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# After Paris, beware 9/11 syndrome

# Say no to Muslim bashing!

By Deirdre Griswold

The news from France is grim. The immediate response of the French government to the terrible attacks in Paris on Nov. 13, which killed 129 people and wounded hundreds more, was to send planes to bomb Raqqa in Syria, a city of 200,000 people.

The group "Raqqa Is Being Slaughtered Silently" reported that on Nov. 15 France bombed a soccer stadium, hospital, museum and government building, in addition to what the French military claimed were ISIS targets. The group has no reason to exaggerate. They have also been reporting brutalities by ISIS.

Inside France, the government of President François Hollande has declared a state of emergency, which it wants to extend for three months and which suspends many civil liberties. Hollande is also trying to push through permanent changes to the French Constitution that would increase the state's power of surveillance and strip convicted "terrorists" of citizenship.

In Britain and the U.S., "national security" officials and politicians are using the attacks in Paris to push their own agendas for more funds, more restrictions on immigrants and control over all digital communications.

Marine Le Pen, head of France's neofascist National Front Party, which is violently anti-immigrant and has called for closing the borders, congratulated President Hollande on his actions in response to the attacks. This should alert any worker, any progressive, anti-racist person to the dangers that lie ahead.

Think back to the 9/11 attacks in the United States in 2001. Did the response of the U.S. government end violence — or did the government use the attacks to enormously increase its violence against countries in the Middle East?

The Bush administration quickly invaded Afghanistan and in early 2003 launched "Shock and Awe," massively bombing Baghdad and invaded Iraq. Iraq had nothing to do with the destruction of the World Trade Center. Since then there has been non-stop bombing of many countries in the region by the U.S., France and other NATO imperialist powers and the destruction of Libya and Syria.

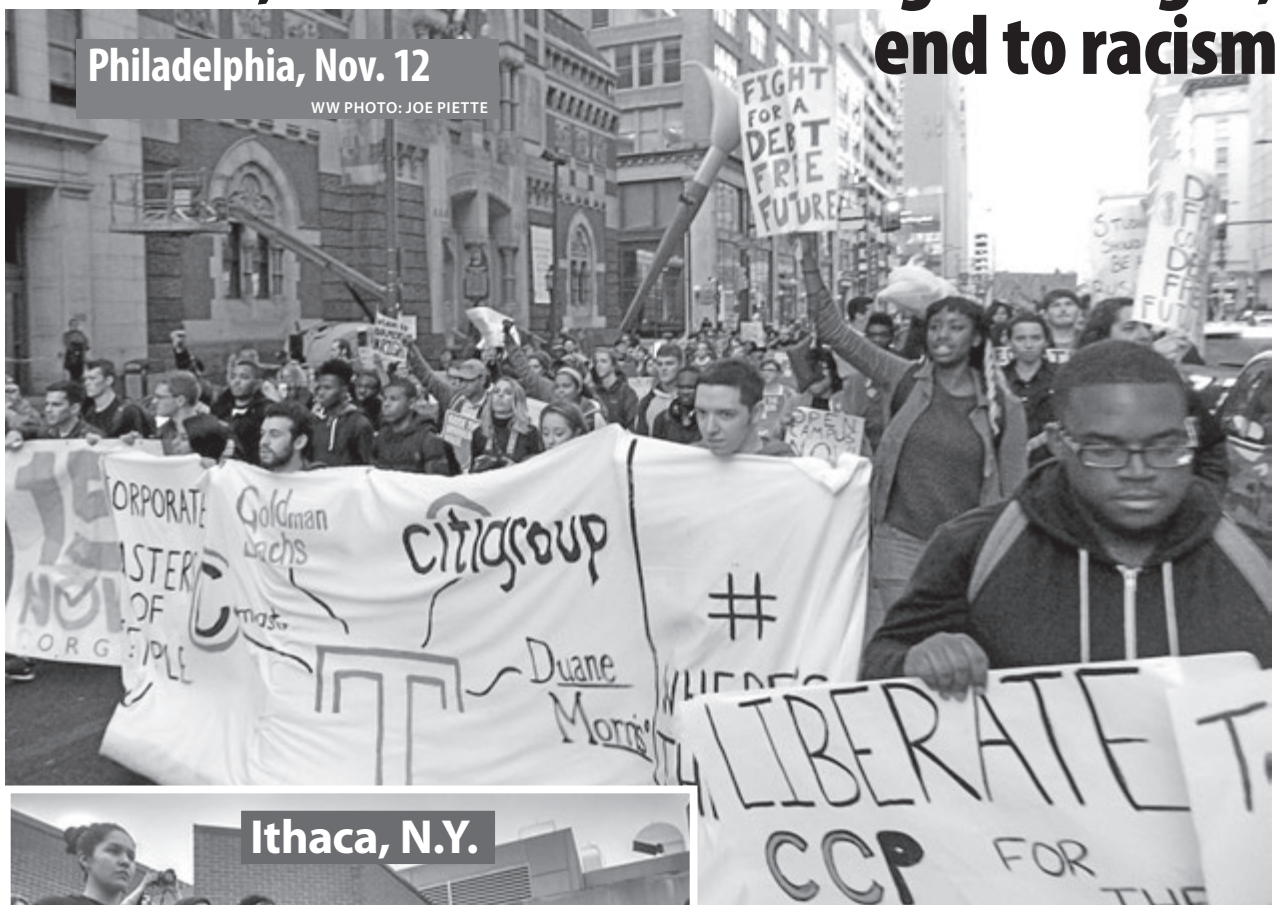
The more acts of war by these rich, heavily armed powers, the more deaths and terrible injuries, the more survivors without homes, families or a way to make a living. Millions have become refugees, trying to flee the wars that seem to follow them from country to country. Hundreds of thousands of men, women and their children have braved great perils to get to Europe — and now are being told the borders are closing and they are all suspected of being "terrorists."

How will any of this promote peace in the region? How could it possibly stabilize these ravaged countries so that the millions who have been displaced by the wars can return to their homes?

The outraged response by Western governments to the Paris attacks has been infinitely greater than any regrets they have voiced over the catastrophes they have inflicted on the peoples of the region for decades.

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## Workers, students demand higher wages, end to racism



Philadelphia, Nov. 12

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Ithaca, N.Y.

PHOTO: COED.COM

Just days apart, people were in the streets coast to coast demanding "\$15 and a union" and an end to bigotry on the campuses. See articles on page 3.



WW PHOTO: ELLIE DORRITIE

Buffalo, N.Y.

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# Boston bus drivers explain solidarity

By Martha Grevatt

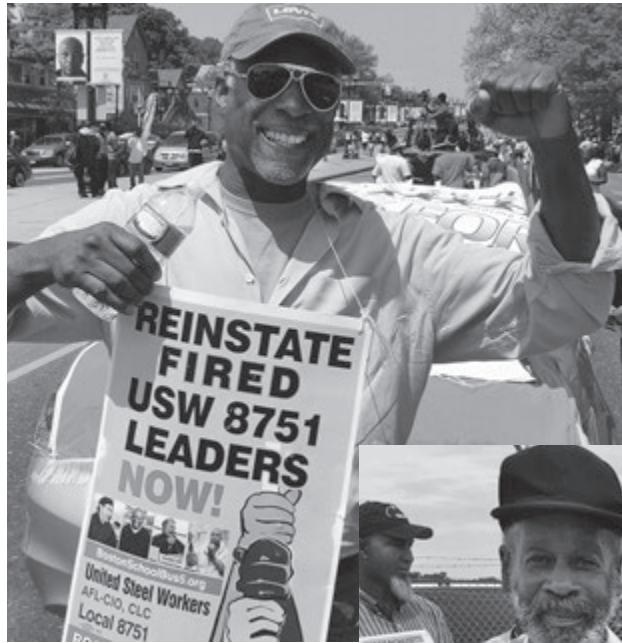
United Steelworkers Local 8751, the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, continues to fight a two-year battle to get four of its elected leaders reinstated after being fired. At the same time, the union is fighting for a just contract, the resolution of 700-plus grievances and many unfair labor practices, and safe transit for the city's children, their precious cargo.

Yet the union never fails to stand up when racism raises its ugly head. Workers World spoke to two union stalwarts, Bobby Traynham and Samir Stanley, whose "solidarity in action" included representing Local 8751 at the October "Justice Or Else" march. Stanley is a 32-year driver, multiterm chief steward and Team Solidarity member of the executive board serving on the accident review committee. Traynham is a rank-and-file Team Solidarity leader with 37 years behind the wheel and a long-time member of Workers World Party.

**Workers World:** What does the word "solidarity" mean to you?

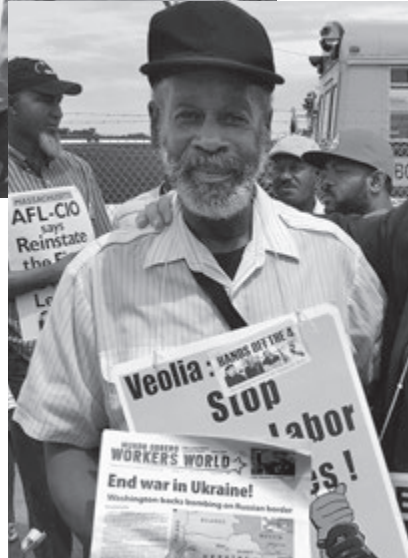
**Bobby Traynham:** It means that you support a person if they are having a hard time. Solidarity forever, that's what I say. You make workers know that and make them feel better. We had a sound truck going around the neighborhood for City Councillor Charles Yancey. We knew he was having a hard time because the bourgeoisie was giving a lot of money to [his opponent] Ms. Campbell. [The bosses' favorite won the election.] We gave a lot of support to Chuck Turner [a former city councillor who served time on trumped-up federal charges]. He was under the gun. He didn't have no solidarity in City Hall; they voted against him. Yancey was the only one who stuck with Chuck. The local was behind him. I was in court every day. Now Chuck's in the forefront of the negotiations for the fired drivers.

**Samir Stanley:** That's a good question. I would be in solidarity with probably any group that believes in fairness and justice and equality for humanity. Local 8751 shows solidarity for most organizations that support equality, anti-racism, housing, and for those that don't have a voice, and labor period. One of the main things is better wages and jobs for workers. McDonald's workers



Left, Samir Stanley.

Below, Bobby Traynham.



PHOTOS: TEAM SOLIDARITY

walked out for better wages. That is one of the most consistent things that we have fought for.

**WW:** Why did Local 8751 send a delegation to "Justice or Else"?

**Stanley:** I think that is easy, because they support what "Justice Or Else" stands for, which is equality and justice for those who don't have it.

I was at the original [Million Man March], so for me the experience was overwhelming. You have to be a Black American to understand what it feels like to be among a group like yourselves that has been portrayed so negatively: your culture, your food, your education, etc. So to not see any of those things at all at a massive rally is a thing to behold. The Million Man March was the highlight of my life. The rally this year was similar to but not equal to that experience. It was like coming home again.

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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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# Wave of strikes in U.S. back fight for \$15

## Special to Workers World

A wave of strikes and protests by low-wage workers fighting for a \$15 minimum hourly wage and a union swept the U.S. on Nov. 10, making it the largest day of action ever as this movement enters its third year.

From Boston to Los Angeles; Seattle to Milwaukee; New York to Durham, N.C.; and Philadelphia to Atlanta, nearly every major city saw strikes at fast food restaurants during the work day and larger demonstrations in the evening. In total, some 500 cities counted strikes and other actions throughout the day.

Fast food, home health care, child care, airport, retail workers and those from many other sectors took to the streets to demand \$15 and a union. What began in November 2012 when a group of fast food workers in New York City walked off the job has since sparked a national movement that has become a rallying cry for workers everywhere.

An encouraging development with the latest round of strikes is the growing alliance among the Black Lives Matter movement, the immigrant rights movement, and the fight for \$15 and a union. In many cities, contingents were organized by Black Lives Matter and immigrant rights activists, and many speakers raised the connection between the low-wage workers' struggle and the fight against racism and police terror.

### Which way forward?

Most of the Nov. 10 demonstrations ended with protests outside city halls and calls for the elected politicians to take action around the demands for \$15 and a union.

