



PHOTO: VANI KANNAN

Dignity for migrant dairy workers, page 4.

# More police crimes uncovered as Mass pressure builds to fire Chicago mayor

By Jill White  
 Chicago

Demonstrators continue to march, protest and shut down major intersections in Chicago despite a Dec. 9 speech by Mayor Rahm Emanuel in which he was forced by mass actions to apologize for the police killing of Laquan McDonald 13 months ago.

Protesters and community activists continue to call for the firing of the mayor and the state's attorney, as well as accountability of all police officers involved in these and other shootings.

While the mayor was giving his speech, 75 white-coated medical students and health care providers lay on the ground in front of City Hall for a 16-minute die-in to protest what they see as a public health crisis of police violence that affects many of their patients. The protest was organized by six organizations of medical students, nurses, residents and physicians in the city, including White Coats for Black Lives.

Meanwhile, State's Attorney Anita Alvarez presented what has been characterized as a "27-minute infomercial" justifying the decision not to charge officer George Hernandez in the police shooting of Ronald Johnson, days prior to McDonald's death. The dashcam video clearly showed Johnson being shot in the back,

never turning toward police. There is no clear picture of a gun in his hand.

Dorothy Holmes, Johnson's mother, responded: "For her to say my son has an object in his hand, I tell it to her face: It's a bald-faced lie. He had nothing in his hand. I hope one day she feels the pain I feel."

## Mass resistance leads to more exposures

The mass response to these events is exposing the previously covered-up history of police violence in Chicago. A video was released Dec. 7 of police Taser-ing and abusing Philip Coleman while handcuffed in a jail cell. His family had requested he be taken to a hospital following a mental breakdown. Instead, he died in jail.

"Someone in this city needs to be responsible for killing my son. And the Chicago police are at the head of this table," his father, Percy Coleman, told WLS-TV News. When finally given a sedative, Coleman died from an allergic reaction to the drug, according to the autopsy. The family attorney, Ed Fox, said Philip was susceptible to neuroleptic syndrome because he was Tasered "up to 15 times." The coroner's report showed 51 external injuries and 19 internal injuries, all occurring prior to the drug being administered.

Continued on page 7

**DETROIT**  
 Bankruptcy protest 3

**MERGERS . . .**  
 Layoffs 3  
 Overpriced drugs 5

**STRIKES . . .**  
 Strike support 4

**EDITORIALS**  
 ♦ Trump's 'union' 10  
 ♦ Climate change 10



Ft. Dix 5; 'Welcome to Georgia' 8-9

**UNITE!**

**NO Fascist Movement racism**

**NO Trump**

**NO Muslim & Immigrant Attacks**

**NO Police Violence & War**

Join the Unity Rally

**SUN ▶ DEC 20 @ 2 pm**

Gathering @ Trump Tower 56th St. & 5th Ave., NYC  
 Marching to CNN & Fox News Building  
 facebook.com/events/706156566150674  
 For more information call the International Action Center: 212.633.6646



Monica Moorehead for President  
 Lamont Lilly for V.P.

WWW PHOTOS: BRENDA RYAN

## Dec. 20: About Trump and more

By Monica Moorehead

The writer is Workers World Party's 2016 candidate for president and a managing editor of Workers World newspaper. Lamont Lilly is the party's candidate for vice president.

The anti-Trump demonstration in New York City planned for Dec. 20 could not come at a more crucial time, not only for the movement and the workers in the

U.S. but also globally. Initiated by the International Action Center, this demonstration is being embraced and endorsed by a growing number of progressive, anti-racist and anti-imperialist groups, including Muslims.

The demonstration is a response to the call by the neofascist Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump in early December to ban all Muslims from entry

Continued on page 2

## RESISTING POLICE TERROR

5-7

- ♦ Mumia on Laquan McDonald
- ♦ Rochester med students
- ♦ Mario Woods video
- ♦ Holtzklaw conviction
- ♦ Emeryville forum
- ♦ Alabama cops & Klan

## Agent Orange; Quebec; French election; So. Africa

9-11

## Subscribe to Workers World

- 4 weeks trial \$4  1 year subscription \$30
- Sign me up for the WWP Supporter Program: [workers.org/articles/donate/supporters\\_/](http://workers.org/articles/donate/supporters_/)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City / State / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Workers World  
 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl, NY, NY 10011

212.627.2994  
[workers.org](http://workers.org)

# Dec. 20: About Trump and more

Continued from page 1

to the U.S. The demands for this unified demonstration are “NO to TRUMP and his media megaphone! NO to racism, Muslim and immigrant bashing! NO to police violence and war! NO to a fascist movement!”

These demands represent the political interests of billions of poor, oppressed and working people worldwide. Why? Because Trump is speaking not just as an individual billionaire but as the representative of a billionaire class of bosses and bankers.

And their system, the capitalist system — that puts profits before the needs of the people — is in the midst of a permanent global crisis of overproduction. In other words, capitalism is at a dead end in terms of recovering from its 2007-08 crisis, notwithstanding the government bailing out Wall Street with an unimaginable \$7.7 trillion stolen from the workers.

Has this bailout created prosperity for the workers and oppressed? Hell, no. In fact, it has created increased poverty in the form of lower wages, speed-ups, loss of pensions and other forms of austerity. Simply put, a desperate ruling class is seeking to solve the crisis of their system through a social war against the workers and oppressed, at home and abroad.

## Hands off Syria!

The various factions in the U.S. ruling class have been united in giving top priority to the domination of the so-called Middle East for over a century, due to its tremendous concentration of oil. This has come in various forms of war and occupation, including the creation of the brutal garrison state of Israel in 1948, which was turned into the apartheid-like occupation of Palestine. While the heroic Palestinian people continue to resist Zionist apartheid rule, the U.S. and its European allies in the form of NATO continue to seek regime change in Syria.

Their attempts to overthrow the democratically elected Assad government by arming so-called Syrian rebels and carrying out terrorist bombings have created an unprecedented forced migration of millions of Syrian refugees, the majority of whom are Muslims. U.S. politicians such as Trump are using the excuse of the Paris attacks by the Islamic State group in November to target Syrian refugees and Muslims in general as scapegoats for their global crisis. Isn't this reminiscent of the rise of fascism in Nazi Germany in the 1930s?

The scapegoating of Muslim people abroad cannot be separated from the main objectives of U.S. imperialism — to control and exploit the vast resources and peoples of

that region for lucrative profits, similar to the motivation for the overthrow of the Moammar Gadhafi regime in the oil-rich North African country of Libya in 2011.

## Fight white supremacy at home

The police and vigilante killings that have led to the Black Lives Matter movement, combined with Muslim bashing, show that white supremacy is alive and well in the U.S. Whether it's the brutal police executions of Laquan McDonald, Mario Woods, Tamir Rice and countless other Black and Brown youth; the rapes of 13 Black women by a predator cop in Oklahoma; mass incarceration and torture of prisoners by KKK guards; the attacks on mosques and Black churches and more, racism and national oppression are at the heart of class oppression. White supremacy coming from the ruling class is the biggest obstacle keeping the multinational working class from uniting to fight a common enemy — class rule. This white supremacy is rooted in the theft of Indigenous lands, the enslavement of African peoples and the exploitation of workers. All this and more gave rise to the expand-or-die system of U.S. imperialism.

As a Black woman born in Alabama, this writer has experienced first-hand the horrors and degradation of Jim Crow racism. Now a resident of Jersey City, N.J., a largely immigrant city populated with South Asians, Arabs, Koreans and many more, it is clear to me that building unity among the immigrants, Black people and working-class whites is so crucial in light of the neofascist rhetoric of Trump. In fact, just recently Trump publicly launched an attack on Jersey City, falsely accusing immigrants here of supporting the 9/11 attacks.

My running mate, Lamont Lilly and I, are proud as revolutionary socialist candidates to be supporting the Dec. 20 mass protest, along with endorsing the shutdown of Trump wherever he raises his ugly head — as in Raleigh, N.C., on Dec. 4, where his speech was disrupted at least 10 times by activists. We stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, from New York to Minneapolis to Chicago to Oakland.

We also stand in solidarity with our Muslim sisters and brothers, no matter their origin, because we understand that we have much more in common with them than with the greedy capitalists who treat the workers — especially those of color — as less than human. The workers must fight and organize in their own name, independent of the big-business Republican and Democratic parties.

All out for Dec. 20!!! ☐

## MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

### Who we are & what we're fighting for

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

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

We fight every kind of oppression. Racism, sexism,

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

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

## Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

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

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

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

**Bay Area**  
1305 Franklin St. #411  
Oakland, CA 94612  
510.600.5800  
bayarea@workers.org

**Boston**  
284 Amory St.  
Boston, MA 02130  
617.286.6574  
boston@workers.org

**Buffalo, N.Y.**  
712 Main St #113B  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
716.883.2534  
buffalo@workers.org

**Chicago**  
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138  
Chicago, IL 60606  
312.229.0161  
chicago@workers.org

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

**Denver**  
denver@workers.org

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

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

**Huntington, W. Va.**  
huntingtonww@workers.org

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

**Lexington, KY**  
lexington@workers.org

**Los Angeles**  
5278 W Pico Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90019  
la@workers.org  
323.306.6240

**Milwaukee**  
milwaukee@workers.org

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

**Pittsburgh**  
pittsburgh@workers.org

**Rochester, N.Y.**  
585.436.6458  
rochester@workers.org

**Rockford, IL**  
rockford@workers.org

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

**Tucson, Ariz.**  
tucson@workers.org

**Virginia**  
virginia@workers.org

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

# WORKERS WORLD this week

## ★ In the U.S.

Mass pressure builds to fire Chicago mayor ..... 1  
Dec. 20: About Trump and more ..... 1  
Protesters shut down bankruptcy event ..... 3  
Dump Trump's racism! ..... 3  
'Elephant' mergers spell worker layoffs. .... 3  
Low-wage autoworkers reject rotten contract, walk out.. 4  
Migrant farm workers march for justice ..... 4  
On the picket line ..... 4  
Support for Kohler strikers ..... 4  
Rx company mergers put meds out of reach for millions.. 5  
Mumia Abu-Jamal: And now, Laquan ..... 5  
Videos expose lies in SFPD killing of Mario Woods ..... 6  
Forum challenges 'safety' of militarized police forces ..... 6  
White Coats for Black Lives ..... 6  
Police terror, sexual violence against Black women ..... 7  
Alabama cops and Klan ..... 7  
Coal mine boss found guilty of conspiracy ..... 8  
Rally supports gay man ..... 8  
Buffalo stands against racist terror ..... 8  
Meeting builds support for Ft. Dix 5 appeal ..... 8  
Atlanta's 'wall of solidarity' ..... 9  
Vietnamese tour U.S. in appeal for Agent Orange victims . 9

## ★ Around the world

Quebec workers stage general strike ..... 9  
National Front wins no posts, pushes politics to right .... 10  
Haitians seek probe of election fraud ..... 10  
Political struggle mounts over S. Africa's economic future 11

## ★ Editorial

The 'union' that ain't ..... 10  
Revolution and climate change ..... 10

## ★ Noticias en Español

Fuerzas detrás del revés electoral en Venezuela ..... 12  
Neocoloniales de Detroit arruinan educación pública. .... 12

Workers World  
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.  
New York, N.Y. 10011  
Phone: 212.627.2994  
E-mail: ww@workers.org  
Web: www.workers.org  
Vol. 57, No. 51 • Dec. 24, 2015  
Closing date: Dec. 15, 2015

Editor: Deirdre Griswold

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

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

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

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

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

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis

Copyright © 2014 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$30; institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org/email.php.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl. New York, N.Y. 10011.

# Protesters shut down bankruptcy event

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

A panel discussion hosted by Detroit Public Television on the first anniversary of the largest municipal bankruptcy in U.S. history was met with protests both inside and outside the Community Arts Auditorium at Wayne State University on Dec. 9.

University police told members of the Moratorium Now! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions, and Utility Shut-offs and others that they had to relocate further down the street. The activists refused to move from the public sidewalk and continued their demonstration denouncing the role of the banks, transnational corporations and their agents in government for the ongoing oppression existing throughout the city.

