

Snipers massacre Gazans as Palestinians resist Israeli apartheid

By Deirdre Griswold

May 15 — Even as the Trump administration celebrated the move of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on May 14, Israeli snipers were mercilessly gunning down Palestinian people just 40 miles away in the Gaza strip.

The Gaza Health Ministry reports that 62 unarmed Palestinian demonstrators were shot dead by Israeli troops on that one day, and thousands more were wounded. Their crime? Trying to breach the walls that keep 1.8 million Palestinians confined in a tiny, crowded strip of coast along the Mediterranean Sea under the most intolerable conditions.

In a cynical twist of the facts, the Trump White House tried to blame the Palestinian resistance group Hamas for the deaths.

This was the eighth and deadliest day of weekly protests by the people of Gaza against the theft and occupation of Palestinian land that created the state of Israel and forced them into prison-like confinement. The Great March of Return began on March 30, Land Day in Palestine. This latest demonstration came one day before the 70th anniversary of the Nakba — the Catastrophe — when in 1948 Zionist troops forced 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and destroyed 400 of their villages. All with the blessings of the Western imperialists, the U.S. and Britain in particular.

Among those murdered were children and a man in a wheelchair, Fadi Abu Salah, who had lost his legs in 2008 when Israel bombed Gaza. Most were shot by snipers using banned expanding bullets, but a 5-month-old baby, Leila Ghandour, died from teargas inhalation. Israel gets most of its weapons from the U.S. military.

Another Sharpeville

This day of heroic struggle by the Palestinian people to break out of the Israeli prison called Gaza will go down in history. In braving the overwhelming terror exercised by the Israeli military, their resistance to oppression stands alongside that of the heroic people of Sharpeville, South Africa, gunned down by apartheid police on March 21, 1960.

The racist cops had fired straight into the crowds of African people, killing 69 children, women and men for daring to demonstrate against the settler state's atrocious pass laws. It was a defining moment in the development of the resistance to apartheid that eventually brought down the racist settler state.

The Palestinians risking their lives in Gaza were also protesting the transfer of the U.S. Embassy from Tel

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Palestinian flag in Havana, Cuba on May Day
WW PHOTO: KAITLYN GRIFFITH



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Labor, community take on Amazon

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

Massive gentrification in Seattle, led by the Amazon company and its headquarters here, has restructured the city. Amazon now rents or owns several dozen new office towers and is building more. There are now 45,000 Amazon employees in downtown Seattle. Other companies, like Expedia and Weyerhaeuser, have moved into downtown Seattle. A gold rush of corporate towers and expensive apartments has led to skyrocketing rents, an epidemic of housing evictions and foreclosures, and a great crisis of homelessness for Seattle's workers. It's actually a crisis for all workers, since rents have gone up 65 percent in 10 years.

The havoc that Amazon has caused in Seattle is repeated across the country and internationally, as this company seeks to monopolize the retail industry by means of worker and community exploitation, along with destruction of its competitors.

There are 11,600 homeless people in Seattle and Martin Luther King County, according to All Home, a community group fighting homelessness. One-third are Black, in a county which is 7 percent Black. Almost half live outdoors, since the capitalist system doesn't provide adequate shelter.

The homeless live in many camps and are highly visible for miles throughout the city center. The city of Seattle, beholden to big business, has used brutal repression more than anything else in dealing with homelessness. Five hundred camps were swept out of existence in a recent year.

In April, the Seattle City Council, led by Councilmember Kshama Sawant, started pushing for a \$75 million a year tax on big business to build affordable housing. This bill is supported by a coalition of homeless and political groups, along with 10 labor unions, including the Martin Luther King County Labor Council.

Under the bill, an employee head tax would be levied on the city's 580 largest employers. Amazon would have to pay \$20 million, a drop in the bucket for a company with \$700 billion in assets.

Just before City Council hearings the week of May 7, Amazon announced that it was going to "pause" construction of a new office tower to oppose the new tax. Faced with the possibility of losing work due to Amazon's



threats, two construction trade unions, the Ironworkers and the Carpenters, sent several dozen workers to City Council hearings to oppose the bill. They were big news on the big business media.

But other speakers at the hearings exposed Amazon for extortion and for its blatant attempt to divide the working class. Speakers for the homeless predominated for several days at the hearing. They said that 42 homeless people, including children, had died outdoors already this year, and that one in

16 children in Seattle public schools is homeless. It was also exposed that Amazon paid no federal income tax last year, but received a \$137 million rebate instead.

Amazon reeled in \$1.6 billion in profits in the first three months of this year. CEO Jeff Bezos is the richest person in the world, worth a jaw-dropping \$130 billion.

The City Council, led by Sawant in a contentious hearing, passed the \$75 million bill by 5 to 4. But Mayor Jenny Durkan, who received \$350,000 from Amazon to get elected, vowed to either veto the bill or water it down. She wants to cut the housing tax in half and sell the homeless short. Sawant responded to this threat by saying that \$150 million for affordable housing is what is really needed.

On May 12, people marched on Amazon, in a protest organized by Sawant's office, including Socialist Alternative; the Affordable Housing Alliance, which includes homeless groups SHARE and WHEEL; and the Democratic Socialists of America. Also marching were several rank-and-file members of the Ironworkers union holding a banner reading "Solidarity" in opposition to their leadership.

One of the speakers was Alex Bacon, president of the Washington Federation of State Employees at Seattle Central College. To show the extent of the housing crisis and how it affects labor, he declared solidarity with the workers of United Auto Workers Local 4121. Their union of 4,500 graduate student teachers, researchers and tutors is scheduled to hold a one-day strike at the University of Washington on May 15. They are striking because they aren't being fairly compensated for their housing and medical costs. □

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Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, joblessness and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black and Brown youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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Vol. 60, No. 20 • May 17, 2018
Closing date: May 15, 2018
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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.

Remembering the Nakba

Al Nakba, the beginning of the barbaric Israeli occupation of Palestine in 1948, was commemorated in a number of cities in the U.S. Here are WW reports from Chicago and Houston.

Several hundred people rallied in **Chicago** on May 11 to mark the 70th anniversary of the infamous Al Nakba, the brutal removal of some 800,000 Palestinians from their homeland by Zionist terrorists.

Speakers made clear that the struggle for Palestinian liberation continues. The Palestinians in Gaza have inspired the world with their courageous protests demanding the full “right of return” to their original homes and lands. The Palestinians of the West Bank continue to resist Israeli occupation. And the Palestinians of Jerusalem refuse to abandon their city, their holy sites and their capital.

The protesters then marched through



WW PHOTO: JEFF SOREL

rush-hour traffic to the Israeli Consulate, drawing many expressions of support from pedestrians and drivers. The May 11 action was organized by the Chicago Coalition for Justice in Palestine.

— Jeff Sorel



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Khamil Khan, speaking in Houston.

The energy from the University of Houston’s Students for Justice in Palestine was contagious on May 12 as they chanted and spoke for three hours at one of the busiest intersections in **Houston** in remembrance of the 70th anniversary of the Nakba, the day when Israel began its ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

The demands for the day included the right of return for ALL Palestinian refugees and their descendants; that Israel keep its hands off Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine; the end of the 11-year blockade of Gaza; freedom for all political prisoners; and an end to Israeli colonization of ALL land in historic Palestine. The Houston protest was

part of Texas-wide actions for Palestine. As the students said, quoting the words of Marwan Barghouti, a political prisoner and one of the leaders of the two Intifadas in Palestine, “Our chains will be broken before we are.”

— Gloria Rubac

Justice for Jose Campos Torres

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

On Cinco de Mayo, we think of people celebrating, drinking margaritas and eating Mexican food. But for the family of Jose Campos Torres, Cinco de Mayo opens wounds from 1977 that have never healed.

Since 2016, the Torres family has organized the Joe Campos Torres Solidarity Walk for Past and Future Generations. This year, Danza Azteca Taxcayotl, a traditional dance group, led the third annual walk, followed by members of the Torres family. Community activists and supporters joined Jose’s sisters, Janie and Margaret Torres, his nephews, Johnny Torres and Richard Molina, and his cousins in retracing the last hours of Jose Torres’ life.

On Cinco de Mayo in 1977 Torres’ family began looking for him when he did not return home. A few days later, their worst nightmare became a reality. Torres was found dead, murdered by six Houston cops. His body was discovered floating in the Buffalo Bayou near the McKee Street Bridge.

Torres, a 23-year-old Vietnam veteran, died as a result of one of the most blatantly racist and egregiously cruel cases of police brutality in the history of Houston. Though it was front-page news for months, only two of the cops involved were held responsible — and got off with 1-year probation and a \$1 fine.

Mexican residents and most of the people of Houston were outraged. Massive demonstrations took place from the banks of the bayou to shopping centers to police department headquarters.

Death in Buffalo Bayou

Police arrested Torres at a bar after an argument and took him to “The Hole” on the banks of the downtown bayou — one of several “holes” used by Houston police to brutalize people they arrest. But afterwards, because of Torres’ serious injuries, the jail refused to book him and ordered the cops to take him to a hospital.

