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CONFERENCE
Putting **REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM** on the table
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WWP/MO Conference & social media 2

Racist atrocities show why Cops must be disarmed!

By **Monica Moorehead**

Police brutality may come in different forms, but its essence is always the same. This atrocious epidemic is a lethal cog in the state-run repressive machinery in the capitalist system — a system of haves and have-nots, the oppressed vs. the oppressor, and workers vs. bosses.

Police brutality is relentless and monstrous; therefore, it cannot be reformed under a system that depends on it for its very survival. People of color, especially Black and Brown, are bearing the heavy brunt of this brutality in overwhelmingly disproportionate numbers, especially the youth and young workers.

According to the June 1 Guardian, an estimated 464 people were killed by the police in the U.S. from January through May 2015. According to those numbers, Black people were twice as likely as whites to be unarmed when killed by police — 32 percent vs. 15 percent. The numbers of Black people who are lucky enough to survive police attacks every minute of every day are immeasurable — no matter their age, gender, gender identity, ability, income or notoriety.

This article raises three cases recently in the news that are prime examples of why the Black Lives Matter movement deserves broad solidarity and why the police must be disarmed.

Tamir Rice

Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old African American, was fatally shot on Nov. 22, 2014, in a Cleveland park for the “crime” of carrying a toy BB gun. His shooting by Tim Loehmann, a white police officer, was captured on video camera. Rice’s 14-year-old sister — who attempted to come to his aid — was viciously thrown to the ground by the police while her brother was allowed to bleed to death.

Tamir Rice’s name has been added to an all-too-long list of other Black victims whose lives were tragically cut short by police violence, including Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Sandra Bland and John Crawford III. The U.S. Justice Department has cited the Cleveland police for their use of “excessive” force, especially against Black people — and for good reason.

Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell, an unarmed Black couple, were slaughtered in 2012 by nine Cleveland police officers who shot 137 bullets into their car. Their alleged crime? Running a stop light. Not one police officer was brought to justice.

Many people expect another miscarriage of justice when it comes to the Rice case. Two separate reports, commissioned by Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Timothy J. McGinty, were released on Oct. 10, stating that Officer Loehmann was found to be “reasonable” when he fatally shot Rice. It is McGinty’s office that will ultimately decide whether charges will be brought against Loehmann when a grand jury finally convenes.



Transwoman Kiesha Jenkins was murdered just days before the annual march. See page 5.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

The Rice family, their supporters and the Black Lives Matter movement have been in the streets and on social media for almost a year demanding the arrest and indictment of Loehmann and his partner, Frank Garmback, for Rice’s murder. The timing of these two reports, released by a Colorado prosecutor and a retired FBI supervisory special agent, is being viewed with suspicion by those seeking justice for Tamir Rice.

Subodh Chandra, one of the family’s lawyers, said in an emailed statement, “These hired guns — all pro-police — dodge the simple fact that the officers rushed Tamir and shot him immediately without assessing the situation in the least. Reasonable jurors in a criminal trial could find that conduct unreasonable.

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Cleveland community mourns loss of Tamir Rice.



Supporters of Rev. Pinkney in Oct. 3 Detroit march that drew 300 activists from environmental, anti-racist and other movements. See page 6.

PHOTO: JEREMY ROYER

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The B&H warehouse workers want better conditions. See page 3.

WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

New website & social media campaign Building the Nov. 7-8 Workers World Party Conference

By Ben Carroll

A freshly updated website and robust social media campaign are being rolled out in advance of the quickly approaching Workers World Party conference. It will take place on Nov. 7 and 8 at the historic Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center in Manhattan's Washington Heights, where many Dominican people live.

The center is located at the site (formerly the Audubon Ballroom) where Malcolm X was assassinated on Feb. 21, 1965, and features murals and other historical pieces dedicated to the political work of Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz. Events in solidarity with the Cuban Revolution, Black Lives Matter and the 43 disappeared Ayotzinapa students have been held there.

The theme of this year's annual WWP conference will be "Putting Socialist Revolution on the Table" and will bring together revolutionaries, anti-capitalists and freedom fighters who are committed to the struggle against all forms of oppression at home and abroad. Organizers will come from across the U.S. for a weekend of discussion and analysis on the pressing issues of the day from a pro-socialist perspective. Solidarity messages from revolutionary movements and struggles worldwide will be shared during the conference.

In the buildup to the conference, Workers World Party unveiled a newly redesigned website in early October that site designers say is easier to navigate and has a more modern appearance. On the site, information about the upcoming conference is featured front and center.

Information about registration, housing, transportation, childcare, the conference schedule and other information can all be found at workersworldparty.org. The site will be continually updated in the weeks leading up to the conference. Leaflets in English and Spanish can be downloaded from the site.

As always, the site features information for those who are interested in learning more about Workers World Party's views on

a range of political questions, WWP's history of struggle and how to become a member of the party.

In addition to the updated website, WWP will also undertake a social media campaign to expand the reach of information about the conference. This comes in addition to — not in replacement of — the hard work Workers World Party branches are already doing in the streets to build for the conference and bring delegations from across the country.

On Facebook, the conference event page is hosted off the main WWP page, which can be found by visiting facebook.com/WorkersWorldParty. Both the Facebook page and event page reflect the most up-to-date information about the conference, which is also available on the website.

Many receive Workers World newspaper updates on Twitter by following @workersworld. While this handle is used exclusively for newspaper articles, @wwpna1 is used to share updates about events and actions WWP branches around the country are engaged in. It's also used extensively in the buildup to the conference to share updates about delegations that will be participating, important information about the conference and other matters.

This information is organized using the hashtag #Time4SocialistRevolution. Organizers encourage others to use that when sharing conference-related information on Twitter or for live tweeting during the conference.



workers.org/wwp facebook.com/WorkersWorldParty #Time4SocialistRevolution

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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. □

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GOP's problems and the class struggle

By David Sole

The chaos exhibited in Washington by the Republican Party majority in the House of Representatives reflects the profound problems of U.S. capitalism and the class basis of this society. The drama — or is it comedy? — is all the more remarkable since the Republicans won a majority in both houses of Congress in the 2014 midterm elections, and should be riding high.

The immediate issue is who will replace John Boehner as Speaker of the House. Boehner resigned that position last month, although he is staying on until a successor is chosen. The struggle for this post has pitted generally conservative Republicans against ultra-right-wing Tea Party Republicans.

This disorganization threatens orderly functioning of the U.S. government, especially with a government funding deadline approaching. The far right appears willing to once again shut down the government and threaten U.S. credit if their “social” agenda items, such as defunding Planned Parenthood, are not adopted.

The big business media have variously described the result as “chaos,” “turmoil,” “fractious” and “a circus.” Paul Krugman of the New York Times calls the ultra-right “crazies.” But what none of the capitalist reporters and commentators ever says is that behind it all is the

deep economic crisis that is widening class divisions.

An open advocate for the Wall Street banks and giant corporations, the traditional Republican Party has had a harder and harder time commanding a majority of the huge U.S. population, the bulk of whom are lower and middle income. It was necessary for the Republicans to attract more broadly from the middle class and even sections of the working class in order to play its role in the two-party political system that dominates the U.S.

The problem of pulling poor and middle-income voters in to support the party of Wall Street has been accomplished by appealing to the vilest racism, anti-immigrant xenophobia, homophobia, anti-woman prejudice and religious fundamentalism. This has kept the Republican Party in the running for decades while pushing it far to the right programmatically.

The problem for Wall Street occurs when the ultra-right-wing faction takes itself seriously and threatens to undermine basic financial stability for the sake of these “social” issues.

The prolonged capitalist economic crisis — with declining wages, severe unemployment and underemployment, plus instability for the fragile middle class — has inflamed these lower layers of the Republican base. But instead of leading to a break with their Wall Street allies, they allow themselves to be di-

verted into ever more intense racism and anti-working-class frenzy.

The big business media give an enormous amount of coverage to the pronouncements of the ultra-right Tea Party types. This helps keep them in the GOP and also discourages and demoralizes any nascent movement to the left among the vast majority of the rest of the population. And, of course, the true class relations can never be mentioned.

The New York Times of Oct. 11 revealed that 158 super-wealthy donors have provided 50 percent of the election campaign funds so far this year. About 90 percent of these funds went to Republican candidates. The donors' wealth came mainly from financial speculation and energy corporations. In a separate article, the Times interviewed a number of relatively poor Republican faithful voters who railed against “the establishment” and the wealthy!

However, in the absence of an independent, mass, revolutionary working-class movement, these contradictions continue to exist side by side. The antics of the far right take on exaggerated importance with the help of the bourgeois media. In fact these right-wing forces, from both factions, are extremely unstable and vulnerable. Every time a serious progressive mass movement erupts, the right-wing's weakness becomes obvious.

Several movements show this. In 2006 millions of long-silent undocumented

workers burst forth with mass marches on May Day, reviving the general strike. In 2011 the Occupy Wall Street movement held national attention for many months, riveting the public's attention on the center of capitalism as the enemy.

In 2014 the Black Lives Matter movement exploded on the scene, shutting many cities down across the country. This past month saw the United Auto Workers at Fiat Chrysler revolt against their leaders and vote down a contract in an unprecedented show of worker solidarity between higher- and lower-paid workers.

Most notably, none of these movements came from established organizations and “leaders.” They all reflected mass anger slowly growing in broad sections of the working class. They all flared up and then seem to have died down. But, in fact, they all have left their mark, pushed forward the struggle and trained new layers of future leaders.

Uniting the many currents of emerging struggle is the challenge facing new and militant leaders. They are learning that the capitalist system is the source of the racism, poverty and war that prevails in the United States. This type of movement will be able to mobilize millions and millions of workers and oppressed people, who will go beyond the pathetic electoral circus currently dominating the attention of the people into a real struggle that can end exploitation, racism and bigotry once and for all. □

Los Angeles students honor Sandra Bland

By Lamont Lilly
Los Angeles

The Community Planning and Economic Development Club at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College honored Sandra Bland, a victim of police terror in Texas, in a Student Day of Action Series on Oct. 7. The goal of this series was to “celebrate the life of Sandra Bland and other women who have died [because] of police brutality.”

The action series was held at Redwood Hall and sponsored by the Associated Student Organization. Through an array of interactive learning stations, both students and community members were able to learn the truth about Sandra Bland and how to get involved in organizing against police terror.

Event organizer Shelia Balque stated, “The whole reason we organized this was because Dash Gomez, a sister organizer who recently transferred, really wanted to do something about this, particularly in a way that raised awareness.” And

raise awareness is exactly what they did. No cameras, no press, no hype. Just the people teaching and learning from one another.

This event was an interactive walking and dialogue tour meticulously comprised of four unique stations. Station one offered a litany of posted facts about Sandra Bland and the specific details surrounding her untimely death at the hands of Prairie View, Texas, police. Attendees were also informed of some of Bland's favorite foods and personal activities.

In addition to Bland, there were stories of other women killed by police, such as Tanisha Anderson, Alesia Thomas, Yvette Smith, Tamika Wilson and Reikia Boyd. Photographs, boards and posters were quite colorful and creative — a nice touch considering that such subject matter can be quite traumatic.

The next station was an interactive letter-writing exercise. In a small section of the room, organizers supplied desks, chairs and stationery supplies needed

to pen support and encouragement to Bland's family. This activity was so important because it allowed the people to communicate directly with her family. The last thing the corporate media want is the oppressed freely communicating with each other, especially in ways that encourage and inspire one another. In an overwhelming show of support, over 200 letters were written and collected.