Inside, Gov. Rick Snyder and retired federal Judge Steven Rhodes were subjected to loud boos and hissing that drowned out their voices. One community activist stood and told Snyder he was a liar and that many people in the city can't sleep at night due to lack of health care, utilities and water. One after another, people stood up and spoke truth about the city's bankruptcy, the devastation that continues in Detroit's neighborhoods and the hardships facing city retirees whose pensions and health care have been deeply slashed. Other activists continued booing and hissing.

A youth organizer stood up and began to chant "Black Lives Matter!" leading to Rhodes rapidly exiting the stage. One pastor rose and asked, "Why don't the Rhodes, Snyders and Duggans suffer cuts? ... It is always the community people who suffer."

Consequently, Detroit Mayor Mike

Duggan refused to come out onto the stage, prompting cancellation of the 90-minute event after about an hour. Press coverage of the shutdown included local television stations and corporate newspaper outlets around the country.

Even the Wall Street Journal carried the story. "Detroit protesters shut down a public forum meant to celebrate the city's progress since it emerged from bankruptcy protection exactly one year ago, showing that many residents are still raw over the deep cuts made to their health-care benefits and monthly pension checks." (Dec. 9)

This was the third demonstration in two months against the bank-led engineers of the forced emergency management and bankruptcy of Detroit. It reflected the mounting anger against the disempowerment and forced removal of the majority African-American population of the city. Poverty, homelessness and disease are on the rise, while the ruling class touts the purported "recovery" of the state's largest municipality.

## Bankruptcy loots city and workers

On Dec. 10 a year ago, now-retired Judge Rhodes approved a so-called "plan of adjustment" allowing the city of Detroit to exit chapter 7 bankruptcy. But it appears now that financial data used for calculations in the bankruptcy were underprojected.

A Nov. 14 Detroit Free Press article revealed: "According to new documents, the new estimate for Detroit's two pension funds is \$195 million, or more than 70 percent above what was projected under the city's bankruptcy plan. Post-bankruptcy Detroit is obligated to pay little to nothing into employee pensions over the next nine years. But then, an enor-

mous bill comes due that has caught city and pensions officials off-guard, raising doubt about the data used in bankruptcy to calculate the city's obligations."

Retirees had their health care benefits terminated in March 2014 and took steep cuts in their monthly checks after adoption of the "plan of adjustment." The Detroit Institute of Arts was turned over to a "trust" for its management, and a scheme to construct a new hockey arena by Detroit Red Wings owner Mike Ilitch was approved by a compliant City Council even before the bankruptcy had been finalized.

Since the imposition of emergency management and municipal bankruptcy during 2013, the corporate media have championed these undemocratic measures which had widespread opposition among broad segments of the residents of the city and statewide. A referendum on emergency management Public Act 4 was defeated by a substantial margin during the November 2012 elections.

However, during the so-called "lame duck" session of 2012, a new emergency manager law, Public Act 436, was drafted and passed by the majority right-wing Republican Legislature and signed by the governor that was referendum-proof. Other reactionary legislation was adopted during this period, including right to work (for less) and the abolition of business property taxes.

## Justifying expropriation

The WSU event was the continuation of attempts to paint a false picture of the impact of the bank-imposed restructuring of the city of Detroit, which expropriated at least \$7 billion in pension funds, health care benefits and other public assets. There is much at stake for

Wall Street in the restructuring of this municipality.

Financial institutions were given preference over retirees, municipal employees and residents during the bankruptcy process. City services have worsened since 2014, despite the claims of the Duggan administration and its supporters in the business-friendly media.

The Sunday Detroit Free Press ran a front page article Dec. 13 saying that a survey revealed 56 percent of the people asked believed things were improving in Detroit.

However, these "findings" are questionable because in the same survey it was reported that 68 percent of the people asked in Detroit had a negative opinion of Governor Snyder; 66 percent held an adverse view of the City Council, which is allowing the ongoing State Financial Review Board to mismanage the city; and 75 percent believed that the public school system, which has been under state control for most of the last 16 years, is not providing quality education.

A front-page article in the Detroit News the next day reported that at least 4,000 households were living without water services, including that of 66-year-old Fayette Coleman, whose water has been shut off since 2013. Out of the 200,000 customers, 108,000 were in arrears and 9,200 face imminent terminations. (Dec. 14)

Conditions in Detroit illustrate the crisis of capitalism in the U.S. Until there is a fundamental transformation of the social and economic system, these problems will worsen.

*For an anti-capitalist analysis of the Detroit bankruptcy and its effect on the people, watch the Dec. 11 segment of "The Board Room" on Detroit IP TV at <http://tinyurl.com/hcba52c>. Hear Moratorium NOW! organizer Jerry Goldberg and Krystal Crittendon, former Detroit Corporation Counsel, debate Detroit News editor Nolan Finley.*

## Valued in the trillions

# 'Elephant' mergers spell worker layoffs

By **Chris Fry**

In early December, with nearly a month to go, 2015 had already become the biggest year ever for global mergers and acquisitions, valued at the mind-boggling sum of \$4.3 trillion. At this pace, the Wall Street Journal predicts that the merger level will reach \$4.7 trillion by the end of the year.

"Bankers call them 'elephant deals' — blockbusting takeover bids that slam together vast global businesses. And when the corporate history books are written, 2015 will be remembered as the year of the elephant." (theguardian.com, Dec. 12)

It should be telling to the "wizards" of high finance on Wall Street that the last time the rate of capitalist mergers hit such a fever pitch was in 2007, on the eve of the Great Recession. However, investment bankers have raked in \$21 billion so far on "advising" fees for these takeovers. They do not care to look beyond their immediate bottom line.

These merger bids are indeed staggering. The drug maker Pfizer announced a \$160 billion deal with botox maker Allergan. Oil giant Shell is acquiring BG Group for \$81 billion. Anheuser Busch is bidding some \$117 billion to buy Miller Brewing.

And on Dec. 11, U.S. chemical giants Dow and DuPont announced a \$130 billion merger deal.

Billionaire investor Warren Buffett has gotten in on the action, with a \$32 billion takeover bid for the industrial compo-

nents group Precision Castparts.

This merger and acquisition trend provides windfall profits for bankers and corporate owners alike, but it spells disaster for millions of workers both here and abroad — because a major factor driving mergers is to shed jobs.

DuPont, for example, expects to lay off 10 percent of its global workforce because of the merger with Dow. The Wall Street Journal, describing this deal, headlined its article: "Dow-DuPont Merger: Better Living Through Layoffs." (wsj.com, Dec. 9) While it seems to amuse the Journal's headline writer, it's no laughing matter to those losing their jobs.

## Wave of layoffs

Some 200,000 oil workers in the U.S. have already been laid off over the last year because of the worldwide glut of oil. Now oil-drilling giants like Schlumberger, which is acquiring Cameron International, announced on Dec. 1 that it intends to "further reduce its workforce."

Drug companies, grocery chains, brewers, airlines, computer makers — workers in all these merger-frenzied industries face massive job losses.

What's behind this wave of mergers and acquisitions?

The Wall Street Journal, renowned mouthpiece for the U.S. capitalist class, is quite explicit: "The economy at large isn't producing enough growth to keep stockholders content. For the largest companies — who are more or less indexed directly to U.S. and global growth

— there is little they can do but keep cutting costs. ... Eventually, this takes the form of mergers, and 2015 has produced over \$4 trillion of transactions. The vast majority of them are 'in industry,' which is banker-ese for cost-cutting exercises."

And "cost-cutting exercises" is boss-ese for layoffs.

Writing in 1916 during World War I, Vladimir Lenin, in his groundbreaking work "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," described how capitalist economists claimed that the trend toward monopolies and cartels was going to somehow end the "boom and bust" cycles and bring stability to the capitalist system. "The statement that cartels can abolish crises is a fable spread by bourgeois economists who at all costs desire to place capitalism in a favorable light. On the contrary, the monopoly created in certain branches of industry increases and intensifies the anarchy inherent in capitalist production as a whole," he wrote.

As millions of workers already reckon with a stagnant economy, cutbacks in services, staggering student debt and the replacement of better-paying jobs with those at minimum wage, this new wave of corporate takeovers is very ominous. The establishment's current array of political office seekers, Republican or Democratic, can offer no solutions at all. Only a revolutionary movement by the workers, youth and oppressed communities to create a "people before profit" social system can overcome this bleak future offered by Wall Street. □

## Dump Trump's



New York — On a warm Dec. 11 here at the pricy Plaza Hotel, which looms over the southeast corner of Central Park, Donald Trump was set to be the keynote speaker for the Pennsylvania Republican Party's annual Commonwealth Club fundraiser luncheon. The event became more interesting as demonstrators disrupted from inside the Plaza while others, gathered outside the hotel, condemned Trump's anti-Muslim statements.

The hotel is only a few blocks from Trump's own "Plaza," a mixed use skyscraper across Fifth Avenue on 56th Street, where a large coalition of organizations has called for an anti-Trump protest on Sunday, Dec. 20 at 2 p.m.

Trump's rallies have become gathering points for racist and pro-fascist bigots around the country, making such disruptions necessary for those wanting to build solidarity among workers and all people facing oppression. Since a well-organized group interrupted Trump's rant 10 times in North Carolina on Dec. 4, these disruptions have become increasingly common at his events.

— **Report and photo by John Catalinotto**

# Low-wage autoworkers reject rotten contract, walk out

By Martha Grevatt  
Detroit

As the clock struck midnight on Dec. 8, members of United Auto Workers Local 699 at auto parts supplier Nexteer began streaming out of the plant and heading to the picket lines. The strike began after workers at the plant, in Buena Vista, Mich., voted a whopping 3,103 to 80 against a new contract that maintained a multitier pay scale and kept everyone's wages low while increasing worker health care costs.

Some Nexteer workers make as little as \$12 an hour on physically demanding and mind-numbing repetitive jobs. They say they went on strike because their pay is too low to support a family. Increased health care premiums would wipe out the small raises in the contract.

The plant, where workers make steering components, was originally part of General Motors and then became a Delphi plant when GM spun off its parts division. Wages fell under the 2007 contract negotiated during the Delphi bankruptcy. GM then took the plant back from Delphi but the workers were not brought under the UAW-GM master contract; wages were kept below what most GM workers make. Then, to allow the plant to be bought by Nexteer and avoid a plant closing, the UAW agreed to let Nexteer cut wages again and have an even lower wage for future hires.

"We're making history right now. We're standing together as a union," striker Marcus Bush told ABC News on Dec. 8. The strike was effective, causing GM to cancel a shift at one of its assembly

plants. The strike ended after 20 hours when Local 699 announced a new, better contract. Workers will vote on the new agreement on Dec. 17 and 18. This contract has bigger raises and bonuses, eliminates temporary worker classifications and does not increase worker health care contributions. However, it maintains a multitier pay structure. The top rates still fall far below what a GM worker makes.

It is possible that the second contract will also be rejected. Whichever way the vote goes, this strike — which follows the resistance to two-tier contracts at Ford, GM and Fiat Chrysler and a monthlong UAW strike against two-tier at Kohler — demonstrates that autoworkers are part of the global resistance to the low wages that have fueled the recovery for the capitalists. □

## Migrant farmworkers march for justice



Migrant dairy workers march against workplace abuse.

PHOTO: VANI KANNAN

By Minnie Bruce Pratt  
Lowville, N.Y.

Latino/a dairy farmworkers and supporters marched here in upstate New York on Dec. 7 to protest police intimidation and violation of workplace rights.

Marks Farms management had called the cops on employees meeting during their free time with the Workers Center of Central New York. On Sept. 1, the farm fired two workers who were alerting co-workers to their right to have visitors meet with them in their lodgings, under U.S. Department of Labor policy. Many of the workers are undocumented immigrants.

At a "Rally for Dignity and Re-

spect" at the farm, workers presented management with a petition of over 1,000 names backing demands that Marks Farms stop all violence and verbal abuse against farmworkers, respect the right of workers to receive visitors in their homes and stop retaliation against workers who are organizing to improve workplace conditions.

Speaking in Spanish at the protest, the fired workers said, "Treat us like human beings, not like slaves or like the cows!" and "That's why [Marks Farm] has everything. It's from the hands of the workers."

"They make \$28 million a year, they say very proudly," said Rebecca Fuentes of the WC-CNY. "They are king in Lewis County, they say.

Now we want justice to be king here too."

After the farm rally, the 25-person contingent of workers and supporters marched through the small downtown of Lowville, clanging cowbells and chanting: "Marks Farms, ¡escucha! ¡Estamos en la lucha!" (Marks Farms, listen up! We are in the struggle!)