The courageous actions by low-wage workers, who have gone on strike many times in the last several years and have helped breathe new life into the U.S. labor movement, clearly demonstrate their commitment to stay the course and see this struggle through. These workers, by broadening relationships with the Black Lives Matter movement and others, are showing the potential for the movement to expand and deepen.

A key question for this movement — an upsurge marked by militancy and the leadership of Black and Latino/a workers, along with many women and young workers — is whether it will maintain its independence in the face of the looming 2016 presidential elections. The elections tend to pull popular movements away from

needed strikes and street actions into the framework set by the two major political parties, both of which represent the interests of the big capitalists and bankers.

It will be up to the workers on the front lines of this struggle and the broader movement that has mobilized to support them to maintain an independent course.

Following are reports from just a few of the many areas where actions were held.

### DETROIT

Hundreds of low-wage workers and their supporters rallied and demonstrated through downtown Detroit. Among them were fast food, retail, home health care and auto parts workers, many of whom had participated in the nationwide strike. The Service Employees union was the principal organizer, with other unions and AFL-CIO affiliates represented. Workers held aloft a papier-mâché model of boxer Joe Louis' fist clenching \$5 and \$10 bills. The fist won a mock battle with a Ronald McDonald puppet.

— Kris Hamel and Martha Grevatt

### NORTH CAROLINA

Members of the North Carolina Public Service Workers rallied at Kinston City Hall, calling for at least \$15 per hour, union rights and recognition that "Black Workers' Lives Matter." A large majority of Health and Human Services employees make less than \$15, even those who have worked for the state for over 20 years. "You wanna know why we are always coming to work tired?" asked Robbin Clarke-Hines, a union member at Caswell Center. "It's because we are forced to work two jobs to make ends meet."

The rally also demanded the internationally recognized right for public workers to collectively bargain, which is banned in this state, and called for an end to police killings.

In the rural eastern part of the state, fast food workers, adjunct professors at nearby universities, public workers and the Pitt County Coalition Against Racism picketed and rallied at Greenville



North Carolina Public Service Workers Union rally  
WW PHOTO: DANTE STROBINO

City Hall. Workers from the Rocky Mount Engine Plant and other members of the Electrical Workers Local 150 rallied at Rocky Mount City Hall. The city of Greensboro recently committed to raise all municipal workers' salaries to \$15 per hour over the next few years. This is a growing trend across the state, the U.S. South and the entire country. Birmingham, Ala., passed a similar ordinance, following on the heels of Seattle; Los Angeles; Oakland, Calif.; New York; and many other areas.

— Dante Strobino

### BUFFALO, N.Y.

The Coalition for Economic Justice organized protests at McDonald's and at City Hall, where workers spoke about long hours, low pay and unfair working conditions. Chanting, "What do we want? \$15 an hour! When do we want it? Now! And if we don't get it? Shut it down!" workers from McDonald's, Tim Horton's, Taco Bell and Wendy's joined home care, child care and other underpaid workers at the rallies, along with supporters from many unions and progressive organizations.

— Ellie Dorritie

### BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Several hundred workers and supporters marched at 6 a.m. from Cadman Plaza to several downtown McDonald's. They wore sweatshirts with not only their wage demands but also the "I can't breathe" slogan signaling condemnation of the police killing of Black Staten Islander Eric Garner. Speakers emphasized the demand for \$15 and a union as well as for immigrant rights and support for the Black Lives Matter struggle. Contingents included carwash and retail workers, Make the Road, NY Communities for Change and the Peoples' Power Assembly.

— Anne Pruden



Brooklyn, New York  
WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

### PHILADELPHIA

Some 200 fast food, home care, airport, nursing home and other workers rallied and marched for a \$15 minimum wage and a union despite a steady rain. The majority were young and Black. They drew many cheers from onlookers as they walked in the street from City Hall to a busy McDonald's store.

— Joe Piette

### MILWAUKEE

Activists from Black Lives Matter, Fight for 15 Wisconsin, immigrant rights and anti-war protesters, the Nation of Islam, unions such as Amalgamated Transit Union Local 998 and the Teachers Education Association, and others united on Nov. 10 to take the streets to confront the Republican Party "debate" in Milwaukee. "The whole damn system is guilty as hell. We need to stand on their necks," said Nate Hamilton, the brother of Dontre Hamilton, at a City Hall rally before marching. Dontre Hamilton was shot 14 times by Milwaukee cop Christopher Manney. That morning the Hamilton family learned that no federal charges would be brought against the cop for Dontre Hamilton's death. For hours thousands faced off against hundreds of cops, chanting "El pueblo, unido, jamás será vencido!" and "I. Believe. That we. Will win!" They demanded \$15 and a union and an end to police terror.

Other demands included an end to the U.S.-Israeli war on Palestine and other Arab and Muslim peoples, stop the war on migrants, money for jobs, solidarity with Cuba, socialism not capitalism, and cancellation of student debt. Due to the militant struggles right outside the so-called Republican Party debate, the first question asked of the candidates was if they supported 15 and a union. They all said no, which didn't surprise or deter the people.

— Milwaukee WW Bureau

# Mizzou sparks protests against campus racism



Student protest at the University of Missouri

## By Kathy Durkin

The militant struggle initiated by African-American students at the University of Missouri, including a hunger strike followed by threats of a boycott from the football team and a faculty walkout with widespread multinational support, struck a stunning blow against campus racism and administrative indifference. The activists successfully forced out the school's president and chancellor.

But the actions of the courageous Missouri students were not without risk. This was evident after the protests began, when three white supremacists were arrested in Missouri for posting death threats on social media against Black students.

However, the strength, determination and victory at Mizzou spurred on students nationwide to actively protest racism and all forms of bigotry and discrimination — overt and covert. Their struggles have shaken up college officials, who can no longer ignore oppressed students' just demands for the eradication of entrenched racism and for the establishment of safe, nonhostile academic environments.

Demonstrations have been multinational, with African-American and other students of color taking the lead, and women in the forefront on many campuses. Many protesters have taken up the chant of the Black Lives Matter movement, which has inspired and emboldened

Continued on page 11

# UAW-GM contract passes, but with much opposition

By Martha Grevatt

United Auto Workers members voted 58 percent in favor of a four-year contract with General Motors, the union announced on Nov. 6. The same day, the UAW reached a similar tentative agreement with Ford, which Ford workers are currently voting on. The ratification of the GM agreement has been delayed because skilled trades members, who have language specific to their concerns, rejected the contract.

This contract in most ways mirrors the contract Fiat Chrysler Automobiles workers passed in October. That contract was significant because it came after workers rejected institutionalized two-tier pay in an initial version, causing a second version to be negotiated that gives second-tier workers a path to top pay. However, the lower seniority workers — production workers hired after Oct. 29, 2007 — still do not get a traditional pension. Their health care and other benefits are also less than first-tier workers.

With GM's third-quarter profits reaching a record \$3.1 billion before interest and taxes, workers there would likely have rejected a contract that did not improve upon the Fiat Chrysler template. In addition to much larger "signing bonuses," the GM contract — and now also the Ford contract — give second-tier workers equal health care benefits. That is another important step towards eradicating the unequal and divisive tiered pay structures that pull wages down and threaten union solidarity. It is another victory for the grassroots shop floor resistance to two-tier that sunk the initial FCA contract.

The GM and Ford contracts, however, also have all the hidden pay inequities of the FCA pattern. There are lower rates of pay for temporary workers, future permanent workers and workers at certain parts plants. The eight-year wage progression, with the biggest raises towards the end, will mean someone with four years' seniority will make over \$7 less an hour than someone with eight



Martha Grevatt

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

years. At the end of the four-year agreement it will be possible for rates of pay to vary by almost 50 percent — over \$14 an hour — for workers doing the same or comparable work.

After these new tiers became widely publicized, they became one of the key reasons that 42 percent of GM workers voted no. And a majority voted no at the four GM plants where the top pay is substantially lower than in the rest of the UAW plants. The contract forces "legacy" workers to take a job at another plant to keep their "traditional" pay. Two of three Ford plants with an identical setup also voted no.

The GM skilled trades workers, about 16 percent of the overall UAW membership, had an added incentive to reject the contract. A draconian job consolidation plan, foisted upon the membership during the state-orchestrated bankruptcy of 2009, is left virtually intact. This language eliminates over two dozen classifications, making most tradespeople a generic "mechanical journey-person."

This threatens safety as well as job security. While trades jobs are the highest-paying and often less physically demanding, they remain the most dangerous. The jobs involve working inside and on top of machinery, confined-space work, working with high voltages and other hazards. The majority of UAW workplace fatalities are in the trades. Without the extensive training unique to each trade, a typical trades worker will face greater risk of injury in these

generic classifications.

"Someone is going to get hurt and it's going to be because of this," explained John Ilgenfritz, a tractor repair specialist at GM's Wentzville, Mo., plant. (Detroit News, Nov. 13) Four years ago, Chrysler skilled trades workers rejected the contract over similar concerns. Without giving the workers a chance to state their view, the UAW's International Executive Board overrode the vote and declared the contract ratified. Hundreds of members protested the ratification through the union's internal appeal process. This appeal, while it did not reverse the IEB's decision, created a better environment for all workers who exercise their democratic right to reject contract concessions.

Many trades workers voiced their concerns at meetings held at local union halls to determine the reasons for their

rejection of the contract. As with the overall no vote at FCA, UAW negotiators feel the rank-and-file pressure and are meeting with GM to try to improve the language on skilled trades. This shows again that workers will benefit when we put aside our fears, stand up to company and union official intimidation, and say no to concessions.

Whether or not the Ford agreement will pass is not yet known. What is clear is that there is a restless mood on the shop floor among workers who see the obscene profits of the bosses and want back what they gave up earlier to save the companies. The current crop of leaders, who openly embrace a "partnership" with the bosses, eventually must adopt a more anti-capitalist stance or get out of the way of a resurgent membership.

Martha Grevatt is a 28-year UAW-Chrysler skilled tradeswoman.

## On the picket line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

### FedEx Freight drivers stage first strike

Eighty-five FedEx Freight drivers in Gardena, Calif., the company's major Los Angeles hub, made history Nov. 9, when they led the first unfair labor practices strike in the company's history, after having filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board. The workers accuse FedEx of illegally interfering with their right to form a union through harassment, wrongful termination and misinformation about unions. "We've been trying to unionize and they do everything in their power to intimidate us," said Greg Barfus, one of the drivers on strike. "We're tired of them violating our rights — this is our warning to FedEx that their illegal behavior needs to stop immediately."

The drivers were joined on the picket line by over 300 Teamster supporters. "FedEx has done everything under the books to oppose workers' right to organize. In some areas, workers have won union elections, but the company has refused to bargain," said Randy Korgan, Teamsters Joint Council 42 organizing director, in a written statement. "We believe this action will inspire other FedEx employees to take similar actions and eventually build enough power to force FedEx's hand. We're in this for the long haul and this is just the beginning."

The workers vow to continue the strike through the busy holiday season unless FedEx recognizes their legal right to collectively bargain. (FOXLA.com, Nov. 9; Daily Breeze, Nov. 9)

### D.C. area paratransit workers win first contract

The First Transit MetroAccess drivers, who provide accessible public transportation to Washington, D.C., area residents with disabilities, scored a victory Oct. 16 when they ratified their first union contract. Previously, the workers had no formal grievance process, inadequate benefits and pay so low many needed public assistance to provide for their families.

Having won representation in 2014 by Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689, the MetroAccess workers entered contract negotiations with the backing of 9,000 ATU 689 members who work for Metro Bus and Rail. The paratransit workers' contract guarantees wage increases, paid vacations, affordable health coverage, and

grievance and arbitration procedures. "This is an exciting win for all of us as these workers come closer to earning a living wage," said ATU 689 President Jackie L. Jeter. (ATU.org, Oct. 19)

### Adjuncts win first contract at Md. College of Art

After protracted contract negotiations, adjunct faculty at the Maryland Institute College of Art ratified their first three-year contract with Service Employees Local 500 on Oct. 8. Though MICA administrators refused an across-the-board wage increase, the contract adapts the existing pay scale so 300 adjuncts can more easily advance up the scale and includes an annual cost-of-living adjustment. The agreement establishes standards for the appointment and reappointment of part-time faculty, a professional development fund and an evaluation process to foster continued excellence in teaching. All help solidify the professionalism of adjunct staff.