Instead, the cops returned Torres to the “The Hole” and continued to beat him. According to later testimony, officer Terry Denson said, “Let’s see if the [racist epithet] can swim.” Torres was thrown, reportedly handcuffed, into the bayou. His lifeless body remained there for three days.

Janie Torres, who was only 10 at the time of her brother’s death, decided in 2016 to organize a walk retracing the last steps of his life. She sought to bring people together in healing, while shining a light of remembrance on her late brother and other families’ loved ones who had died due to police violence.

The third annual walk was an emotional day for all participants. Janie and Margaret Torres, along with Johnny Torres and Richard Molina — who never got to know their uncle — spoke from their hearts about their loss. As the crowd stood on the ground where Jose Torres was beaten and thrown into the bayou, Johnny read two of his poems.

Some of Johnny’s words were: “I will always remember 1977, that was the day that I died. And I wasn’t even born yet. ... Buffalo Bayou turned the color of red, remember what the police said, ‘Let’s see if the [w—k] can swim.’ ... When I learn to let go and find the peace I am looking for, that message will always haunt my mind. If the soldier had any last words, I think they would be, ‘I fought for my country and death is what I got in return.’”

‘Justice for Joe Torres!’

On Cinco de Mayo in 1978, one year after Torres’ murder, as thousands of Houstonians celebrated in Moody Park, the police were called to break up a fight. But when they arrived, those in the huge crowd realized they had a common enemy in the Houston Police Department — and a rebellion began.

The uprising against decades of police occupation and daily brutality in the Northside community resulted in the cop cars burning and blocks of businesses being torched. Nearly 100 people were arrested. As the rebellion progressed, thousands of people chanted, “Justice for Joe Torres!” over and over again.

As this year’s event ended, Janie Torres told those gathered: “Today, I want to say that we need unity. That’s the only way we are going to stop the police from



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Since early April, Palestine solidarity activists have gathered outside the Kimmel Center every week to tell the Philadelphia Philharmonic Orchestra “Don’t Orchestrate Apartheid” and to cancel a planned trip to Israel in June. Philly Don’t Orchestrate Apartheid, a broad coalition of groups and individuals, launched the campaign when it learned that the orchestra would be traveling to Israel to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Nakba

— the Catastrophe — when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forced off their land by Zionists.

Despite the threat of rain, the energy on May 10, the sixth weekly protest, was so infectious that several people joined off the street, including two young queer Palestinian workers. Everyone handing out fliers for the boycott reported receiving a more favorable response than in the previous five weeks. A number of concert attendees promised to sign PDOA’s online petition at tinyurl.com/y7vzjy8f or to call the orchestra to complain at 215-893-1955.

While the orchestra claims its tour is not “a political mission,” it is touting it “in celebration of its [Israel’s] 70th anniversary.” Orchestra representatives will be meeting with high-level Israeli government and military officials. Two visits to Israel Defense Forces bases are scheduled in which orchestra members will be performing with IDF soldiers, in blatant disregard of the Israeli military attacks in Gaza that have intentionally killed more than 100 and seriously wounded more than 7,000 Palestinians since May 14.

It is clear that the orchestra is feeling the heat. For the first time it is running daily ads on National Public Radio and the local KYW radio station to promote its upcoming concerts. Publications supporting the tour have launched a vicious, Trump-like attack campaign against individual organizers of the PDOA, but the group is not backing down.

PDOA’s last action prior to the Orchestra’s departure will be on May 19, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at 300 S. Broad Street in Philadelphia. Organizers are urging everyone who opposes Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands to turn out. For more information, see tinyurl.com/fbPDOA. □



The annual Joe Campos Torres Solidarity Walk.

PHOTO: MARIO SALINAS

killing us. My family has never recovered from Joe’s murder. My mother has never been the same. This is still happening 41 years later, the cop killings in ‘the land of the free and the home of the brave, with justice for all.’ But there’s only justice for a few, not for all of us.

“If we join together in unity, we can fight! We can win!” concluded Janie Torres. As she and her sister, Margaret, threw a wreath of flowers into the Buffalo Bayou, she said, “This is for you, brother.” □

National movement bails out Black mamas

By Dolores Cox

Mother’s Day is a designated annual day to honor all mothers and celebrate their love, sacrifices and dedication to their families. But many Black mothers will be absent from their families on that day. They are among millions who are behind bars because they are financially unable to post bail for even minor infractions.

In May 2017, the National Bail Out Collective launched a campaign to post bail for mothers who would otherwise be separated from their children on Mother’s Day. They raised enough funds to free about 100 women who were awaiting trial. Their efforts gave families an effective way out of a system that disproportionately impacts African Americans and incarcerates people living in poverty. This has become a year-round effort, joining the movement to end mass incarceration.

On May 6, the collective, a formation of Black organizers and allies who are committed to building a community-based movement to end pretrial detention, launched the second year of the National Black Mama’s Bail Out campaign, with 13 participating organizations. They include SONG (Southerners On New Ground), the Black Youth Project, Dream Defenders, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Color of Change and the Black Alliance for Just Immigration.

The Black Mama’s Bail Out Day campaign aims to raise money to bail out



PHOTO: SONG

as many Black mothers in the country as possible and reunite them with their families for Mother’s Day. A further goal is to bring attention to the injustice of the for-profit cash bail industry, which jails people awaiting trial before they are even convicted of a crime.

Welcoming community members home with love, support and offerings, the collective has been able to provide short-term housing, health care, transportation, drug treatment and mental health services. It states: “We are working hard to help our people get back on their feet. Because our cities and states invest in jails and cages instead of services or support, many of our people do not have the basic resources they need to take care of themselves or their families.”

Ending racist pretrial detention

An average of 700,000 people daily are condemned to local jails and separated from their families simply because they cannot afford bail. It can ruin a person’s life; they may lose their job, housing, autos and even their children.

Pretrial incarceration has catastrophic impacts on Black families and communi-

ties in particular. Black people are twice as likely to be arrested and caged before trial, and according to Color of Change’s Philadelphia campaign director Clarice McCants, 80 percent of Black women in jail are mothers. (WABC’s “Here & Now,” May 13)

The racist “war on drugs” has resulted in millions of people being taken from their families.

A statement issued by the National Bail Out Collective asserts: “We are committed to building a community-based movement to end pretrial detention and ultimately mass incarceration. The Mama’s Day action is rooted in the tradition of our enslaved ancestors, who went to every length, including harnessing their collective resources, to purchase each other’s freedom and keep their families together.” (colorlines.com, May 7)

SONG Co-Director Mary Hooks spoke of their efforts to unite and help families achieve stability and referred to the arrest and courtroom system as another form of lynching: “When someone goes before a judge, oftentimes they’re levied a bail that never considers their income, never considers if they are eligible to pay or not. And we believe that wealth-based detention is not a legitimate means of even qualifying as to whether or not someone’s going to come back to court or not. And so, we oftentimes see primarily poor and black people who languish

in cages because they can’t afford their bail.” (truth-out.org, May 11)

Hooks stated that they’re looking for solutions to dismantle the system of money bail, and that a lot of their work is making sure that they build and provide the alternatives that mothers need. They don’t need cages, she stressed; they need care and community-based solutions. She adds that they’re not going to wait on the state or big business to find an interest in this hot topic. They’re going to take matters into their own hands, because they know that their communities are suffering.

SONG, a grassroots, queer-liberation organization that seeks to bail out mothers and caregivers of all genders, expects that more than 100 mothers will be bailed out for this year’s Mother’s Day. But they know that hundreds in the communities are going to be impacted if even just one mother and caregiver is bailed out of the cage.

The week before Mother’s Day, organizations in cities across the country began bailing out as many mothers as possible who would otherwise spend Mother’s Day in a cell. Some cities include Durham and Charlotte, N.C.; New York; Baltimore; Little Rock, Ark.; Philadelphia; Atlanta; St. Louis; Montgomery, Ala.; Charlottesville, Va.; Houston; Memphis; St. Petersburg, Fla.; Los Angeles and Oakland, Calif.

The National Black Mama’s Bail Out campaign also highlights local organizing efforts while activists call on legislators, judges and district attorneys to abolish the cash bail system.

For more information, see NationalBailOut.org.

Iowans protest ICE raid

By Mike Kühlenbeck
Mount Pleasant, Iowa

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested 32 immigrant workers after raiding the concrete manufacturing plant MPC Enterprises (Midwest Precast Concrete) on the morning of May 9 as part of the U.S. government’s ongoing war against immigrants and workers.

At MPC, 32 men were arrested and detained by ICE agents, with the assistance of the Mt. Pleasant Police Department and the Henry County Sheriff’s department. The workers, who were from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, were charged with “administrative immigration violations” and loaded into vans. The specific charges against them have not been released, and the workers were unable to contact their families.

ICE Regional Public Affairs Officer Shawn Neudauer refused to answer questions about the raid after being contacted by this reporter. Instead, Neudauer issued a statement to Workers World on May 10. According to the statement, “There is no threat to the public. As this involves an ongoing criminal investigation no further comment is available.”