Continuing to chant, "¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!" ("The people united will never be defeated"), they were greeted with some approving horn blasts and thumbs-up. Several local passers-by and drivers asked for more information and fliers. For more on the dairy workers' struggle, go to workerscentercny.org. □

## Support for Kohler strikers

Sheboygan, Wis. — Members of Rockford Fight Imperialism, Stand Together, the Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement and Workers World Party participated in a delegation to the United Auto Workers Local 833 union hall and picket lines on Dec. 13-14. The solidarity delegation received a warm welcome from the courageous strikers and their families.

"We came to support Local 833 for solidarity and because we as youth demand a future, and we know unions are essential to secure that future," said Andrea Bañuelos of Rockford FIST.

Local 833 has been on strike against the Kohler Company since Nov. 15 in a fight to end an unequal two-tier wage system where Tier B workers make at least \$10 an hour less than Tier A workers for the same work. Other issues



include skyrocketing health insurance costs.

The strikers continue to stand strong and are receiving labor and community support from across the world. Solidarity resolutions to Local 833 have come from various unions, including American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 526 in Milwaukee and United Steelworkers Local 8751 in Boston, as well as from such organizations as the Autoworker Caravan and the School of the Ameri-

cas Watch Labor Caucus.

For more information and how to support Local 833, visit facebook.com/Local833local, facebook.com/defeatrighttowork, #kohlerstrike and wibailoutpeople.org. Supporters can send or drop off contributions, solidarity resolutions and nonperishable goods for UAW Local 833, Emil Mazey Hall, 5425 Superior Ave., Sheboygan, WI 53083.

— Report and photo by WW  
Milwaukee Bureau

## On the picket line

By Matty Starrdust and Sue Davis

### American Airlines agents win historic contract

American Airlines customer service agents celebrated the ratification of their first union contract Nov. 30, after unionizing in 2014 with the CWA/IBT Passenger Service Employees (a joint local of the Communication Workers and the Teamsters) after a 19-year struggle. The contract grants the airline's nearly 15,000 agents both the highest wages in the industry and the largest one-time raise in industry history, which the workers will see in their paychecks on Dec. 24. Benefits will be extended to some 3,500 workers who previously earned none. Some 1,200 ticket counter positions, currently held by outsourced private contractors, will be made union jobs. (American-Agents.org)

Bargaining committee member Ken Grunwald noted that for many workers the contract "was far more meaningful than I could have ever imagined. Many members called to tearfully explain that the wage increase alone would impact their lives in an overwhelmingly positive way. [Their lives] will be improved dramatically." To enforce the contract, especially the job security terms, the union plans to build a strong steward network. (CWA-union.org, Dec. 3)

### Trump workers find strength in union

Workers at two hotels owned by reactionary billionaire presidential hopeful Donald Trump have stepped up to demand fair treatment and end Trump's racist hate speech.

A majority of the 500 workers at the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas, most of whom are Spanish-speaking immigrants, voted Dec. 4-5 to join UNITE HERE's Culinary Workers Local 226 and Bartenders Local 165. A powerful video posted on CulinaryUnion226.org shows a sea of workers countering Trump's attacks on immigrants: "If you want to make America great again, start here in Las Vegas with the workers at your hotel!" said Geoconda Arguello-Kline, secretary-treasurer of Local 226. (Sept. 23) On Dec. 7, she called on hotel management to "negotiate a contract as soon as possible." The workers will bargain for fair wages, benefits and job security.

Workers at the Trump Hotel in Toronto, Canada, who won union representation with UNITE HERE Local 75 in April and ratified their first contract in December, joined a protest of Trump's rabid Islamophobia on Dec. 11. Dozens of workers and supporters gathered outside the hotel, holding signs and leading chants declaring Trump's bigotry "Not welcome in Toronto!" The union's Facebook page states: "There's no room in Toronto for anti-Muslim bigotry. We are standing up for equality, openness and inclusion!" (UniteHereLocal75, Dec. 12)

### Union solidarity with Planned Parenthood

On the National Day in Solidarity with Planned Parenthood, Dec. 5, President Mary Kay Henry of the Service Employees union, which lost 10 members in the San Bernardino, Calif., shooting on Dec. 2 (four were injured), posted this statement on her Facebook page: "Today I carried SEIU members in my heart to stand in vigil and solidarity with Planned Parenthood over the lives we've lost to senseless violence."

She continued: "Our members — public health stewards — who lost their lives and were injured in #SanBernardino act out of the same love and commitment as the healthcare providers in Planned Parenthood health centers. Planned Parenthood and SEIU will stand stronger together today and every day forward till we end violence in all its forms in our workplaces and in our communities."

### NYC bus workers ratify improved contract

About 2,200 members of Transit Workers Local 100 in New York City — bus operators in the Bronx and Queens, as well as maintainers and their helpers, cleaner helpers, stock workers and their assistants — ratified a new contract overwhelmingly on Nov. 24. They won raises every year, including retroactive payments, and vastly improved pension benefits, which will now have parity with those of Transit Authority subway workers and Operating Authority bus operators in Manhattan.

TWU 100 President John Samuelson said: "As with the TA/OA agreement [signed May 19, 2014], we beat the pattern set in City bargaining with every public sector union by a significant amount. ... Every other NYC public sector union accepted zeros; we did not. We also secured a series of important new health, safety and family-friendly benefits, ... [including] lifetime spousal medical coverage and first time ever two weeks' paid paternity and maternity leave." After apologizing for past inequities in MTA Bus pension benefits, he added, "We now march forward in unity and strength, pursuing across the board parity with [other NYC transit workers]." (twulocal100.org, Nov. 24) □

# Rx company mergers put meds out of reach for millions

By Betsey Piette

Around 170 million people globally are chronically infected with the hepatitis C virus. Left untreated, HCV causes liver disease and other complications that kill 350,000 to 500,000 people every year.

In the U.S. an estimated 3.2 million people have chronic HCV infection. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most won't feel ill or even know they are infected until it is too late.

U.S. numbers might be substantially higher if prisoners were included. However, federal and state prisons, while routinely screening for HIV-AIDS, do not test for hepatitis C. Prisoners returning to their communities upon release can unknowingly contribute to the spread of this disease, a major cause of death in many African-American and poor communities.

In 2013, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the new direct-acting antiviral drug Sovaldi with a 90 percent cure rate for HCV — almost double that of previous treatments. But here's the catch: Gilead Sciences, which acquired the drug through a takeover of Sovaldi's developer, Pharmasset, priced the drug so high few could afford it.

Gilead charges \$84,000 (\$1,000 per pill) for a 12-week course of treatment. The company later introduced Sovaldi's successor, Harvoni, at \$94,500 per treatment course.

An 18-month federal study of Gilead's price practices, released Dec. 1, found no evidence that research and development costs or even the multibillion-dollar purchase of Pharmasset factored into how Gilead priced the drug. Senate Finance Committee members Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), who oversaw the investigation, determined that Gilead had set the initial price of Sovaldi as high as the market would bear so it could charge even more for Harvoni.

Gilead's price speculation has resulted in heavy burdens for Medicare, Medicaid and the Bureau of Prisons, which are all limited by federal law from negotiating for lower drug costs. The result has severely restricted access to the drugs for HCV-infected patients whose lives depend on the new treatment.

## Mumia files suit over HCV drugs

Few if any prisoners get these drugs. This has resulted in several lawsuits on behalf of prisoners, including one filed by Pennsylvania political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was recently diagnosed with complications resulting from HCV but was denied the new drugs.

On Dec. 18, an evidentiary hearing requested by Abu-Jamal will be held in Scranton, Pa. Abu-Jamal is seeking medical care to treat the hepatitis C virus he contracted from a blood transfusion in 1981. Pam Africa, of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, says, "A legal victory in Mumia's case will also be a victory for the other 10,000 Pennsylvania prisoners afflicted by hep C."

The Senate study found that since Sovaldi's approval, Medicare had paid out nearly \$8.2 billion, before rebates, for Sovaldi and Harvoni — a six-fold increase in spending for HCV treatment. The combined cost for the drugs in all state Medicaid programs in 2014 was \$1.3 billion before rebates. Because of this hefty price tag, less than 2.4 percent of 700,000 Medicaid enrollees with HCV received the new cure.



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

The Senate study concluded that Gilead pursued a "calculated scheme for pricing and marketing its Hepatitis C drug based on one primary goal, maximizing revenue, regardless of the human consequences" and with "little concern for access or affordability."

The study determined that even though Gilead knew its exorbitant prices would deny treatment for millions and create serious financial burdens for Medicare and Medicaid, the company still went ahead. Gilead projected \$20.6 billion in revenues from U.S. sales of Sovaldi and Harvoni for the 21 months following introduction of the drugs.

The federal investigation shed light on Gilead's greed but offered no concrete action to stop it. While other industrial countries restrict what can be charged for prescription medicines, no such limits exist in the U.S., where drug companies can charge whatever they can get away with.

Drugs overpriced in the U.S. are available in other countries for far less. In India generic versions of Sovaldi and Harvoni run \$900 for the 12-week course. In Europe the cost is around half that in the U.S.

One reason for lax U.S. restrictions may be "benefits" that politicians receive for maintaining the status quo. The pharmaceutical industry spends more money lobbying Washington — \$3 billion from 1998 to 2015 — than the military industry and Big Oil combined. (opensecrets.org)

## 4,000 percent price hike for malaria drug

Due to numerous mergers, companies like Gilead Sciences, Pfizer, AstraZeneca, GlaxoSmithKline and Turing Pharmaceuticals control the sale and distribution of high-demand prescription medicine.

In August, Turing Pharmaceuticals CEO Martin Shkreli, a former hedge fund manager, raised the price for Daraprim from \$18 to \$750 a pill — a 4,000 percent increase. Developed to treat malaria, Daraprim is Turing's brand name for pyrimethamine, which is also a critical treatment for a parasitic infection often fatal to people with compromised immune systems due to HIV/AIDS or cancer.

The London-based pharmaceutical company Burroughs Wellcome first developed pyrimethamine in 1953. Forty-two years later, Burroughs Wellcome merged with British-based Glaxo. In 2010, now GlaxoSmithKline sold the U.S. rights to the drug, renamed Daraprim, to CorePharma. The patent on pyrimethamine had expired, but there was no generic competitor, so CorePharma had a monopoly on the drug when it was sold to Turing.

A course of treatment requires 100 pills and originally cost \$1,800. Now Turing has raised the cost to \$75,000 for U.S. patients. However, the drug is still available in Britain for 66 cents a pill and costs even less in India.

In 2014, four drug companies — Hoffmann-LaRoche, AbbVie, GlaxoSmithKline and Eli Lilly — had profit margins exceeding 20 percent. However, Pfizer led them all with a 42 percent margin. But that apparently wasn't enough for the U.S. pharmaceutical giant.

On Nov. 9, Pfizer revealed plans for an all-stock merger with Ireland-based Allergan — the largest merger in pharmaceutical industry history.

Under the deal the two companies will combine under Allergan, which will be renamed Pfizer for Wall Street trade purposes. The "new" company will retain Allergan's legal and tax residency in Ireland, while Pfizer's global operational headquarters will be in New York.

As a result of the \$160 billion merger, Pfizer-Allergan will enjoy a significant tax savings. Ireland's business tax rate is under 18 percent compared to 25 percent in the U.S. Only four of the 10 biggest global pharmaceutical companies remain U.S.-based.

## Public foots bill for R&D

Major drug companies promote the myth that they have to charge more for drugs because of the high cost of research

# And now, Laquan

*Taken from a Nov. 27 audio recording on prisonradio.org. Mumia Abu-Jamal will appear in a court hearing, via video conferencing, on Dec. 18 in Scranton, Pa., to demand health care for himself and 10,000 other Pennsylvania prisoners suffering from hepatitis C, a curable disease.*

## By Mumia Abu-Jamal

With a name like Laquan, we can safely assume his Blackness. Of middling height, perhaps 5 feet 2 inches, with a weight of 130 pounds, Laquan bounces down a Chicago avenue with typical teenage abandon.

He seems more like he's skipping than running, his right hand holding a pen-knife of some 3 inches or so. One can almost feel the buzz of youthful testosterone rushing through his veins. A subterranean river of strength assuring him that he is invincible, that he can punch through walls, get hit with a mountain and rise.