Station three of the series was an interactive video and interview workshop. In a quiet, closed-off nook, attendees were able to verbally share support via live testimonials and statements of solidarity. Questions such as “Why do Black Lives Matter to you?” were very important in helping to frame the event's overall purpose and conversation. For those who did not want to be seen on live video, voice recordings were an option — a perfect vehicle for sharing thoughts and self-reflection.

The final station was a dialogue wrap-up and free lunch. It was here that series participants were able to be in fellowship

and build with one another over fresh fruit, chips and a full assortment of pizzas. Attendees were also given Sandra Bland T-shirts with a beautiful headshot, bearing the hashtag #SayHerName. Co-organizers Kim Williams and Julie Minnard assisted attendees through each station.

No, this event was not a major protest or highway shutdown. It was, however, just as powerful and equally effective. Not only were participants well-educated on the subject of state violence, they were immediately mobilized into a series of actions.

Los Angeles-based activist Shelia Balque will also be speaking at the upcoming People's Tribunal on Racist Police and State Terror, which convenes Oct. 16-17 at Los Angeles Trade-Tech's South Tent, 2225 South Grand Ave.

Join us that weekend as the Black and Brown Students for Social Justice, the Puerto Rican Alliance and WeChargeGenocideLA continue the work of raising consciousness and fighting for the oppressed. □



Workers demand union at B&H

By John Catalinotto
New York

Workers from B&H Photo and their families have launched a union campaign with the worker-led group Laundry Workers Center and the United Steelworkers. They held their first public protest on West 34th Street on Oct. 11.

The demonstration of hundreds of workers and supporters called for this major New York-based photo and video retailer to “fix dangerous workplace conditions, end discrimination against Latino employees, and stop wage theft at their two Brooklyn warehouses,” according to a press release.

“We decided to change the conditions in our workplace. We demand respect and to be treated as human beings,” said Raul Pedraza, a B&H warehouse worker for over six years.

The workers described how at B&H Photo warehouses, supervisors order them to unload or carry extremely heavy loads without sufficient help or safety training. Workers suffer back injuries, the air is filled with dust, and the rooms are hot and dirty, sometimes causing nosebleeds.

According to the release, during a recent fire at one warehouse, workers had to continue working while 50 firefighters and a helicopter gathered outside.

Workers say they start at 7:30 a.m., and must stay until management permits them to leave, often as late as 11 p.m. They are also not allowed to “take the meals and rest breaks required by law, nor use their cell phones to reach their families.”

Latino workers complain of being verbally abused and of being paid substantially less than other warehouse employees.

A leaflet signed by the Laundry Workers Center and the United Steelworkers called for “a union!” and for the company to “end discrimination, stop verbal abuse” and provide “training, safe work-



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

ing conditions, fair scheduling, respect and dignity” with time for “meals and breaks.” A march from 11th Avenue and 34th Street ended up at the B&H flagship store on 9th Avenue. □

Bosses want 'fewer and cheaper workers'

Chrysler workers push them back

By Martha Grevatt

This article is based on a talk given by Grevatt at Workers World Party meetings in New York and Detroit.

I have been a United Auto Workers Chrysler worker for 28 years. I have never experienced anything on the shop floor like this movement that has emerged around this contract vote. It was not even close — 2-to-1 on the average voting “no” and in some plants higher, with 87 percent “no” at the Toledo Jeep plant.

Workers became organizers. They made T-shirts, rallied, talked to their co-workers and got leaflets around. These are things we are experts at, but workers became experts almost overnight.

Where did it come from?

Capitalism is at a dead end and baring its teeth at the working class. Look at a company like Veolia or a CEO like Fiat Chrysler Automobiles' Sergio Marchionne, who famously said the UAW had to get used to “a culture of poverty.” These kinds of bosses are on the ascendancy, and you have the far right of the Republican Party on the rise, but the workers and oppressed are on the ascendancy, too. “Black Lives Matter” has awakened the masses of all nationalities. In this context, workers at FCA sent a message loud and clear, as they chanted in Toledo, “Hell no, Sergio!”

The 2009 bankruptcy, which the company calls a “near-death experience,” is in the past now. Profits are sky-high. Marchionne paid himself \$72 million last year — more than twice the compensation

of Ford CEO Alan Mullally. Auto sales are actually higher today than before the 2008 auto recession that triggered the GM and Chrysler bankruptcies. FCA has gained market share and has seen sales gains for 66 consecutive months.

The workers want back what they gave up.

But the auto bosses and the Wall Street bankers — who make billions in profit through interest payments from the auto companies and are the major shareholders of Ford, General Motors and FCA — are driven to hold the lid on labor costs.

The New York Times explained the bosses' cost-cutting strategy four years ago, in a feature piece about GM's Orion, Mich., assembly plant, closed during bankruptcy and reopened in 2010. This plant was retooled to build small cars, but at a higher profit margin. The Times bluntly stated that “the radically revamped factory here operates with fewer and cheaper workers.”

More vehicles made by fewer workers making lower wages — thanks to [the] “two-tier” [wage system]. It's the formula for massive profits during a boom and the insurance policy in the event of a capitalist downturn. The subprime auto lending — like what triggered the housing recession — with longer loan payment terms as high as seven years, and all of the easy credit that has fueled the sales boom, could turn into its opposite. The fear of an inevitable downturn creates downward pressure on labor costs. Now, however, the bosses' formula has put them on a collision course with the UAW.

The 2011 contract raised wages for

second-tier workers but left a huge pay gap between them and the “traditional” workers. The wage gap is compounded by a gap in benefits and the fact that second-tier workers are frozen out of a traditional pension. “Two-tier,” a hypothetical problem when introduced in the 2007 contract, means now that almost half of FCA workers make the lower wage. They are our union sisters and brothers who have worked alongside us for the past five years. The injustice has become glaring.

The contract that was recently rejected included another significant pay raise, but did not fix the core problem of two-tier: that it violates the basic union principle of equal pay for equal work. On top of the unfairness, workers are feeling the rising cost of living in a real way. Capitalism at a dead end creates not only a downward push on wages, it creates inflationary pressures on our pocketbooks.

The other key contract issue, besides “cheaper workers,” is fewer workers. When the new contract was rolled out, attached to it was a highly touted \$5.3 billion investment plan. This included moving all car production out of UAW plants, presumably to Mexico. FCA announced a radical restructuring, moving products out of one plant and into another. The outcome of this musical chairs game is an increased number of vehicles built per hour — a high-tech speedup designed to cut workers. So another big reason we voted “no” was to protect our jobs.

After the “no” vote, the UAW and FCA went back to the table. The UAW issued FCA a strike deadline of midnight, Oct. 7. Locals shifted into strike mode, putting

signs on sticks, handing out instructions and getting the workers ready. About 20 minutes before the deadline, when evening shift workers were getting their minds in gear to begin a work stoppage — for many their first — the UAW announced a tentative agreement.

This contract does what workers had been told could not be done: it gives every current second-tier worker a path to top pay. That's a real victory! But by denying equal benefits and pensions and creating new tiers for future workers, temporary workers and axle plant workers, the contract still reinforces inequalities. That only exacerbates division and conflict.

The investment plan is spelled out in more detail and, as workers feared, equals fewer workers. In the Detroit area, Sterling Heights Assembly Plant could gain 1,750 jobs if the Ram truck is moved there from Warren Truck Assembly, but Warren Truck could lose 2,400 jobs — a net loss of 650.

Those are the core issues in this contract struggle. Shall we let the bourgeoisie keep pushing ahead with its formula for fewer and cheaper workers? Or will we push back?

After raising the specter of a strike, whether or not the UAW leaders had any intention of following through on the threat, they put the idea in workers' heads that they had the power to stop production and force changes. Voting on the new proposed contract is scheduled for Oct. 20 and 21. Whatever the outcome, the struggle against “two-tier” and to protect jobs has awakened a spirit of solidarity. □

Letter to
the editor:

From a mariner on El Faro tragedy

Excerpted from a letter to WW from “El Tigre,” a seafarer who knew five of those killed on the cargo ship El Faro, which sank on Oct. 1 during Hurricane Joaquin. For the full letter, see workers.org.

Every mariner has, at one point or another, sailed on what we seafarers call a “rust bucket.” It is pretty much exactly what it sounds like: a beat-up, old rusty ship that shouldn't be seaworthy, but somehow is. These ships should be put out of commission and replaced by newer, safer ones, but are still in use. Sealift Inc. is one of many shipping companies out there that are notorious for sailing these “rust buckets” around the world.

Why do these shipping companies continue to use these old, dilapidated death traps? Even some of the newer ships are falling into disrepair because of a lack of personnel and the proper tools needed to keep a vessel in “ship shape,” due to the fact that the shipping companies don't want to spend the time or money on the upkeep of their own vessels. We have all seen this first hand, licensed [ship's officers] and unlicensed sailors alike, in the form of cuts in overtime or having to fight a company tooth and nail in order to receive the proper parts or tools needed to get a job done.

The old timers talk about how it was back in the old days of shipping. The crews were much larger back then. Everyone got paid the same wages we get paid now, but it was during the 1970s and 1980s when the cost of living was much cheaper. Once the shipping companies decided to cut crew size, they expected

the same amount of production from a crew of 15 as from a crew of 50. And the U.S. Coast Guard gave them the OK.

The shipping companies are always looking for the cheapest and quickest route to deliver their cargo, regardless of the dangers (hurricanes, pirates, etc.). Meanwhile the Coast Guard has over-regulated the shipping industry to the point of almost collapsing it. The merchant mariners are caught in the middle of it all.

With the recent tragedy of the merchant vessel El Faro, many brothers and sisters in our industry, licensed and unlicensed, have been devastated. Many want answers as to why a ship would sail directly into the heart of a Category 3 hurricane — especially a 40-year-old ship whose engines were being worked on, and with open, [but] covered lifeboats and outdated safety equipment, approved by the Coast Guard.

I don't blame the captain for the fate of the El Faro. I don't stand by his decision either. He was doing what captains sometimes do — following company orders — and ultimately he paid the same price as everyone else aboard that ship.

All of us have been on a ship that has sailed through storms, hurricanes and heavy seas. Sometimes the captain will refuse to go through a storm, in which case the company might even threaten to replace that captain. We don't know the circumstances behind why the El Faro went into that hurricane. What we do know so far is that the shipping company, Tote, has not been completely honest.

Since the beginning the company stated that, at the time, the hurricane was

thought to only be a tropical storm. But an email that surfaced from the second mate to her mother proved that they did have prior knowledge that they were heading into a hurricane. The company also knew that the engines were being worked on because there were private contractors aboard who were hired to make repairs on them.

The company will try and make this tragedy look like crew negligence. They will say that the captain acted on his own accord to go through the storm, putting all the crew members at risk (even though they have the power to veto any captain's decision to go through rough weather). They will try and say the crew lacked knowledge of the life-saving equipment. Meanwhile, no mention will be made about the age and condition of that equipment, which was more than 40 years old.

Knowledge of the safety equipment aboard our ships needs to be more democratized. Mates and engineers should not be the only ones with a working knowledge of, for example, the manual release pump aboard a free-falling lifeboat. Get the unlicensed involved. During an emergency, they might be the ones to have to drop the boat in the water; the chief cook

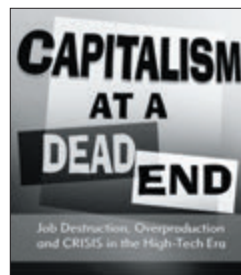
might have to be the one to put out a fire.

These shipping companies already have insurance on the ship, the cargo and its crew. They make their money regardless of whether or not the ship makes it from point A to point B. We (officers and crew) are literally all on the same boat.

The shipping companies don't fully understand the daily operations of a ship and don't know the first thing about good seamanship, and they don't care. Their only motivation is profit. Always keep this in mind, because it's our lives that are being put at risk, not the company's. It is our blood that stains these decks, not Tote, not Crowley, not Maersk, and not Sealift Inc.