The workers did not pose any threat to the public, but ICE continues being a threat with its campaign of intimidation and force. As reported by WHO TV, Mt. Pleasant resident Tammy Shull said, “Students were leaving class to see if their parents were there. There’s a lot of fear in the community.” (May 9)

One of those students was 15-year-old Oscar Lopez of Mount Pleasant High School, who heard about the raid from a



PHOTO: CENTER FOR WORKER JUSTICE OF EASTERN IOWA

Mount Pleasant rally on May 10.

phone call during his third-period class. Fearing that his father was among those arrested, Lopez and his mother went to the MPC plant, where they saw ICE agents guarding the entrance and the workers forcibly escorted into the vans. It was later reported that Lopez’s father was among those arrested. (Des Moines Register, May 10)

Since news of the raid spread through the town of 8,500 people, Mt. Pleasant’s First Presbyterian Church (FPC), a safe place for immigrants and refugees, has been working with groups like the Iowa City-based Center for Worker Justice (CWJ) of Eastern Iowa to develop an emergency response to the raid and pursue a course of action.

CWJ Executive Director Rafael Morataya took to social media, writing: “It is devastating to see the faces of children during the meeting yesterday in Mount Pleasant, the community is dismayed by the raid in a town that has welcomed immigrants with open arms as they have contributed to the local economy and have made their new home. Thanks to all who are supporting the families and rejecting the hate from ICE.”

The FPC hosted a community forum, followed by an “Immigrant Children Vigil” outside the Henry County Courthouse in Mt. Pleasant on May 10. During the forum, Mt. Pleasant Police Chief Ron Archer told forum attendees that assisting ICE was “part of my job.” (Des Moines Register, May 11)

This line of reasoning follows the “Nuremberg Defense” that Nazi war criminals used to justify their compliance with the fascist regime by saying, “We were only following orders.”

In Des Moines, a solidarity vigil was conducted outside the Neal Smith Federal Building. The Vigilia Solidaria was organized by the American Friends Service Committee (Iowa), the Iowa DREAM Coalition, Iowa Justice For Our Neighbors and Proyecto Latino Iowa CCI, which is part of Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement’s sister organization, Iowa CCI Action Fund.

In a May 11 email, Iowa CCI said: “We’re not going to back down – we won’t stand for more families being torn apart. We are committed to making sure that our local law enforcement don’t become pawns of ICE.”

Iowa legislators and law enforcement

are carrying out the bidding of President Donald Trump and ICE. A recent example was the passing of Senate Bill 481 in April, a measure to punish sanctuary cities that was eagerly signed into law by Gov. Kim Reynolds and will take effect on July 1. This bill represents the willingness of state officials to work with the Trump administration in tearing apart families and communities.

The raid took place three days before the 10th anniversary of another Iowa tragedy: the ICE raid on the Agriprocessors Inc. meatpacking plant in Postville, Iowa, on May 12, 2008. Nearly 400 immigrant workers were arrested and subjected to barbaric treatment by the authorities. One of the workers was María Gómez, who was 31 when she told the Los Angeles Times, “We walk on the streets, and the Americans see us as criminals.” (May 12, 2009)

This moment in recent history shows how the U.S. government was waging a war on immigrants and workers long before Trump took office.

The Iowa Federation of Labor released a public statement which concluded: “Every single worker suffers when millions struggle but have no way to speak up on the job, and we worry that making workplaces spaces of fear will only increase the exploitation and suffering of our fellow workers. Instead of deporting people, we should ensure that all workers have rights on the job – and can exercise them without being retaliated against.” (iowalabornews.com, May 10)

Many of the emergency response groups condemning ICE are raising funds for the arrested workers and their families. □

NYC press conference: 'Not one more' immigrant detention

By Anne Pruden

"As [immigrants] become a target ... we are here to protect!" said Ravi Ragbir, a co-director of the New Sanctuary Coalition in New York City, at a Manhattan press conference on May 11 outside U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement headquarters.

Ragbir was detained just months ago, not only for being an immigrant, but also, many believe, because he is a leader in defense of the sanctuary movement for immigrant rights. Thanks to the organized support of many, he won a temporary stay in February, just hours before he was to be deported to Trinidad and Tobago.

The May 11 event attracted a large number of supporters and media. As speakers told why the New Sanctuary Coalition advocates for abolishing ICE, sanctuary members — said to be a "voice of the voiceless" — wore buttons displaying a large S. Speakers included immigrants who were



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

recently released from ICE custody and relatives of the abducted or disappeared, all victims of racist discrimination.

A former Honduran soldier, who escaped from his home country with his mother, described how he fears political execution in Honduras. Fifteen-year-old Marco of Queens, N.Y., recounted the pain of losing his recently detained

mother: "I have lived with her all my life!" Guadalupe, a Latina born and raised here in the U.S., spoke of the deep pain in having to choose between living with a parent here or leaving the country to stay with her other parent in Mexico, who was deported there. She said, "We all have to be strong!"

Other New Sanctuary Coalition speakers read the names of the abducted and disappeared. The group has helped to free three people from detention in the last month.

ISAP denounced

The coalition also exposed the Intensive Supervision Appearance Program, which imposes scary restrictions on a person's freedom and rights. These including wearing a GPS ankle monitor, a

12-hour home curfew, three meetings with a so-called caseworker, and the unceasing stress of unannounced calls and visits. ISAP may also require the installation of voice-recognition technology on phones.

Activists handed out fliers describing how ISAP operates via the privately owned BI (Behavioral Interventions) Incorporated, based in Boulder, Colo. According to the Center for Effective Government, the company has had \$40 million worth of contracts with ICE since the program began in 2004.

What is also alarming is how ISAP hides its operations. Advocates and lawyers are not allowed to accompany their friends or clients to an ISAP "check-in." When an immigrant brings an advocate with them, the ISAP representative — who is called an officer — threatens to return them to jail.

ICE profits off ISAP's oppression. According to its 2008 budget, ICE spends \$95 a day to detain an immigrant in a prison, compared with only \$12 a day under ISAP.

As Ragbir eloquently stated today, "Everyone here has to put bodies on the line to protect victims!" He inspired a cry raised by all: "No detentions! No deportations! Not one more!" □

Union women speak Organizing to keep TPS

By Phebe Eckfeldt and Sam Ordóñez
Boston

Temporary protected status (TPS) was enacted in the U.S. in 1990 when Congress established a procedure to provide deportation relief to immigrants unable to return safely to their home countries due to war, violence, the aftermath of natural disasters or other dangerous conditions. Some of the countries covered by TPS include Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

In the TPS-designated countries, U.S. imperialism has created desperate conditions through war, forced underdevelopment, capitalist exploitation and imposition of death-squad governments.

Many people with TPS status fled those conditions and have lived in the U.S. for 15 or more years. They have set down roots here, built families, own homes, have children with U.S. citizenship. Over the years, their protected status has been renewed at regular intervals.

In January, Trump decided to cancel TPS completely, effective sometime in 2019, with protection for some countries ending sooner. Over 250,000 Salvadorans will be affected by this. Many came to the U.S. after a devastating earthquake in 2001.

Workers World spoke on April 28 with two union organizers at Harvard University who are leaders in the Harvard TPS Coalition and who migrated from El Salvador.

Doris is a leader in Service Employees Union 32BJ, which represents the custodians, and Marta is a leader in UNITE HERE Local 26, which represents the dining hall workers.

The Harvard TPS Coalition is made up of members of UNITE HERE Local 26; SEIU 32BJ; the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, AFSCME Local 3650; the Harvard Graduate Student Union, and faculty and students.

Workers World: How did you get involved in forming the TPS Coalition at Harvard? We have heard there is a UNITE HERE Local 26 initiative to organize TPS workers within the union in order to expand protection and demand permanent residence.

Marta: Being a woman and union activist have been a good experience for me. I was hired by my union for six weeks to do the TPS organizing work. I went to Northeastern University and Sky Chef [a kitchen which supplies food for the airplanes]. Sky Chef was the hardest. The workers don't want to talk about TPS. They said: "Nothing is going to change. What do you think the union is going to do for us?" So the first thing I say is, "You are the union. I am the union. So if we come together, we can make change, right?" I started with two people in Sky Chef and now we have 14 people who come and call me. Word spreads and they call me.

WW: What motivated you to get involved? I believe you were active in a strike at Harvard a year and a half ago that was a huge international workers' victory, with big wins in health care, im/migrant rights and compensation for layoffs.

Marta: I started to become more motivated to do this work around TPS after the strike, because it was three, very powerful, very difficult weeks for me. What made us strong was a year's worth of work, starting with talking to the workers one by one and convincing them, first, that we were going to strike and why, what we wanted and why we needed to be strong in order to take to the streets and win the strike. The last big event we had [a rally on Cambridge Commons and march to City Hall], that day I cried because people came from Los Angeles, Washington, Chicago, New York, Boston, all the unions were together. And they talked to us about the strength we had by uniting and the words I won't forget. A

PART 1



Harvard TPS Coalition rallies outside the JFK Library for #ResidencyNow, March 28.

PHOTO: GENEVIEVE LECHAT

leader in the union said: "I'm going to say the word: We're going to kick Harvard's ass!" We had a contract on Monday. So that made me realize that, OK, we'll unite and we're going to keep going, and we're going to work.