And then, without warning, a shot rings out, and it spins him like a top, 360 degrees.

He falls, and unfamiliar pain grips him, curling him, folding him into a fetal position cradled by the cold earth. Then, like heartbeats, come death beats of bullets, and 17-year-old Laquan McDonald is no more.

and development. Nothing is further from the truth.

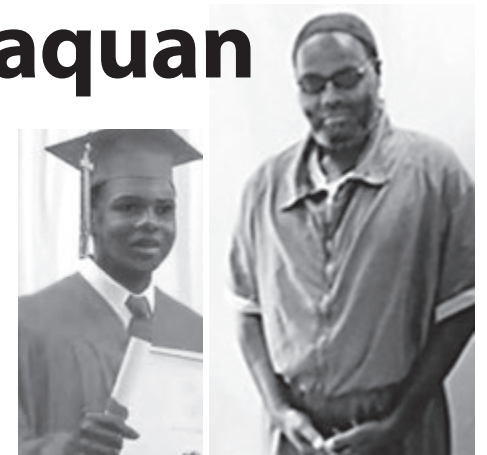
Marcia Angell, senior lecturer at Harvard Medical School, noted that often the company which developed a drug is not the one currently marketing it. "[L]ike big fish swallowing little fish, larger companies either buy small firms outright or license promising drugs from them." (Washington Post, Sept. 25)

The initial discovery often happens at a university lab that receives public funding from the National Institutes of Health. The drug is then licensed by a start-up company partly owned by the university before it's turned over to a private company. Big drug companies are rarely involved in innovation. Instead they create minor variations of top-selling drugs designed to lure new patients, even if the new version is no more effective than the old one.

Only 16 percent of drug-producing costs stem from research, compared to 30 percent for marketing. We've all seen those ubiquitous television ads, often playing in clinic waiting rooms, telling us to "Ask your doctor if XYZ drug is right for you." The pitch usually features attractive people enjoying themselves outdoors. The ads end with a rapid-fire recital of possible, potentially serious side effects, often including "risk of death" — almost drowned out by upbeat music.

The other 54 percent of drug costs are for corporate administration (including CEO salaries) plus the profits drug companies enjoy — at public expense.

By maintaining U.S.-based research divisions, Big Pharma can take advantage of NIH-funded research. At the same time, with parent companies headquartered abroad, they evade paying taxes to the U.S. For the corporations it's a win-win situation. For people in dire need of life-saving medications, the best remedy is to end this profit-crazy system. □



Laquan McDonald, above left. Mumia Abu-Jamal, above.

He is but the latest Black body blasted into oblivion by a white Klansman in blue.

His once unknown name joins a chorus of the dead: Tamir Rice, Mike Brown, Donald "Dontay" Ivy, Eric Garner, Oscar Grant, Freddie Gray and more; victims all of one of the oldest maladies on the American mainland: white fear, a 3-inch blade (legal by the way) and 16 shots burned into the body of a teenager.

For a year, the cameras go dark, until a freelance journalist fights, and wins a Freedom of Information suit against the city. The camera replays that savage moment of a boy skipping his way into death.

There has been an arrest, yes; but don't be surprised by an acquittal.

Any city that can make a murder disappear for a year can surely hustle up an acquittal. Only sustained struggle can make a difference. □

## Question the narrative!

# Videos expose lies in SFPD killing of Mario Woods

By Terri Kay  
Oakland, Calif.

The Black community of Bayview Hunter's Point in San Francisco has demonstrated its outrage at the firing-squad execution of 26-year-old Mario Woods, another African-American victim of wanton police terror. Three eyewitness videos show police officers surrounding Woods before he was shot by at least five of them on Dec. 2.

Since the shooting, there have been several community responses to this blatant disregard for the life of an African-American youth in an area of San Francisco historically known as the heart of the African-American community. Now, after years of gentrification, the remaining African-American residents call themselves "the last 3 percent."

People came out on the streets on the night of the shooting. The next day, a community vigil was followed by a community town hall meeting that night. After that gathering, large crowds poured into the streets and blocked traffic.

Community members packed the San Francisco Police Department town hall meeting on Dec. 4, expressing their outrage. Police Chief Greg Suhr tried to claim the usual "police were in fear of their lives" justification for the killing. Suhr showed an enlarged frame from one of the videos which showed Woods with his arms extended, and claimed it showed the victim was pointing a small

kitchen knife at the officers.

However, when community activists downloaded the same video and played it in slow motion, it was clear that police fired the first shot before Woods' arm was extended — and so the victim's movement could have been a reflex to that shot.

Hundreds of angry protesters turned up on Dec. 9 at the first San Francisco Commission meeting since the shooting. They demanded Suhr's resignation.

### 'Justice for Mario Woods!'

Two days later, hundreds of high school and middle-school students walked out of school to protest this police killing. One group started at the Bay Area Rapid Transit station on 16th and Mission streets and marched to City Hall, where they were met by more students. Then they marched down Market Street toward Union Square, chanting "Black lives matter!" and "Justice for Mario Woods!" shutting down several intersections along the way.

At the same time, John Burriss, the Woods' family attorney, announced at a press conference that he was filing a federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of the victim's family. As Burriss released a third — and very revealing — eyewitness video, he said, "Mario's arms were at his sides. He was not committing a dangerous act. He was not threatening police officers at the time. He was walking slowly. It was the police officer that created [a] confrontation when he jumped in front of him."

A Dec. 12 article in SFGate.com con-



WW PHOTOS: TERRI KAY

tinued, "Burriss questioned whether Woods had a knife on him at the time of his death. On the video, it is unclear if he is armed. Burriss also asserted that the officers involved should be indicted." Additionally, Burriss said that "attorneys at his office counted 20 bullet wounds on Woods' body, including several in his back and to the back of his head."

On Dec. 11 the SFPD released the names of the five officers involved in Woods' shooting: Winson Seto, Antonio Santos, Charles August, Nicholas Cuevas and Scott Phillips. They are all on administrative leave with pay.

KPFA radio commentator Davey D. Cook asked in his Dec. 12 blog post: "Where is Kamala Harris on this Mario Woods Killing?" Harris is the California State Attorney General and is projected to be the Democratic Party's nominee to replace outgoing Sen. Barbara Boxer. Harris has not prosecuted a single killer cop since she's been in office. The Justice for Alan Blueford Coalition held a rally at the

Oakland State Building in February 2014 demanding that Harris prosecute the cops who killed African-American youth Alan Blueford and countless others across the state. Eight people were arrested for civil disobedience, including this writer.

In yet another instance of recent police violence, Oakland officers fatally gunned down Richard Perkins Jr. in East Oakland on Nov. 15. The officers say that he pointed a pellet gun at them, which was mistaken for a real gun. Multiple shots were fired. The East Oakland community is outraged.

However, there was no eyewitness video of Perkins' slaying, and the Oakland Police had turned off their body cameras. The only known video footage was taken by a gas station security camera. It was immediately confiscated by the police and has yet to be made public. Only a people's struggle can win the release of this video.

Justice for Mario Woods, Alan Blueford, Richard Perkins Jr. and all other victims of fatal police violence! □

## Forum challenges 'safety' of militarized police forces

Oakland, Calif. — Police departments across the country have been getting more and more militarized through receiving much weaponry directly from the Pentagon and with police recruiting often focusing on war veterans. The Anti Police-Terror Project has launched a campaign to demilitarize the police, starting with the small community of Emeryville, Calif., just north of Oakland, where Yvette Henderson was killed by Emeryville police officers armed with AR-15 assault rifles.

The APTP held a forum in Emeryville on Dec. 13 to open the discussion on whether these militarized police departments really make the communities they are charged with defending any safer, as



they claim, or whether these weapons are actually part of the real threat to Black communities and other people of color.

Speaking to a packed house, which included two Emeryville City Council

members, a number of speakers talked about the various perspectives involved. Cat Brooks of the APTP chaired the meeting. Yvette Henderson's brother, Jamison Robinson, talked about the loss

of his sister. John Lindsay-Poland of the American Friends Service Committee spoke on the Pentagon's giving weapons to local police forces. Omar Ali of the Arab Resource and Organizing Center spoke on the Israeli Defense Force's training of U.S. police departments, including the Oakland PD. Sagnicthe Salazar of the Stop Urban Shield Coalition covered the role of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and their ties to local policing. Maddy Taylor of Standing Up for Racial Justice described organizing plans to demilitarize the Emeryville police. Alia Sharrief, a Muslimah [Muslim woman] hip-hop artist, performed "Black Heroes."

— Report and photo by Terri Kay

## White Coats for Black lives

By Gene Clancy  
Rochester, N.Y.

On Dec. 10, University of Rochester medical students, joined by some faculty and staff, protested against racism at the university and in the health care system as a whole.

With the words "Actions speak louder than words" taped over their mouths, 100 demonstrators crowded into the Flaum Atrium of the UR School of Medicine and Dentistry.

The protest was called by students in the local chapter of White Coats for Black Lives, an organization inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement. "We,

as future physicians, could not stay silent because we know that medicine is not immune to the racism that is rooted in our education, housing, employment and criminal justice system," said Guyida Richard, a second year UR medical student and one of the protest organizers. Richard went on to say that the racial climate has "gotten worse." (Democrat and Chronicle, Dec. 11)

The protesters want better training of medical students so they are able to better address the needs of people of color. They also want increased diversity in the medical school faculty and recruitment of more students of color. For this school year, 41 of the 435 students at the medical

school are Black, 26 are Latino/a and 11 are of two or more ethnic backgrounds.

Another demand calls for discussions about structural racism in medicine. Students related "implicitly racist" stereotypes of people of color that can stand in the way of proper treatment.

The University of Rochester, with its associated teaching hospitals, is the largest employer in the city. With a student enrollment of 4,500, its endowment of nearly \$3 billion makes it one of the richest per capita schools in the country. (Endowment.com)

The Board of Trustees looks like a who's who of the Rochester business elite, except for those who hail from Wall Street.

As is the case for universities in many cities, the UR is located right next to a large oppressed community. It pays no property taxes, not even payments in lieu of taxes. Nevertheless, the university recently pressured the chronically broke city to float a \$20 million loan for its new College Town, a gentrification project that has driven many residents and small businesses from the community.

The White Coats for Black Lives organization is a welcome movement toward solidarity among the youth of Rochester and around the country of different nationalities and ethnic groups. It's an inspiring example of how the Black Lives Matter movement is at the forefront of struggle. □

Rochester, N.Y.

# Police terror, sexual violence against Black women

## WW commentary

By Danielle Boachie

On Dec. 11, former Oklahoma City police officer Daniel Holtzclaw, 29, was convicted of 18 counts of rape and other charges associated with attacks against 13 Black women.

This conviction stands as a rare legal victory for Black rape victims as well as victims of police violence. Many rapes are never reported, and the few that are seldom result in convictions. Cops who terrorize Black people — harassing, raping, torturing or murdering at will — are even more rarely convicted.

While appalling, these low rates of conviction should come as no surprise to anyone with an understanding of the repressive role of the capitalist state — the police, courts and prisons — plays in society. Instead, this case is symbolic of the worst aspects of the sexist “rape culture” of the United States — the system of culture, custom and law that promotes and normalizes rape and violence against women.

As the trial continued and more women testified, a harrowing picture of the of-



Danielle Boachie

ficer’s predatory exploitation of authority, power and privilege emerged. Holtzclaw methodically targeted the most vulnerable — poor women, including sex workers with “criminal” or drug addiction histories who he assumed would be unlikely to be believed if they brought forth accusations against him. Using the threat of violence or arrest, Holtzclaw coerced the women into sex acts with him.

One woman reported being forced to perform oral sex on the officer while he made his firearm visible on his belt. An-

other victim, a 17-year-old girl, testified that he threatened her with an outstanding warrant before raping her on her mother’s front porch. “What am I going to do?” she asked. “Call the cops? He was a cop.” (The Guardian, Nov. 27)

Much of the mainstream media coverage of the case applauds the verdict as an example of justice served against a single “dirty cop.” Holtzclaw’s crimes, however, must be considered in the broader context of the generalized police war on Black people and all people of color.