What happened to the El Faro was tragic. Whatever new Coast Guard regulations are put in place after this event should be placed on the shoulders of the shipping companies that own these rust bucket ships, not on the backs of those who work on them.

All our labor unions need to come together as one (SIU, SUP, AMO, MMP, etc.) and demand: Fire up the shipyards! Build newer and safer ships! Hire bigger crews to sail those ships! This is how we should honor the 33 of the El Faro.



Capitalism at a Dead End

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

For information on this book and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com

Available at major online booksellers.

NEWS FROM BEHIND PRISON WALLS

By **Matty Starrdust**

As the U.S. imperialist war machine continues to churn out chaos and destruction abroad, a new wave of militancy is sweeping across those most oppressed at home. Here, we highlight a few of the ways prisoners have played decisive roles in struggles from inside the belly of the beast this year.

Prisoner solidarity with Mumia

Regular readers of *Workers World* will surely know the name Mumia Abu-Jamal, the world-renowned journalist and political prisoner. But what about Major Tillery? Along with Mumia, Major is serving a life sentence in Pennsylvania's notorious SCI Mahanoy prison. Also like Mumia, Major has earned admiration through his role as a jailhouse lawyer. A 1990 lawsuit brought by Major against the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania resulted in the practice of "double dealing" — crowding as many as four men into a single jail cell — being declared unconstitutional.

In 2015, several weeks before Mumia was first brought to the brink of death by untreated diabetic shock, Major warned prison officials of Mumia's declining health. When guards told him to mind his own business, Major responded, ac-

ording to Mumia himself, "That's what I'm doing, cuz that's my brother — and I want for my brother what I want for myself!" (PrisonRadio.org, Aug. 20)

As is usually the case, prison guards responded to this brave act of solidarity with severe retaliation, sentencing Major to solitary confinement for six months on trumped-up drug charges. Upon hearing Major's story, activists across the globe flooded prison officials' offices with calls and letters demanding Major's release from solitary. On Sept. 1, two months ahead of the completion of his sentence in solitary, Major was placed back in general population. (Justice4MajorTillery.blogspot.com, Sept. 3)

Prisoners lead struggle against solitary confinement

Despite widespread condemnation of the use of long-term solitary confinement in U.S. prisons, including from the United Nations Committee Against Torture and the U.N. Human Rights Committee, it took the mass movement of thousands of prisoners themselves to really challenge this form of institutional torture in California. In 2011, prisoners in California's infamous Pelican Bay State Prison, where solitary confinement sentences routinely lasted over 10 years,

launched a hunger strike to call attention to their inhumane treatment.

In 2012, inmates in solitary signed a historic Agreement to End Hostilities in order to "end the violence between the various ethnic groups in California prisons [and] inspire not only state prisoners, but also jail detainees, county prisoners and our communities on the street, to oppose ethnic and racial violence," according to a statement written by the prisoners. (*Workers World*, Sept. 4)

By 2013, more than 30,000 prisoners in California and beyond had joined the hunger strike, making it the largest in history. Finally, in 2015, Gov. Jerry Brown, under tremendous pressure from prisoners and their supporters, agreed to a settlement whereby the state would phase out the use of indefinite solitary confinement. According to the nonprofit Center for Constitutional Rights, "Ultimately, [the settlement] is the result not merely of litigation, but of a widespread community effort led by prisoners and their families." (CCRjustice.org, Sept. 1)

Migrant mothers strike for freedom

Every year, hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants, the great majority of them refugees created by U.S. neoliberal policies in the Global South, are arrested and jailed without trial in

detention camps while they await deportation. When migrant families are arrested together, they are typically sent to any of three family detention camps in the U.S. — two in Texas and one in Pennsylvania — where even young children languish in prison-like conditions.

On March 31, mothers detained in Karnes Family Detention Camp in Texas launched a work strike and hunger strike, demanding to be set free with their children. According to a statement signed by all the mothers in the prison, translated from Spanish, "During this Hunger Strike, no mother will work in the center of detention or send our children to school. We will not use any of the services provided by this place until we have been heard and our freedom has been approved." (EndFamilyDetention.com)

Less than three months later, in June, 10 mothers imprisoned at the Berks County, Pa., Family Detention Camp launched a work strike, demanding freedom for themselves and their children, and for the camp to be shut down.

On Aug. 21, a federal judge ruled in favor of 10 imprisoned mothers who had brought a suit against the government, directing the Obama administration to begin releasing all detained mothers and children by Oct. 23. (McClatchyDC.com, Aug. 22) □

Philly trans* march draws broad support

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

Hundreds of people gathered at Thomas Paine Plaza on Oct. 10 for Philadelphia's fifth annual Trans* March ["trans*" is a word currently used with an asterisk to indicate the spectrum of all the different genders of people who do not conform to the either/or of male/female — WW]. The rally across from City Hall was followed by a march through city streets that received broad and very positive support, with several people honking car horns or joining along the route.

Popular chants heard along the march included "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Transphobia's got to go!" and "What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!"

Organizers of Philadelphia's Trans*

March called the event a "revolutionary movement ... accepting to people of all gender identities, expressions and experiences."

Evident in this year's demonstration was the influence of the Black Lives Matter movement that arose in response to the murder of Michael Brown by police in Ferguson, Mo., in 2014. BLM has forcefully pointed out that the brutal, racist murders of people of color happen across a range of gender identity. Several signs carried the message that "Black Trans Lives Matter."

The event took on particular significance in the wake of the murder of 22-year-old Kiesha Jenkins, a Black transgender woman. Jenkins was on her way home early in the morning of Oct. 6, when she was brutally beaten by five or six men, and then shot twice in the back

as she lay on the ground. While Philadelphia police are trying to portray this as a "robbery gone wrong," the Jenkins family insists it was a hate crime. Members of her family joined in the demonstration.

Jenkins is the 20th transgender person murdered in the U.S. in 2015 and the 18th transgender person of color.

The Philadelphia Coalition for Racial, Economic and Legal Justice, which participated in the march, brought signs demanding justice for Jenkins. REAL Justice organizer Erica Mines, speaking at the concluding rally after the march, read the names of transgendered individuals killed as the crowd responded, "Say their name," after each one.

Rally organizer Deja Alvarez noted:



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

"This community does not face disproportionate poverty, violence, death by suicide and murder only when one of us makes the news. We face these threats 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year." (Philly.com, Oct. 11) □

Gentrifiers pressure Oakland's vibrant culture



A multicultural drumming circle was held at Lake Merritt on Oct. 11. "Preserve the Soul of Oakland" was called in response to the Oakland Police Depart-

ment's handling of a complaint on Sept. 27 by a disgruntled new resident to the Lake Merritt area of the city.

The area has experienced great resi-

dential turnover with rising rents, part of the gentrification of Oakland. This new resident physically attempted to grab the drumsticks out of the hands of Theo Williams, artistic director of Samba-Funk! As a result of the ensuing melee, 13 OPD officers were called to the scene and two drummers were issued citations.

The community was enraged. Drumming circles were held on Oct. 6, the night of the City Council meeting, in front of City Hall. Additional drumming circles happened at other times. The Parks and Recreation Department was forced to remove signs around the

lake stating that musical instruments were prohibited. The signs quoted an ordinance that didn't even exist.

The Oct. 11 event, led by Williams, included Korean, First Nation, Brazilian and Haitian drummers. Oakland City Councilmembers Abel Guillén and Desley Brooks addressed the crowd. Even Oakland's Black churches around the lake have been harassed with noise complaints as a result of gentrification.

According to the Oct. 9 Post News Group, "Post publisher Paul Cobb spoke about the complaints that Pleasant Grove has been receiving at last week's City Council meeting, reminding council members that jubilant worshipping and celebration are a vital part of the Black church experience and must not be suppressed. 'Black churches matter. We will not allow gentrifiers to come into our community and tell us how to worship God,' said Cobb."

— Report and photo by Terri Kay

Save Mumia from medical neglect – and free him!

By Henry Hagins

'A single spark can start a prairie fire' – Mao Zedong

Major Tillery's courageous decision not to abandon his friend and stricken comrade, Mumia Abu-Jamal, as the intellectual-warrior and political prisoner lay unconscious on that dispassionate prison floor at SCI Mahanoy on March 30 and started slipping into diabetic shock, remains iron-clad in its pivotal importance. We must forever remember his name. Indeed. His spark of defiance reignited a forest fire of resistance. The movement to Free Mumia has long been committed to the same.

It was the spark that re-inflamed this invigorated effort to restore Mumia's health and to finally free him; fire alarm bells had been sounded. Family, friends, organizations, longtime supporters, lawyers and curious others responded with uncompromising purpose. Worldwide.

Mumia's health crisis had glaringly been revealed, via medical neglect and abuse on the part of prison "health care" staff, that contributed to high blood sugar levels, diabetes, liver endangerment, lethargy, elevated blood pressure and hepatitis C virus (HCV) discovery in his blood, along with related symptoms such as skin discoloration and severe itching. These afflictions had not been properly

diagnosed and treated during the period when medical staff could have identified and remedied these threats early on!

It was not until Dr. Joseph Harris, an expert in HIV and HCV cases, was able to examine Mumia (on the down-low) in the visitor's room and not in an exam room that some medical suspicions were confirmed. A thinker outside the box, Dr. Harris hit the proverbial nail on the head!

A careful examination of Mumia's precarious condition, as it had dangerously progressed over the initial nine months, shows that the prison health care system failed to safeguard his health by both accident and design! On at least two occasions, Mumia had to be treated (brief as they were) at two local hospitals, back-to-back because the folks at Mahanoy were ill-equipped to do so. The national and international outcry exposed the system's bacteria-laden hands.

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections infamously joins the states of Minnesota and Massachusetts in having prisoner-initiated class-action lawsuits filed against them for their foot dragging in providing up-to-date protocols that are able to effectively combat the hepatitis C virus with a 95 percent success rate. Attorneys Bret Grote and Bob Boyle filed on Mumia's behalf and for the estimated 10,000 other inmates held captive in the state's penal colonies who also carry the

hepatitis C virus.

The avaricious greed of the pharmaceutical companies drives the cost of the medicine to the moon. Yet this flimsy argument cannot hold humanitarian and ounce-of-prevention water!

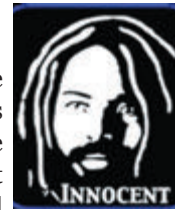
A spate of recent articles by such authors as Maria Barry Jester, Shira Schoenberg, Christine Rodriguez and Robin Kelly focus sobering floodlights on the debilitating impact that HVC, known as a "silent epidemic," has not only on the prison population around the country but on the communities that most formerly incarcerated people return to. The miserly practice of not treating HVC-afflicted people, in or out of prison, is more than penny-wise and pound-foolish. Dealing with the disease would save resources, now and in the future.

Health care providers take a stand

As if inspired by the applause-worthy example set by the National Writers Union, dozens of health care providers, in New York City and elsewhere, eagerly signed an "Appeal for Treatment for Hepatitis C for Mumia Abu-Jamal and 10,000 Other Pennsylvania Prisoners." A related petition, posted on iacenter.org, has begun attracting hundreds of signers whose signatures are immediately forwarded to Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf, state Health Secretary Karen Brown, Secretary of Corrections John Wetzel and Mahanoy SCI Superintendent John Kerestes. The appeal and the petition emphatically request that Mumia Abu-Jamal and all HCV-identified Pennsylvania prisoners be given the direct-acting antiviral medication that has a 95 percent cure rate. Other health care providers and workers are encouraged to sign the petition at tinyurl.com/mumia-hepcappeal.