WW: What about you, Doris?

Doris: For me, it was a little different. Being active in the union was a very difficult step to take. But the bullying I was suffering at my job, the discrimination I was experiencing at work, made me decide to do something. I knew I had a union I could count on. And I don't think I'll ever forget what a boss said to me once when I put in a complaint about what I was going through at work. He said: "Look, I'm the boss here. I do what I want, and neither you nor anyone else is going to tell me what I have to do." All because I asked him to give the other employees some training about what I was going through. Because I'm a Muslim, so on every Friday at 1:30 [in the afternoon] I go to pray. I was wearing my veil and another worker started laughing at me. I think that it's something that deserves respect, that we all deserve respect at work. That was a few years that I worked in the Law School, and it still hurts to talk about it. It got to a point where the bullying was so intense I had to see a psychiatrist. Because people don't think about how they can hurt a human being, how they can hurt them. Especially in my case because I suffered sexual abuse when I was eight years old, and that trauma has been very hard for me to overcome. So I have problems with disassociation, and when I was bullied at work, sometimes I would lose myself and forget who and where I was.

But then people bullied me for that, so I said, "No more." I deserve respect, just like anyone deserves respect, and I'm not going to allow this.

That's when I met a union organizer, Jennifer, who I'll never forget. She got me involved with the union working on our contract. I lived the experience and the excitement of the Local 26 strike. When they would pass by where I was working, I would go out to yell with them as if their struggle were mine, because I felt that need to express what was happening at my work. After they won their strike, we started our negotiations. I remember the organizer was exhausted because they had left her alone, and she told me: "Tomorrow we need to get a group of people out because, if not, how are we going to pressure Harvard?" Because we were also fighting for medical insurance. And I said: "Wow, this is my first experience with the union, what can I do?" I went to bed at 8 at night and woke up an hour later and started calling all my coworkers. In the morning, we had a meeting and at 11 I went to my organizer and said: "You have the speakers, the signs to march?" And she said, "But nobody is gonna come." And I said: "Trust me, people will come."

And 200 workers came! 200 workers who marched, and that motivated me more and more. How this has helped me with the TPS coalition is that it gives me strength. Because without this experience, this TPS stuff would have left me alone at home crying. But because I had this experience, when I heard the news that Trump said there would be no more TPS after September 2019, I said: "Well, I have to do something." □

California education workers militant and in motion

By Workers World California bureau

After months of negotiations, the University of California Service Workers, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3299, called a statewide three-day strike from May 7 to 9 due to lack of good faith bargaining by UC management.

Joining them in sympathy strikes were AFSCME patient care workers, the California Nurses Association, and the University Professional and Technical Employees. This was a massive show of statewide solidarity, as all together they represent 53,000 UC workers across California.

The striking service workers at all UC campuses and medical centers statewide do such work as provide transcripts, help with information technology issues, schedule classes, catalog library materials, help with administrative needs, and coordinate health services and clinics.

Local 3299 is asking for a 6 percent yearly raise, a freeze on health care premiums, and an end to outsourcing jobs

their members are trained for. Kathryn Lybarger, lead gardener at UC Berkeley and president of the local, noted that jobs are being outsourced to “low-wage contract workers, which contributes to widening inequality for workers who are women, immigrants and people of color.” (Payday Report, May 5)

In Los Angeles, 94 percent of public school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, special education assistants, custodians and other workers voted to go on strike May 15 if necessary to win respect and a fair contract from the LA school district. A week before the strike date, SEIU Local 99’s determination won a new



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

Striking AFSCME 3299 education workers in San Francisco at UC Hastings College of the Law

John Parker, socialist candidate for Senate, at UCLA, in support of education workers’ strike.

WW PHOTO: MAGGIE VASCASSENNO

three-year contract. Local 99 used petitions, informational picket lines, sticker-ups, rallies, protests at school board

meetings and unity to win.

Education workers across the country are on the move for decent wages and working conditions so that, in addition to taking care of their students, they can go home and take care of their own families.

□

Education workers and class struggle

This is a lightly edited version of a talk given at the Midwest Marxist School in Detroit in April 2018.

By K. Green

In late February, education workers in all 55 counties of West Virginia went on strike for nine days. They ultimately won their strike demands despite the state’s right-to-work (for less!) status and the unions’ attempt to end the strike prematurely. Since then, public school teachers in Oklahoma, Arizona, Puerto Rico and, most recently, Milwaukee have picketed or engaged in work stoppages to challenge the economic austerity policies that have stagnated their wages and destroyed public schools.

Whenever education workers engage in class struggle, leftists (and I use this term the way it’s used colloquially in the U.S., broadly: those who are opposed to hierarchical divisions of society based on class, race, gender, and other factors) become engaged in an old argument about the education system under capitalism. Since the West Virginia strike, this argument has been circulating again, so I’d like to briefly talk about some of its foundations and some of its misuses. Then I’d like to explain why we as communists support education workers when they exercise their power to resist ruling-class attacks.

For a long time, leftists have been aware of the public education system’s potential role in supporting capitalist social relations that reinforce the power of the ruling class. Schools controlled by the capitalist state can be used to transmit ruling-class ideology, ensuring the transmission of cultural capital across generations and socializing children into the dominant hierarchies of being.

Some arguments take these conclusions a step further by claiming that teachers, by their participation in such a system, are doomed to transmit ruling-class ideology even though they themselves are working-class. This argument is often made by comparing teachers to cops. People who make this comparison assert that institutions of education play the same role as institutions of armed repression



PHOTO: MILWAUKEE TEACHERS’ EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Milwaukee public school students joined education workers, parents and community to fight funding cuts, April 7.

because the capitalist state administers them both and the state wants to reproduce capitalist social relations at all costs.

There are, superficially, similarities between those two institutions, schools and prisons. Both are usually run by the state, although sometimes privatized. Both involve physical control over the bodies of young people. But the important differences between these institutions have to do with why they exist in the first place.

The police are accountable to the state and its law first and foremost. They are trained, socialized and required to uphold laws which systematically favor property, patriarchy and white supremacy. Modern policing arose as a way for the ruling class to control large groups of people: striking workers and slave insurrections.

Both the origin and the current function of policing are such that instituting direct community control of this institution — making cops directly accountable to the people who live under the law — would end policing as we know it. The police as an institution are defined by their role in a system of domination; it makes no difference to this institution if the people who have to live under these laws agree with them or not. There is no possible way to reform the police without fundamentally changing the nature of policing.

Public education, on the other hand, is not — at its origin — a project that serves the ruling class. Fundamentally, teachers have the potential to exercise much more autonomy than the police in the performance of their job. This doesn’t mean that

public education cannot be used by the ruling class to reproduce social relations that favor capital and maintain inequality and white supremacy. A school can be a tool for social discipline, an incubator for a compliant work force and a way for liberals to support the mythology of meritocracy in the U.S.

But free universal public schooling can also be, and has been, something that working-class and oppressed communities have fought for and that the ruling class has, vehemently, fought against.

This is because schooling has not always been solely a ruling-class project in the way that policing has been, and because, when schooling has threatened to turn into such a project, students, parents, teachers and their communities have resisted. Teachers and their unions have fought to keep legislative interference, which serves the interests of the ruling class, out of their classrooms.

In addition, striking education workers frequently raise demands that highlight radical goals beyond their own wages (though those demands are just and valid too). In Oklahoma, education workers specifically included in their demands a call to repeal a capital gains tax exemption, which largely benefits the wealthy, that reduced funding for public schools.

The March teacher strike in Puerto Rico against public school closings, and the expansion of charter schools to replace them, was a battle in the larger struggle against the U.S.-instigated privatization-for-profit of public services. Arizona teachers included in their demands an

initiative to increase taxes for incomes greater than \$250,000 to fund schools. Teachers are striking for students, families, their communities and the institution of free, accessible education for all.

The ruling class obviously would rather use the education system as an incubator for labor power than allow it to be a resource for the working class. Their first option will always be to limit education to technical skills or whatever is necessary to simply reproduce labor power in the configuration that capital requires.

Historically, teachers have had the power to actively resist the demand to produce generations of compliant workers. In response, the ruling class has spent their time and money both attacking public education itself and attempting to use schools as sites to promote their own ideology.

A politicized, powerful, education worker movement can ensure that control over what children learn is in the hands of the working class — the teachers — rather than the ruling class — the administrators and policymakers who serve capital.

If the argument is that U.S. schools serve to reproduce the social conditions of capitalism, with all its racism, woman-hating and more, it’s an obvious result that a shift of power away from education workers toward the ruling class would only intensify this.

Attacking education worker struggles helps the ruling class use the education system for their own goals: a compliant working class, the reproduction of white supremacy and the protection of their own capital accumulation.

The ruling class recognizes that, when teachers are unionized and legally protected from right-wing retaliation, those teachers can hold leverage over significant ideological institutions that are funded through progressive taxes and constantly threatened to slip out of ruling-class control. Politicized school workers’ movements remain the way forward in making sure that schools do not simply act as cogs in a machine of repression.