The sheer number of Black men lynched by police can, at times, lead to the invisibility of the tremendous crimes perpetrated by the state against Black and Brown women and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\*, queer community. (Trans\* is used with an asterisk to indicate the spectrum of all the different genders of people who do not conform to the either/or of male/female or masculine/feminine.) Normative discussions of power are constructed to embody cisgender (not transgender) masculinity, leaving the contextualization of the violence inflicted on Black women’s bodies a peripheral concern. Certainly, this tendency erases

the fact that Black women are the fastest-growing incarcerated demographic in the United States.

While the conviction of this cop should be applauded, the state cannot be relied upon to bring justice for Black women or any oppressed peoples. Far more often, the state is the perpetrator of violence, as in the case of Wanda Jean Allen, a Black woman executed by the state of Oklahoma in 2001. The state apparatus is complicit with racist, historical repression that criminalizes and dehumanizes Black women.

Because of rape culture, gender-specific violence and anti-Black misogyny, police brutality against Black women is often synonymous with sexual assault or harassment. Yet, in order to dismantle systemic and racialized state violence and in order to achieve the liberation of all Black people, it is essential to not only include, but prioritize, the voices and lives of Black women. Holtzclaw’s conviction, though a symbolic victory, is not enough to end institutionalized racist violence against women of color. The struggle must continue until #BlackWomensLivesMatter. □

# In Alabama, cops, Klan & state go hand-in-hand

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

According to an activist Alabama blog, the Henry County Report, some current and former cops in Dothan, Ala., planted false evidence of drugs and guns on young Black men with no criminal records from 1996 to 2004, resulting in many allegedly unjust convictions. The Dec. 1 blog article also charges District Attorney Doug Valeska, of Alabama’s 20th Judicial District, with covering up this malfeasance and proceeding with prosecutions of innocent people.

The blog additionally notes that members of the Dothan Police Department belong to a neo-Confederate racist organization. One of those named, former Sgt. Andy Hughes, is now assistant director of Homeland Security for Alabama. A blog photo shows a group of white men posed with a huge Confederate flag and identifies them as specific Dothan cops, including Hughes. (Al.com)

The blogger, Jon Collins of the Alabama Justice Project, says his charges are substantiated by records, some of which he has posted, which were leaked by members of the police department. He states he authenticated the leaked documents by having them viewed by several police officers, including a former sergeant in the Dothan Internal Affairs Office. (alabamajusticeproject.com)

Mainstream and social media quickly spread the blogged report, and then as quickly downplayed the documents as giving no definitive proof of the charges. A Slate Magazine commentary said: “The evidence Carroll has put forth so far isn’t enough. That doesn’t mean the Dothan Police Department is innocent of his accusations. It just means we can’t pretend we know its cops are guilty of the crimes Carroll alleges. ... Right now we don’t know what happened in Dothan.” (tinyurl.com/nh09hzp)

But we do know what happened in Dothan. If we look beyond the narrow criteria for what constitutes “evidence” within a system of bourgeois law, we can indict the Dothan police, the city itself and the Alabama injustice system for racism.

We can begin with the fact that Do-



Above: Election night in 1966 as armed self-defense guards protect Black voters for the Lowndes County Freedom Party. The Black Panther, right, was its ballot symbol.

than Police Chief Steve Parrish named his son, Nathan Bedford Parrish, after the founder and Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, Nathan Bedford Forrest.

Then we can note that a federal judge’s summary order in June 2015 found in favor of a case brought by a veteran Black police officer against the city of Dothan. The order states that there was a pattern of racism in the department, including the fact that Parrish and other Dothan cops have been or are members of the Sons of the Confederate Veterans. This group advocates a return to a system of slavery and apartheid, and has been on the Southern Poverty Center’s “Hate Watch” because the most extreme right-wing elements have taken over local chapters. (tinyurl.com/p3fj3b)

The federal case lists many vile, racist comments and artifacts within the police station, including a representation of a charred, lynched President Barack Obama. (tinyurl.com/hkf962w)

There is racism in the local legal system. Twentieth Judicial Circuit Attorney General Doug Valeska has had cases challenged on appeal because of his systematic exclusion of Black people from juries, as well as verdicts overturned for “illegal evidence and improper comments to juries.” (Washington Post, Dec. 3)

There is a deep history of racism among the local police in Alabama — from “slave patrollers” who trapped

and beat escaping Black people back into slavery, to the Reconstruction-era convict-lease program that re-enslaved freed Black workers and paid their wages to the state. Today, local “debtors’ prisons” make profit off charging prisoners, primarily people of color, exorbitant fees for court services.

After the criminalization of free Black labor throughout the South in the 1870s,



in addition to being entrapped into the convict-lease system, free Black people were also held and made to work by force — slavery, in fact — by individual white people.

Such was the case in 1903, when a federal prosecutor who was exposing hundreds of involuntary servitude cases in Alabama received a desperate call from

*Continued to page 11*

# Chicago mass actions

*Continued from page 1*

The Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression filed a complaint this week on behalf of more families who say their loved ones were shot and killed by police. The group turned over a list of dozens of cases, including shootings of teenagers by officers and confessions coerced by torture.

In an attempt to appease the growing mass calls for righteousness and accountability, the U.S. Department of Justice has added Chicago to the list of 20 cities they claim to be investigating regarding the use of force by police. Clearly motivated by growing nationwide movements, Attorney General Loretta Lynch said that “when suspicion and hostility [are] allowed to fester, [they] can erupt

into unrest.”

Included in the list are Baltimore and Ferguson, Mo., where rebellions have taken place, led by Black youth and supported across the country. What is really needed in Chicago is a People’s Tribunal where the truth can be told and the real role of the police can be exposed.

In this capitalist system, the basic role of the police is to protect the private property of the rich, which is wealth that the masses of working and oppressed people have created and deserve. State violence by the police reinforces the divide-and-conquer program of racism and anti-immigrant propaganda.

But it is a new day. As events propel activism, unity and mass struggle will turn this system upside down. □

# Only a 'misdemeanor' for 29 deaths Coal mine boss found guilty of conspiracy

By Francisco Pena-Ariet  
Huntington, W.Va.

Imagine leaving for work. As you walk out the door, you look back at your children, not knowing if you are ever going to see them again.

For thousands of miners, this is a daily reality. In the case of 29 coal miners in Raleigh County, W.Va., it is exactly what happened on April 4, 2010. They went to work and never came back.

This was the day of the Upper Big Branch mine disaster in Montcoal, only about an hour from Charleston, the state capital. The disaster was caused by the neglect and carelessness of the coal mine's owners, Massey Energy Co., and specifically the company CEO, Don Blankenship.

The disaster actually started before 3 p.m., when an initial explosion occurred. The drill parts on a coal shearer, an essential piece of mining machinery, were broken and got overheated. It was only a matter of time before the hot, broken drill bits hit a methane line, unfortunately not uncommon, and ignited a spark that caused an initial explosion.

Safety mechanisms were supposed to be in place, such as lime sprayers to neutralize the flammable coal dust in the air and water sprayers to put out any fires that might occur. All this equipment was broken and unchecked, even though all inspection records stated they were operational. This was a lie, as an investigation found out after years of probing and digging.

Well, this is just collateral damage, right? Just the hazards of the job? Not true! This did not have to happen. This should not have happened. Even a report released by Davitt McAteer, lead investigator for the governor's "independent" investigation team — independent in quotes because Big Coal and the West Virginia governor's office are rarely independent of each other — found that Massey failed to follow basic mine safety standards and that its corporate culture has always been one of putting profits before the safety of employees.

It was also discovered that Don Blankenship had direct knowledge of the violations and in many instances encouraged ignoring them to save

the company money, even hiring unlicensed foremen to sign off on supposed "inspections" that never took place.

In November 2014, Blankenship was indicted on federal charges of conspiring to willfully violate federal mine and safety standards, conspiring to cover up safety violations, hindering law enforcement from doing their jobs by warning his foremen that the government was coming to inspect, and lying about safety standards at the Upper Big Branch mine prior to the explosion.

His case finally went to trial Oct. 7. After a two-month federal trial, which included a change of venue, the verdict came on Dec. 15: guilty on a misdemeanor charge of conspiring to violate mine safety and health standards. However, Blankenship was acquitted on the two felony charges of lying and fraud committed against the mine safety administration.

Pat McGinley, a law professor at West Virginia University, commented, "This is one of those unique situations where federal prosecutors are outgunned and resourced by a multimillion-dollar defense team." (statejournal.org, Dec 10)

Although to those not from the Coal Baron class, this is not unique. Repeatedly, coal money wins in Appalachian government.

We have seen this corruption for a long time. In the case of Don Blankenship, it has been personified. Blankenship received a "salary" of \$18 million the year before the disaster. He was let go from Massey Energy with a \$12 million settlement package after the explosion. He killed 29 people and walked away richer than before the disaster.

Appalachia is a forgotten region, condemned to disgusting stereotypes in the corporate media that create an atmosphere of uncaring for the fate of the Appalachian worker. While they focus on San Bernardino, Calif., and use it as a pretext to fight and kill innocent people thousands of miles away, the deaths of coal miners here in West Virginia are forgotten as long as the coal barons rake in more profits.

However, their families, friends and communities will never forget and will continue to fight for justice. By any means necessary. □

## Meeting builds support for Ft. Dix 5 appeal

By Joe Piette  
Philadelphia

Standing up to an unrelenting wave of fear and hatred in the media targeting anyone of the Islamic faith, political activists in Philadelphia are building support for five Muslim men unfairly convicted of terrorism in New Jersey. Members of Project SALAM and the Fort Dix 5 Support Committee are urging community members to attend an appeal hearing on Jan. 6 in federal court. The hearing will rule on whether the men received a fair trial.

In 2008, five Muslim men, including three brothers, were entrapped in an FBI sting operation for allegedly plotting to attack Fort Dix, N.J. Eljvir, Dritan and Shain Duka received life sentences plus 30 years for their disputed role in a government-manufactured "conspiracy" to attack the military base.

At the trial, the government's witness — an informant paid to entrap the brothers — conceded that the three brothers had never been told about any conversation regarding an attack on Fort Dix. But under federal law, in a conspiracy case all associates are considered equally culpable, even if they do not know of the existence of a plan.

The appeal hearing is not just a new chance for the three brothers to state their innocence before a judge, but also an opportunity to call attention to this outrageous miscarriage of justice.

Supporters have organized weekly "Hold a Banner for the Dukas" rallies in front of the U.S. courthouse where the hearing will be held, handing out fliers to passersby. At one such event, a professor from the nearby Rutgers University Camden campus stopped by and extended an invitation for organizers to speak to his students.

At a public gathering in Philadelphia on Dec. 12, two documentaries were shown, including "The Newburgh Sting," which focuses on an entrapment case simi-

lar to the Fort Dix 5 case. The Peabody Award-winning film investigates the 2009 case of the Newburgh 4, in which FBI informants turned four innocent African-American men into unwitting "terrorists."

A short documentary film, "Entrapped," was also shown. It includes a summary of the Fort Dix 5 case and an interview with Burim Duka, the youngest Duka brother. Alicia McWilliams, aunt of one of the Newburgh 4 defendants, Burim Duka and Lynn Jackson of Project SALAM answered questions after the films.

### Injustice in atmosphere of fear

Several people in the audience commented that Donald Trump's campaign of racism and anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant bigotry was creating a resistance movement more willing to fight back today than after Sept. 11, 2001, or in April 2009 when the Fort Dix 5 were sentenced.

In an atmosphere of Islamophobia fueled by ambitious politicians and sensationalist media headlines such as "Muslim fanatics" and "Jersey jihadists," the Duka brothers were convicted of a plot they literally had never heard of before their arrest. The U.S. attorney who prosecuted the case was Chris Christie, now governor of New Jersey and candidate for U.S. president.

The rare, court-ordered appeal hearing is scheduled for Jan. 6 to determine whether the three brothers received a fair trial and effective representation from their court-appointed attorneys. Supporters are urged to show solidarity at a short rally at 8 a.m. in front of the Mitchell H. Cohen Building and U.S. Courthouse, 4th and Cooper streets, Camden, N.J. Court proceedings begin at 9 a.m.

More details on the case can be found at [projectsalam.org](http://projectsalam.org) or in the 2009 *Workers World* article, "The Fort Dix 5 convictions: provocation and frameup?" [tinyurl.com/zy58fsq](http://tinyurl.com/zy58fsq).