Unionizing at MICA is part of the national movement to establish collective bargaining rights for part-time faculty at U.S. colleges and universities. This is the first bargaining unit in the greater Baltimore area, which has thousands of adjunct faculty at dozens of private and public educational institutions. (In These Times, Oct. 5)

### Tyson Foods lawsuit before Supreme Court

Although the Supreme Court is known to be hostile to class action lawsuits, it heard arguments on Nov. 10 about a wage theft lawsuit pitting Tyson Foods against about 3,000 workers at a pig-processing plant in Iowa. The first judge who heard the case allowed the workers to band together in a single lawsuit seeking overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act and awarded them \$6 million. The workers want to be paid for the time they spend putting on and taking off protective gear and other work-related functions. They cite an expert witness's statistical calculations based on hundreds of videotaped observations of how long it took the workers to get ready. The Nov. 13 Huffington Post pointed out this case follows "decades of cases, court orders and [Department of Labor] investigations finding the company owes millions to its workers." □

## Boston bus drivers explain solidarity

Continued from page 2

To deal with the problem you have to deal with the root. I feel that this country has a problem: that is racism. It might not be at the top of your agenda, but for a person that's dealing with it, it's at the top of the list. When it comes to the root, the inception of America, you have the taking of the land of the original people that were here. Then you have the immigrants coming onto the land. Then you have the involuntary immigrants, the Black people. If those three entities are not addressed, then the fight against racism is not a real fight. That event, that shows Black people in a positive light, was not aired. Events like this show that the fight on racism is far from being done.

**Traynham:** I wanted to be there. This is the 20th anniversary of the Million Man March. I went 20 years ago. That was the highlight of my life to see one million Black men. There was a whole lot of youth at this year's one. I met kids from Texas and I talked with them about 20 years ago. It was good to see young people watch our backs. One of the biggest things was the Native Americans and they highlighted them speaking

about their struggle. Also parents talked about their kids being shot down by police. I expected more from the Nation of Islam about boycotting the holidays. I was disappointed that Minister Farakhan pulled back. He did not clarify what the "else" was in "Justice or Else."

**WW:** Why did the drivers attend the WW conference?

**Traynham:** I think most of the drivers went because they love Workers World. They talked about it to other workers when they got back. All the workers were asking what happened. For three or four days we explained. Freeport Yard [one of four bus yards where Traynham works] supports the party. The thing we got to do, we got to recruit. After the contract is settled we can recruit.

I was born in a place in West Virginia they call Redstar. So I was made a communist from the beginning. I don't know what I'd be doing if I had not entered Workers World. I took to it right away. When I met the party, I got rid of all my vices, drinking beer and whisky and smoking. The party is probably why I am still alive. I am going to pay a debt to Workers World as long as I live. That's what I'm doing. □

## As state court blocks his release

# Woodfox fights for freedom

By Kathy Durkin

Freedom was within reach for Louisiana political prisoner Albert Woodfox, the last imprisoned member of the “Angola Three.” But his much-anticipated release didn’t happen. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled 2-1 on Nov. 9 that Woodfox must remain in custody and that the state of Louisiana could try him for a third time, despite a federal court’s ruling prohibiting a retrial.

This cruel legal maneuvering shows the entrenched racism and unfairness in the criminal justice system. State officials are hell-bent on stopping Woodfox’s release and on continuing his 43-year imprisonment in solitary confinement.

The appeals court overturned a June 8 decision by U.S. District Judge James Brady that had ordered Woodfox’s immediate release and prohibited the state from retrying him for the 1972 killing of a prison guard. Brady had asserted that it would not be a fair trial: Key witnesses had died, there was no physical evidence

linking Woodfox to the death, and there was racial discrimination in the jury selection. Woodfox has steadfastly maintained his innocence.

This latest decision by the appeals court was not unanimous. One of the three judges, James L. Dennis, strongly agreed with Brady. Excerpts from his dissent, published at the blog site of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, state: “If ever a case justifiably could be considered to present ‘exceptional circumstances’ barring re-prosecution, this is that case.

“For more than four decades, Albert Woodfox has been solitarily confined to a nine-by-six foot cell for 23 hours a day,” says Dennis, who adds that during the hour Woodfox is allowed outside his cell, he must remain in solitude. “[He] is a model prisoner, now 68 years old, and in frail health, suffering from an onslaught of life-shortening diseases. The State has twice tried and twice failed to obtain a constitutionally valid conviction of Woodfox. For the vast majority of his life, Woodfox has spent nearly every waking

hour in a cramped cell in crushing solitude without a valid conviction.”

Today, Woodfox is the longest-held U.S. prisoner in solitary confinement, a punishment considered torture by civil liberties and international human rights organizations.

### ‘Angola Three’ fought injustice in prison

Woodfox, Herman Wallace and Robert King became known as the “Angola Three,” all internationally known African-American political prisoners who spent decades in solitary confinement. Workers World has actively supported their fight for freedom and justice.

This newspaper said on June 8, 2012, that “Woodfox’s case began 40 years ago, deep in rural, southern Louisiana, when he and two other young Black men, Herman Wallace and Robert King, were silenced for exposing racial segregation, systemic corruption and horrific abuse in the biggest prison in the U.S. at that time, an 18,000-acre former slave plantation called Angola.”

Prisoners organized hunger strikes,

work stoppages and political education classes, even forming a Black Panther Party chapter. They sought investigations into unconstitutional and inhumane practices. After a prison guard was killed in a 1972 rebellion, officials framed the three activists and threw them into solitary confinement.

King was released in 2001. After 41 years in solitary, Wallace was let out on Oct. 1, 2013, but died of cancer three days later. Even as Wallace was dying, prison officials were trying to re-imprison him.

The Angola 3 News blog reports that Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the U.S., and that three-fourths of Angola’s more than 5,000 prisoners are African American. Due to harsh sentencing laws, 97 percent will die there. Louisiana officials want the same fate for Woodfox.

Albert Woodfox is determined to keep fighting until he gets justice. See the Angola 3 News blog for updates and how to send letters of support to this courageous brother. □

## Visitors break Rev. Pinkney’s isolation

By David Sole  
Detroit

From Nov. 11-14, activists from Detroit and Ann Arbor, Mich., drove hundreds of miles to Benton Harbor, Mich., to pick up Dorothy Pinkney, spouse of political prisoner the Rev. Edward Pinkney. They then headed north another 500 miles to Marquette Branch Prison.

The round trip, a total of over 1,400 miles, finally broke the isolation prison officials had imposed on Rev. Pinkney when, starting Oct. 23, they denied him all telephone access. Rev. Pinkney had been punitively transferred to the far north of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula from a prison close to his spouse, attorney and supporters. They visited Rev. Pinkney on both Nov. 12 and Nov. 13.

Rev. Pinkney is serving a 2 1/2- to 10-year sentence for allegedly altering five dates on a petition in 2014 seeking to recall then Benton Harbor Mayor James Hightower. Although there was absolutely no evidence linking the reverend to the changes, the all-

white jury was told by the prosecutor and judge that they could convict him “with no evidence” and assume that he was to blame because he led the recall campaign. He began serving his sentence last December.

In a letter sent from Marquette Prison and posted on the bbbanco.org website — BANCO is the Black Autonomous Network Community Organization, a group Rev. Pinkney heads — he wrote: “I was transferred to Marquette Prison, shackled, mistreated and intimidated. I was forced to strip on five different occasions. I am forced into overcrowding, inadequate exercise, lack of clean clothing and inadequate medical care. I believe that [prison authorities] have put a hit on me, inside the prison system. I believe they are trying to force me to die in prison. If I do not survive this, you will know the reason why.” Rev. Pinkney turned 67 last month.

Efforts to recall Mayor Hightower were thwarted by the courts and the prosecution of Rev. Pinkney. However, Hightower was ousted by Benton Harbor voters this Nov. 3 in the regular election. City Commission-

er Marcus Muhammad, sweeping the election 666 to 444, will take office on Jan. 1.

The Final Call newspaper, writing about Commissioner Muhammad’s election, noted that “a major community leader, Rev. Edward Pinkney, was jailed after what many residents believe was a politically motivated arrest and trial. ... Mr. Pinkney led the mobilization for the recall election and was a strong supporter of Mr. Muhammad. Rev. Pinkney challenged the awesome power of giants like the Whirlpool Corp., which is based in Benton Harbor, saying the corporation had too much power and received too many benefits while giving Benton Harbor Black residents little.” (Nov. 11)

The case of Rev. Pinkney has been gaining the attention of other media in the United States and abroad.

Workers World spoke to Marcina Cole from the organization Observers in the Court, who made the trip and visited with Rev. Pinkney. She reported that he seemed



WW PHOTO: DAVID SOLE  
Marcina Cole and Dorothy Pinkney at Marquette City Hall during a break while visiting political prisoner Rev. Edward Pinkney.

more agitated than in previous visits when he was at Lakeland Prison. Guards swarmed all through the visiting area constantly. Cole and Dorothy Pinkney were the only African-American visitors at this remote prison.

“I didn’t see even one African-American guard,” said Cole. “Rev. Pinkney estimated that 80 percent of the prisoners are white.” She also noted that Rev. Pinkney’s clothes, which “disappeared in the wash,” have not been replaced. “Rev. Pinkney wants his supporters to demand that Gov. Rick Snyder remove Warden Robert Napel and close down the deteriorating Marquette Branch Prison.”

Between visits, the group found Snyder’s Marquette office. They met with a staff member, who politely listened to their complaints and concerns. □

## Mumia supporters highlight HVC epidemic

By Betsey Piette  
Philadelphia

An “Emergency Town Hall and Report to the People” was held here Nov. 13 to garner support for a campaign demanding that the state of Pennsylvania immediately provide life-saving drugs for imprisoned journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal and thousands of other prisoners suffering from the hepatitis C virus. The event was held at the Friends Center before a standing-room-only crowd.

State Representative Vanessa Lowry Brown, family physician Dr. Safiyya Shabazz, attorney Robert Boyle and Joe Piette, with the Mumia Hep C Treatment Campaign, addressed the impact of untreated HCV on prisoners and communities at large. Members of an Abu-Jamal solidarity delegation from France; Suzanne Ross, of the NYC Free Mumia Coalition; and Johanna Fernandez, with the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, de-

livered solidarity messages.

Abu-Jamal has been severely ill with symptoms of active HCV for over eight months. In fighting for Mumia’s health, supporters learned that while new medicines can cure it, prison officials refuse to dispense them, claiming his symptoms were not “severe enough.” Mumia nearly died from untreated diabetes in March and has been suffering from serious skin rashes and swelling — all linked to untreated HCV.

An estimated 3 million people in the U.S. are infected with HCV, and it is a leading cause of death for African Americans between 45 and 64. According to a University of Pennsylvania study, the state’s Medicaid program denies nearly half the coverage requests for the drugs most effective in treating this disease. If left untreated, HCV can result in liver cirrhosis and cancer.

Dr. Shabazz noted that patients born between 1944 and 1975 are now routine-

ly tested for HCV. Brown, who chairs the Pennsylvania legislative committee on health, pledged to hold public hearings in Philadelphia on the crisis. She pointed out that when prisoners with untreated HCV are released, they introduce the virus into the general population, further increasing its spread.

Boyle, who is Abu-Jamal’s medical attorney, described the progress of the case he filed against the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections for denying treatment. The next hearing will be Dec. 18 in Scranton. Boyle noted that while a 12-week course of the needed anti-viral drug currently costs around \$90,000, the state spent over \$170,000 when Mumia was hospitalized for complications that came from not having been treated for the infection.

Piette and other community and labor activists initiated a campaign to get support from unions and public health workers for Mumia and other prisoners to re-



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Nov. 13, Philadelphia.

ceive the anti-viral drugs, which have a 95 percent cure rate. He raised that the for-profit health care system often uses public funds for research, but keeps the costs of life-saving drugs beyond public reach. Piette noted that while the antiviral drug may cure HCV, we need a socialist system where health care and medicines are free.