This is why free public education for all, with education workers who have autonomy from ruling-class interests, should be a transitional demand in a capitalist state.

□

Victory in New School occupation

WW PHOTO: JULIE VARUGHESE

By Nathaniel Peters
New York

Students at the New School here have occupied their cafeteria since May 1 in solidarity with cafeteria workers under attack by a union-busting administration and with graduate student workers fighting for a contract and livable wage.

When the New School administration announced it planned to lay off all cafeteria workers, represented by UNITE HERE Local 100, and have them reapply for their jobs, with most positions to be filled by students, students sprang into action to defend the cafeteria workers. They occupied the cafeteria, demanding no workers be laid off. Students rejected this racist, union-busting attack on Black and Brown workers with the slogan, “All of Us or None! Every Single Job!”

The workers announced May 10 that they had reached an agreement ensuring

that every cafeteria worker would continue to have a job at the New School and setting dates for contract negotiations.

As one student, who asked not be named, put it: “It was the collective power of the workers and students together that forced the New School to give back every worker a job and their union.” Another student added: “This victory was not given to us by the bosses or the president, but was something workers and students took for ourselves through collective action.”

In addition to the struggle in the cafeteria, graduate student workers, represented by the Student Employees at the New School-United Auto Workers, have been fighting for a contract since 2014. Graduate student workers keep the New School running by teaching and assisting courses, grading papers, tutoring students and carrying out research, yet, for what is often a full-time job, they are paid

May 10 protest at the New School, N.Y.



part-time poverty wages with no health care benefits.

After four years without a contract, graduate student workers went on strike May 8-13, setting up picket lines at New School buildings and demanding a fair contract that will include a livable wage and health care.

The strike has forced economic concessions from the administration, but its proposals, particularly on health care, remain unsatisfactory to the graduate student workers. Negotiations are expected to continue. See Facebook (facebook.com/SENSUAW) and Twitter (@SENSUAW) for updates on the struggle. □

Marx@200 celebrates working-class struggles

By Jose Monzon
New York

Workers World Party celebrated the 200th birthday of Karl Marx here on May 6 with “Marx@200: Class Struggle in the Age of Trump,” a series of panels and discussions. The event analyzed the relevance of Marx today to oppressed nationalities and groups as well as an analysis of who the working class is today.

Workers World contributing editor and event co-organizer Greg Butterfield kicked off the celebration with a vital quote from Karl Marx: “Labor in the white skin can never free itself as long as labor in the Black skin is branded.”

Tying it to today’s political reality, Butterfield continued, “In this era of Donald Trump’s undisguised white supremacy and the resurgence of neofascist movements in the U.S. and western Europe, the struggle against racism and for solidarity among all workers is key to advancing the struggle for socialism.”

WWP First Secretary Larry Holmes discussed the nationwide teachers’ strikes and what a revolutionary movement they are in the current political context. “This strike is illegal according to bourgeois law, which means that it is a rebellion. Tens of thousands of workers are saying ‘to hell with it,’ they can get fired, but they’re still walking out.” Today’s working class is increasingly militant and multinational, he added.

WWP Secretariat member and International Action Center Co-Director Sara Flounders talked about how “Marxism speaks to all the movements of the colonized and nationally oppressed. Every fighter for national liberation looked to Marxism to understand how to fight imperialism.” WWP organizer John Steffins spoke about Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin’s contributions to developing Marxism in the age of imperialism, warning that appeals to “return to Marx” by ignoring the history of revolutionary struggles of the 20th century are a dead end for today’s fighters.

We then heard from Mike Legaspi of BAYAN-USA about how Marx has been integral to the struggle for liberation in the Philippines and about his legacy: “Marx died a long time ago, but his legacy lives on in us today. It is through class struggle that proletarian revolutionaries become immortal.” Jessica Schwartz of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization spoke on applying the mass line devel-

oped by Chinese revolutionary Mao Zedong to organizing workers in unions.

Today’s working class

During the second panel, chaired by WWP member and event co-organizer Julie Varughese, party members and candidates discussed what the working class looks like today. The panelists also answered questions from the audience.

Christian Cobb, a WWP activist and organizer with the People’s Power Assemblies, reminded us that “unions are Marxism in action.” As we see in teachers’ strikes across the nation, the rank and file are leading the way because workers are the union. Sara Catalinotto, a New York teacher and militant, spoke about her recent participation in a delegation to support striking Oklahoma education workers. Edward Yudelovich talked about repression against workers, highlighting the Trump administration’s attempt to prove a “conspiracy” against activists in unions who were arrested at the #J20 2017 counter-inaugural protests.

Al Shiflett, a WWP candidate member, discussed capitalism and the #MeToo movement. Marx was critical of the hierarchical and diametrical opposition between men and women, in which feminized labor is seen as insignificant and thus created a population that’s easier to divide and exploit.

Taryn Fivek, an economics teacher and organizer with WWP and the International Action Center, said, “Laden with debt, depressed, anxious, facing down killer cops, low wages, bad health care and precarious employment, young people seem to have given up on capitalism.

“The Trump presidency is the death spasm of an era,” Fivek declared. “It is up to us to build the next era, and it must be so-

cialist, or we will perish. Because the only thing youth have to look forward to inheriting from their parents is a dead planet.”

Ted Kelly, a WWP activist based in Philadelphia, discussed prisoners and how they’re one of the most oppressed sections of the working class. It is slavery in its modern form and, as Marx noted, “Every independent workers’ movement in the U.S. will be paralyzed as long as slavery remains a central part of the republic.” Thousands of prisoners subscribe to Workers World newspaper, and Kelly reminded us that it is “our duty to grow the proletariat” by joining prisoners in our struggle.

Mary Kaessinger, a WWP wheelchair user, spoke about disabled workers and how the Fair Labor Standards Act allows employers to pay subminimum wages to disabled people, prisoners and restaurant workers. Currently there is a struggle to eliminate the subminimum wage at the state level, with the goal of ultimately challenging it at the federal level. Disabled people are fighting to join the workforce.

Solidarity with refugees, students, sex workers

Kayla Popuchet expressed anger against the system felt by young people increasingly shut out from basic human needs. Ana Androvic spoke on the plight of refugees and migrant workers and the need for classwide solidarity with their struggle. Haakon Lenzi talked about racism and gentrification, which he described as “about class struggle, a way for capitalists to seize property and displace people.” This writer also addressed the intense exploitation of Amazon.com workers.

WWP candidate member John Ebho gave an enthusiastic account of Marx’s influence on Thomas Sankara, the revo-

lutionary leader of Burkina Faso. Renée Imperato, a disabled trans activist and Vietnam veteran, noted that “Capitalist imperialism survives on divide and conquer,” a strategy which failed in Vietnam since many U.S. soldiers refused to fire on their fellow working-class Vietnamese fighters. “The Vietnamese had one weapon U.S. imperialism couldn’t defeat: revolutionary class hatred.”

WWP member Sofia spoke on the increased assault by the state against sex workers through the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act, which shut down online forums used by these workers to promote safety and community. They talked about ways to support sex workers, who are part of our class.

The event ended, quite appropriately, with the singing of “The Internationale” and eating of birthday cake. The working-class anthem was led off by 2016 WWP presidential candidate Monica Moorehead and Larry Holmes, with renowned Yugoslav composer Milos Raickovich accompanying them on the piano.

Afterward, we marched to The New School, led by a student, Mia, to join cafeteria workers and students. The school wants to fire dozens of cafeteria workers, some of whom have worked there for more than 16 years and have pensions. Many of the workers are Black and Brown.

The school tried to divide students and cafeteria workers by attempting to replace the workers with students who are not unionized and would be paid less. But this attempt failed, and students have joined the workers and occupied the cafeteria. WWP contributed food and cash donations.

There isn’t a more fighting way to show that Karl Marx, 200 years after his birth, is alive and well in our current revolutionary struggles. □

Milwaukee teachers: ‘Scott Walker unwelcome!’

Despite a rainstorm, numerous poor and working people participated in an “(Un)Welcome Scott Walker” protest at the Milwaukee Public Museum on May 11. Sponsored by the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association, the protest was supported by many other labor and community organizations.

After the protest, the MTEA announced on its Facebook page: “Thanks to all the amazing Milwaukee Public School educators who made it out to (un)welcome Scott Walker and his guests at

the Milwaukee Public Museum tonight in the less than perfect weather. We sent a message loud and clear that Walker and his supporters are not welcome in this city for their crimes against our students.

It is criminal that MPS students receive thousands of dollars less in per pupil funding when compared to their sur-



May 11 protest at Milwaukee Public Museum.

PHOTO: JOE BRUSKY

rounding suburban counterparts. We say ENOUGH!” (facebook.com/MTEAunion)

— Workers World Wisconsin bureau

May Day actions show global class struggle

By Kathy Durkin

Proudly, the workers of the world marched on May Day. Millions walked out of the factories, fields and offices to stand with their class sisters and brothers. As members of the global multinational, multigendered, multigenerational working class, they showed their strength and solidarity.