Comments from several signers:

"Pharmaceutical companies are given grants, tax breaks and other incentives to conduct medical research. In return the



public has a right to benefit from that research without outrageous price gouging."

– Suzanne Kelly

"Pharmaceutical companies claim they have intellectual

property rights to new medicines and can charge whatever they want to cover costs and make a profit. ... Health care is a human right that should take precedence over intellectual property rights when it's a life or death issue."

– Berta Joubert-Ceci

"Denying medicines and proper medical treatments to prisoners is inhumane. It is the illegal imposition of punishment, humiliation and torture on prisoners. For Abu-Jamal and other prisoners infected with hep C, it is a death penalty by medical neglect.

– Suzanne Ross

Estela Vasquez, executive vice president of 1199 SEIU and a longtime supporter of Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners, has graciously made available the health care union's facilities for a press conference to be held on Oct. 20 at 11:30 a.m. at 310 West 43rd St., New York, between 8th and 9th avenues.

The purpose of the press conference is to give health care providers an opportunity to explain publicly why giving proper treatment for this silent epidemic is so important. It will also inform the public about the status of a protocol that is being "hammered out" by officials from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and Department of Health.

Left untreated, HCV can lead to diabetes, heart disease, liver failure and even death. All health care workers, organizations and interested others should sign the petition. The fight for Mumia's life, health and ultimate freedom benefits us all!

'When spiders unite they can tie up a lion.' – African proverb

Hagins is co-chair of the Free Mumia Coalition (NYC).

Racist jailers isolate activist reverend



PHOTO: JEREMY ROYER

Supporters of Rev. Pinkney in Oct. 3 Detroit march that drew 300 activists from environmental, anti-racist and other movements.

By David Sole
Detroit

The Rev. Edward Pinkney was rousted from his cell at 6 a.m. on Oct. 6 and hustled out of Lakeland Correctional Facility in Coldwater, Mich., with no prior notice to him, his spouse or his attorney. Pinkney has been incarcerated since February at Lakeland, a two-hour drive from his Benton Harbor, Mich., home.

For two days no one had word from the reverend until his attorney, Tim Holloway, got confirmation that Pinkney was locked up in Marquette Branch Prison — 483 miles north of his home.

Benton Harbor sits on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. It is an 89 percent majority African-American town on prime real estate coveted by the white racist, corporate elite of Berrien County. During a mass uprising against the police killing of an African-American youth in 2003, Rev. Pinkney led mass marches

from Benton Harbor into mostly white, affluent St. Joseph across the river.

As head of the Black Autonomy Network Community Organization, Pinkney protested layoffs of mainly African-American workers by the Whirlpool Corp., headquartered in Benton Harbor. Politicians subservient to Whirlpool became a target of many Benton Harbor residents, often led by the reverend. In 2007, Pinkney was framed up on a charge of "buying votes."

One of the witnesses against him even asked while on the stand, "Am I going to get paid now?" Convicted on four felony counts, Pinkney was sentenced to a year of house arrest with a tether.

In 2008, while still under house arrest, Pinkney wrote an article in which he quoted a part of the Old Testament that threatens the wrath of the Lord upon iniquitous judges and their descendants.

Continued on page 11

People's Grand Jury finds u

By Peter Gilbert

The movement against police and court violence against Black youth is as vibrant in small towns in the U.S. South like Greenville, N.C., as in industrial cities like Oakland, Calif., and Baltimore.

In the afternoon of Oct. 6, community members in Greenville joined activists from the Mothers of the Incarcerated and the Pitt County Coalition Against Racism (CAR) to hold a People's Grand Jury. That body charged local District Attorney Kimberly Robb and former District Attorney Clark Everett with illegal racial bias in their decisions to prosecute Black people while ignoring crimes committed by whites.

Next the two groups plan to take their demands to Raleigh, the state capital, for a Nov. 14 People's Trial to be held outside the state bar association.

Racial disparities in the criminal justice system are as overwhelming in Pitt County as they are across the country. CAR presented data showing Black people are three to four times as likely to be charged with resisting arrest, three times as likely to be charged with misdemeanor possession of marijuana, and one-and-a-half times as likely to be charged with possession of drug paraphernalia. All this despite evidence showing that white people are more likely to be marijuana users.

The racist disparities are evident not

only in the charging decisions made by the district attorneys, but in the actions of the police. Statistics compiled by UNC-Chapel Hill professor Frank Baumgartner show that the Greenville Police Department is 72 percent more likely to search a Black person at a traffic stop than a white person. (tinyurl.com/o4tva25)

Greenville is neither unique nor particularly backward. This city of over 90,000 is home to one of the largest universities in the state and has a highly educated population. Unlike most neighboring towns in Eastern North Carolina that have lost population following the 1994 NAFTA trade agreement with Canada and Mexico that expedited the loss of over 100,000 mill jobs in North Carolina, Greenville's large hospital, university and medical school have fueled its growth. Despite this development, the racist attitudes of the police and courts remain the same as under the era of racial discrimination and segregation known as Jim Crow.

Two of the mothers who testified experienced the racism of the courts in seemingly opposite ways. They were both clear that their stories had roots in the same op-



Driving while Black or poor: Alabama closes DMV access

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The state of Alabama has closed 31 of its 67 Department of Motor Vehicle locations where most people get the most commonly used voter ID, the driver's license.

State officials asserted this was a budgetary, not a political, action and without racist intent. The Alabama NAACP and American Civil Liberties Union quickly exposed this as a lie, citing the fact that counties losing the DMV offices are poor and economically underdeveloped, and most have majority, or significant, Black populations.

The Alabama ACLU reports that as many as 250,000 registered voters in the state don't have IDs. They now will be unable to vote unless they travel outside their county to get a driver's license or take an onerous trip to another location for a voter ID. This could mean up to an hour's trip each way for most people, leading to loss of work time and income. People would also have to arrange, and perhaps pay a stiff price, for private transportation to a state office, since intercounty transportation is minimal or nonexistent. (aclualabama.org)

Thus, the impact of the closures is to directly limit voter participation.

In the ramp-up to the 2016 elections, Republicans and Democrats are engaged in a fierce national fight about available voters. There is a March 1 slate of primaries in the South in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee and Texas, as well as Virginia and Oklahoma, dubbed the "SEC primary" — a reference to a college football region.

Right-wing Republican candidates like Donald Trump and Ted Cruz are already swinging through the region with overt and coded overtures to white voters still entrenched in racism. Democrats are looking to the historically Black vote in the South for their candidates. (USA Today, Oct. 11)

The current right-wing initiative across the U.S. to deny or limit voting rights was

drastically strengthened by the 2013 gutting of key portions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. That legislation was first won by a militant Black movement in Alabama. It was also partially overturned through a challenge filed by an Alabama all-white County Commission in white-flight Shelby County. (tinyurl.com/ot49jrp)

Before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled to gut the VRA, the state of Alabama was required by law to submit DMV closures for review by the U.S. Department of Justice.

The day of the Supreme Court ruling, the state of Alabama announced implementation of a photo ID for voting — a requirement known to disproportionately limit voting by people who are poor or nationally oppressed. This was part of a wave of anti-voter, right-wing initiatives across the U.S., with a total of 22 states attempting to pass laws to limit voting access.

According to a Brennan Center for Justice study at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, the more increases in people of color and low-income voter participation, the more likely such states were to push laws limiting voter rights.

In addition to an impact on voting

rights, the loss of ready access to drivers' licenses represents a significant economic hardship on the people of the affected counties.

Because all the counties losing their DMV offices are poor and economically underdeveloped, most local people have to commute outside their counties to get to jobs. In this writer's home county of Bibb, on the list for DMV closure, 90 percent of local workers commute to jobs outside the county.

At the Hyundai plant in Montgomery, located at the center of majority-Black counties targeted for DMV closure, some workers drive two hours each way to work. (New York Times, Feb. 18, 2011)

Drivers' licenses and worker organizing

In the last decade, the upswing in auto, electronic and other mass production in Alabama has opened up jobs for those people in the affected counties who could commute to the nearest plant for work. Increasing numbers of these new workers have been Black, Latino/a or female, and are more likely to be involved in worker rights organizing.

Cops must be disarmed!

Continued from page 1

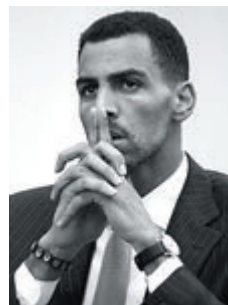
But they will never get the chance, because the prosecutor is working diligently to ensure that there is no indictment and no accountability." (New York Times, Oct. 11)

Demonstrations resumed after the release of the two reports.

Thabo Sefolosa

Last April, Thabo Sefolosa, a forward with the National Basketball Association's Atlanta Hawks, was viciously attacked by several New York police officers outside a nightclub. The police broke Sefolosa's leg while he was trying to defend himself. This injury deprived him and his team of his talents, as he could not participate in the NBA playoffs.

Sefolosa was arrested and charged with resisting arrest and disorderly conduct. The police tried to offer him a plea bargain, in which he would have to do one day of community service. But that



would have been an admission of guilt.

To his credit, Sefolosa chose to go to trial to clear his name, instead putting the New York Police Department on trial for brutality. A homeless man testified on his behalf, saying Sefolosa was offering him money before being attacked.

A jury vindicated Sefolosa on Oct. 8 when they acquitted him. Jury members did not believe for one moment the police officers' testimonies that they were justified in breaking Sefolosa's leg because he was "menacing." Sefolosa now has the option of bringing a civil suit against the NYPD.

As sports analyst Dave Zirin wrote in his Oct. 8 column in *The Nation*, "This is a familiar story in New York City, but the difference this time was that Thabo Sefolosa had the financial means and political will to fight back. Even though this could have all gone away, he chose instead to seek justice. Clearly, the NYPD grabbed the wrong 'black man in a hoodie.'"



Jonathan Miller

Jonathan Miller, a 26-year-old Black city councilperson in Prairie View, Texas, was Tasered outside his home on Oct. 8 by police when he came to the defense of his guests. The horrific incident was captured on a cell phone video.

Police alleged that Miller's guests were engaged in drug activities. Miller was arrested for resisting arrest and disorderly conduct. After being held overnight in Waller County Jail, he was released on Oct. 9.

The police officers who carried out this senseless act belong to the same department that brutally arrested and jailed Sandra Bland, a 26-year-old Black woman, following a July 10 traffic stop. Her case made national news when just a few days after her arrest by Brian Encinia, a white male police officer, she was found hanging in her cell in the Waller County Jail.

No one has been arrested or indicted for Bland's death. Her family has filed a wrongful death lawsuit against Encinia and other local and county officials, stating that she should never have been arrested in the first place. □

Unjust 'justice'



An earlier protest against the district attorney.

pression. Sharon Carter's 20-year-old African-American daughter was killed two years ago by a young white man, Mitchell Wilkerson, whose family has strong ties to Greenville authorities. Wilkerson was texting while driving, but was ultimately given only a \$25 fine and no jail time.

Sarah Blakely testified about her son, Donte Sharpe, who has served 22 years for a murder he did not commit. Despite the efforts of the Innocence Project at Duke University Law to reopen the case, both DAs Robb and Everett oppose a new trial for Donte Sharpe.

The Mothers of the Incarcerated and CAR are committed to the struggle against the racist police and criminal justice system and won't stop here. They have held demonstrations in solidarity with Mike Brown, the young Black man killed by police in Ferguson, Mo., in the summer of 2014, and the Black Lives Matter movement. □

Justice for Yvette Henderson!