## Rally supports gay man



PHOTO: SAMANTHA GAHM

Huntington, W.Va. — Over a dozen people rallied on Dec. 4 in support of a gay man, Robert Campbell, who had his house vandalized with red paint dumped on his porch and anti-gay slurs written on his door. His gay pride flag was taken down as well. Demonstrators used the opportunity to denounce homophobic bigotry, and while at least four slurs were hurled their way from passersby, the overall reception from the public was positive. Groups involved in the demonstration were the Appalachian Left; Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays; Fight Imperialism, Stand Together; the Huntington Unitarian Church; and Workers World Party.

— Report by Benji Pyles

## Buffalo stands against racist terror



A rally on Human Rights Day, Dec. 10, was held at a midtown Buffalo, N.Y., intersection where many hundreds of high school students catch their trains and buses. The Buffalo Anti-Racism Coalition and supporters rallied to show solidarity with those struggling in Minneapolis, Chicago, Baltimore, around the country and around the world. Passing students joined the rally to demand, "Disarm the cops! White supremacy and racist violence — and the whole rotten system that supports them — must go!"

— Report and photo by Ellie Dorritie



## War crimes continue to kill

# Vietnamese tour U.S. in appeal for Agent Orange victims

By Paddy Colligan  
New York

“Who will take care of them? That is my question.” Tran Thi Hoan posed this on World Human Rights Day, Dec. 10. This computer science professional from Central Vietnam is touring the U.S. with a delegation from the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin. She spoke at a meeting at the Martin Luther King Jr. Labor Center 1199.

VAVA is a mass organization in Vietnam with over 300,000 members working to raise awareness and gain necessary assistance for the Vietnamese people suffering the effects of Agent Orange/dioxin exposure during and since the U.S. used it in its unsuccessful war to destroy the country. Exposure has caused illnesses or birth defects in an estimated 3 million Vietnamese; some 50,000 have been born with birth defects that are often staggering in their severity.

Agent Orange/dioxin is bitterly referred to as “the gift that keeps on giving.” It is a group of chemical herbicides given innocuous names like “orange,” “blue” and “yellow” that contain the long-lasting contaminant dioxin. The herbicide was produced in this formulation by Dow and Monsanto, the U.S. corporate criminals who profited handsomely from selling it to the U.S. military.

Between 1961 and 1971 the Pentagon

used planes and helicopters to spray an estimated 20 million gallons of the herbicide (mixed at up to 13 times the recommended concentration) to destroy the lush rural landscape of south and central Vietnam where the majority of the population of this agricultural nation lived. Besides destroying the land for future agricultural use, the forests for harvesting forest products, and the rivers and ponds for aquaculture, the herbicide made direct contact with between 2 million and 5 million Vietnamese people.

### Profound, long-lasting cruelty

The horror continued long past the end of the spraying program. Today 27 of the original 28 areas originally designated as hot spots for dangerous levels of toxicity are still toxic; only one has been remediated by the U.S. Dioxin remains in the food chain and natural environment so even the fish are too toxic to eat. People living in these extensive areas of contamination continue to be exposed to it every day.

The profound and long-lasting cruelty of this weapon continues to plague the people of Vietnam as well as its neighbors in Laos and Cambodia. Those exposed during the war experienced significantly elevated rates of particular cancers and chronic health problems. It didn't stop there. Agent Orange/dioxin exposure increased chances of miscarriages and of giving birth to profoundly disabled chil-

dren when one or the other parent had been exposed.

Today there are second and third generations of children suffering the effects of Agent Orange/dioxin from the ongoing exposure of their parents to contaminated food, water and soil. (Other adults and children are maimed by unexploded ordnance buried in the fields and forests of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.)

So this is the meaning of Tran's question: “Who will take care of them?” She is deeply troubled about the future of very disabled children and adults totally dependent on family members who are now in their advanced years and are dying. What will happen when these caregivers are no longer there?

### War's legacy keeps Vietnam in poverty

Vietnam is still a very poor country. The extraordinarily large number of people who are ill and disabled from the effects of the war is a heavy burden falling mostly on family members. VAVA and friends in other countries have provided millions of dollars to help, but that is not enough to meet the tremendous need.

Tran's story is itself remarkable. Her mother was a peasant farmer who had been exposed to Agent Orange/dioxin in Central Vietnam. Tran attended school in her village for a few years but eventually stopped because of her disabilities. Her father was determined that she should

continue and was able to move her to Peace Village II, where many children with Agent Orange live. She continued her schooling and is now a college graduate, fluent in English, and working as a computer professional in Tu Du Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City.

Tran is an attractive, vivacious and inspiring young fighter working on behalf of fellow Agent Orange/dioxin victims. She has accomplished all this despite having been born without legs and with one atrophied hand. She sees herself as one of the “fortunate” victims. She is reputed to be a terror navigating Ho Chi Minh City traffic on a moped!

Who will take care of them? The U.S. signed the Paris Peace Accords in 1973, which eventually led to the humiliatingly hasty withdrawal of U.S. forces in 1975. Despite having agreed to “help heal the wounds of war” in this agreement, the U.S. has done little to fulfill its commitment.

Instead, Washington has continued sowing these human disasters in country after country as it wages wars for profit and domination. It has left behind horrible chemical legacies of depleted uranium, part of its arsenal in the post-Vietnam world, as it willingly inflicts lingering damage on the peoples it cannot succeed in crushing. Even its own soldiers have been poisoned and carry the legacy home to their families. □

## Atlanta's 'wall of solidarity'

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

Upwards of 200 people gathered at the Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church, a center for immigrant and refugees services on Dec. 12, to publicly and visibly denounce the racist and Islamophobic pronouncements of politicians, both nationally and in Georgia.

In the past, Gov. Nathan Deal has repeatedly stated that Georgia wants no additional refugees. Most recently, he announced that besides calling Syrian refugees “unwelcome,” he has directed state agencies to refuse to assist them in receiving federal benefits such as food stamps.

During Deal's tenure in office, Georgia has passed numerous pieces of anti-immigrant legislation. In addition, the notorious, privately owned and operated Stewart Detention Center is located in Lumpkin, Ga. About 1,800 undocu-

mented men are held there in horrible and inhumane conditions, some for years, awaiting deportation.

The multinational, multigenerational crowd assembled on busy Memorial Drive had a completely different message. Initiated by the Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition, the rally was billed as “Welcome to Georgia” and a declaration of solidarity with refugees and immigrants.

At the speakout, refugees from Sudan, Syria, Pakistan, Congo and Somalia described the devastation, suffering and pain their countries have endured because of war and their hope to be able to live in peace and security.

Then, it was time to take the message to the street as human billboards reach-



“Welcome to Georgia” say people at speakout in defiance of governor's exclusion of refugees.

ing out to the hundreds of passing motorists.

The billboards stretched the full length of the block with their signs calling for “No more war,” “Solidarity with refugees and immigrants,” “Fight racism,” “Welcome

Syrians” and “Human rights for all.” Drivers honked their horns in approval; passengers raised fists out the windows in agreement; smiles and waves were abundant as people slowed to take pictures.

This section of Memorial Drive connects largely African-American neighborhoods where many refugee and immigrant families have settled. A right-wing county commissioner and state legislators have targeted an apartment complex directly behind the church with vicious scapegoating, blaming victims of U.S. militarism and economic exploitation for community blight and crime.

Invigorated by their unity, dozens of people, once strangers, stayed to talk about what to do next. □

## As gov't tries to shrug it off

# Quebec workers stage general strike

By G. Dunkel

Some 400,000 Quebec public service workers struck for one day on Dec. 9 to show the provincial government of Premier Philippe Couillard that they are indeed angry: their salaries have been frozen and they are getting paid below the going rate for public sector workers.

The one-day strike was organized by the Common Front, a coalition between the large National Confederation of Unions (CSN) and a federation of teachers' unions (FAE) and community groups.

Quebec is the largest province in Canada and about 400,000 of its 540,000 public workers are organized. Its current government is trying to drive the budget deficit to zero on the backs of the workers, even though the deficit comes to only about half a percent of its gross domestic product.

The minister of government administration, Martin Coiteux, one of the leaders of the government's negotiating team, told the Montreal newspaper *Le Devoir* that the strike was “irrelevant,” since the government has no intention of budging. Its offer is a wage increase of 3 percent

over five years, with a freeze for the first two years. The unions are looking for an increase of 13.5 percent over three years, or 4.5 percent per year.

Some unions struck for more than one day. The FAE held a three-day walkout, starting on Dec. 9. Some of its members camped for a few days outside the Minister of Education's office in Montreal, with the slogan “Save public schools.” (rabble.ca, Dec. 10) Blue-collar workers in Montreal held a mass meeting on Dec. 8, the day before their walkout.

Tens of thousands of workers, angry and needing a raise, walked out all over

this vast province, from Purnivituq on Hudson Bay, a town off the province's road network, to Gaspésie in the east, Sept-Îles on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River, Gatineau in the west, and the large urban centers of Montreal and Quebec City.

Workers in Quebec have the second-highest unionization rate in Canada, after the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. They got where they are today by fighting the bosses and showing solidarity. The public service workers have popular opinion on their side and are going to keep on fighting for decent raises. □

## WORKERS WORLD editorial

# The 'union' that ain't

The history of unions goes back to the 18th century and the Industrial Revolution. Until there were unions, laborers seemed to exist at the mercy of the bosses, who worked them to death and starved them and their families at the same time. But as the number of wage workers in those hellish factories and mills began to rise in numbers and concentration, they were imbued with a sense of their own strength.

They figured out how to organize and get together to demand higher wages, shorter hours and better conditions. They showed the bosses that unless they won improvements, they'd walk off the job en masse and close down the profit mills. Unions were born.

Unions and bosses were like water and fire — they didn't mix.

Now comes Donald Trump, the epitome of the super-rich oppressor of workers, with a bank account bigger than a mountain of gold. And he is claiming he has union support.

What union could that be?

"Trump endorsed by police union," read a U.S. News & World Report headline. Ah, it's the New England Police Benevolent Association. Well, that's two lies. It's not a "union" and it's not "benevolent."

It seems these cops really like what Trump said about barring Muslims from the U.S. They also like his plan to extend the death penalty — as though it weren't already one of the harshest in the world — to anyone who kills a cop, for any rea-

son. What if it's a cop raping a woman or shaking down a small store owner with a gun to his/her head? Doesn't matter.

It's a twisting of the truth for anyone to call these "police benevolent associations" unions. The bosses call in the cops to break picket lines, not enforce workers' rights. Even though more people of color have been inducted into the force, the police "unions" have been bastions of racism and white supremacy, and the function of the police has continued to be one of violently repressing the poorest sections of the working class — never the white-collar criminals who steal millions. In the United States, because of the legacy of centuries of racism, this means cops are a violent occupying force in communities of color.

So what should workers do about this? Especially, how can those white workers in the labor movement strengthen their solidarity with workers of color and immigrants, like the Muslims Trump wants to bar from this country?

A good way to start would be to kick this "union" out of the labor movement. It doesn't belong there. It's like having a rattlesnake in your bedroll.

It's not a Republicans-versus-Democrats issue. It's collusion between a bunch of racist, anti-immigrant killers with guns and a super-rich bigot who hates all real unions. Together, they're trying to carry out a maneuver that could cast disgrace on the whole labor movement.

Say no to Trump! □

## Revolution and climate change

The COP21 climate conference has ended, and the corporate media are begging us to believe that a breakthrough has occurred, even though there were many heavy hearts at the end of the meeting.

"Despair" is probably too mild a word to describe the emotions expressed by many of the Indigenous peoples who attended. The Indigenous had hoped that the rich imperialist countries would set aside a small portion of the large amount they looted to assist island peoples and others who will have nowhere to go as glaciers melt and oceans rise during the rest of this century. The conference did nothing for them.

What is being hyped as a great achievement is that anything at all was agreed upon, unlike in the previous 20 climate conferences that have taken place. Yes, a last-minute accord was arrived at that would — given its most favorable outcome — limit the rise in the earth's temperature to 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit in this century. But that would still mean devastating changes to the environment.

And the accord agreed on is not binding. Even the U.S. corporate media note that for the U.S. to implement this agreement, it would take a vote in the Republican-dominated Senate — and most of the senators have already said they'd oppose it.

