tratan de hacernos a un lado. Honro a todos nuestros compañeros que están al frente de esta lucha.

Y después de todo lo que he visto en estos 40 años tras las rejas, todavía me sorprende de lo que están tratando de hacer al pueblo Apache de Oak Flats. Esto no se puede tolerar. Esto no es solamente un robo flagrante de dinero a costa del lugar sagrado de una tribu, sino que es un esfuerzo para exterminarnos, ignorando nuestros derechos como naciones soberanas. Esto no lo vamos a tolerar. Nada es sagrado para estas personas y continuarán tratando de destruirnos y sacarnos del camino sin ni

siquiera pensar un momento en nuestras generaciones futuras si no seguimos en pie y nos oponemos a ellos. Debemos estar preparados para cualquier cosa o si no perderemos todo lo que hemos ganado en los últimos 40 años.

El uso continuo de mascotas racistas es algo que no podemos aceptar como pueblos indígenas y necesitamos continuar todos empujando para poner fin a esa práctica racista.

He aprendido tanto acerca del tiempo en estos años en prisión. Y ahora puedo ver que el tiempo se me está escapando y sé que si no consigo mi libertad bajo la administración de este presidente, estoy casi seguro que moriré en prisión.

He sido capaz de sobrevivir con la esperanza que ustedes me han dado, y por sus oraciones, y estoy agradecido por el apoyo de todos ustedes.

Sigo orando por la familia de mi hermano Joe Stuntz [asesinado por el FBI] y por todos los que pagaron un precio tan alto en esos momentos amargos hace 40 años.

*En el Espíritu de Caballo Loco.
Doksha*

Mientras las iglesias negras se queman, ¿dónde están los agentes federales?

Por Deirdre Griswold

El estado capitalista en los EUA convive cómodamente con los terroristas de la derecha. Este hecho vil se ha confirmado una vez más en la secuela de los asesinatos por el terrorista racista Dylann Roof.

Para el 29 de junio, ya seis iglesias negras en el Sur habían sido destruidas o sufrieron graves daños por incendios desde lo ocurrido en Charleston. Al menos en tres se ha confirmado haber sido causado por incendio provocado, según el Southern Poverty Law Center (Centro legal para la pobreza sureña). La pérdida para la gente de estas comunidades suma cientos de miles de dólares.

Peor aún, los incendios son una amenaza de más violencia a un pueblo cuya dolorosa historia a manos de explotadores blancos todavía resuena con mucha fuerza.

El primer incendio destruyó la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día College Hills en Knoxville-Tennessee el 22 de junio. El departamento de bomberos en Knoxville dijo que el asaltante inició varios incendios en la propiedad de la iglesia. El auto de la iglesia también fue quemado.

Al día siguiente, un incendio en el santuario de la Iglesia El poder de Dios de Cristo en Macon-Georgia, también fue atribuido a un incendio provocado.

Y al día siguiente, otro incendio fue



Una iglesia incendiada en Warrenville, Carolina del Sur.

deliberadamente iniciado en la Iglesia Bautista Briar en Charlotte-Carolina del Norte que destruyó el ala de la escuela aledaña destinada a albergar un programa de verano para las/os niños. El gimnasio y el santuario se quemaron, causando daños estimados de \$250.000.

Esa misma semana, otras tres iglesias negras del Sur - en Tennessee, Florida y Carolina del Sur - también sufrieron incendios, aunque dos pudieron haber sido por causas naturales. Las investigaciones continúan.

Después de lo que pasó en Charleston, no puede haber duda de que los incendios provocados fueron iniciados por supremacistas blancos, cuyas efusiones de odio en forma impresa y por el Internet llaman una y otra vez a la violencia contra las personas de color, utilizando un lenguaje a veces disfrazado y otras

veces en términos viles y degradantes.

Uno podría pensar que el asesinato en masa del tipo que pasó en Charleston provocaría inmediatamente el arresto de quienes abogan una guerra racial contra las/os negros. Hemos visto muchos ejemplos en los últimos años de operaciones encubiertas creadas por el FBI y las autoridades locales de policía para atrapar a militantes negros acusándoles de

tramar actos terroristas - actos que los agentes del gobierno habían alentado y facilitado.

Pero al igual que con los asesinatos de los tres trabajadores de derechos civiles en 1964 - James Chaney, Andrew Goodman y Michael Schwerner - por miembros del Ku Klux Klan, las autoridades no han intervenido para detener este tipo de ataques. Esto, a pesar de que es lógico suponer que, en estos días de amplia vigilancia, tienen conocimiento de ellos.

Esta acción por parte del Estado sin embargo, no encajaría con su objetivo principal - facilitar la extracción de ganancias capitalistas del trabajo de millones de trabajadoras/es al proteger el estatus quo. Y este estatus quo cada vez es más insostenible para millones, mientras la brecha crece entre los muy ricos y el resto de nosotras/os. Así que el esta-

do se torna cada vez más inexorable, con encarcelaciones masivas, sobre todo del pueblo negro y latino, y el entrenamiento y equipamiento de las fuerzas de policía locales para el combate al estilo militar - contra las/os oprimidos, no contra los terroristas racistas.

Sin embargo, hay otra consecuencia de Charleston. Es la alentadora visión de negras/os y blancas/os juntas/os exigiendo la eliminación de la bandera y estatuas confederadas. Blancas/os sureños están saliendo a las calles en solidaridad con sus vecinas/os, amigos y compañeros de trabajo negros. A diferencia de los racistas, que en su mayoría permanecen en las sombras en el ejercicio de sus actos fascistas, las/os que luchan contra el racismo son visibles y hablan - inspirando a otras/os con su valor.

El valor es algo manifiestamente carente en los intolerantes. ¿Quién sino un cobarde elegiría una iglesia negra para llevar a cabo una campaña criminal? Roof sabía que nadie allí estaría armado. Y los otros que prendieron fuego a las otras iglesias negras lo hicieron en medio de la noche.

Pero no es solo de valentía personal que estos elementos fascistas carecen. Toda su perspectiva social se basa en la capitulación cobarde a la clase dominante capitalista. Ellos fulminan contra aquellas/os que son los más oprimidos, culpándoles de todos los males de la sociedad - mientras hacen el trabajo sucio para quienes dominan y se ensañan contra la gran mayoría. □