Supporters of Justice for Yvette Henderson returned to the Emeryville City Council on Oct. 6 to hear about and respond to the police chief's report on policing. This report was requested by the council in response to demands, raised by more than 30 community members in September, for demilitarization of the Emeryville Police Department. Henderson was killed in Oakland, Calif., on Feb. 3 by police using firearms, which included an AR-15 military-grade assault rifle. Henderson died of multiple gunshot wounds.

Police Chief Jennifer Tajada and former interim chief Dave Hall gave presentations which were essentially textbook "dog-and-pony" talks with broad generalities about what "community policing" should look like. Neither one addressed any actual details about the use of force by Emeryville police or about the killing

of Henderson.

Several community members addressed the council after the presentations, demanding real information about the record of the EPD's use of force and calling for its demilitarization. Among the speakers was Antrinette Jenkins, Henderson's sister, who spoke about the pain her family is still dealing with at the loss of the life of their beloved relative.

Yvette Henderson, a 38-year-old African-American mother of four and grandmother of one, was killed by Emeryville police officers Michelle Shepherd and Warren Williams. An employee at the



Crowd outside Emeryville City Council.

Emeryville Home Depot had accused her of shoplifting. Henderson sustained a head injury at the hands of the store's security guard and requested an ambulance. When police arrived instead of an ambulance, she fled to Hollis Street, just inside Oakland city limits. There, police shot and killed her.

— Report and photo by Terri Kay

Angry French air workers strip bosses

By Chris Fry

Angry workers stormed Air France headquarters near Paris on Oct. 5. Top company executives were meeting to discuss the company's plan to lay off 2,900 workers "for the implementation of productivity measures leading to a lasting return to profitability."

The workers chased two executives out of the room and over a fence. They tore the shirt right off of Executive Vice President Xavier Broseta and shredded the shirt and jacket of Air France's director of Human Resources, Pierre Pissonnier. Pictures of a half-naked Air France executive climbing a high fence to escape the incensed workers circled the globe on the Internet.

Air France, which is partly owned by the French government, had announced plans to lay off 1,700 ground staff, 900 flight attendants and 300 cockpit crew members. Before that, management had tried to get the pilots to work longer hours for the same pay, which, of course, would have put both passengers and crew at greater risk. The pilots had refused.

In this era of capitalist austerity, direct action like this by French workers has become more common. Canadian Broadcasting commented, "Although Monday's scuffle was unusually violent, labor relations in France are commonly testy, with unions sometimes even resorting to holding managers hostage — or "boss-napping" — to make a point." (cbc.ca, Oct. 5)

Since the dawn of capitalist industrialization, the fierce exploitation, harsh working conditions, dangers and layoffs have sparked angry responses from exhausted workers. The word "sabotage" comes from France, where workers jammed shoes, called "sabots" in French, in gears to stop factory machines for a while so the workers could catch a breath.

What is the response of the French government to the airline workers' plight and their stirring action? After all, French President François Hollande heads a party that still calls itself socialist. But he showed his true pro-capitalist colors, condemning the "violence" and warning it could "have consequences for the image and attractiveness" of the

country to investors. Transport Secretary Alain Vidalies condemned the workers' action, tweeting that it was "unacceptable and must be punished."

The French people, on the other hand, feel quite differently. In a poll of 1,000 people by the Sud Ouest Dimanche (South West Sunday) newspaper, 54 percent said they "understood" the workers' anger. Only 38 percent condemned the "violence." (yahoo.com, Oct. 10)

Compare this French government response to workers' direct action to the governmental response to an incident that took place in China, where the government, the product of a great revolution, is run by the Communist Party. Since 1978, it has allowed capitalist enterprises to function in China, but the government is committed to building socialism and has developed a strong, state-owned infrastructure. Under its planned development, 500 million people have been raised up out of extreme poverty over the last three decades.

This year, Workers World wrote, in an article titled "China, rising wages and worker militancy," about how Chinese

steelworkers at a state-owned mill had responded to announced layoffs in 2009: "After a mass meeting addressed by the executive of the steel company that was going to take over their plant (and make huge job cuts), the workers rebelled and beat him to death." (workers.org, July 21)

Before this happened, local officials had gone along with a bid to privatize the plant. But that changed when the workers rose up. The Chinese government stepped in. "The privatization was halted. No arrests, no prosecutions. Isn't that the kind of power that workers should have everywhere?" asked Workers World.

The French workers' action is not an isolated incident. It is part of a growing, militant, anti-austerity movement that is sweeping Europe and indeed the rest of the globe.

The more that capitalism decays, the more such struggles will be transformed into a revolutionary movement to actually overturn capitalism and install a socialist system, run by the working class and driven, not by profits for a few, but to meet the needs of all the people. □

Tu You You and the fight against malaria

A socialist hero



Tu You You

By Gene Clancy

Earlier this month, Tu You You was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for her discovery of artemisinin, which is used to treat malaria and has saved millions of lives.

Tu is the first Chinese Nobel laureate in physiology or medicine and the first citizen of the Peoples' Republic of China to receive the Nobel Prize in natural sciences. She was born, educated and carried out her research exclusively in China.

But it took over 40 years for Tu and her team to be recognized for their achievements.

In 1967, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, along with its ally, the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam, were under extreme pressure from bombing and invasion by the United States, which had escalated the war to its highest point.

However, the Vietnamese faced another severe challenge: North Vietnamese troops were being decimated by malaria. "Soldiers' lives lost to malaria were two to three times those lost in combat. The malaria parasite had developed resistance to all drugs. The United States was working on it, too, because they were losing soldiers." (Tu You You, Interview with the New York Times, Oct. 9)

The leader of socialist Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, turned to China for help. As an act of socialist solidarity, as well as to fight malaria in the southern provinces of China, Mao Zedong agreed to establish a special unit: "Project 523," named after its starting date on May 23, 1967.

Scientists worldwide had screened over 240,000 compounds without success. In

1969, Tu, then 39 years old, was asked to lead the Chinese team.

Tu You You was born in 1930 in Ningbo, a port city about 140 miles south of Shanghai. In 1951, she graduated from the Peking University School of Medicine and moved to the Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine. To conduct their research, she and her team went to the island of Hainan, off the Chinese southern coast, where malaria was prevalent.

Tu witnessed up close the mosquito-borne disease's devastating toll on the human body. "I saw a lot of children who were in the latest stages of malaria," she said. "Those kids died very quickly." (The Guardian, Oct. 5)

Tu and her team decided to draw on her extensive knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine. In an ancient text, they discovered an herbal remedy used to treat malaria: sweet wormwood ("Artemisia annua," or in Chinese, "qinghao"). Using modern techniques, Tu discovered a way to extract the active compound and create artemisinin.

Having tested artemisinin only on animals, the matter of safety remained. "We worried whether the drug was safe. Two colleagues and I took it to show that it wasn't lethal. I thought it was my responsibility as a medical chemist and all part of the job," she told the New York Times.

Artemisinin and its derivatives proved to be not only safe but also extremely effective, with practically no side effects. The medicine "wipes out malaria in more than 96 percent of patients in regions where malaria has become resistant to older drugs." It has also proved effective against a large number of other parasitic diseases and even as a treatment, though as yet little used, for a number of cancers. (Scientific American, Dec. 23, 2008)

Capitalist and socialist medicine

Given such profound benefits, why did it take the Nobel prize committee 46 years to present their award to Tu and her team?

One answer, of course, is the unremitting hostility of world imperialism towards China. Increasingly, China is seen as the main obstacle to U.S. impe-

rialism's drive towards world hegemony. But there is more.

Along with many other illnesses, malaria has long been classified as a "neglected disease." According to the National Institutes of Health, neglected diseases "are conditions that inflict severe health burdens on the world's poorest people. ... The diseases are most heavily concentrated in low-income nations in Africa and Latin America," as well as parts of Asia and the Middle East. (rare diseases.info.nih.gov)

The World Health Organization estimates that more than 1 billion people — one-sixth of the world's population — suffer from one or more neglected diseases.

But why are these diseases neglected? The NIH says: "Diseases are said to be neglected if they are often overlooked by drug developers or by others instru-

mental in drug access, such as government officials, public health programs and the news media. Typically, private pharmaceutical companies cannot recover the cost of developing and producing treatments for these diseases."

A shorter and more accurate explanation would be that big business is unable to make a profit from the treatment of these diseases.

Discoveries like those made by Tu You You — drawn from traditional medicine with no patents, inexpensively made and extremely effective — are a dagger pointed at the heart of the capitalist pharmaceutical companies. Her example proves that cooperative socialist research can produce medicines and therapies based on human needs, at low cost, without the need for expensive patents, investment banks, hedge funds and stock offerings. □

UnDrone Upstate Walk opposes U.S. wars

By Minnie Bruce Pratt
Syracuse, N.Y.

The 165-mile "UnDrone Upstate Walk" stepped off Oct. 7 with a protest at Hancock Air National Guard Base in Syracuse. Marchers then headed out on a two-week journey to the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station.

Soldiers at both bases operate MQ9 Reaper drones that drop "Hellfire" bombs on locations in Afghanistan. The New York Air National Guard's 174th Attack Wing is stationed in Syracuse and the Guard's 107th Air Wing in Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Drones are big business in central and upstate New York. Hancock Air Base opened a new \$3.5 million drone training facility in May. The Central New York Regional Economic Development Council recently announced plans for a \$250 million investment to make "Central New York a global center for the development of unmanned aerial and ground systems" — in other words, drones and drone flight technology. (Syracuse Post-Standard, Oct. 6)

Murderous imperialist U.S. wars are increasingly "normalized" through use

of remotely flown drones. The 107th's commander, Col. John J. Higgins, said in an interview: "You can drop off the kids in the morning, fly a mission wherever they need you, maybe even pull a trigger. And 10 hours later, you're done and you go pick up the kids." (Buffalo News, Oct. 10)

Organizers emphasize the importance of the Walk, as the U.S. Department of Defense plans to up its drone use by 50 percent in the next four years. Drones are now the "backup" to Afghan forces on the ground in place of U.S. soldiers.

The Walk was organized by the Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars. Since 2010, the coalition has battled the killing inflicted by U.S. drone warfare, using civil disobedience arrests and creative mass protests. The group has run television ads urging Army Reserve drone operators to refuse to commit war crimes. (upstatedroneaction.org)

The Walk will include more than a dozen stops, from small towns to big cities. A forum in Rochester will be on "Drones, Black Lives Matter, the European Refugee Crisis: What Do They Have in Common?" □

Erdogan regime opened door for massacre in Ankara

By John Catalinotto

Oct. 12 — No matter who set off the bombs in Ankara on Oct. 10, the Turkish regime led by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is responsible for the explosions that killed more than 128 peace demonstrators and wounded hundreds more in the country's capital. That is the view of leaders of the leftist People's Democratic Party (HDP) and other observers.

The two explosions, apparently set off by suicide bombers, went off as tens of thousands of people had gathered for a march, called by the HDP, youth groups and unions. The marchers were demanding that the Erdogan regime conclude a cease-fire and make peace with the guerrilla forces from the Workers Party of Kurdistan (PKK). The PKK itself had just declared it would honor a cease-fire if the regime also refrained from attacks.

Demonstrations and marches mourning the dead and vowing to continue the fight have already taken place across Turkey and in many European cities, especially where there are Kurdish immigrants. The DISK and KESK labor union coalitions called for a general strike on Oct. 12 and 13. The target is the regime.

The first reaction of the Turkish police reinforced the argument that the regime was responsible. Just after the explo-

sions, police launched an attack with water cannon, tear gas and clubs on demonstrators who were trying to aid those wounded by the bombs.

HDP and other left spokespeople also accuse the Turkish political police — who are ubiquitous and claim to know every detail of political events inside Turkey — of knowing about this planned bombing and allowing it to happen.