Pam Africa, of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and the MOVE organization, ended the event with calls for upcoming actions around Dec. 9 and April 24. She urged the crowd to do whatever it takes to force the state to act on this crisis. □

# Excerpts from the talks at the Workers World Party

## ‘What gives Black youth such courage?’

**M**alcolm X and Betty Shabazz, long live these wonderful revolutionaries. There should be statues, parks, schools, a holiday. But at least there is a hall where the community and revolutionaries like us can meet, especially those who are sworn to defend oppressed people and who understand the national question and do not put it second, third or 10th, but put it first. I’m glad we’re using this venue for this very wonderful conference.

I’d like to dedicate my talk to the Black Lives Matter uprising. Many of those, typically young people, Black and some white, who have come into this tremendous struggle that has shut down bridges and highways from coast to coast to stop the murder of Black people, either knew about Malcolm before or know about him now.

One of the things that the People’s Power Assembly here in New York and elsewhere has been doing is working hard to help out in any way, form or fashion this Black Lives Matter uprising and their rally call, “Shut them down!” To get the police’s attention, the government’s attention, the capitalist’s attention, you can’t just have a picket line. Sometimes you just gotta shut it down. Brave, brave activists.

Last week Hillary Clinton went to Atlanta to shore up her Black support. They held an event for her in Clark Atlanta University, and it was filled with Black civil rights leaders, mostly from the past.

That’s what Democratic Party politicians do. You see them when they want your vote, but when the police are beating you up and shooting you or your child, you don’t see them. You don’t get your phone call returned.



First Secretary Larry Holmes

While surrounded by all these Black people, including John Lewis and former mayors like Andrew Young, about 20 Black youth from a group called “Shut It Down Atlanta” got up and started chanting, “Black lives matter! Black lives matter!”

That took courage. I was so moved and impressed by it. That’s the kind of spirit that is revolutionary, that is determined. Sometimes it’s easy or obvious, like calling Trump a racist and calling NBC racist for allowing him to be on “Saturday Night Live” tonight — which was a slap not only in the face of Latinos and Latinas, but every progressive person.

In the final analysis it’s all about dollars. What a sick, bizarre Republican campaign that Trump is leading the pack. It is a sign of the decay of imperialism.

Shut It Down Atlanta disrupting Hillary Clinton sharpened a dimension to the Black Lives Matter uprising. I’m talking about class struggle.

There have been hundreds, thousands of arrests, many of them right here in New York. The police have gotten more brutal after they decided to crack down. Same thing in Baltimore.

What has given these young people so much passion, so much determination? They are trying to stop genocide.

It’s not just a temporary uprising — something happens, a brutal murder of a Black child and we’re upset, we rebel and then we go back to business as usual. This is not that. It will have its ups and downs but things will never be the same.

There is a material basis for Black Lives Matter in the globalized high-tech economy. These murders are on the increase and it’s open season on Black and Brown people because under globalized capitalism the bourgeoisie has found out that they don’t need as much Black cheap labor. When the capitalists conclude that, that means they’re going to do anything to you.

That’s the reason for gentrification. That’s the reason why schools close or are privatized. That’s the reason why they are killing more of us. There are economic reasons behind this, which can be analyzed on a Marxist basis.

It is behind the expansion of the prison-industrial complex. Kill them, put them in jail, force them out. It is social and physical genocide based on changes in capitalism.

How many of you have heard about dialectical materialism? Change is inevitable, which is one of the reasons why a theme of this conference is putting socialist revolution back on the table.

Why put it back? Because in a general way, the working class movement and its leaders over the past hundred years have slowly but surely to a large extent taken socialist revolution off the table.

One of the early setbacks was when the Russian Revolution didn’t expand into Europe and Russia was left alone. Another setback was during the 1930s when it seemed that the workers around the world were right on the precipice of revolution. But it didn’t happen. Fascism and war won out, both here and in Europe and elsewhere. That was a setback. The collapse of the Soviet Union, another setback.

Many conclude that a socialist revolution is nice, but it’s not going to happen in my lifetime and they take it off the table. They come up with a more limited objective.

There is nothing wrong with fighting for reforms: fighting for a union, a good contract, decent wages, health insurance, Social Security, free public schools — all the things they’re trying to take back. We call that the limited program. But you can’t just have the limited program and take off the table the maximum program, which is socialist revolution.

High technology and globalization have rendered the capitalist economy in a state of permanent overproduction. Can they fix it? No. This is what we mean when we say capitalism is at a dead end.

We’ve got to teach more revolutionaries that even while they’re fighting on a local basis, they have got to have a revolutionary orientation, a revolutionary perspective.

Things are happening that will affect

*Continued on page 11*

## Getting WW newspaper in the hands of people

**W**hat we produce isn’t just a newspaper, comrades; it’s a serious weapon of truth and liberation. Our newspaper is a calling card to the people. It’s a living tangible witness to the capitalist crisis, an orientation in working-class language that any oppressed person worldwide can pick up and relate to. That’s a very powerful tool. Our Workers World newspaper is a roadmap to revolution — a type of literary GPS to justice and freedom fighting. What I’m holding is a weapon of revolutionary information, a bridge to mass consciousness and critical theory; and honestly, it’s one of the best weapons we have. It was the Workers World newspaper that initially sparked my interest in the party.

What we produce, comrades, in the form of our weekly newspaper, is the last and only printed weekly Marxist-Leninist periodical in the United States. We’re the last weekly revolutionary newspaper still standing. And that’s something that we should all be very proud of. And when you take pride in something, you take care of it. You defend it, you protect it, you share it, you love it. You invest in it and help it to reach its fullest potential.

I’ve recently traveled to different branches as a visiting organizer. One of the first things I’ve noticed is stacks of Workers World newspapers. Get these newspapers out of your cars, your branch offices, your homes and apartments! What we provide is the exact kind of information that working-class people need to have in their hands, comrades.

You don’t keep your best revolutionary weapon at home, locked up in some stor-



Lamont Lilly

age closet for a keepsake. Our newspaper should be in every ghetto in the United States — in every “hood” and housing project we can find. We should be taking our papers to the barber shops, beauty salons and soul food restaurants — to the bus stations and homeless shelters — to the Social Service office, where the poor and oppressed are standing in long lines for their EBT cards and child care vouchers.

Take them to high schools and college campuses, where Black and Brown youth are being patrolled by campus police and school resource officers. The youth know exactly what we’re talking about. They inherited this capitalist police state. They’re living it, which is why we want our best weapon in the public libraries.

What makes our newspaper so powerful is that when you open it up, there isn’t one relevant struggle that at least one of our comrades isn’t covering — from local

to national to international; from workers’ rights to immigration to Black Liberation; from the LGBTQ liberation movement to women’s rights and Planned Parenthood; from gentrification in Oakland to water shutoffs in Detroit; from police terror to the fight for \$15; from Troy Davis to Sandra Bland; from Syria to Cuba to South Africa.

I was thinking the other day how when you live something, or live with something every day, you sometimes take it for granted. [Any couples here should] think back to when you all first starting dating. You were on fire 24 hours a day! He, she or they were the most beautiful thing you had ever seen. Sometimes you just sat and stared at each other.

But as time goes on, sometimes you forget just how marvelous they are. You take for granted that they’ll always be there; sometimes they even become “old news” to you.

Our newspaper is the same way, comrades. We live it. We write it. We sleep with it and wake up to it every day. Some of our comrades have been living and writing it for 30 and 40 years — Fred Goldstein, 54 years. And some of us may have slipped into taking it for granted. But, oh wow! To the people who see it for the first time, it’s the best thing they ever saw.

I remember when I first starting seeing the paper. Man, I would read every article! I would outline and highlight quotes in yellow markers. I literally couldn’t get enough. And it’s the same way other oppressed people respond when they pick it up. I’ve even received letters from sisters and brothers who are getting our newspaper in jails and prisons, from Texas to Colorado. We can’t

forget about them, comrades. Those who are incarcerated definitely need our newspaper. Our newspaper is a symbol of love, resistance and support.

Recently, I was able to get some insider information from one of our newspaper staffers, web editor comrade Gary Wilson. Brother Wilson shared with me that right now there’s about a thousand users on our website each day — with about 200 of them being regular readers. All the others are brand-new to the site. He explained how when something major has happened in the world there can be as many as 20,000 new readers a day.

We also have about 1,500 email subscribers and approximately 3,000 followers of the newspaper on Twitter. The Workers World website is one of the places people go when they want to find out about major events from a revolutionary perspective.

It’s a new generation, comrades. Some of the young people don’t read newspapers anymore. They’re on the Internet and their blogs. They’re on these new tablet things where you can read a whole book on the computer screen.

If the youth are on their iphones, that’s exactly where we have to get the newspaper. Yes, on iphones, comrades! If you don’t change with the times, the times will leave you behind. And as far as I’m concerned, the best newspaper in the United States can’t afford to be left behind. Let’s put this newspaper in the hands of the people, comrades, by any means necessary.

*Lamont Lilly is a leading member of the Durham Branch of Workers World Party. He is also the Workers World Party 2016 U.S. vice-presidential candidate.*

# Communists, elections and revolution

**E**lections have been around since capitalism became a developed economic and social system and since the workers have become a cohesive class.

Lenin, in his book “Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder,” said that elections have to be paid attention to by the communist movement — until the workers disperse the bourgeois parliament and set up their own regime.

Historically, running in the elections is a way of measuring the influence of the party and a way of measuring the class consciousness of the vanguard of the masses. But we are not anywhere near that now.

## Election and Marxist propaganda

What we do need to be concerned with is recruitment. Participating in elections is just one of the many forms of struggle that the party will have to master — all the way from peaceful demonstrations to occupations, seizures, picket lines, strikes, general struggle strikes, legal struggle and not legal struggle, underground struggle, all have to be mastered by any party that hopes to lead this multinational, million-fold working class to power.

The challenge of finding those elements among the masses, among the different sectors of our class, who can be pulled toward Marxism and socialist revolution — that is an art that we have to master.

Agitation alone is not enough to win somebody over to a world view. That takes elaboration of what socialism is, what capitalism is and why we have to get rid of capitalism. That is a task for a propagandist.

## Elections open a window to the masses

We have a chance to go face to face with our class and with all the oppressed.



Secretariat member Fred Goldstein

Because the bourgeoisie has opened a window with their election campaign. It makes the workers' ears perk up.

We need to hone our skills as Marxist propagandists and speak to the workers, the students, the people in the community who are willing to listen. If we can pull them towards us, it will be on an ideological basis.

That is going to be the final strength of our party. Struggle combined with ideological unity around Marxist ideology and socialist revolution.

The election campaign offers us an opportunity to speak to all sectors on Marxism and socialism. And it offers us the opportunity to operate as a national unit. It doesn't mean giving up any struggle. It means bringing the campaign into the struggle.

This campaign can only be carried by the party as a whole. From a rally, from a

sound truck or a ladder to forcing our way into a debate we can bring the message of socialism and revolution.

## Speaking to Black Lives Matter

Take the Black Lives Matter movement. We can bring Marxism to their movement. For example, we can discuss the capitalist state. We can show how the police in this country began as slave patrols sent to capture escaped slaves, and also to discipline plantation slaves and subjugate the Native peoples.

We can show that, as capitalism developed, the police, [which] are part of the capitalist state, went from being slave patrols to becoming strike breakers and spies.

## Speaking to low-wage workers, to unionists

There are hundreds of organizations and thousands of activists around the country who know that the low-wage workers are being exploited, that they don't have decent wages and that the bosses are getting richer and richer.

What do we bring to that discussion? The workers should own McDonald's. That's what we bring to the argument. Yes, the workers should get \$15 an hour. Yes, the workers should have a union. But [where they work] are places of exploitation, and exploitation itself must be abolished.

One of the high points of this conference, from my point of view, is the attendance of unionists from the UE [the Electrical Workers union] in Vermont who came here to tell about their defense guard against racism and the Klan.

That's new. And that's what the union

movement needs. And who did this? It was class-conscious, revolutionary trade unionists.