As capitalists the world over impose austerity programs, with layoffs, speed-ups and salary cuts — and try to weaken the power of organized labor — workers are standing up. Where imperialist companies super-exploit workers to maximize profits, paying semi-starvation wages, many are defying the bosses, demanding unions, livable salaries, permanent jobs and basic rights. Migrant workers, many of them women, confronted by racism and abuse, are making their voices heard.

May Day began during the period of labor militancy in the 1880s in Europe and the U.S., when workers demanded the 8-hour day. Unions organized a general strike; hundreds of thousands of workers joined U.S. rallies on May 1, 1886. Some 30,000-40,000 workers left their job sites in Chicago alone.

At Chicago's Haymarket Square, police killed workers demonstrating for the 8-hour day. After the massacre, the movement picked up steam, as the call for the 8-hour day resonated at home and abroad. The First International Socialist Congress in 1889 recognized International Workers' Day to commemorate the Haymarket massacre.

For many in the global workforce, the fight for the 8-hour day continues. On this May Day, labor unions, social justice groups, socialists, communists and other progressive forces organized and joined demonstrations. Some red flags, posters of Che Guevara and portraits of Karl Marx were visible. Notably, defiant workers rallied, despite police attacks. Here are highlights of global May Day actions.



France

'No to austerity!'
Hundreds of thousands marched across France to protest pro-corporate Macron government austerity measures, attacks on public sector unions and transit privatization plans. Workers also marched across Germany to defend their rights against globalized capitalism's ravages, protesting service cutbacks and demanding secure jobs and decent working conditions. The German Trade Union Federation said 340,000 joined 500 events.

Organized by major labor unions CCOO and UGT, tens of thousands opposed austerity in 70 cities across Spain. In Madrid, workers waved red union flags, demanding higher pay, secure jobs and pensions. Chants of "general strike!" resounded. Women held purple flags representing their struggles for gender pay equity and an end to misogynist violence.



Thousands of workers marched through Athens, Greece, in three separate marches, one organized by the Communist-affiliated PAME labor union, and in Thessaloniki. Work stoppages shut down museums and transportation systems. Protesters denounced European Union banker-imposed austerity policies and criticized the SYRIZA government.

Elsewhere in Europe, workers marched in Italy and Austria, carried red flags in Denmark, and rallied in former socialist countries, including Poland and Russia.

Enemy: 'monopoly capital'

More than 7,000 members of the General Union of Tunisian Workers celebrated in Tunis. They hailed their union's commitment to fighting for their right to secure jobs and benefits and its opposition to privatization, abuse and oppression. The union has 750,000 members from many industries and public sectors, and is organizing agricultural workers, mainly women.



The Congress of South African Trade Unions organized 14 marches, with a major rally in Nelson Mandela Bay. Speakers included COSATU President S'dumo Dlamini, SA Communist Party leader Blade Nzimandi and African National Congress President Cyril Ramaphosa. Dlamini asserted the workers' enemy was "monopoly capital." COSATU called for an alternative development strategy to tackle poverty, unemployment and inequality.



The South African Federation of Trade Unions held several marches and rallies. SAFTU's statement deplored the country's crises of unemployment and economic inequality.

'Long Live May 1!'

Thousands of workers and activists rallied across Turkey, including in Ankara and Istanbul, for higher pay and improved working conditions — and denounced the Erdoğan regime's repression. Left-wing unions protested privatization and other anti-labor policies. Sixty people were arrested as they chanted, "Long live May 1!" and attempted to defy a government ban by marching to Taksim Square, site of a 1977 police massacre of 40 demonstrators.

In Damascus, Syria, the General Federation of Trade Unions celebrated May Day, honoring workers, including martyrs of today's civil war. Also honored were Syrian army victories in this war.

In Gaza, hundreds of Palestinians called for an end to the horrific U.S.-backed Israeli siege and the resulting "humanitarian disaster" — deteriorating economic conditions of their people.

Iraqi Communist Party members marched with red flags and hammers in Baghdad.

Communist parties organized workers' meetings, marches and rallies throughout India. The All-India Central Council



of Trade Unions mobilized, too. Banner slogans called for an 8-hour workday, jobs, higher wages and social justice.

Dhaka, Bangladesh, was the site of many demonstrations. Thousands of workers, backed by 14 organizations, demanded a monthly minimum wage of 18,000 TK (\$213), unionization, an 8-hour day and workplace safety. The



Communist Party of Bangladesh waved red flags. The government denies garment workers' calls for higher wages in order to benefit profit-seeking global brands.

More than 10,000 Korean Confederation of Trade Unions members assembled in Seoul, South Korea, demanding a higher minimum wage and change of "non-regular employees" to "regular employee" status, with equal pay and treatment. A slogan was: "Rewrite the constitution based on labor rights!" The KCTU-Migrant Trade Union held a separate rally on April 26 for migrant workers.

In Hong Kong, 5,000 workers pressured employers to stop using their pension funds, set regular hours and provide paid maternity leave at a march organized by the Federation of Trade Unions; 200 subsidiary unions participated. Also addressed were migrant and disabled workers' rights.



Thousands of chanting labor unionists and other workers, dressed in red and waving red flags, marched in Manila, Philippines, to decry President Rodrigo Duterte's economic policies. They denounced short-term employment contracts, which deny workers decent pay and job security, as well as low wages, unemployment and repression of labor unions.



Elsewhere in Asia, workers rallied for their rights throughout Pakistan; garment and shoe factory workers marched in Yangon, Myanmar; thousands of union members were out in Taipei, Taiwan, while 10,000 unionists demonstrated in Jakarta, Indonesia, for better wages and



working conditions, permanent jobs and free health care.

Haiti: 'Holiday of Agriculture and Work'

Workers marched on May 1 through Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to demand a three-fold increase in the daily minimum wage from 350 gourdes (\$5.38) to 1,000 gourdes (\$15.36). The Confederation of Haitian Workers, the National Central of Haitian Workers and other unions led the demonstration. (Haiti Liberté, May 2) The Trump administration has intensified racism against Haitians in the U.S.



In San Juan, Puerto Rico, tens of thousands marched in the Golden Mile financial hub against drastic U.S.-imposed austerity measures and posthurricane neglect and abuse. Coordinated marches took place throughout the island. Police tear gassed and attacked young protesters. But the people vow to keep fighting local and U.S. attacks on their living conditions. (See WW, May 10; tinyurl.com/yal6tw6r)

In socialist Cuba, 1 million people honored workers, former Presidents Fidel Castro and Raúl Castro and their new leader, Miguel Díaz-Canel. (See article, page 9)



In Guatemala City and Mexico City, thousands demanded jobs and improved pay and working conditions. At the same time, the bigoted, anti-immigrant Trump administration stopped a caravan of Central Americans, mostly women, LGBTQ individuals and children, at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Police used tear gas and water cannons against demonstrators in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. In that city and two others in the country, workers protested the fraudulent Nov. 26 election of pro-U.S. President Juan Orlando Hernández.

Stop U.S. attacks on Venezuela!

Thousands of workers from throughout Venezuela gathered in Caracas for a massive march and rally supporting President Nicolás Maduro's reelection and the Bolivarian Revolution. They said "No" to imperialist sanctions and interference.

Maduro hailed workers' gains, particularly those outlined in the Organic Law of Work and Workers, and announced a 95 percent minimum wage increase. He vowed, "We are going to contain [imperialism's] brutal economic war and we will move forward." (TeleSUR, May 1)

Demonstrators in Curitiba, Brazil, yelled "Free Lula!" while demanding the release from prison of former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, jailed there on false corruption charges.

Union and social movement activists protested slashes in government services and energy subsidies (prices have soared 1,000 percent in two years!) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, under the Macri administration's austerity policies. Similar forces marched peacefully through Santiago, Chile, opposing President Sebastián Piñera's reactionary program. Riot police attacked them. □

U.S. delegation celebrates May Day with Cuba

By Kaitlyn Griffith
Havana

More than 70 allies of Cuba living in the U.S. celebrated International Workers’ Day in Havana on May 1. These activists participated in the 13th International May Day Brigade and spent two weeks in Cuba, learning about the 1959 revolution and engaging with its legacy. More than 300 people from 31 nations traveled to Cuba to join the brigade.

Cuba’s famous May Day celebration began at 7:30 a.m. on May 1 with the major address by General Secretary Ulises Guilarde de Nacimiento of the Workers’ Central Union of Cuba. He spoke about the ongoing revolutionary engagement of workers and their unions throughout Cuba, the need to preserve collective bargaining power domestically and internationally, and the ongoing demands to end the U.S. blockade and to return the territory in Guantánamo illegally occupied by the U.S. military.

Following these remarks, Cubans began their march through Revolution Square. Nearly a million Cuban workers, soldiers, farmers, retirees and students took their places as early as 4 a.m. to be able to walk shoulder-to-shoulder through their nation’s capital city. All public institutions and industry were closed for the holiday, allowing for the high attendance at the event. Privately owned businesses remained open at the discretion of individual owners.

Marchers held a banner spanning the width of the crowd reading “80 Años de

Principios, Unidad e Historia,” which translates to “80 Years of Principles, Unity and History.” This slogan alludes to the revolutionary past of Cuba and calls for a continuation of the revolutionary process into coming decades.