Thousands of climate activists from around the world held a protest at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris as the conference ended. "We don't like the COP21," said one of them, Joseph Purugganan, who had come from the Philippines with other activists from a coalition called Focus on

the Global South. "The message here is that the real solution will come from the people," he said. "After 20 years of COPs, look at where we are." (New York Times, Dec. 12)

Most climate scientists agree, and some walked out in anger. Prominent among them was James Hansen, former head of NASA, who began warning of climate change almost three decades ago. However, his prescription, which was not even discussed in Paris, is to impose a "carbon tax" on the burning of fossil fuels. Wouldn't such a tax hurt workers and poor the most, not the rich bankers and bosses whose headlong gallop to make profits has brought the world to this state?

Naomi Klein's book, "This Changes Everything," correctly nails corporate capitalism as responsible for the climate change that threatens the world. That's a step further than the older environmental movement went. But she does not recognize that the working class and the oppressed peoples will play not just an auxiliary, but the central role in tearing down the system.

Revolutionaries see climate change as a compelling issue that must bring more and more young people into the struggle of the workers and oppressed for socialism — a system without bosses and billionaires, where stock exchanges will be museums dedicated to the horrors and ridiculous extremes of the past, and where healing the earth will go hand in hand with eradicating the injustices of centuries of exploitation and racist, sexist, homophobic oppression. □

## France

# National Front wins no posts, pushes politics to right

By G. Dunkel

The results of the second round of voting in France's regional elections Dec. 13 showed that although the racist and anti-Muslim National Front (FN) had come out ahead two weeks before in the earlier round, the FN was unable to win control of any regional governments.

The FN was stymied for now because the right-wing Republicans — Nicolas Sarkozy's party — and the centrist Socialist Party had made an agreement to withdraw in favor of whichever of the two parties had the best chance in each region of defeating the FN. While the FN was kept out of office, many of its xenophobic and racist policies have been at least partially endorsed by the parties in office.

The right-wing Republicans and their allies are going to manage seven of France's 13 regions; the Socialist Party and its allies will manage five; Corsican nationalists will run the region on the island of Corsica.

The Socialist Party, despite its name, is currently managing the French government for the French imperialist ruling class.

In the two regions of Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie in the north and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) in the south, the Socialist candidates had followed

the orders of the national leadership and withdrawn from the second round to block the FN from winning. Voters responded with "an explosion of blank ballots." (francetvinfo, Dec. 14) In some polling places, especially in PACA, nearly 100 percent of the ballots were blank.

This blank vote showed that many who wanted to defeat the FN refused to vote for the rightist Republicans. Some of the Socialists criticized the party's decision to withdraw as one of surrender to the right.

Where the Socialists didn't run in the second round, the FN will be the official opposition in regional councils. The FN, which got its highest vote ever — 6.8 million — will have 358 seats, the Republicans 818 and the Socialists 618.

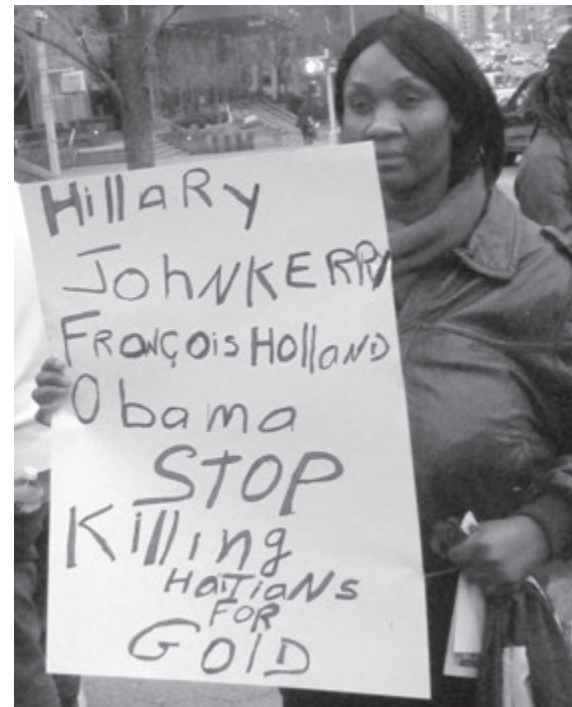
Writing after the first round in the December issue of Transform! Europe, Elisabeth Gauthier, of the French Communist Party's National Committee, trying to explain the FN's appeal, basically called for the creation of "a real alternative," one that is "against austerity, and for solidarity and the shared progress of humanity." Neither the Communist Party nor any other workers' party on the left had an impact on the elections.

Challenges to the French bourgeoisie need to take place not only in elections but also in the streets, factories and offices of France. □

## Haitians seek probe of election fraud

New York — Members of the Haitian diaspora in the U.S., known as Haiti's 11th Department, gathered in a demonstration near the United Nations on Dec. 11. Representing Fanmi Lavalas, Pitit Desalin, Kodinasyon Desalin and KAKOLA, they came to present a letter to Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon asking for a complete investigation of the recent fraudulent presidential elections in Haiti and the U.N.'s role in perpetuating this fraud. They also demanded that foreign governments stop meddling in Haiti's municipal, legislative and presidential elections.

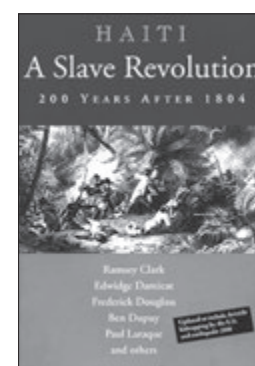
—Report and photo by G. Dunkel



**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.



**HAITI**  
A Slave Revolution

Updated to include the Aristide kidnapping by the U.S. and the earthquake in 2010.

Books available in major booksellers online and in bookstores around the country.

# Political struggle mounts over South Africa's economic future

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

During the week of Dec. 7, the South African government changed its minister of finance twice, bringing South Africa's economic crisis into focus.

First, the African National Congress government in South Africa under President Jacob Zuma summarily dismissed Nhanhla Nene, appointing David van Rooyen in his place. Bond-rating agencies quickly lowered the value of South Africa's credit worthiness to a level just above junk status. Protests from opponents and allies and a 15 percent drop in the rand's value to 16 against the U.S. dollar forced Zuma to replace Rooyen with Pravin Gordhan, who had served as finance minister from 2009-14.

This decision comes amid a worsening economic crisis in the country. Africa's most industrialized state has seen a sharp rise in unemployment, the decline of the rand, reduced energy generation and water shortages. The country has narrowly missed entering a recession with less than 1 percent growth.

The South African economic crisis is a reflection of the downturn among numerous emerging states which experienced substantial growth over the last decade. A decline in commodity prices, including oil and other natural resources, illustrates the continuing dependency on the existing capitalist dominance of the world economic system. What must be recognized is the need for a reorientation from a neoliberal economic policy to one that is focused on the needs of the working people, farmers, youth and jobless.

After Zuma said Gordhan would return as finance minister, the rand rose around 5 percent to 15.10 against the dollar on Dec. 14. Gordhan's subsequent statements quoted in the international media for the benefit of the global centers of finance capital were designed to rebuild confidence in the ability of South Africa to halt the decline in the economy.

## Political response in and outside the ruling alliance

Elements in the Congress of South African Trade Unions, which is commemo-

rating its 30th anniversary in 2015, criticized the decision to terminate finance minister Nene. COSATU, a key ally of the ANC, held its 12th National Congress recently, at which it called for reforms in the national economy.

In a statement issued from its offices in Braamfontein on Dec. 10, the COSATU federation said, "The unemployment rate is going through the roof and the blight of capital flight is back in full swing. To maneuver this economic minefield and smooth transition, we needed the stability, continuity and the experience that Cde Nhlanhla Nene provided. COSATU also feels that what is wrong with treasury is that the mandarins and technocrats have too much power and they are neoliberal hardliners."

South Africa's ruling ANC party in its Dec. 14 statement about the finance ministry said, "The ANC further appreciates the explanation provided by President Zuma on the reasons behind the initial reshuffle of Comrade Nhlanhla Nene, who is the country's nominee to serve as head of the African Regional Center of the New Development Bank/BRICS Bank. The decision underscores the importance of BRICS as a game changer in the world economy. ... The ANC commends the public for vocal engagement [with the] government on the appointment of the Minister of Finance."

The third key ally in the tripartite ruling alliance, the South African Communist Party, spoke favorably about the government's response to the widespread criticism over the changes in the ministry. A statement issued by the SACP on Dec. 14 noted, "This is very important, and the SACP welcomes it."

Opposition parties, including the largest, the Democratic Alliance, used the reshuffling and the decline in the currency value and bond ratings as a political wedge against the Zuma government. Nonetheless, no real alternative economic policies are being advanced by these



organizations, which occupy the parliament in Cape Town along with the ANC.

## Job losses to escalate class struggle

The appointment of successive finance ministers has been met with trepidation by the corporate interests. Meanwhile the Anglo American mining conglomerate announced it would eliminate 85,000 jobs in a major restructuring plan. These developments represent an ongoing process of job losses in the extractive industry, a major source of employment and foreign exchange earnings in South African and regional economies.

Anglo American's announcement in preparation for shedding some of its assets and downsizing its workforce indicates that similar actions could follow in other coal and gold companies during 2016.

These decisions will intensify the already escalating class struggle in South Africa. For the last four years, there have been numerous strikes in the mining industry, which have impacted the financial crisis emanating from the unresolved necessity for redistribution of wealth during the postapartheid period.

Mamokgheti Molopyane, a labor relations and mining analyst, predicts that the long-term effects of Anglo American's restructuring plans in the platinum, coal and gold sectors will become clearer during 2016.

"Anglo is not the only company that announced possible job cuts," said Molopyane. "The gold and coal sectors [will be impacted], so you can rest assured that next year it's going to be a battle between the employers and the workers." (Eyewitness News, Dec. 8) □

# In Alabama, cops, Klan and state go hand-in-hand

Continued from page 7

a Dothan attorney. His client, Enoch Patterson, was being held in peonage — by the Dothan police chief.

In 1912, the city of Dothan made itself into an all-white town by committing "racial cleansing" when it drove out all Black townspeople in a white supremacy riot. (Elliot Jaspin, "Bitter Waters: The Hidden History of Racial Cleansing in America")

This horrific racism is not a thing of the past in Dothan. In 2011 and 2013, paralleling a U.S. surge in racist recruiting, Ku Klux Klan fliers were distributed in the city, with a 2009 KKK cross-burning in a Black neighborhood in the adjoining town of Ozark. (Dothan Eagle)

In the Henry County Report, Jon Collins calls for a federal investigation into racism going on now in the Dothan Police Department and legal system. Undoubtedly, that racism exists, given the evidence of history as well as recent federal court cases — as it exists throughout the U.S.

Quinton Parrish, an African-American man targeted by the Dothan police, has come forward to ask the U.S. Justice Department to intervene. He describes actions by the Dothan cops as "a form of domestic terrorism that must be stopped." (Henry County Report, Dec. 7)

Collins says the as yet unnamed sources who leaked documents are hoping "the mood of the country" is now such that at-

tention will be brought to bear on injustice in Dothan.

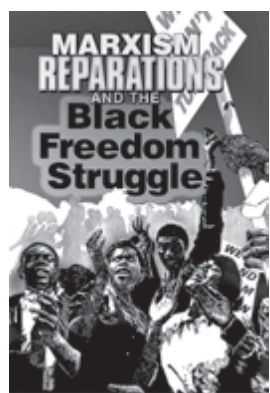
As the U.S. enters a period of increased economic crisis and war-mongering, the scapegoating of people of color, especially immigrants and Muslims, is increasing.

The police were created to protect the property and interests of the owning class. The function of the police is to keep all workers and all oppressed people — women, people of color, people with disabilities, and people of nonconforming genders and sexualities — from rising up together against the brutal conditions forced upon us by capitalist exploitation.

One of the forces changing "the mood of the country" has been the uncompromising activism against police brutality and state terror by the Black Lives Matter movement and allies throughout the U.S.

Now, resistance against Donald Trump's racist campaign, like the successful shutdown of his rally recently in North Carolina, is building solidarity across an increasingly wide spectrum of people. A Workers Defense Guard against the KKK has been set in motion by several Vermont locals of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America/UE.

An unbreakable resistance to police and state injustice against workers and all oppressed people can only be achieved through militant, anti-racist organizing. □



## MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

Anthology of Workers World writings edited by Monica Moorehead.  
**Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination** Larry Holmes  
**Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy  
**Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell  
**The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead  
**Domestic Workers United Demand a Bill of Rights** Imani Henry  
**Black & Brown Unity** Saladin Muhammad  
**Harriet Tubman** Mumia Abu-Jamal  
**Racism & Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales  
**Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion** John Parker  
 Available at major online book sellers and other bookstores.