As Lenin said [in “What Is to Be Done,” revolutionaries must get into the unions. The unions are the only class organizations that exist in capitalist society for the workers. Sam Marcy, the founder of this party, who was a trade unionist in his early days, used to tell us: “If the bosses and/or the ruling class push you out of the union by the front door, you come in the back door. If they throw you out the back door, you come through the window. But you must get in.”

Look at the Boston bus drivers' union, Local 8751, look at ILWU Local 10 in Oakland, and look at the UE. They are among the only unions in the country that fight racism, that fight for immigrants, that fight for Mumia. We have to multiply and spread that everywhere.

## Speaking to immigrants

And we can bring Marxism to the immigration struggle. The detention centers for immigrants are profit centers, too. They are owned by private corporations, the Correction Corporation of America and others.

Before CCA signs a contract with the government, it is guaranteed to be paid for 100 beds, or 200 beds or 300 beds that will be filled. So ICE herds immigrants into the detention centers to guarantee that the beds will be filled and the capitalists get their profits.

So we have a lot to say about Marxism to the immigrant movement, for which we fight so hard, as well as the struggle

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# Why we should march in Philadelphia

**I**'m presenting to the party a proposal to mobilize across the country for the Democratic National Convention held in Philadelphia this coming July of 2016. Philadelphia is the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence, placed in Congress on July 4, 1776.

The founding fathers of the so-called American government were speaking completely of themselves: the wealthy landowners, the dictators of class within the society and the proprietors of businesses. The people they were not speaking of had no say. That included women, the poor, the slaves and the workers.

What they chose to forget was the country was founded on capitalism and state-sanctioned violence. They robbed, killed and slaughtered the Native people of this land.

Within this document they spoke of all men being created equal. They had certain unalienable rights, that gifted life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government.

Philadelphia is the birthplace of solitary confinement in the prison system. Philadelphia, one of the four largest cities in the country, has one of the highest poverty rates affecting the Black and Brown communities the most. Philadelphia has one of the most failing school districts in the country.

The gentrification in Philadelphia has



Erica Mines-Simmons

pushed more people of color out of their neighborhoods and into senior living facilities, if not directly into homelessness.

Police brutality is as historic as the name itself in Philadelphia, from the invasion and slaughtering of the Lenni Lenape tribes to the brutal beating and stripping of the Panthers and the framing of the Move 9, to the unjust beating of Tyree Carroll. We are still demanding the fair and equal treatment of our LGBTQ community, for gender-neutral bathrooms everywhere and to be called by their preferred pronouns and names.

All over the city, the people are rising up, the students, the homeless, the disabled, the elderly, the wage workers, the immigrants, and more importantly the people as a whole.

This is a significant sign that the only

solution is a socialist revolution. Philadelphia is Baltimore, Philadelphia is Ferguson, Philadelphia is Chicago and Detroit. Philadelphia represents all the barrios throughout the world. We heard the cries of “Justice for Freddie Grey” in Tel Aviv and we hear the chants of “Black Lives Matter” in Palestine.

Oppressed people here and throughout the world will be free. My daughter will see a socialist revolution in her lifetime, this lifetime. The entire capitalist system as a whole must be abolished and shut down!

We must demand that the true meaning of democracy be established and that is by raising up the voices of the people and demanding a government that actually serves the best interest in the common good of the people. We must take back the land, the airways, the buildings, the political offices. We must get away from these two-party elections.

We must educate our communities on what it means to be a socialist. Bernie Sanders called himself a socialist, now it's time to show and prove. Hillary Clinton is in favor of keeping the death penalty. Why? Because she's a murderer.

Her husband, Bill Clinton, implemented the three-strike rule that has so many of my brothers and sisters incarcerated for life for nonviolent crimes. There's one million Black men missing from our society and you can believe, between Ronald Reagan's drug wars and Bill Clinton's three-strike rule, our men are in prison or in the grave. They put the guns in our communi-

ties. Now they want to disarm us. We say, I say, hell no! You don't disarm people. You direct the people to take up arms against the system and not themselves.

We can no longer afford to watch the government push back our Social Security benefits to age 70, while expanding prison development and murdering our babies as young as 3 and 7 years of age.

We can no longer see the failing of school officials and their failed discipline of our children on display when we are watching police toss our young women across the floor like rag dolls for being a typical teenager. We can't afford to send troops to fight wars across seas when the wars are in our own backyards.

Sandra Bland, Rekia Boyd, Aiyana Stanley-Jones, deserved to live. Natasha McKenna, Amber Monroe, London Chanel, deserved to live. Renisha McBride, Tynisha Anderson and Shantel Davis deserved to live.

Karl Marx said it's not the illusions of our conditions we have to focus on, it's the conditions of our illusions that give rise for it to exist. Until killer cops are indicted, convicted and sentenced beneath the jail, there is no celebration because justice has not been served.

This system is so disturbed, it will piss on you and then claim it's raining. The role of police has always been to protect and serve, so they're doing their jobs: protecting the wealth, and the land has

*Continued on page 11*

# U.S., France raise threat of wider war over Syria

By Sara Flounders

Nov. 17 — The series of attacks in Paris claimed by ISIS have riveted world attention. But the most urgent question the working class faces is: “Will the imperialist camp use the attacks as a pretext for wider war?” Using as cover the great sympathy for the hundreds of innocent people who were shot and the 129 who died, the Western imperialist governments may put tens of thousands of other lives at risk.

Whipping up racist, anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim hatred is the first step in a war mobilization. Demonization of the targeted nation is an essential part of justifying imperialist destruction.

According to polls taken in the months before the massacre, nearly two-thirds of the French population opposed French involvement in a war in Syria. But the regime that serves French imperialism, which formerly held Syria as its colony, has been wholly committed to the complete destruction of Syrian sovereignty through a violent overturn of the Syrian government. Paris has even armed rebel forces similar to ISIS and ISIS itself to accomplish this.

The killings in Paris are hardly the only violent deaths or mass murders in the region. A massive explosion in Beirut a day earlier; a Russian passenger plane downed in the Sinai Desert two weeks earlier; the U.S. bombing of a hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan, a month and a half ago; and an attack last spring in Kenya have been equally murderous. However, only for Paris has the imperialist media provided an extensive outpouring of sympathy for the victims. Not only does this response expose the systemic media racism and their bias in valuing most the lives of those in imperialist countries, but it serves a political agenda: war escalation.

The Pentagon had just sent F-16C

Dogfighter jets to Syria, armed with air-to-air missiles. They are capable only of fighting other aircraft. ISIS does not have an air force. Russia does. This is a dangerous escalation.

President Obama has announced he is sending 50 Special Forces to Syria, along with thousands of U.S. advisers to Iraq. A no-fly zone on the Turkish border has been actively discussed for months and is in the planning stages.

The imperialists refused to invite the Syrian government to the round of negotiations in Vienna that discussed its future. There the U.S. and French governments were the most adamant in arrogantly demanding that the Syrian government must surrender its sovereignty and “step down.” At each international gathering, while piously wringing their hands and declaring that they desperately want peace, the imperialists assert that the war will continue until their proxy “democratic” forces are installed in power.

## Chaos of U.S. wars

The greatest need of the hour in combating this war mobilization is to explain and expose the role of U.S. imperialism, along with French and European Union participation, in decades of war in the region. Imperialist wars have ripped apart whole countries and destroyed vibrant cultures.

It is also essential to extend solidarity to those under attack and to consciously resist the racist climate.

Twenty-five years of sanctions, sabotage, occupations and invasions, beginning with the first U.S. war against Iraq in 1991, have uprooted more than 10 million people in the region.

U.S. and French imperialist policy aimed at “regime change” cultivated the very forces that are now claiming responsibility for the attacks in Paris, starting in Afghanistan in the 1980s. The two pow-

ers trained, funded and equipped “opposition” forces in Syria and Libya, resulting in massive destruction. Their ally, the Saudi Arabian monarchy, has organized and trained some of the most reactionary forces, known as ISIS, with a wink and a nod from U.S. advisers.

The Syrian government says it captured fighters holding passports from 60 countries. Many speak no Arabic and have no roots in Syria. Hundreds came from France and Belgium without hindrance, even with government encouragement.

The U.S. and French governments, along with British, Turkish, Saudi, Jordanian and Israeli support, have given political cover to corrupt and contending rebel groups, declaring them “democratic opposition forces.” They number tens of thousands of volunteers and mercenaries recruited from all over the world.

Groups such as al-Qaida, Al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State have political differences. Alliances are fluid. But they all serve the same purpose: trying to pull apart the Syrian government, destroy the infrastructure and demoralize the population. Among tens of thousands involved in the fighting are Special Operations forces and U.S., French, British and Jordanian advisers, trainers and intelligence operatives.

For decades Syria had great pride in its rich fabric of cultural and religious diversity, modernization of its infrastructure, full education and the highest levels of health care. There was also national pride in standing up to Israel’s occupation of Palestine, even though a significant part of Syria, the Golan, was stolen in 1967 by Israel. Syria’s policy of controlling its nationalized industries, staying free of debt from Western banks and being independent of imperialist control was a constant frustration to both the U.S. and EU corporate rulers.

Similar progressive policies, propelled by mass upsurges and revolutionary upheavals in the 1960s and 1970s in Iraq, Libya and Iran, also made these countries targets of U.S. and world imperialism, which aimed to restore these lands to their pre-World War II colonial status.

The social upheaval in Egypt and Tunisia in 2011 against dictators that imperialism backed, called the Arab Spring, was used as an opening for imperialist intervention in neighboring Arab countries on the U.S. hit list — Libya and Syria.

Right-wing forces in France have not lost a minute in whipping up attacks on desperate war refugees who have flooded into the country. But the real criminals are the U.S. and European imperialists who have launched these wars, and are now positioning for a new offensive. □

## After Paris, beware 9/11 syndrome

# No Muslim bashing!

Continued from page 1

Ratcheting up the “security state” and criminalizing immigrants can only lay the basis for more war, more suffering and more extreme acts. There was no ISIS or Nusrah Front before the imperialists began their offensive to turn back the clock and get rid of the nationalist regimes that came out of anti-colonial uprisings after World War II.

The stronger the movements against war, racism and imperialism become, here in the U.S. and in Europe, the more chance to build true solidarity among all peoples — which is the only answer to the terrible situation that now exists.

No bashing of Muslims and other immigrants! □

## Cubans speak in U.S.

# ‘It’s time to end U.S. blockade!’

By Cheryl LaBash

In a first since the formalization of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba, revolutionary Cuban representatives — Kenia Serrano, president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), and Leima Martinez, North American Division of ICAP — spoke in New York, New Jersey, Washington, D.C., and the California Bay Area. Serrano is also a parliamentarian in Cuba’s National Assembly.

Throughout two weeks of exchanges, from Nov. 3-17, the Cuban representatives thanked the solidarity movement for its tireless work to win the freedom of the Cuban 5 — the anti-terrorist Cuban State Security agents unjustly imprisoned in the U.S. in 1998. Last Dec. 17, the final three men returned to Cuba, part of the agreement to renew formal diplomatic relations with Cuba, which had been broken by the U.S. in 1961.

Especially recognized for their decades of fearless challenges to the U.S. ban on travel to Cuba were the Venceremos Brigade and the Friendship Caravans of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, founded by the late Rev. Lucius Walker.

Right off a plane from Miami on Nov. 4, Serrano and Martinez spoke to a class at John Jay College in New York. Then they met with social justice organizers at the historic site of the Hotel Theresa, lo-

cation of the famous 1960 Harlem meeting between Fidel Castro and Malcolm X. Next was a packed public event in the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center — formerly the Audubon Ballroom, where Malcolm X was killed. The next day, they discussed Cuba’s health care revolution at New Jersey’s Essex County College.

At the National Network on Cuba’s annual meeting in Washington on Nov. 7-8, the Cuban women interacted with organizations from Texas, Minnesota, Illinois and Michigan — places they could not visit on this trip. NNOC co-chairs received an ICAP flag with the image of Fidel Castro and a Certificate of Recognition for the work done by the NNOC to free the five Cuban Heroes.