The air was filled with the live music of a large band that performed on the southern side of the square. They played songs, well-known by Cubans, celebrating the revolution and urging its continuation.

Brigade members stood and danced at the foot of Cuban hero José Martí’s memorial on the northern side of the plaza as the march went by. Special guests joined them, including medical students from ELAM, the Latin American School of Medicine, who hailed from such nations as Palestine and South Africa.

Nearby, the Cuban 5 — Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González — celebrated with their families. The Cuban 5 were political prisoners in the U.S. who were returned to their home in December 2014 as part of a prisoner exchange.

Not far from them, Miguel Díaz-Canel,

Cuba’s newly elected president, and Raúl Castro, former president and hero of the revolution, waved and sang throughout the morning. Raúl wore military fatigues and at one point stepped away from the march, only to return a few minutes later wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat to block the heat and sun.

Workers and students carried banners identifying their workplaces and schools. Many were elaborately painted and stretched 20 feet or more. Others carried large Cuban flags and pictures of Fidel Castro or Che Guevara. Some marchers waved rainbow Pride flags.

Brigade members greeted marchers with banners of their own, expressing solidarity with Cubans as they struggled against U.S. imperialism and articulated unity between the workers and their international unions and the workers and their unions in Cuba. The U.S. delegation had painted a banner stating, “U.S.A. People Say Cuba Si, Bloqueo No! No U.S. Blockade of Cuba! U.S. Out of Guantánamo!” They attached it to a wooden barrier so it was visible to marchers as they passed.

The AFL-CIO of California also displayed a banner, which read, “Solidaridad Entre Los Trabajadores! Cuba Y California, Saludos de los Trabajadores del AFL-CIO en California!” which in English reads “Solidarity Among Workers! Cuba and California, Greetings from the AFL-CIO Workers in California!” In 2016, the California AFL-CIO passed a resolution to actively show solidarity with Cuba and its workers. As an extension of that, elected representatives from the California AFL-CIO participated in 2017 and 2018 international brigades.

The march lasted more than two hours



PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

Mercedes Lopez Acea, Cuba’s new president, Miguel Díaz-Canel, and Raúl Castro.

and never dipped in enthusiasm. At the end, workers, soldiers, farmers, students and retirees held dozens of Cuban flags, faced the José Martí memorial and special guests Miguel Díaz-Canel, Raúl Castro and the international brigade, and sang The Internationale. Those facing the marchers waved their own national flags and sang in unison in their own languages.

This year’s International May Day brigade was the second since the beginning of direct commercial flights from the U.S. to Cuba. It also had record high participation from people in the U.S. If the flights remain, it’s expected that U.S. participation will continue to increase. However, given recent warmongering from the U.S. president, this scenario is in jeopardy. This was widely cited by many from the U.S. as motivation to travel to Cuba and participate in the brigade for International Workers’ Day

After witnessing the resilient, revolutionary spirit of the Cuban people, and knowing the crushing grip U.S. imperialism has on the island, many U.S. participants committed to work to end the blockade and expel the U.S. military from Guantánamo upon returning home.

To reserve your place for next year’s brigade, write to ICanGoToCuba@nnoc.info. □



WW PHOTO: KAITLYN GRIFFITH

Snipers massacre Gazans as Palestinians resist Israeli apartheid

Continued from page 1

Aviv to Jerusalem. This political move by the Trump administration has dashed any hopes that may have been harbored by some for a peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian struggle.

For years, as Israel built up its formidable arsenal of repression in alliance with the Pentagon, various U.S. imperialist administrations dangled the idea of a two-state solution like a carrot before Palestinian organizations and leaders of the Arab countries. Jerusalem was put forward as the likely city to encompass the capitals of both a Zionist and a Palestinian state.

This slaughter of unarmed Palestinian protesters, and the simultaneous move of the U.S. Embassy to anoint Jerusalem as capital of the Israeli state, should make it now clearer than ever to the whole world that Israel has always been a project of Western imperialism, not a refuge for Jewish people, as has been claimed for so long.

Zionism cover for another racist settler state

Israel is a largely European settler state imposed on the Palestinian people who have lived there for generations, just as South Africa was a largely European settler state imposed on Indigenous African people.

In 1948, Zionism, the reactionary political movement behind the establishment of Israel, denied the very existence of the Palestinians. They claimed that the European settlers who invaded Palestine were building “a land without a people for a people without a land.” But the resistance of the Palestinians to draconian

Israeli rule is proof enough that the people of Palestine existed then, exist now and will continue to fight to take back the land they have lived in and sustainably cultivated for generations.

Zionism was given a big boost by the British ruling class in the Balfour Declaration, issued in 1917, which encouraged the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. At that time, few Jewish people supported Zionism. Instead, they struggled against anti-Semitism in Europe as well as in the U.S.

That anti-Semitism took on monstrous proportions in Germany with the triumph of fascism. Hitler scapegoated and massacred Jews as well as Slavs, communists, gays and lesbians, and Roma people for the immense hardships that had in reality been caused by the capitalist depression of the 1930s.

After Germany’s defeat in 1945, the U.S. as well as Britain, which had controlled Palestine since World War I, conspired to promote it as a haven for the Jewish people who survived the Nazi Holocaust. They armed it against the rising tide of Arab liberation sweeping the area, even to the point that Israel is now the third-largest nuclear power in the world.

As these imperialists gave away Palestine, they never consulted the Palestinian people, acting as though they didn’t exist.

But the Palestinian people do exist, and they have been courageously fighting for their rights as a nation ever since. This move by the U.S. government and the billionaire ruling class behind it only further exposes their predatory use of Israel as a battering ram against the peoples of the entire Middle East. □



Trabajadoras/es de educación y lucha de clase

Continúa de página 12

demandas una iniciativa para aumentar los impuestos a los ingresos superiores a \$250.000 para financiar las escuelas. Las/os maestros luchan para las/os estudiantes, las familias, sus comunidades y la institución de educación gratuita y accesible para todas/os.

La clase dominante obviamente preferiría usar el sistema educativo como una incubadora para la fuerza de trabajo que permitir que sea un recurso para la clase trabajadora. Su primera opción siempre será limitar la educación a las habilidades técnicas o lo que sea necesario para simplemente reproducir la fuerza de trabajo en la configuración que requiere el capital. Históricamente, las/os maestros han tenido el poder de resistir activamente la demanda de producir generaciones de trabajadoras/es obedientes. En respuesta, la clase dominante ha gastado su tiempo y dinero tanto atacando la educación pública como intentando usar las escuelas como sitios para promover su propia ideología.

Un movimiento de trabajadoras/es de la educación politizado y poderoso puede garantizar que el control de lo que aprenden las/os niños esté en manos de la clase trabajadora: las/os maestros, en lugar de la clase dominante: administradores y quienes diseñan las políticas que sirven al capital.

Si el argumento es que las escuelas de EUA sirven para reproducir las condiciones sociales del capitalismo, con todo su racismo, odio a las mujeres y más, es obvio que un cambio de poder de las/os trabajadores de la educación hacia la clase dominante solo intensificará esto.

Atacar las luchas de las/os trabajadores de la educación ayuda a la clase dominante a usar el sistema educativo para sus propios objetivos: una clase trabajadora obediente, la reproducción de la supremacía blanca y la protección de su propia acumulación de capital.

La clase dominante reconoce que, cuando las/os docentes están sindicalizados y protegidos legalmente de represalias derechistas, esas/os maestros pueden ejercer influencia sobre importantes instituciones ideológicas que se financian con impuestos progresivos y amenazan constantemente con salirse del control de la clase dominante. Los movimientos politizados de trabajadoras/es escolares siguen siendo el camino a seguir para garantizar que las escuelas no actúen simplemente como engranajes en una máquina de represión.

Esta es la razón por la que la educación pública gratuita para todas/os, con trabajadoras/es de la educación que tienen autonomía de los intereses de la clase dominante, debe ser una demanda de transición en un estado capitalista. □

Torture for a dying system

With two Democratic senators having announced their support for Gina Haspel to become the new head of the CIA, it is likely the Senate will confirm her later this week. Haspel is notorious for heading a secret CIA torture site in Thailand where waterboarding sessions took place and were videotaped. These sickening recordings had been stored in a safe at the site until Haspel ordered them destroyed in 2005.

What does the Haspel nomination show us about the decline of the U.S. empire? Just the fact that this torturer was nominated to head the most secretive and brutal agency of the U.S. government shows that the ruling class here wants to send a message to the world that it will stop at nothing to maintain its mind-boggling wealth and destructive power.

That not just Trump but so many political figures in both imperialist parties support her confirms that those in power will resort to ghastly and illegal methods — methods condemned by many global agreements that the U.S. government has signed — to impose its will on countries it means to subjugate and plunder as neocolonies.

Not that the U.S. ruling class has had a clean record before this, not at all. Brutality against people of color began with the extermination campaigns against Indigenous peoples, the horrendous slave trade and denial of the most basic human rights to Black people, and the brutal conquest of the entire Southwest from Mexico. It is present today in oppressed communities occupied and subjugated by a militarized police force and racist courts.