Erdogan's Justice Party (AKP) government has conducted a long-range strategy with the goal — shared with and encouraged by U.S. imperialism — of overthrowing the Bashar al-Assad government in Syria and establishing a Turkish client state there. To do this, the AKP regime has worked closely, if quietly, with anti-Assad groups similar to al-Qaida and those now known as the Islamic State group.

Besides the Syrian army and Hezbollah from Lebanon, the most effective anti-Islamic State fighters in Syria have been from the PKK and the PKK's sister organization in the Kurdish regions of north and northeast Syria.

Ankara regime aided Islamic State group

Since the AKP and the Turkish military consider the Kurds to be the biggest threat to Turkish nationalism, they have sided with the Islamic State group against the Kurdish fighters. The Islamic

State group and others have been able to move in and out of Turkey, resupplying and resting their fighters. As some HDP spokespeople have said, this strategy has led to "bringing the Syrian war inside Turkey." (Democracy Now!, Oct. 12)

Following the bombing, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu from the AKP made a 20-minute talk accusing the PKK and revolutionary Turkish groups essentially of bombing themselves; he mentioned the Islamic State group for only a minute.

Recent electoral struggles have also made the Erdogan regime focus its attacks on the HDP as well as on the PKK and Kurds in general. Erdogan had schemed before last June's national election for his ruling Justice Party to increase its majority to 60 percent of the seats in Parliament. This would allow him to change the Turkish Constitution and consolidate his rule by strongly increasing presidential powers.

Instead, the AKP lost 71 seats, winning only a minority — 258 — of the 550 seats. The new leftist/Kurdish coalition party, the HDP, won a surprising 79 seats. By sowing turmoil, the AKP, still the biggest party in parliament, hopes to disrupt the HDP campaign and intimidate the women, workers and youth who voted for HDP.

From its overall strategy against Syria



On Oct. 12, unions in Diyarbakir, Turkey hold general strike and march to protest Oct. 11 massacre.

and its narrower focus on the November elections, the AKP as well as the Turkish state — military and army — can logically be held responsible for the massacre of the demonstrators. This is true even if Islamic State suicide bombers carried it out.

U.S. imperialism also shares responsibility because of its decades-long strategy in the West Asian region of sowing religious and civil war in order to weaken any sovereign states. Washington has done this even though it resulted in creating and strengthening the Islamic State group and related forces that are incompatible with establishing a stable puppet regime. While this strategy has brought no clear victory for imperialism, it has created havoc and misery for the people there. □

Russian assistance in Syria sets back U.S. 'regime change' plans

By Sara Flounders

U.S.-NATO plans to overturn the Syrian government and recognize a dysfunctional regime of imperialist collaborators have suffered a serious setback.

Under the pretext of fighting the terrorist force called the Islamic State, the Pentagon has pulled 13 other countries into bombing raids and military actions in Syria. With U.S. coordination, jet bombers from NATO members Britain, France, Turkey, Canada, Belgium and Netherlands have conducted military actions in Syria in the past year.

In addition, Israel, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Bahrain and Australia have also used their aircraft to bomb inside Syria. All these countries wring their hands and express frustration that the Islamic State has continued to grow. All are determined to overthrow the government of Syria. Meanwhile, Syria's people have been devastated by this war imposed from the outside, with 12 million of Syria's 23 million people displaced and homeless.

A no-fly zone and ground actions were under active discussion in almost every country, but both have faced intense opposition in imperialist Europe and the U.S.

However, the destruction is just beginning. Combatants from 80 countries, including mercenaries, organized into 1,000 armed opposition groups and comprising more than 100,000 reactionary and fanatical fighters, are operating in Syria.

That Saudi Arabian money equips and pays them is hardly a secret. Units operate openly from bases in Turkey and Jordan. Truck convoys of hundreds of trucks resupply these units. Yet despite all this assistance over more than four years, these mercenary forces have failed to overturn the Syrian government.

The no-fly zones under discussion were intended to create an area of safe-

ty for a U.S.-organized opposition army to build strength. Tens of thousands of Syrian refugees would be dumped in this "Protected Zone."

In 2011, the Pentagon war machine and its NATO co-conspirators declared a no-fly zone in Libya in order to authorize seven months of relentless bombing of that country, leading to the brutal overthrow of the Libyan government. They've been unable to repeat this in Syria.

Russia and Iran's aid: a game changer

In the midst of all this outside intervention, Russia and Iran's intervention into the war and Russia's air strikes on the Islamic State have suddenly raised wild protest and screams among the imperialists. This is because both Russia and Iran, along with Lebanon's Hezbollah forces, aim to defend Syria's sovereignty, not to overthrow the Bashar al-Assad government. Russia's entrance into the war has closed off Western plans to create a no-fly zone in Syria.

An Oct. 8 article in the New York Times exposed Washington and EU thinking behind the massive publicity given to the refugee crisis and now their enormous frustration with Russia's assistance to Syria. "First, [Russian President Putin] has closed off Western options that might have threatened the current regime in Damascus, the Syrian capital. This summer's large flow of refugees stemming from the Syrian conflict had begun to focus European minds on how to resolve the underlying problem. Britain, France, Jordan, Turkey and Washington had begun at long last to talk seriously about creating so-called no-fly zones over Syria.

"Those zones were intended to create areas of safety inside Syria for opposition forces and for thousands of displaced people, reducing the refugee flow. The tactic was intended to prevent the Syrian air force from attacking rebels and their

supporters opposed to President Bashar al-Assad, who was steadily losing ground as his officials admitted to shortages of manpower.

"The presence of sophisticated Russian warplanes and Russian personnel on the ground makes it almost impossible for the United States and its allies to risk such a no-fly zone."

What could possibly be clearer?

This article exposes Washington's cynical thinking and NATO's military plans. This also puts in perspective the barrage of corporate media that was suddenly so overwhelmingly sympathetic to the wave of desperate refugees. The flow of refugees was intended to break down the resistance in Europe and promote NATO involvement.

The United Nations' drastic cut-off in meager food assistance to war refugees in camps in Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Syria also pushed desperate people into the dangerous trek to Europe. The U.N. agency needed a mere \$236 million to keep the program funded through November, but didn't get it. According to NationalPrior-

ities.org, the U.S. government has spent that much on wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria every 28 hours since 2001.

Was this preventable cut-off in food to refugees also intended to provoke migration in order to "focus European minds ... at long last to talk seriously about creating so-called no-fly zones over Syria"?

Despite the words of U.S. diplomats urging cooperation with Russian and Iranian forces, any cooperation is unlikely, as the goals of the two sides are diametrically opposed. The U.S. and Western forces are still determined to pursue "regime change" in Syria; Russia and Iran know that their own sovereignty and the stability of the entire region are connected to Syria's ability to defend itself from colonial-style subjugation.

The U.S. response has been to increase the shipment of military equipment to the various reactionary forces and escalate the growing confrontation.

The only way to resolve this conflict is for the U.S., NATO — including Turkey — and the Gulf monarchies to get out of Syria and stay out! □

Islamophobes chased off in Dearborn, Mich.

On Oct. 10, a small group of Islamophobes showed up at the Henry Ford Centennial Library in Dearborn, Mich., armed with semi-automatic weapons and handguns, to demonstrate their hatred toward Muslims and Arab Americans alike.

However, activists from various organizations, including the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice and Workers World Party, outnumbered them. Eventually the small group of racists was chased off. The activists standing up for Muslims promoted solidarity, using a loud megaphone for speeches and chants and carrying signs stating that racism will not be tolerated.

— Report and photo by Jeremy Royer



WORKERS WORLD

editorial

Habitual hospital bombers

A fluke or a war crime?

U.S. warplanes bombed and destroyed a hospital operated by Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières/MSF) in Kunduz, Afghanistan, on Oct. 3. For 65 minutes, an AC-130U gunship circled the hospital, aiming cannon fire and incendiary munitions at its main building, housing the intensive care unit and operating and emergency rooms.

Some 180 patients and staff were inside. At least 12 MSF personnel and 10 patients, all Afghans, were killed; some burned to death. Another 37 were wounded; 33 are still missing as of Oct. 12.

To prevent such an attack, hospital staff had repeatedly reported their GPS coordinates to U.S., NATO and Afghan forces. During the bombing, MSF officials called U.S. officials in Kabul and Washington, including the Pentagon's Joint Staff, pleading for them to stop the airstrikes. But the strikes continued for another 30 minutes.

Consequently, MSF left Kunduz. Northern Afghanistan is now without a trauma center to treat war injuries. The aid organization charges the U.S. with committing a war crime in violation of basic human rights, and humanitarian and international law. MSF asserts the bombing was an attack on the Geneva Conventions, which protect civilians, including medical workers, and prohibit bombings of hospitals in war zones. The U.S. ratified these principles in 1955.

Hearing a global outcry, the Pentagon changed its story four times. It kept insisting the airstrikes were "accidental." Now Gen. John Campbell, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, admits the lethal assault was the result of a "U.S. decision made within the U.S. chain of command." So far the military refuses to provide details.

In a rare wartime act, President Barack Obama apologized to MSF. The Pentagon has even offered compensation to victims' families. This falls far short of earning a pardon for such a heinous crime.

MSF strongly repudiates the investigations set up by the U.S., NATO and Afghanistan, and is demanding an independent fact-finding probe of the bombing, under a body set up under Geneva Convention protocols.

After 14 years of occupying Afghanistan, the imperialists are still losing. In

their desperation, the U.S. ruling class and its NATO allies are ready to commit any crime, violate any international treaty, flout human rights and disregard human life. It's their standard behavior in the quest for super-profits.

Bombing hospitals – nothing new for U.S.

U.S. imperialism is a repeat war crime offender, with a long, sordid history of bombing hospitals and killing injured civilians and medical personnel. These were no accidents. They were acts aimed at terrorizing populations and forcing governments to submit. The record speaks for itself.

During the 1950s' U.S. war on north Korea, U.S. warplanes bombed hundreds of hospitals. Pentagon B-52 bombers obliterated Bach Mai Hospital in Hanoi, the largest medical facility in North Vietnam, during the "Christmas bombings" in December 1972.

In Mogadishu, Somalia, a U.N. "peace-keeping force" from Turkey and the U.S. bombed a Digfer hospital in 1993.

When the U.S. and NATO waged war to dismantle Yugoslavia, NATO launched cruise missiles against a Belgrade hospital and dropped cluster bombs on a Nis hospital in May 1999 — and bombed four other hospitals.

The U.S. invasion and occupation of Afghanistan followed the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center, ostensibly to pursue Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida. U.S. warplanes then bombed at least six hospitals and clinics in Kabul, Kandahar and elsewhere. In a stunning blow, U.S. planes even dropped a 1,000-pound cluster bomb on a hospital in Herat.

In the 2003 "Shock and Awe" bombing campaign against Iraq, Pentagon aircraft bombed a Red Crescent maternity hospital in Baghdad, killing and wounding medics and patients. A year later in Fallujah, U.S. rockets razed the newly built Hai Nazal hospital. U.S. bombs killed 63 staff and patients at the Fallujah Central Health Clinic.

With much international support, Doctors Without Borders continues to demand truth and accountability from the Pentagon and Obama administration.

More must be done. The filthy-rich U.S. ruling class must pay reparations for its war crimes! □

Help build a Workers World!

- ▶ If you're sick, sick, sick of endless wars, bombings and drones, and oppose the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Syria,
- ▶ If you are in solidarity with the dynamic Black Lives Matter struggle in the forefront of fighting police terror and structural racism,
- ▶ If you detest the bankers and bosses making the workers pay for the economic crisis they didn't create,
- ▶ If you know from reading WW that capitalism is at a dead end,
- ▶ If you want to fight for a better way of life based on economic planning and the equitable distribution of wealth the workers create,
- ▶ If you're lucky enough to still have a job, Then put some of your hard-earned

dollars in Workers World and help us put out one of the only remaining progressive weeklies in the U.S. that's still printed as well as on the Web. We plan to keep issuing a printed edition to hand it out to people on demonstrations, picket lines and street corners.