The University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law co-sponsored a public meeting with the DC Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution and the NNOC. Students from the Maryland International Day School opened and closed the program with bilingual songs, spoken words of Cuban hero Jose Marti and dance.

Packed meetings continued in the Bay Area, where historic support for the Cuban Revolution is strong. Seven U.S. graduates of Cuba’s Latin American School of Medicine met with the Cuban women they knew from their school days.

The visit of the two revolutionary Cuban women was symbolic of what has



From left: Prof. Felix Kury, Kenia Serrano, Clarence Thomas, Delores Lemon-Thomas, Leima Martinez at Richmond, Calif. meeting, Nov. 13.

PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

been achieved without concessions after more than 55 years. Serrano credited “the resistance of the Cuban people and international solidarity — including the people of the United States.”

## Blockade, ‘regime change’ still U.S. policy

But while formal diplomatic relations and bilateral discussions are taking place between the U.S. and Cuba, the economic, commercial and financial blockade is still in place. Cuba still cannot use U.S. dollars for foreign trade, making it impossible to pay for technology that Washington has approved for sale to Cuba. When trade is permitted for food, Cuba must pay with cash in advance and cannot use Cuban ships to transport the goods.

Although the rhetoric of the bilateral discussions is positive, forces intent on defeating the Cuban revolution are still

there. The U.S. budgets an average of \$20 million per year for “regime change” programs that are opposed by the majority of the Cuban people. Guantanamo has been illegally occupied by the U.S. military for more than 100 years. The prison there should be closed and the territory returned to Cuba.

Serrano reiterated ICAP’s commitment to Latin American and Caribbean continental integration as the only way to guarantee real independence. “On Jan. 1, 1959, Cuba won our independence and sovereignty. The current very good dialogue has achieved many things, but Cuba won’t accept reduction in our sovereignty.”

Videos of most major events during the tour are posted on the National Network on Cuba website: NNOC.info/livestream.

LaBash is a co-chair of the National Network on Cuba.



## Greece

# General strike renews anti-banker struggle

By G. Dunkel

The Greek labor movement held a 24-hour general strike Nov. 12 that basically shut the country down.

The strike closed the Athens metro and suburban railway and cut service on bus, trolley and train routes. It stranded the ferries in port linking the Ionian islands, which are currently flooded with refugees traveling from Turkey to Europe. It cancelled domestic air flights.

The strike shut museums and archaeological sites, as well as schools and pharmacies. Hospitals handled only emergencies. Many privately owned shops also closed.

According to the Nov. 12 British Guardian, this was the first general strike since Syriza took office in January 2015 and the 41st since Greece's financial crisis began five years ago.

In addition to the strike, there were three major rallies in Athens. One was led by the Greek Public Sector Union, ADEDY, and the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE). Another was led by the All Workers' Militant Front (PAME), which is close to the Greek Communist Party. The third was led by a coalition of small leftist parties and anarchists, whom the cops attacked. Police reported 25,000 protesting in Athens, while a coordinated demonstration in

Thessaloniki drew 10,000.

PAME organized 71 strike demonstrations all over the country, drawing the unemployed, pensioners, self-employed, poor farmers, as well as youth and women from the Federation of Greek Women.

The mostly foreign big banks were demanding changes to make it easier for them to foreclose on the tens of thousands of mortgages in arrears. The Syriza government, led by Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, gave in to the creditors. Popular anger against the new measures grew so intense that the Syriza party, despite its role in running the government, called on workers to participate in the demonstrations of ADEDY-GSEE against

its own anti-people political line.

PAME called this a "brazen display of hypocrisy." Comments on social media made the same point. One, for example, asked: "Do we march with Alexis to overthrow Tsipras, or do we march with Tsipras to overthrow Alexis?" (BFMTV.com)

Greece has been in a major capitalist depression for more than six years, and the austerity its creditors demand worsen this depression. Wages have been cut by 30 percent, pensions by even more, and taxes on everything are going up. But the big German and English banks want every last penny of the debt — even if paying it destroys Greece's economy and leads to a social explosion. □

# Moldova anti-oligarchy prisoners need solidarity

By Greg Butterfield

On Sept. 6, seven left-wing activists were brutally arrested during an anti-oligarchy protest in Chisinau, the capital of Moldova. Today, more than two months later, all seven remain behind bars. What began as a 72-hour detention has been extended three times so far. They face charges that could keep them in prison for up to eight years.

These activists weren't picked out at random. All seven are members of the Red Bloc party. Among them is the Red Bloc's leader, Grigory Petrenko, a former parliamentary deputy who led workers' protests last summer that blocked steep hikes in utility and fuel rates.

Five of the political prisoners are youth. Two of them — Pavel Grigorchuk and Mikhail Amerberg — had already spent several months in jail and under house arrest this year, after being framed before last year's November parliamentary elections.

Moldova is a former Soviet republic of 3.6 million people, sandwiched between Ukraine and Romania in eastern Europe. Since 2009, it's been ruled by pro-Western parties dominated by wealthy oligarchs.

Brandishing deceptive names like "Democrats" and "Liberals," these right-wing parties have imposed harsh austerity on the workers and farmers of Moldova. The oligarchs have broken traditional economic and political ties with Russia in a headlong rush for "Euro-integration."

Petrenko and his comrades were singled out for pointing the finger of blame at Vlad Plahotniuc, Moldova's top oligarch and political kingmaker. An energy and media tycoon, Plahotniuc is the force behind the country's Democratic Party and ruling Alliance for European Integration. His henchmen control key government posts, including the prosecutor general's office, the bureau of prisons and many courts.

The Red Bloc earned Plahotniuc's wrath when it set up a protest tent camp outside his mansion in Chisinau in July — it was quickly broken up by police and private security goons — and by marching to the gates of his media empire during a fight to stop utility rate hikes.

The mobilization of workers, youth and pensioners across the country included occupations of many city halls. Officials were forced to temporarily roll back the rate hikes — which cost Plahotniuc a lot of profits.

On Nov. 9, however, with the protest leaders safely behind bars, the National Energy Regulation Agency announced it was again hiking electricity rates by 37 percent. Water rates are next to rise. (Grenada.md)

## Abuse of political prisoners

According to the Red Bloc prisoners, their imprisonment is meant to intimidate protesters from taking to the streets to resist the oligarchs and pro-fascist and

pro-imperialist forces, such as those who seized power in neighboring Ukraine last year.

Petrenko, Grigorchuk and Amerberg most recently had their "preventive detention" extended by 45 days, until Dec. 20. However, there is no guarantee they will be released then.

Every court hearing has been surrounded by masked riot police wielding automatic weapons. In some cases, supporters, family members and media have been unlawfully blocked from entering the court.

In early October, Oleg Bunzi, who suffers from insulin-dependent diabetes, was in danger of falling into a coma after being denied medicine and proper nutrition, family members said. During a court hearing on Oct. 2, supporters had to fight to have an ambulance called to the courthouse to treat him. (MoldNews)

Petrenko has been singled out for special abuse. On the night of Oct. 18, his cell was raided by agents from the prison bureau in defiance of regulations and without notifying the warden. Petrenko was roughed up and his personal papers illegally searched.

Recently, Petrenko and his attorney learned that he had been deliberately exposed to tuberculosis. At a press conference on Nov. 10, Ursachi reported that a prison guard told Petrenko that the yard where he was taken for daily walks was otherwise used exclusively by TB patients.

Since then, Petrenko has refused to go.

## Urgent to fight for their release

This and other information has been reported to the United Nations, the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the U.S. and European Union ambassadors, said Ursachi. A case is also being brought before the European Court of Human Rights.

Demands for the political prisoners' release have come from diverse political forces throughout Europe and Russia, including from members of all factions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), of which Petrenko is a former leader and honorary member. Street protests have been held in Moscow, Kiev, New York and other cities.

There's an urgency to fighting for their release that goes beyond the safety of the prisoners themselves. Their leadership in Moldova's political life is sorely needed.

Since late August, Moldova has been engulfed by protests from both the right and left against the ruling regime. By Oct. 29, Prime Minister Valeriu Strelet's government was forced to step down.

Free the Red Bloc political prisoners now! Return the most resolute leaders of the struggle to their rightful posts at the head of the anti-fascist movement!

*Sign and share a petition from the International Action Center demanding the immediate release of the Petrenko Group at <https://goo.gl/tNrBq1>.*

# Fraudulent election in Haiti

By G. Dunkel

The Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) of Haiti announced the results of the Oct. 25 presidential elections on Nov. 5. The most significant figure reported was the level of participation: only 26 percent of registered voters went to the polls.

Almost every party of the 54 participating in these elections — with the exception of the winner — rejected the results as being based on deliberate fraud, miscounts and ballot stuffing.

According to the CEP's rounded results, Jovenèl Moïse, of President Michel Martelly's ruling PHTK, came in first with 33 percent.

Jude Célestin, of LAPEH, came in second with 25 percent. He also came in second in the 2010 vote, but was de-selected by then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in favor of Martelly.

Moïse Jean-Charles, of Pitit Dessalines, came in third with 14 percent, and Maryse Narcisse of the Lavalas Family (FL) came in fourth with 7 percent.

Narcisse's lawyer, Gervais Charles,

told the Miami Herald that Lavalas was "contesting the credibility of the process," but we "know who we are going before to plead our case, the same people who are at the base of all the violations." The FL, led by Narcisse, has held demonstrations of thousands through the streets of Port-au-Prince, demanding that the CEP recount the ballots, according to videos posted on her Facebook page.

Pitit Dessalines, according to its Facebook page, held a major nighttime demonstration in Cap-Haitien, challenging the vote count. Moïse Jean-Charles declared Nov. 9 that he and his party were launching "a juridical-political battle" against the results, and said, "We cannot let them trample the vote." (Haïti-Liberté, Nov. 11-17)

A series of protests, meetings, declarations and press conferences have been held throughout Haiti. Many say, according to Haïti-Liberté, that the CEP was harkening back "to the period of official elections by dictatorial regimes" where the "vote settled nothing." The cops have been picking up discarded tires off the

streets to keep protesters from setting them on fire in burning barricades.

In Haitian overseas communities, there has been a call to condemn and protest the electoral fraud. The Boston branch of FL protested before the Haitian Consulate there on Nov. 13.

Some left political parties, like the Coordination Dessalines (KOD), boycotted the elections, saying they could not be fair under military occupation by the U.N. occupation forces in Haiti, called Minustah. KOD and other groups called the CEP's count an electoral coup d'état.

## Minustah and the U.S. role

Minustah's flickr account showed pictures of its forces unloading pallets of ballots with forklifts from a large cargo plane. They put the ballots into trucks and then provided an armed escort to polling sites, where they were turned over to election workers. There are also pictures of heavily armed Minustah troops patrolling popular neighborhoods.

The U.S. government acknowledged spending \$30 million on the Oct. 25 Hai-

tian election.

Minustah was originally set up in 2004 to replace U.S., French, Canadian and Chilean troops that occupied Haiti after President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was kidnapped and sent to the Central African Republic on a U.S. Air Force plane.

Minustah veils U.S. military domination of Haiti. When the command structure of Minustah was damaged by the 2010 earthquake, the Pentagon rushed in nearly 20,000 troops until its veil could be restored.

Some media accounts report that the international community — meaning official U.S. opinion — is satisfied with the election because there was no violence. Yet cops stomped a protester to death. And someone assassinated Pitit Dessalines militant Maxo Gaspard in his party's office. By their enormous abstention, the Haitian people showed just how dissatisfied they are.

But the Haitian people have been fighting to preserve their independence for 211 years, and they are not going to let a bogus election derail their struggle. □

# WORKERS WORLD

## editorial

### Student truth and 'free speech'

Student protests against racism and other bigotries are being lambasted across the U.S. as an assault on "free speech."

Seeing marches led by young women of color, white male students have shouted, "I'm for freedom of speech!" On one campus, opponents of this new movement put up signs "In memoriam of the true victim of the Missouri Protests: Free Speech" along with "All Lives Matter" posters.

Those signs reveal the foundation of "free speech" criticism: racism. It's a tool the capitalist ruling class uses as it propagandizes, organizes and legislates to keep all oppressed people — and emphatically people of color — silent and powerless.