WORKERS WORLD  
MUNDO OBRERO

# Neocoloniales de Detroit arruinan educación pública

Continua de página 12

el control. Es evidente que no va a las aulas, y las/os maestros cesaron sus labores el 1º de diciembre. Su plan de cuidado de salud se ha reducido de nuevo y las condiciones de trabajo son tan malas que están dejando su trabajo, una/o por una/o.

No hay suficientes libros de texto en las escuelas. La clase promedio consiste de 45 estudiantes. Las/os maestros tienen dos horas de preparación por semana y pocas escuelas tienen clases de arte o música. Muchas/os estudiantes tienen solamente una clase de educación física por semana. Se pueden ver los consultores por todas partes. Se los puede reconocer porque la mayoría de ellos son blancos en esta ciudad de mayoría negra.

Es una toma colonial, siendo la narrativa que la ciudad y los distritos escolares negros están mejor si están en manos de los blancos como el alcalde Duggan y los administradores de emergencias.

Nuestras escuelas y nuestra ciudad han sido saqueadas por los oficiales más altos en el poder. Los jueces condonan estos robos y los medios de comunicación repiten todo lo que los jefes corporativos les digan. Hay tan poca información disponible que el público en general tiene que llegar a sus propias conclusiones.

Detroit tiene todas las características de una colonia interna. La mejor noticia es que las colonias eventualmente se rebelan.

Elena Herrada es miembro electa de la Junta en el exilio de las Escuelas Públicas de Detroit.



Presidente Nicolás Maduro

## Fuerzas detrás del revés electoral en Venezuela

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

Luego de la medianoche del domingo 6 de diciembre, cuando las tendencias ya eran irreversibles, la Comisión Nacional Electoral (CNE) informó públicamente los resultados de los comicios parlamentarios en Venezuela. De los 167 escaños en juego en la Legislatura, 99 habían sido ganados por la oposición, la Mesa de la Unidad Democrática, MUD, habiendo obtenido el Gran Polo Patriótico, GPP, la coalición oficialista, solo 46 puestos. Quedaban 22 posiciones por computar, lo cual no cambiaría la mayoría parlamentaria electa.

Poco después, el presidente Nicolás Maduro se dirigió al pueblo felicitándolo por su masiva participación, casi un 75% del electorado. Con la frase “Confiamos en la voluntad de ustedes. Lo aceptamos”, reconoció la derrota, añadiendo que “el triunfo no fue de una oposición, sino de la contrarrevolución” y que “hay que acelerar una nueva política económica”. (TelsurTV.net)

Esta fue la 20ª elección en 17 años de Revolución Bolivariana y se llevó a cabo bajo un clima de tranquilidad pese a los funestos augurios de los medios de la derecha nacional e internacional.

Nunca antes unas elecciones no presidenciales en esa nación habían despertado tantos rumores y vaticinios tanto a nivel nacional como mundial. ¿Por qué esta novedosa situación?

La Revolución Bolivariana no es sólo el gobierno de un país. Desde que triunfó Hugo Chávez poniendo en marcha el tren de la esperanza de liberación y participación de los pueblos más excluidos, de la unidad regional, la dignidad y la soberanía junto a la gloriosa Revolución Cubana, Venezuela se convirtió en brújula de los movimientos progresistas tanto en América Latina como en el resto del mundo. Aunque aún es un país capital-

ista, la posibilidad de liberarse del yugo imperialista estadounidense, controlar sus recursos y su economía y hablar en su propia voz despertó en el imperio y sus aliados a nivel mundial el ansia de derrocar este anhelo continental.

Por eso Latinoamérica entera estuvo pendiente de estos comicios. Mensajes de solidaridad inundaron las redes sociales, incluyendo un email del infatigable héroe puertorriqueño, Rafael Cancel Miranda, quien mandó este breve pero elocuente mensaje a su lista: ¡Venezuela en estos momentos es todos nosotros!

### Agresión imperialista

Cuando el capitalismo se encuentra en una encerrona, se vuelve más cruel y se revuelven las aguas podridas de la derecha más recalcitrante. Enfrentado a movimientos progresistas a nivel mundial, se despiertan las olas fascistas utilizadas por la burguesía en su afán de dominar a los pueblos en marcha. Esto ha pasado en Venezuela durante pasados años pero el gobierno bolivariano pudo enfrentar y ahogar por el momento esas hordas violentas.

Ahora, sin embargo, la derecha, con la ayuda estadounidense, comenzó otra campaña más sutil aprovechando la crisis económica mundial que ha afectado a muchos países incluido Venezuela.

La situación económica del país se ha deteriorado tanto por factores externos como por la baja en el precio del petróleo, como por la guerra económica de los oligarcas venezolanos que dominan el sector de importación y que se aprovechan - realmente robando - intercambiando en el mercado negro, las divisas que el gobierno les otorga a precios más bajos.

Hay varios factores más como la fuga de productos por la frontera con Colombia.

Aunque el gobierno ha impuesto algunas medidas, no han sido lo suficientemente consecuentes como para evitar la enorme subida de precios en algunos ren-

glones y la escasez de algunos productos, lo que hace que gran parte del pueblo tenga que esperar en largas colas para comprar determinadas mercancías, provocando así sentimientos de insatisfacción. Esto fue utilizado por la MUD en su campaña de “cambio” donde decían que de ganar, esta situación y la economía mejorarían.

A esto se añade la infusión de millones de dólares de EUA para desestabilizar la Revolución. Según Eva Golinger en un artículo del 12 de noviembre en RT titulado EEUU: La Emboscada contra Venezuela, dice que “Durante el último año, el Gobierno de Estados Unidos ha gastado más de 18 millones de dólares en financiamiento público para grupos antigubernamentales en Venezuela” a través de agencias adscritas al Departamento de Estado como la NED y la USAID. Más adelante en el artículo menciona que “400.000 dólares han sido entregados a un programa para “apoyar miembros de la Asamblea Nacional y el desarrollo de políticas”. Y hay más de 40.000 dólares dedicados a “monitorear la Asamblea Nacional de Venezuela”. (actualidad.rt.com)

“Al imperialismo, ni un tantito así”. Frase famosa del Che Guevara que no necesita más explicación. Desgraciadamente, el gobierno bolivariano, bajo la inmensa presión de la economía y por tratar de conciliar tal vez la derecha financiera criolla, y lograr algunos beneficios para el pueblo, le hizo algunas concesiones, quizás temporeras, pero que abrieron la puerta al voraz apetito de la derecha. Es a esto quizás que el presidente Maduro se refiere cuando dijo que “hay que acelerar una nueva política económica”.

### Solidaridad internacional más importante que nunca

La Revolución Bolivariana no terminó con estas elecciones pese a la mayoría parlamentaria lograda por la MUD. La derecha está dividida y ganó gracias a

las inyecciones y consejos de EUA y la intervención de la derecha internacional, tanto de mandatarios y ex mandatarios, como de los grandes medios noticiosos corporativos. En esta campaña a nivel mundial participan muchos, incluyendo el recién elegido presidente de Argentina Mauricio Macri, quien solicitó que se aplique la Carta Democrática para que Venezuela sea suspendida como miembro pleno del Mercosur.

Otros participantes en esta campaña desestabilizadora y quienes estuvieron en Venezuela durante las elecciones invitados por la MUD son las/os ex mandatarios, Ricardo Lagos de Chile, Andrés Pastrana de Colombia, Alejandro Toledo de Perú, Luis Alberto Lacalle de Uruguay, Mireya Moscoso de Panamá, Laura Chinchilla y Miguel Ángel Rodríguez de Costa Rica, el primer ministro español Mariano Rajoy y el ex mandatario Boliviano Jorge Quiroga. La conducta y declaraciones públicas injerencistas de algunos de estos mandatarios fue tal que Tibisay Lucena, la presidenta del CNE, les retiró las credenciales entregadas.

El pueblo bolivariano sin embargo, no olvida los grandes avances que en sólo 17 años ha logrado. A pesar de las colas, “el Mapa Mundial del Hambre 2015, difundido por la FAO, certifica que en Venezuela no existe ese flagelo. En 40 años, Gobiernos de derecha construyeron 5 mil centros de salud. La Revolución, en 16 años, ha edificado 9 mil sedes de atención médica”. (Tomado de “Los 50 Grandes Logros de la indetenible Revolución Bolivariana” Chavezvive.info.ve)

Como todo proceso, la Revolución Bolivariana tiene y tendrá errores y aciertos. Ahora en una nueva etapa, es crucial la solidaridad del movimiento progresista internacional para que el pueblo bolivariano logre el camino al socialismo que ha querido intentar pero que se ha topado con inmensas dificultades. □

## Neocoloniales de Detroit arruinan educación pública

Por Elena Herrada

La Educación Pública de Detroit ha estado bajo un administrador de emergencia desde el año 2009 porque supuestamente el distrito estaba fracasando a las/os estudiantes. Ese mito ha sido expuesto. La verdadera razón de la toma del poder estatal fue para que a las/os funcionarios electos no se les permita gobernar y el estado pueda tomar el dinero de los bonos directamente.

Un bono se había aprobado anteriormente y el estado tomó el control del distrito entonces, en el 1999. Un frenesí de construcción siguió, aunque muchos de los nuevos edificios pronto fueron cerrados. La empresa constructora Walbridge asumió la mayor parte de los contratos de construcción. El presidente de Walbridge es John Rikolta, patrocinador de políticos derechistas.

En 2009, el entonces gobernador Jennifer Granholm conoció a Robert Bobb en la inauguración de Barack Obama. Al poco tiempo,

Bobb llegó a Detroit como administrador de emergencia para las Escuelas Públicas de Detroit, (EPD). Millones de dólares en honorarios de consultores salieron del salón de clases hacia los bolsillos privados. Entonces, la Ley Pública 72 hizo a Bobb el gerente financiero de emergencia. Después que se gastaron las finanzas, el consejo escolar electo demandó por el derecho de determinar el currículo de las EPD. Una decisión sorprendente fue lograda en el tribunal, afirmando que la Junta tenía el derecho a determinar el currículo.

Entonces, el gobernador Rick Snyder cambió la Ley Pública 72 a la Ley Pública 4 y creó la ley de administrador de emergencias. Esto permitió al Administrador de Emergencia (AE) el control total de todos los aspectos del distrito escolar anteriormente en manos de la junta electa.

Los gestores de emergencias se rotan cada 17 meses y 29 días. El gobernador Snyder, cuando el juez Steven Rodas le preguntó

en la corte de bancarrota si la gestión de emergencias no despoja a las/os residentes de Detroit de sus derechos como votantes, respondió que no lo hace porque son a los 18 meses cuando un cuerpo elegido podría votar con una mayoría de dos terceras partes para eliminar la AE.

La Junta Escolar de Detroit había estado bajo una AE desde 2009, así que seguimos las normas de la Ley Pública 436 y votamos eliminando la AE tres veces en un mes con una súper mayoría de la junta electa. La AE no dio paso atrás. Así que fuimos a la corte. El juez nos dijo que la ley dice que sólo ese administrador de emergencia en particular podría ser eliminado, pero el gobernador podría nombrar a otro en su lugar. Para evitar que eliminemos por voto la AE de nuevo, el gobernador elimina la AE antes del primer día del 18vo mes y nombra a una nueva. El gobernador Snyder y el alcalde de Detroit Mike Duggan forman un equipo cuyas administraciones se rigen por el en-

gaño, la mentira y el robo de los recursos públicos. Detroit ha sufrido un retraso de generaciones por perder terreno en la educación.

### Colonización urbana de hoy

La junta elegida fue amenazada recientemente por el AE Darnell Earley, quien era el AE de Flint-Michigan, cuando esa ciudad cambió su fuente de agua al Río Flint, envenenando a miles con agua contaminada con plomo. Nos dijeron que no nos reuniéramos sin la previa aprobación de nuestra agenda por Earley. Él se enojó por la negativa de la junta en aceptar una auditoría que se nos presentó para nuestra aprobación después de que ya había sido enviada al estado y la tenían los medios de comunicación.

No lo habíamos visto y no pudimos discernir los gastos, ya que no tenemos autoridad ni acceso a la información sobre lo que hace con el dinero el equipo que tomó