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While 'Normandy 4' talk peace – Washington & Kiev plot more war

By Greg Butterfield

Despite another promise to cease its fire and withdraw heavy weapons from the front line, the Ukrainian military has intensified its attacks on the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics in the Donbass region. The Kiev regime's army committed 22 violations of the ceasefire on the Oct. 10-11 weekend alone, killing both civilians and soldiers.

It's not hard to see what inspired the latest escalation of war crimes by Kiev.

On Oct. 7, the U.S. Senate passed a \$612 billion "defense spending" bill for the 2016 fiscal year, which began Oct. 1. Included in this bill is \$300 million in direct military aid to the right-wing regime in Ukraine; this item is the brainchild of Republican Sen. John McCain. Earlier, the House of Representatives passed a similar measure.

While it's unclear at this time whether President Barack Obama will sign this particular version of the "defense" bill, both Republicans and Democrats in Washington are committed to spending billions to continue U.S. wars for world domination, both direct and, as in Ukraine, by proxy.

Up to now, Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry have preferred to keep so-called "lethal military aid" to Kiev hidden from view. They prefer secret transfers or those by third countries loyal to Washington, such as NATO member Poland and Gulf monarchy Qatar. But Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter and Obama's nominee to head the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford, have joined McCain's call for the direct arming of Kiev.

Meanwhile, lost from the discussion is an amendment introduced by Rep. John Conyers and passed by the House last June prohibiting the Pentagon from arming and training the openly neo-Nazi Azov Battalion of the Ukrainian National Guard.

After a "pilot program" training Azov personnel earlier this year, the commander of U.S. forces in Europe announced the expansion of the training program in September for active-duty Ukrainian National Guard troops.

The National Guard was set up after the right-wing coup in Kiev in February 2014 to integrate fascist gangs and paramilitary groups into the state apparatus. Now Washington sees it as the basis for an all-new, NATO-trained Ukrainian military.

Passage of the \$300 million in military aid to Ukraine was another signal that Washington remains committed to both propping up the criminal junta that it helped bring to power and continuing the war against the anti-fascist people's movement in the Eastern Donbass region. This war is ultimately against neighboring Russia.

For over two decades, U.S. imperialism has been steadily marching toward its goal of busting up the Russian Federation and preventing its consolidation as a capitalist power independent of Wall Street and Washington.

To this end, the NATO military alliance has been expanded to Russia's borders. Domination of Ukraine, its integration into NATO and the destruction of the resistance in the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics is a big next step in that strategy.

Donbass elections postponed

The heads of state of Germany, France,

Russia and Ukraine — the so-called Normandy 4 — met in Paris Oct. 2 for negotiations on the long-stalled Minsk 2 ceasefire agreement between Ukraine and the independent Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics.

Despite rumors that French President François Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel took a harder-than-usual stance to make the Ukrainian oligarch, President Petro Poroshenko, enact constitutional changes and laws required by the Minsk agreements, the Kiev junta's rhetoric and actions since the Paris meeting have remained as belligerent as ever. The Ukrainian parliament, for example, voted to legalize the use of foreign mercenaries in the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

The only tangible concession granted at the Paris meeting came from President Vladimir Putin, who agreed to use Russian influence to pressure the governments of Donetsk and Lugansk to postpone local elections scheduled for Oct. 18 and Nov. 1. As a result, the elections were postponed in the Donbass, with possible new dates projected for February, March or April 2016.

Even before the Paris talks, the tone of the official leadership of the Donbass republics was more conciliatory about the possibility of Donetsk and Lugansk being reintegrated into Ukraine — if only Kiev carries out its end of the Minsk agreement.

Of course, the people of the Donbass desperately want and need peace. According to the U.N., more than 8,000 people have been killed since the start of Kiev's "Anti-Terrorist Operation" last year — but most experts believe the number is far higher. Close to one and a half million people have been displaced by the war, with the majority fleeing as refugees to Russia and Belarus. Industry has ground to a halt. Poroshenko's government has cut off all social payments, such as pensions, leaving many completely dependent on aid from the Russian government and private humanitarian initiatives.

Peace with junta: mission impossible

But as Donbass leaders have frequently acknowledged, while affirming the importance of the Minsk negotiations, there is no possibility of peace while the far-right coup regime of oligarchs, neoliberal politicians and fascists rules Kiev. Not only because the Poroshenko regime has never kept its promises — but because surrender of the Donbass would mean genocide by the armed fascist paramilitaries against Russian-speaking and other national minority populations in the east, as well as communists and other political opponents of the junta.

The Minsk agreements do not address the internal repressive regime in Ukraine. Rebellious eastern cities like Odessa and Kharkov are patrolled by fascist paramilitaries. Political opponents and journalists are jailed, tortured and killed; communist and anti-fascist symbols are banned. Thousands of political refugees from other parts of Ukraine — today living and working in solidarity with the Donbass — face trumped-up charges not addressed by the proposed "amnesty" law.

As the latest moves by Kiev and Washington show, there is no guarantee the enemy will honor any concessions or treaties that are not backed up by mass struggle, its own armed representatives and international support. □

Amid slowing of economy

South African coal miners go on strike

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

Some 30,000 South African coal miners downed their tools on Oct. 4 over a wage dispute.

This strike was organized by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), a key affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, which is an ally of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party.

NUM has blamed the mining firm bosses for the failure to reach an agreement acceptable to their rank and file. The owners submitted another offer on Oct. 9, a day after negotiations had broken down.

According to Peter Bailey, chief coal negotiator for NUM, "This morning, when we were supposed to reconvene, there was one outstanding company which has done nothing and that is Glencore. They are the ones holding the whole process to ransom." (Reuters, Oct. 9)

The same Reuters article noted in the disagreements between the workers and the bosses, "The Chamber of Mines said last week that coal producers had offered to increase wages by up to 8.5 percent for the lowest paid workers, up from a previous offer of 8 percent. The NUM has rejected both offers. The union had been seeking a 50 percent rise for its lowest paid workers, who make about 6,000 rand (\$445) a month in basic pay, but has since scaled that back to a demand of 1,000 rand, or an increase of about 17 percent."

The workers have walked off the jobs at mines run by Glencore, Anglo American, Exxaro and some smaller producers, threatening supplies of coal to the government-run power utility Eskom. South Africa, the most industrialized state on the continent, has been plagued by power shortages. The economy relies

heavily on coal for its power generation, and South Africa is a major exporter to Europe and Asia.

South African Business Day Live website noted: "A resolution to the standoff on a two-year wage agreement would be good news for coal companies, whose margins are being squeezed by weak global coal prices. ... Eskom has said it has enough stockpiles for its coal-fired power stations to withstand a one-to-two-month strike but not if the strike lasted longer." (Oct. 12)

Two traditionally white-dominated unions in the coal sector, Solidarity and the United Association of South Africa, accepted the owner's offer on Sept. 14. NUM, however, represents 72 percent of the workers in the coal mines, most of them African.

This industrial action is taking place amid an economic slump in South Africa, a cause for concern for the ruling ANC government of President Jacob Zuma. With commodity prices declining worldwide, South Africa, along with other so-called "emerging economies," is experiencing similar problems because of dependence on the generation of foreign exchange through exports of minerals and oil.

Other workers threaten to strike

A rival labor group, the Association of Miners and Construction Workers, is threatening to strike in the gold mines.

On Oct. 11, AMCU took a strike vote at the Sibanye facilities, although leaders claim they will not walk out until negotiating possibilities have been exhausted. AMCU has its largest membership at Sibanye; none of the unions at the mine have an outright majority.

"Today all the members of AMCU have agreed overwhelmingly that we are prepared to go on a protected strike in pursuit of the living wage at AngloGold

Ashanti, Harmony Gold Mining and Sibanye Gold," union President Joseph Mathunjwa told media outlets after a rally outside Johannesburg on Oct. 11. (Independent Online, Oct. 12)

But he added that an immediate strike would seriously divide the workforce, saying, "If we would strike now, we would be divided. Because others will complain that if it's December, they have to go home. Others will say they have to budget to pay for their children's school uniform."

NUM, Solidarity and the United Association of South Africa signed a three-year pay agreement with AngloGold Ashanti and Harmony on Oct. 2. Nonetheless, AMCU was issued a certificate of nonresolution by the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

Mine owners intend to take legal action against AMCU if they proceed with a strike in an attempt to have any work stoppage declared unprotected. AMCU's lack of a majority representation will be used by the bosses to try to win an injunction forcing the union members back to work.

South Africa's gold output has fallen 39 percent from a June 2011 high, and the largest firms, whose mines are the deepest and among the oldest globally, say they are losing money on about 35 percent of production at current price levels.

Platinum production declines

South Africa is the world's largest source of platinum. Its production has

been down overall this year.

In 2014, AMCU led the longest strike in the history of the mining industry, resulting in lower production and slowing of growth inside the country.

It was in the platinum sector that the Marikana strike took place in August 2012, leading to the deaths of more than 11 union organizers and workers who were killed in internecine conflicts between supporters of NUM and AMCU. During the strike, the Northwest provincial police carried out a massacre of miners on Aug. 16; 34 were killed and many other injured.

The International Monetary Fund recently released its forecast for growth in South Africa, saying there was the potential for a 1.4 percent increase in 2015, revising downward its previous prediction of 2 percent. IMF officials also warned that in 2016, the growth rate would be 1.3 percent, revising an earlier forecast of 2.1 percent.

A World Bank report examining the potential for economic growth in South Africa and throughout the continent as a whole also scaled back growth figures for 2015 and 2016. It predicted a 1.5 percent growth rate for 2015 and 1.7 percent for the following year. Rates for sub-Saharan Africa were forecast to decline from 4.6 percent in 2014 to 3.7 percent for 2015, the lowest since 2009.

Predictions of slower growth indicate that Africa would be the only developing region to fall below the United Nations global poverty reduction goals. □



INDONESIA 1965:

Lecciones de una derrota catastrófica

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Eric Norden; y Mark Lane, un ex miembro de la Asamblea del Estado de Nueva York quien más tarde llevó a cabo una investigación independiente sobre el asesinato de John F. Kennedy. La indagatoria fue presidida por esta escritora.

Los medios corporativos boicotearon el evento, pero una transcripción de toda la reunión fue publicada por YAWF ese año en forma de libro bajo el título "The Silent Slaughter: The Role of the United States in the Indonesian Massacre" (La masacre silenciosa: El papel de EUA en la masacre de Indonesia). Aún se encuentran copias en librerías en línea.

YAWF continuó denunciando y protestando contra el terrible exterminio físico de la izquierda en Indonesia, que antes del golpe llegaba al menos a 20 millones de personas - 3 millones de miembros del PKI y de 15 a 20 millones de activistas en varios grupos aliados.

En febrero de 1970 YAWF publicó "Indonesia: The Second Greatest Crime of the Century" (Indonesia: El segundo crimen más grande del siglo), que detalló la lucha del país para superar su legado de pobreza extrema después de derrotar el dominio colonial holandés. Bajo Sukarno, su primer presidente, Indonesia se había convertido en imán para los nuevos países independientes que trataban de sobrevivir en un mundo dominado

por el imperialismo.