The recent wave of protests at U.S. colleges and universities is not a struggle over "speech." It is a struggle by students seeking to liberate their own educational process — including from devastating student loan debt that generates huge profits for lending agencies.

This is a struggle to create school environments where young people of color, women, people with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\* and queer people can learn without being terrorized, threatened and slandered by administrators, faculty, campus police and other students. (Trans\* is currently used with an asterisk to indicate the spectrum of different sexes and genders of people who do not conform to the either/or of male/female or masculine/feminine.)

Women are technically "protected" by U.S. law from job environments where co-workers hang crudely sexist posters or use foul anti-woman language. But students are reporting daily at their

schools the most vile, racist, sexist and anti-LGBT\*Q language, including death threats. Plus they are targeted and sometimes beaten by campus cops.

The struggle over who gets to speak and what they say is not an abstract discussion. The struggle is not about how students learn "to tolerate opposing points of view."

The student protests are a struggle about who gets to live and how.

In the U.S. where corporations are legally considered "people" and spend billions to make sure their "free speech" is broadcast in every venue — from major media to the White House — oppressed people have to struggle every day not just to be heard, but to survive racist, sexist, homophobic, anti-disabled attacks.

Oppressed students struggle to find a way into a future where they are not merely human robots in corporate assembly lines. They are speaking out and fighting for a better world.

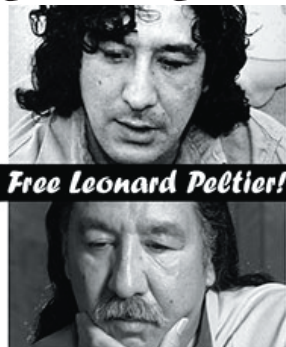
This world cannot be built using narrow legalities put in place by a bourgeois democratic revolution in the 1700s that framed "rights" as possessed only by white, propertied men. That way includes even now the notion of who can speak and who is considered "truthful."

The students' speech, their truth, can be heard as one more break in the old oppressive system. And their struggle also points toward socialist revolution.

Because when workers and oppressed people speak our truths, we are communicating to each other the information we need to organize and liberate ourselves.

Listen to the students. Fight for their right to speak and organize! □

## Get on NYC bus Nov. 26: Nat'l Day of Mourning to debunk 'Thanksgiving'



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## South Africa

# U.S. trade demands compound domestic problems

By Abayomi Azikiwe  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

The South African government is facing three serious economic issues. Parliamentary workers have been on strike for higher wages since Nov. 9, preventing routine legislative work. The current drought, which is likely to cut agricultural production, has caused periodic power shortages and outages, cutting revenues to the state-owned utility. In addition, President Obama's administration is demanding changes in Pretoria's trade policy that endanger the country's sovereignty.

Members of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union are defying an injunction to end their strike. NEHAWU is an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions. The government claims the strike is illegal because the workers perform "essential services."

Parliamentary workers clean, cater and oversee the efficient operations of the legislative committee meetings and control access at the visitors' center. Since Nov. 9, workers holding strike actions inside the Parliament building in Cape Town have prevented normal legislative work and forced cancellation of some committee meetings.

On Nov. 16, NEHAWU's leaders reported that workers' salaries were withheld due to strike participation. Negotiations were halted, and NEHAWU said they would not resume until the workers' pay was reinstated. COSATU and its unions have sent many messages of support, as have NEHAWU's regional leaders and student and youth organizations.

A settlement earlier in the year involving a 9 percent pay increase did not include performance bonuses, which is a major strike issue. (News24)

At a rally on Nov. 16, NEHAWU said its demands were non-negotiable. The newly elected NEHAWU Ikapa South Regional Secretary Baxolise Mali told the crowd, "We are going to have a national shutdown ... we are very clear. We are not fighting the [government] alliance, we are fighting the employer."

On Nov. 11 police used stun grenades in clashes with the union. Law-enforcement officers wearing full body armor carried away NEHAWU members. For the second time in a month, Cape Town's Parliament building was the scene of battles. The first involved students in October.

A parliamentary spokesperson claimed that the union's demands are "unbudgeted for and unaffordable for Parliament given the shoestring budget it is managing." (News24, Nov. 16)

### Problems with state-owned utility

At the G20 Summit held in Turkey, South African Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene said the drought in the subcontinent, as Africa's southern hemisphere enters summer, could impact agricultural production and consequently prompt a

rise in prices for food and other consumer goods, reduce revenues and increase unemployment.

Problems with the state-owned Eskom utility agency have also mounted over the last several months. Periodic power shortages and outages have compelled the government to address the fall in consumer revenues from power generation.

The government response to the Eskom crisis includes the conversion of subordinated debt into equity, which Nene says has eased funding pressure. The utility agency has still not tapped into the roughly 50 billion rand (approximately \$3.5 billion) of financial banking guaranteed by the government.

### Obama threatens suspension from AGOA

The Africa Growth and Opportunities Act was established during the latter period of Bill Clinton's presidency. It is ostensibly designed to foster the export of capital to the continent while providing market access for products from both the U.S. and African nation-states.

President Barack Obama's administration is demanding changes in Pretoria's trade policy, which the White House says hinders U.S. access to domestic markets. The U.S. threatens to remove key agricultural sectors from the agreements with South Africa, which could cause further damage to the economy. Negotiations continue toward a Jan. 1 deadline.

A Nov. 9 statement from the South African Communist Party supports the ANC government's position in the negotiations with the U.S. The SACP says that despite its commendable declarations, "in reality, AGOA is imperialist both in terms of its content and strategic goal disguised under the fetishist illusion of 'free market.' Its extraterritorial imperialist content is now being aggressively pushed by the U.S. against South Africa."

The SACP emphasizes that "to allow the U.S. to prohibit ownership of economic assets by the state in our country is to allow it to usurp our constitutional right to democratic national sovereignty. This will be tantamount to handing over to U.S. imperialism our right to determine our own development trajectory and decide policies to achieve it."

The party also noted that "South Africa's independence must be safeguarded in the interest of the completion of our struggle for national liberation and social emancipation. Our democratic national independence and public property rights — the right to collective ownership of productive assets including through the state — are crucial to the success of our second, more radical phase of transformation!"

The Obama administration's stance illustrates the real agenda behind AGOA and the overall foreign policy imperatives of the White House. South Africa has the inalienable right to determine its own economic program without the interference of Washington and Wall Street. □



## WAR WITHOUT VICTORY

by Sara Flounders

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

— Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President, U.N. General Assembly, 2008-2009;  
Foreign Minister of Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

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Complete WWP Conference talks at workers.org

## ‘What gives Black youth courage?’

Continued from page 6

what you are doing, sooner or later; the capitalist economy on a worldwide basis is falling apart.

If it weren't for the Federal Reserve and other central banks across the world pumping trillions of dollars into the financial markets, the world would be in a depression. They are not pumping the money into what people need, like decent-paying jobs and free health care and affordable housing and daycare. They're pumping it into the market to create a buffer for the financial class.

I want to say a few words about the party's election campaign. I think it should be an out-of-the-box, revolutionary campaign. We'll have a 10-point program that will hit all the right points: jobs for everyone, housing, women, antiracist, LGBTQ. That will be the minimal program.

We'll also have a maximum program, saying that capitalism cannot be reformed. It has to be abolished.

I think it would be part of the job of our candidates to call on people to rise up and form peoples' power assemblies because the struggle is coming. Abolish the system.

Maybe, besides the presidential candidates, we can also have a people's minister of justice, of women's liberation, of LGBTQ liberation, a people's minister of international solidarity.

That will underscore the fact that we don't think elections are the way you change things. We need a whole new government and a whole new system. It's not too soon to imbue the masses with that notion.

The Bernie Sanders campaign: There's not that much difference between him and Clinton. But one thing he has done, and it's a breakthrough. He has brought the idea of socialism into the minds of people.

One of our goals will be to show people what socialism is really about. And if activists, revolutionaries, socialists, communists and even anarchists around the country were really reflecting upon what it means that Sanders has done this, they would want to come together on a very serious basis and explore whether we can have some revolutionary socialist unity.

Free Mumia! Long live Malcolm X and Betty Shabazz! ☐

## Communists, elections & revolution

Continued from page 7

against mass incarceration. And also to the women's movement about patriarchal capitalism, its origins in property, in inheritance, exploitation, and many other things exposed by Friedrich Engels in his book "Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State," which showed what led to the destruction of the status of women in society.

Of course we must talk to the LGBTQ movement, which is also in struggle against patriarchal capitalism. And we must speak to the anti-war movement and explain that this is an imperialist system. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the imperialists have been trying to get back all the territory they lost in the 20th century. That is what all the interventions are about.

### Sanders and socialism

Finally, a word about Sanders and socialism. Sanders has made, not socialism itself, but the word socialism, discussable. But when he is asked about it, he starts mumbling about Denmark or Sweden or Scandinavia and national health care, less inequality, and then goes on to the next question as fast as he can.

But we can talk about it every place and everywhere. And we can explain to the people that socialism is not just about erasing extreme inequality under capitalism.

We want the bosses to be expropriated and for them to be on the bottom and the workers and the oppressed be on top! That's the essence of socialism.

Build a workers' world! Build the election campaign! Down with capitalism, imperialism and racism! Fight for socialism! ☐

## Why we should march in Philadelphia

Continued from page 7

changed from the plantation to the corporation. There are no good cops in a racist system.

The only solution is a socialist revolution! It's time to mobilize the masses and demand they work for our vote. Disown inequality and stand on the right side of justice. We must build a true socialist society that's written by us, for us.

That includes all members of our society. It's our right and we must invoke them at all costs. Resistance is the only solution. There can be no peaceful revolution when we can't live, eat, sleep or breathe in peace.

The elections will matter when Black lives matter. This is why we mobilize. This is why the Democratic National Convention must be shut down. Resistance is justified when people are occupied. If we don't get justice, they don't get peace.

This mobilization will consist of each localized party going to their respective communities and engaging the public and different organizations into meetings for mobilization and flooding the city of Philadelphia for three days of civil un-

rest and possibly, to form an All-People's Power Assembly conference.

We in Philadelphia have established the date of Dec. 18 to begin holding these meetings to form a coalition for the DNC.

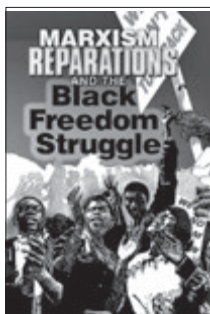
In the words of our great sister and comrade, Assata Shakur: "It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love and support one another. We have nothing to lose but our chains!"

Erica Mines-Simmons is a member of the Philadelphia WWP branch.

### MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

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

Available at all major online bookstores.



## Mizzou sparks protests against campus racism



Ohio State University

Continued from page 3

ened students to rise up against racism and oppression.

From Brown University in Rhode Island and Smith College in Massachusetts to California's Claremont McKenna College, students rallied in solidarity with Mizzou students and against campus bigotry. Bold actions at McKenna over Dean of Students Mary Spellman's insensitivity to students of color forced her to resign.

Anger boiled over at Yale University in Connecticut. More than 1,000 students held a March of Resilience on Nov. 9 opposing the school's deeply ingrained campus culture of racism and sexism, exemplified by emails, social events — including a "white girls only" frat party — and insensitivity of officials.

Fed up with overt acts of racism, People of Color at Ithaca College in upstate New York organized a walkout on Nov. 11. More than 1,000 students joined, demanding President Tom Rochon resign for ignoring several racist episodes. African-American organizer Elijah Breton characterized the racism as systemic, saying recent events were the "tipping point." Protests have been growing and now involve a large percentage of the campus in activism, say students.

### 'MIZZOU IS S.U.!'

Black students led about 200 protesters in a "MIZZOU IS S.U.!" multinational march at New York's Syracuse University on Nov. 12, expressing their solidarity against racism and prejudice on campuses. One woman commented she was marching against racist discrimination and sexual assault, which are not two separate issues.

Honoring the Mizzou football team's leadership in the recent struggle, S.U. students rallied around a statue of Ernie Davis, the first Black football player to win the Heisman Trophy. At a 1961 Cotton Bowl banquet, Davis and other Black teammates were segregated from white University of Texas players and from their own teammates.

In Columbus, more than 700 people chanted "Black Lives Matter" while marching on Nov. 13 for an end to rac-

ism throughout the Ohio State University system, which educates 60,000 students. A sit-in for several hours followed at the school's Ohio Union. African-American students organized these protests under the hashtag "#OSU2MIZZOU: Racism Lives Here!"

Oppressed students led a die-in at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in solidarity with Mizzou's Black students on Nov. 12, while a Madison campus action sponsored by the Black Student Union, and supported by allies, brought out hundreds. The Black Student Union at Milwaukee's Alverno College's Black-out protest four days later stated, "Not only are we showing solidarity for the students at Mizzou, and all the Black lives that have been treated with injustice, but also for the experiences that we face on our campus."

### Million Student March

On some campuses, protests against racism were combined with Million Student March actions on Nov. 12 calling for free public colleges, cancellation of student debt and a \$15 minimum hourly wage for campus employees.

In one such action, more than 300 students from high schools, Philadelphia Community College, Drexel and Temple universities, and the University of Pennsylvania marched to a rally in front of Philadelphia City Hall. Speakers and chants addressed the prohibitively high costs of education and the racism permeating the educational system. Popular chants were "Mizzou, we got your back!" and "Education is a right! Not just for the rich and white!"

The University of Michigan-Dearborn campus held its own MSM march organized by the Social Justice League, a multinational student coalition. Faculty and students, a majority of Arab descent, walked from the University Center to the administration office, gaining supporters on the way. In solidarity with Mizzou students, a banner and chants said, "No justice! No peace! No racist police!"

Michael Mchahwar, Joe Piette and Minnie Bruce Pratt contributed to this article.



University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee die-in, Nov. 11.

PHOTO: JOE BRUSKY/UW-MILWAUKEE



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE  
Filadelfia, 10 de noviembre.

## La revolución socialista de nuevo en la mesa

Por Deirdre Griswold

Qué diferencia hace un día.

Cientos de combatientes militantes contra el capitalismo y todas sus horribles consecuencias para el mundo se reunieron aquí en la 56ta Conferencia Nacional del Partido Workers World/Mundo Obrero el 7 y 8 de noviembre, y el resultado fue un pequeño terremoto.

El lugar en sí, decía mucho. La conferencia llenó la sala principal en el Centro Memorial y Educativo Malcolm X y Betty Shabazz en el borde de Harlem – donde sus paredes mostraban conmovedores murales de estos valientes líderes de la lucha por la autodeterminación afroamericana. Fue en este mismo edificio que Malcolm X fue brutalmente asesinado en 1965, después de alcanzar fama mundial. Se ha reconstruido dando lugar a un espacio hermoso y lleno de esperanza.

La preponderancia de activistas de color, mujeres y personas de la comunidad lgbt, tanto en la audiencia como oradoras/es en la conferencia de WW-MO - además de sus mensajes - fue otra reivindicación de las creencias de Malcolm sobre el levantamiento de los pueblos oprimidos, por el medio que sea.

Así fue la presencia de una nutrida delegación de conductores de autobuses escolares de Boston, en su mayoría negras/os e inmigrantes, cuyo sindicato clasista lucha en una amplia variedad de causas progresistas.

El tema de la conferencia fue audaz:



Mónica Moorehead y Lamont Lilly.

“Poner a la Revolución Socialista sobre la mesa”. La palabra “socialismo” por fin se oye bastante en estos días. Pero el mensaje del Partido WW/MO no fue obscuro. Lo que traslució en cada palabra y cada pieza de literatura es que las luchas de liberación nacional de las/os negras y latinas/os en Estados Unidos, especialmente desde el surgimiento del militante movimiento Black Lives Matter (Las Vidas Negras Importan), y el de las/os trabajadores de bajos salarios, deben ser y son una parte integral de la lucha de clases para transformar por completo la sociedad mediante la eliminación del capitalismo y la construcción del socialismo.

Las/os jóvenes, al igual que el gran número de asistentes a la conferencia, se han tomado esto muy seriamente. Dijeron a través de discursos, poesía y canciones que no quieren vivir en un mundo donde las personas son humilladas y empobrecidas a causa de su nacionalidad, estatus migratorio, sexualidad o ex-

presión de género.

El socialismo no es sólo reformar el capitalismo en algo “más amable y gentil”, dijeron muchas/os oradores. Eso es imposible. El embate diario de este sistema contra millones y millones de personas aquí y en todo el mundo sólo se puede terminar cuando el gobierno de los banqueros y multimillonarios empresariales se rompa a través de las acciones decididas y revolucionarias de las/os trabajadores y las/os oprimidos. ¡Weeepaa! No se miden las palabras aquí.

Especialmente conmovedores fueron los relatos de Dionne Smith Downs, una madre de Stockton-California, quien contó cómo la policía criminal había matado a su hermoso hijo de negro de 16 años de edad, y Erica Mines-Simmons, una activista comunitaria de Filadelfia quien movió a la audiencia mientras exclamaba contundentemente consignas nacidas del movimiento Black Lives Matter.

### Campaña electoral revolucionaria de WW-MO

Después de tantos discursos sinceros y apasionados que reflejaron el profundo sufrimiento de las comunidades de la clase trabajadora, todo ese dolor e ira se fundieron en un grito colectivo de júbilo cuando se anunció que WW-MO lanzaría una campaña electoral revolucionaria en el 2016 y que sus candidatos serían Mónica Moorehead y Lamont Lilly: una mujer negra para presidente y un hombre negro para vicepresidente.

## Estudiantes de Misuri golpean racismo

Por Kris Hamel

La ira y el poder de las/os estudiantes, organizados bajo el liderazgo de las/os más oprimidos, no sólo puede exigir y luchar por ellos, sino que puede ganar. Una victoria contra el racismo fue ganada hoy cuando el presidente de la Universidad de Misuri Tim Wolfe renunció, después de semanas de protestas por las/os estudiantes.

Las protestas estudiantiles desde finales de septiembre, una huelga de hambre, el anuncio del equipo de fútbol Mizzou declarando un boicot del resto de la temporada, y un paro inminente de la facultad, todos exigían la destitución de Wolfe por fracasar al no luchar contra una serie de actos racistas en y cerca del recinto en Columbia-Mo., al noroeste de San Luis.

Wolfe hizo el anuncio durante una reunión por la mañana de la Junta de Comisarios, órgano gobernante de la universidad. “Asumo toda la responsabilidad de esta frustración [de estudiantes] y asumo toda la responsabilidad por la inacción que ha ocurrido”, indicó.

El liderazgo del gobierno estudiantil de licenciatura, que representa a 27.000 estudiantes, emitió públicamente una carta esta mañana antes del anuncio de la renuncia, exigiendo que Wolfe dimitiera. Sólo el 8 por ciento del cuerpo estudiantil de Mizzou es afroamericano, sin embargo, las/os estudiantes apoyaron firme-

mente la lucha contra el racismo y otras formas de opresión.

La carta decía en parte: “En agosto de 2014, la Universidad de Misuri guardó silencio por el asesinato de Michael Brown. En los siguientes meses, nuestros estudiantes quedaron varados, obligados a enfrentarse a un aumento de tensión y desigualdad sin apoyo sistémico. Durante los últimos 16 meses, la calidad de vida de nuestros estudiantes sólo ha empeorado...”

“El liderazgo [de Wolfe] innegablemente nos ha fallado y a los estudiantes que representamos. Él no sólo ha permitido una cultura de racismo desde el inicio de su mandato en 2012, sino que descaradamente ha ignorado y despreciado las inquietudes de los estudiantes. ... Si bien reconocemos que la carga de la opresión sistémica no cae del todo sobre sus hombros, como líder de este sistema es su prerrogativa el escuchar y responder a los estudiantes. Ha fracasado en esto completamente. Estudiantes de diferentes razas, géneros, sexualidades, habilidades, y de otras nacionalidades no han tenido sus identidades representadas”.

### Una primera victoria importante

Jonathan Butler, un estudiante graduado afroamericano de 25 años, había estado en una huelga de hambre por una semana cuando llegó la noticia de que Wolfe había renunciado. Cuando anunció el fin de su huelga de hambre, Butler tu-

iteo i“Éste es solo el primer paso! ¡Más cambios vendrán! #TheStruggleContinues #ConcernedStudent1950”.

El último ‘hashtag’, utilizado por el grupo de estudiantes antirracistas, se refiere al año en que estudiantes negros fueron admitidos por primera vez en la Universidad de Misuri.

Michael Sam, el primer jugador profesional de fútbol estadounidense abiertamente gay y ex jugador del equipo de Mizzou, expresó su solidaridad con las acciones de Butler. (can.com, 9 de noviembre)

El 7 de noviembre, el grupo de fútbol de la universidad anunció que boicotearía el resto de la temporada. Anthony Sherrills, jugador y estudiante de segundo año, publicó en medios de comunicación social una foto de 32 jugadores de fútbol, blancos y negros, con una declaración exigiendo que Wolfe renuncie o sea despedido de su puesto como presidente. El 8 de noviembre, el entrenador jefe Gary Pinkel anunció su solidaridad con su equipo en Twitter: “La familia Mizzou está unida. Apoyamos a nuestros jugadores. #ConcernedStudent1950 GP”.

En el anuncio público los jugadores dijeron: “Los atletas de color en el equipo de fútbol de la Universidad de Misuri realmente creen que ‘La injusticia en cualquier lugar es una amenaza a la justicia en todas partes’. Ya no vamos a participar en ninguna actividad relacionada con el fútbol hasta que el presidente Tim

Fue Teresa Gutiérrez, dinámica líder latina y ahora la directora de la campaña electoral WW-MO, quien explicó por qué es más adecuado tener dos candidatos afroamericanos en este momento y cómo harían un excelente trabajo para conseguir apoyo para la lucha de las/os migrantes y otras cuestiones a un público más amplio.

La sensación en la sala era inconfundible: una confianza y entendimiento mutuo se había forjado entre este partido multinacional - en el cual revolucionarias/os negras, latinas y blancas de la clase obrera de todas las edades, géneros y sexualidades, trabajan y aprenden juntos - y activistas destacadas/os de diferentes movimientos para el necesario cambio social.

La conferencia recibió muchos mensajes de solidaridad de progresistas, socialistas y comunistas de todo el mundo y de EUA. (Para leerlos, vaya a workers.org.)

Aunque estuvo centrado merecidamente en los movimientos en desarrollo contra la opresión nacional aquí en casa, y con muchos militantes sindicales también discutiendo estrategias para luchar contra los patronos, la agenda también elevó el antiimperialismo, la lucha contra la guerra y el apoyo a los países que enfrentan amenazas y sanciones, impuestas porque o bien tratan de construir el socialismo o simplemente tratan de evitar que el imperialismo destruya su soberanía política y económica. □

Wolfe renuncie o sea eliminado debido a su negligencia hacia la experiencia de los estudiantes marginados. ¡ESTAMOS UNIDOS!!!” (espn.com, 9 de noviembre)

Payton Head, el presidente de la Asociación de Estudiantes de Misuri en Mizzou, recibió epítetos racistas cuando comenzó el año académico en septiembre. Head utilizó Facebook para reportar los incidentes y hablar contra el racismo, el asalto sexual y la opresión de la expresión de género. Esta transparencia en los medios sociales causó una avalancha de indignación de las/os estudiantes y apoyo por la lucha.

Otros incidentes incluyeron el despliegue de banderas confederadas y una esvástica garabateada en heces en una pared del baño de un dormitorio.

El 9 de noviembre, Reuters informó que el hashtag #Concernedstudent1950 es uno de los temas más corrientes y populares en Twitter y Facebook, y que #Mizzou fue el hashtag más popular en Estados Unidos.

La mayoría de quienes utilizan los medios sociales están reportando la renuncia de Wolfe como una victoria en la lucha contra el racismo. Muchas/os están afirmando que la lucha acaba de empezar y que todavía queda mucho por hacer en el campus de Mizzou en Columbia-Misuri, y en otras ciudades por los Estados Unidos para combatir y erradicar el racismo y el terror racista. □