El libro también mostró que los políticos estadounidenses estaban al tanto de los monumentales crímenes realizados por sus aliados en Indonesia a partir de 1965, y consideraban las decenas de millones gastados en ayuda militar a los generales como "dividendos pagados". (Testimonio del senador por Alabama John Sparkman, en las audiencias sobre el Programa de Asistencia al Exterior de 1967)

Un actor importante en las relaciones de la administración de Lyndon Johnson con los generales indonesios fue el vicepresidente Hubert Humphrey, cuya reputación "liberal" proporcionó una buena cobertura para sus contactos secretos con el ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de Indonesia, Adam Malik. Malik dijo a la periodista Marianne Means, de la revista World Journal Tribune, que Humphrey había jugado un secreto, pero importante papel en el fomento de las "fuerzas democráticas" en Indonesia, queriendo decir los generales asesinos. (WJT 28 de septiembre de 1966)

Griswold es autora del libro "Indonesia: Segundo Crimen más grande del siglo" Es de libre acceso en línea en workers.org.

Fue reimpresso en octubre de 1975. Una tercera edición se publicó cuatro años después.

Racist jailers isolate activist reverend

Continued from page 6

The judge who presided over his frame-up called this a threat against him and his family and sent Pinkney to prison. It took a full year for an appeals court to overturn this outrageous imprisonment.

Pinkney remains the only minister to ever be jailed for quoting the Bible.

In 2012, when public park land was seized and converted into a fancy golf course, Pinkney led a mass march right to the gates at the opening Professional Golf Association game.

During a 2014 recall campaign headed by the reverend against Benton Harbor Mayor James Hightower, Pinkney was charged with five counts of forgery for allegedly having altered five dates on the recall petitions. A SWAT team was sent to arrest him at his home.

His trial during October 2014 continued the persecution of this community leader. An all-white jury was seated to hear the case. Prosecutor Michael Sepic presented absolutely no evidence against Rev. Pinkney. The jury was told, after Judge Sterling Schrock allowed it, that "you don't need evidence to convict Pinkney." It was enough for this racist court that the reverend had spoken at press conferences, organized picket lines and chaired meetings that discussed the petition drive.

On Dec. 14, Pinkney was sentenced from 2 1/2 years to 10 years in prison "as an example." He has been in jail ever since. His request to be at Lakeland, which was honored until Oct. 6, had allowed his spouse Dorothy to visit on a regular basis. Many other supporters visited him and sent him mail, books and magazines.

It could very well have been this strong support that caused the Department of Corrections to decide to ship Rev. Pinkney to the far north of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, far from family and friends. In September, Pinkney's request to the Michigan Court of Appeals for bond pending appeal was denied with no explanation. On Sept. 21, attorney Holloway filed his brief to the Court of Appeals citing numerous unconstitutional and other irregularities in Pinkney's trial and conviction.

Supporters of the reverend are urging all those concerned with justice to call Director Heidi Washington of the Michigan Department of Corrections (517-241-7238) to demand that political prisoner Rev. Edward Pinkney #294671 be transferred back downstate, nearer to his loved ones and his attorney.

Donations can be made at bhbanco.org via PayPal. □

Gente de color forzada fuera de centros urbanos en EUA

Por Abayomi Azikiwe

Un informe del censo publicado recientemente, indica que las poblaciones blancas están empezando a aumentar en las zonas urbanas de Estados Unidos.

Un ligero crecimiento de personas blancas en las ciudades, de las que muchas habían huido hace décadas, no se traduce necesariamente en la mejoría de las condiciones sociales de las comunidades afroamericanas y latinas que ahora habitan en esas municipalidades. De hecho, las cifras reflejan una disminución adicional del compromiso al mantenimiento del bienestar de las comunidades de personas de color, quienes están siendo obligadas a trasladarse.

Este fenómeno se expuso el 16 de septiembre en el Detroit News, una publicación diaria que ha sido gran defensora de la reestructuración de la ciudad en base a los intereses de los bancos y las corporaciones multinacionales. Detroit y otras zonas urbanas grandes fueron víctimas de décadas de pérdida de empleos, préstamos abusivos y políticas públicas hostiles y racistas que han cerrado escuelas y forzado a un mayor número de personas a la pobreza y a la marginación política.

Desde que Detroit fue injustamente llevado a la mayor quiebra municipal

en la historia de Estados Unidos durante 2013-14, la “reconstrucción” de la ciudad defendida por los medios de comunicación de la clase dominante se ha basado en la idea - en parte - de una migración inversa de los blancos, junto con medidas que echan afuera a afroamericanas/os, latinas/os y a las/os pobres en general.

Hasta el Washington Post del 24 de septiembre echó cuenta de los artículos en medios corporativos relacionados con el crecimiento en el número de personas blancas que viven en las ciudades. En colaboración con William Frey, demógrafo de la Institución Brookings, se analizaron los datos del censo a la luz de los patrones de migración en los últimos 60 años que afectan a las principales zonas urbanas.

El International Business Times del 25 de septiembre, dijo de este cambio, “Los medios han cubierto las poblaciones blancas que se han trasladado a las ciudades de forma individual en el pasado, a menudo escribiendo sobre las tendencias de manera individual como ciertos barrios cambian debido al aburguesamiento. Especialmente con el 10mo aniversario del huracán Katrina en agosto, muchos medios escribieron acerca de los cambios demográficos en Nueva Orleans”.

El informe continúa diciendo, “Pero ahora que esto parece a una tendencia más amplia, Frey dijo al Washington Post que no cree que eso signifique que será un modelo a largo plazo de la misma manera que la fuga de los blancos sucedió en la década de 1950. “No es que digamos que vamos a movernos 180 grados en la otra dirección”, dijo Frey. “Y la población blanca no está creciendo tan rápidamente como antes de todos modos. Pero es un indicador de que cualquier tipo de renacimiento de la ciudad - ya sea a corto o largo plazo que estamos viendo - involucra a los blancos”.

Ciudades más pobres están siendo ‘revitalizadas’

Frey puso a la ciudad de Detroit como un ejemplo, diciendo que 8.000 blancos se han mudado recientemente a la municipalidad. Sin embargo, sólo una semana antes, otro informe había señalado que la ciudad, que es más del 80 por ciento afroamericana, también es la más económicamente subdesarrollada y desfavorecida con el empobrecimiento de las personas.

El mismo noticiero Detroit News que a diario celebra y aboga por la explotación y por impedir el empoderamiento de la población mayoritaria en la ciudad, se

vio obligado a informar el 16 de septiembre que, a pesar de toda la propaganda sobre un renacimiento por la clase dominante, Detroit sigue siendo la ciudad más pobre del país. Esto ha sido después de las declaraciones de bancarrota por dos de los fabricantes de automóviles en el 2009 y por la ciudad en los últimos dos años.

El artículo resaltó que, “Michigan es uno de 12 estados que han visto una disminución en el porcentaje de personas que viven en la pobreza en 2014, aunque la tasa de pobreza del estado se mantuvo más alta que la media nacional, según un informe de la Oficina del Censo de Estados Unidos publicado el miércoles”.

Sin embargo, el artículo continúa diciendo que, “Detroit fue la ciudad importante más pobre en América con un 39,3 por ciento que vive por debajo de la línea de pobreza de \$24.008 para una familia de cuatro. Pero Flint encabezó la lista de las ciudades más pobres de Michigan, con el 40,1 por ciento de los residentes viviendo en la pobreza”.

Tanto Detroit como Flint eran centros de la industria automotriz en el siglo 20, cuando la United Auto Workers y varios sindicatos lucharon batallas para ganar el reconocimiento de los derechos de negociación. □

INDONESIA 1965:

Lecciones de una derrota catastrófica

Por Deirdre Griswold

¿Quién quiere estudiar derrotas? Es mucho más satisfactorio estudiar victorias. Leer acerca de héroes conquistadores en lugar de vencidos.

Sin embargo, cualquier soldado puede decir que los guerreros rechazan el estudio de derrotas a su propio riesgo. Las lecciones de las derrotas son esenciales para éxitos futuros.

Si no por otra razón, los movimientos sociales progresistas surgiendo en este período de profundización de la decadencia capitalista, necesitan aprender sobre la derrota catastrófica que ocurrió en Indonesia a partir del 1 de octubre 1965 - hace medio siglo.

En pocos meses, los ríos a lo largo de esa poblada nación del sudeste asiático quedaron congestionados con cadáveres. El ejército había ido de isla en isla y de pueblo en pueblo pidiendo a sus secuaces locales que reuniera a aquellas/os que tuvieron alguna asociación con el Partido Comunista Indonesio - PKI - o con sus filiales de masa: asociaciones de obreros, campesinos, mujeres y jóvenes que habían estado exigiendo justicia y una mayor igualdad.

Una vez identificadas/os, o fueron

asesinadas/os en el lugar o enviadas/os a campos de concentración. Los estimados de la prensa occidental sobre el número de muertes en este baño de sangre, se informaron sin emoción, oscilando entre 300.000 y un millón.

Usted no oirá nada de esto en las historias que presentan al gobierno y a los militares de EUA como defensores de la libertad y la democracia mundial. Pero EUA estaba profundamente involucrado, incluso mientras al mismo tiempo expandía su guerra neocolonial a Vietnam, Camboya y Laos.

En los últimos años, indonesios valientes y algunos investigadores occidentales han desenterrado trozos de esta horrorosa historia. Dos documentales del cineasta Joshua Oppenheimer - “The Act of Killing” (El acto de matar) en 2012 y en este año “The Look of Silence” (La faz del silencio) - se basan en entrevistas con indonesios que llevaron a cabo algunos de los asesinatos y aún alardean de ello, y con miembros de la familia de sus víctimas.

Oppenheimer dice que trabajar en las películas fue como ir a la Alemania nazi 40 años después del Holocausto - y encontrar la misma gente todavía en el poder.

La periodista Kathy Kadane entrevistó en 1990 a ex funcionarios del Departamento de Estado y la CIA que no sólo admitieron que EUA había dado listas con los nombres de miles de miembros del PKI a los militares indonesios en el momento de los asesinatos, sino que trataron de justificarlo. (Chicago Tribune, 23 de mayo, 1990)

La oposición a masacres en EUA

Lo que no se ha mencionado sin embargo, es que existía una oposición activa en EUA en el momento de los asesinatos. Jóvenes contra la Guerra y el Fascismo (Youth Against War & Fascism, YAWF), el brazo juvenil del Partido Workers World-Mundo Obrero, realizaron manifestaciones en contra del papel de Estados Unidos en estas masacres y expusieron lo que estaba sucediendo en Indonesia a través de artículos en este periódico.

YAWF también organizó una investigación pública en la Universidad de Columbia, el 2 de junio de 1966, a la que asistieron 1.000 personas. El grupo colocó un anuncio acerca de la investigación en una edición internacional del New York Times para que el mundo pudiera ver que había oposición en EUA a

los terribles crímenes perpetrados por Washington, en connivencia con una camarilla de generales indonesios de la extrema derecha.

El famoso matemático y filósofo Bertrand Russell envió un mensaje a la investigación en nombre de su Fundación Paz. Dos de sus representantes habían estado asistiendo a una conferencia en Yakarta en el momento del golpe.

Russell escribió que “pocos tenían duda sobre lo que estaba sucediendo a su alrededor. La Séptima Flota de los Estados Unidos se encontraba en aguas javanesas. La base más grande de la zona, febrilmente construida por EUA solo unos meses antes en el punto más meridional de la isla más al sur de las Filipinas, fue ordenada en estado de alerta. El general Nasution tenía una misión en Washington. Estados Unidos estaba involucrado directamente en el día a día de los acontecimientos”.

Los oradores en la investigación incluían a William Worthy, corresponsal del Baltimore Afro-American, quien había visitado Indonesia tres veces; el profesor Andrew March, del Instituto de Asia Oriental de Columbia; el periodista

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