But torture can't turn back the clock on overdue social transformation. The

Catholic Church, a bastion of feudalism, tried it for centuries in Europe with the Inquisition. Those called "heretics" were burned alive at the stake, drawn and quartered in front of vast crowds, or tortured endlessly in gruesome dungeons. The bourgeoisie, a rising class then, but not yet in control of the state, rightfully decried these horrible crimes at the time.

Today, it is this same class, the bourgeoisie, in the most powerful capitalist country, that is endorsing methodical and "scientific" torture in order to control the energy-rich area of southwest Asia and buttress its dying system.

And why is the capitalist system dying? Because it has so revolutionized the means of production that it is now choking on its own productivity. Its world is awash in luxury for a few, while the majority of workers must struggle ever harder to survive.

Instead of being applied to end the problems of homelessness, unemployment, ill health, addiction, alienation, violence and environmental degradation, all of which fall most heavily on the shoulders of the workers and oppressed, this great wealth, under the economic laws of capitalism, must be employed primarily to create even more obscene wealth for the shrinking class of super-rich.

No wonder that a 2017 poll showed that, among people under 30 in the United States, the majority favored socialism and/or communism over capitalism. (yougov.com) Putting torturer Haspel in charge of the CIA won't change the minds of these millennials. On the contrary, it will only fuel the fire of socialist revolution, for a world based on cooperation and respect, not exploitation and coercion — beginning here at home. □

Youth ignite new anti-war movement



May 5 protest.

WWW PHOTO: RASIKA RUWANPATHIRANA

By Gil Concon

Over 30 young students and workers gathered on May 5 at the entrance to Johns Hopkins University for a demonstration commemorating the Catonsville Nine, who are part of Baltimore's anti-war history.

Fifty years ago, nine Catholic activists stole nearly 400 draft cards from the local selective service board in Catonsville, Md., and burned them with homemade napalm. Their action saved 400 people from being shipped off to fight the illegal war in Vietnam.

The May 5 action marked the formation of Youth Against War and Racism, whose members dedicate themselves to taking up the anti-imperialist, anti-war, anti-racist mantle. Members of YAWR are affiliated with groups like the People's Power Assembly, Bayan USA, the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (US), Hopkins Tzedek, Hopkins Students for a Democratic Society and Workers World Party.

YAWR demonstrators marched over 2 miles from the university campus to

the Maryland State Armory, where the National Guard secured their weapons during the 2015 Baltimore uprisings against the police killing of Freddie Gray. At the armory, YAWR members tore up and burned military recruitment materials and a U.S. flag — symbols of racism and imperialism — in the tradition of the Catonsville Nine.

"It's becoming more and more crucial that young people help ignite a new anti-war movement," explained Miranda Bachman, a member of YAWR and Workers World Party. "Especially in Maryland, where weapon developers reign."

Weapons corporations and federal security agencies based in Maryland and the District of Columbia are huge funders of weapons research programs in Maryland colleges and universities. It is no coincidence that their CEOs and top brass sit on the boards of directors of many university foundations.

Now, more than ever, YAWR is seeking to raise anti-war consciousness, combat imperialist propaganda, fight racism and be in solidarity with the nations and people who oppose the U.S. war machine. □

Ecuador:

Free Jorge Glas!

Based on a talk given at a May 10 Workers World Party meeting in New York City. The writer is a member of Acción Revolución, a group of Ecuadorian activists.

By Angela Vera

Jorge Glas was first elected vice president in 2013 during President Rafael Correa's second full term, though he previously held a number of top positions throughout Correa's 10-year presidency. As a proponent of the Citizen's Revolution, Glas implemented a variety of policies for the public's benefit, including the construction of a number of hydroelectric power plants and the implementation of multipurpose works that helped farmers with their crops.

In 2016, Glas announced his candidacy for the vice presidency again, this time as the running mate of Lenin Moreno, who was seeking the presidency as Correa's successor in the Alianza Pais movement. Those opposed to the Citizen's Revolution movement immediately sought to discredit Glas. Articles were written charging him with illicit association in connection with Odebrecht, a construction company that paid bribes to various government officials throughout Latin America.

The first allegations against Glas were published by the newspaper La Estrella de Panamá, based on false information delivered by Guillermo Lasso and Andrés Páez, who ran as candidates of the opposing party. Ana Cerrud, the deputy director of the newspaper, later admitted that no evidence had been provided to back the claims.

Following the electoral victory of President Moreno and Vice President Glas in 2017, Moreno shifted loyalties completely. He developed a relationship with the infamous Gustavo Larrea, who had been fired from his position as minister of the interior by Correa's government after it came to light that he had channeled information to the CIA regarding a FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army] encampment in Ecuador.

Moreno opened up dialogue with opposition parties and began giving away successful achievements of the Correa government. Control of major public electric enterprises was handed over to the



PHOTO: WELLINGTON ECHEGARAY

Angela Vera, pictured far left.

Bucaram family, a group with a history of criminal activity in Ecuador. Private banks were given management rights over electronic transactions between the government and the citizenry, from which the bankers take a cut. A variety of other reactionary measures were undertaken, which Glas denounced in a public letter on Aug. 2.

In retaliation, the next day Moreno issued a decree relieving Glas of all functions of the vice presidency, though he claimed to be doing so due to the rumors of Glas' involvement with Odebrecht. The corrupt media that had published unsub-

stantiated lies called for an investigation, which Moreno hypocritically backed under the guise of fighting corruption, despite his propensity for appointing criminals from the Bucaram family to important posts.

With constant coverage by the government, media and political organizations placing pressure on the judicial system to address the accusations, Glas asked the Assembly

to take away his constitutionally granted immunity against investigation, stating, "I do not fear anything because I have not done anything."

Upon the removal of his immunity, a general prosecutor had Glas put into custody, in violation of his due process rights, alleging that he was a flight risk. The government claimed that this imprisonment counted as a "temporary absence" under Ecuadorian law and that after 90 days the absence would become "definitive." In this way they'd be able to remove Glas from office without even

Continued on the next page

U.S. threatens wider war on Syria, Iran

By Joe Mchahwar

President Donald Trump announced on May 8 that the U.S. was unilaterally leaving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action — the Iran nuclear deal — and effectively taking a path of direct confrontation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. New sanctions were announced, to take effect within months. Literally hours after the announcement, Israeli missiles rained down just south of Syria's capital.

Israel launched further strikes in Syria on May 10 against what it claimed to be Iranian infrastructure, a claim both Syria and Iran have refuted. This Zionist aggression escalated into an exchange of missiles with Syria, making it the first time Syria has struck the Zionist occupation since 1974. Syrian missiles targeted occupation infrastructure in the Golan Heights, Syrian land occupied since 1967. The Israelis tried to pin these missiles on Iran, too.

Trump campaigned on a promise to destroy the JCPOA. But a reality TV star doesn't tell the Pentagon what to do, ideology cannot overrule capital, and in the case of Israel, the tail doesn't wag the dog. Every war Israel has waged has benefited Wall Street and the U.S. capitalist ruling class.

As Gen. Alexander Haig, secretary of state under President Ronald Reagan, said in 1981, "Israel is the largest U.S. aircraft carrier in the world that cannot be sunk."

There was a time when U.S. capitalists planned a nuclear program for Iran. Under the Shah, a U.S. puppet, General Electric and Westinghouse won eight contracts to construct nuclear reactors in Iran. Before the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iran had plans to buy 18 nuclear power reactors from the U.S., France and Germany. But once the Shah was overthrown, Iran nationalized its oil.

U.S. capitalists are now more desperate than ever to maintain their oil and gas profits — desperate enough to recklessly pursue a regional war to devastate Iran and expand existing U.S. occupations.

For decades Wall Street and the military-industrial complex fed off of a massive flow of petrodollars from Saudi Arabia and other comprador regimes in the Persian Gulf. The U.S. invasion of Iraq ushered in the fracking boom and a myriad of other huge, unsustainable profits for big oil. That bubble burst, but the insatiable need for profits has some hoping they can relive the magic of the George W. Bush era through Trump.

Pentagon setbacks in Syria

Setbacks for the U.S. on the Syrian front are a major factor in the drive to war with Iran. Since the Russian intervention in September 2015, the Syrian state and allied forces have had one decisive victory after another. Thousands of death squad

fighters, with billions of dollars in funding and often advanced weaponry, have been disbanded, disarmed or defeated. Any hope of the U.S. or its allies to liquidate the Syrian nation through proxy forces has been completely abandoned.

Syria is now confronted directly by a Turkish invasion in the northwest, a U.S. occupation through the YPG (the Kurds' People's Protection Units) across northern and eastern Syria, a U.S.-Jordanian base close to Jordan in al Tanf, an Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights, and a buffer zone of Israeli-supported contras surrounding it. Despite this, Syria controls the majority of its land.

This direct confrontation marks a new and very dangerous phase of the war against Syria. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad confirmed this in a recent interview in which he said Syria is fighting the terrorists, meaning the armies of Turkey, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia.

"Forget about the different factions and who is going to finance those factions; at the end, they work for one agenda, and those different players obey one master: the American master. [Turkish President] Erdoğan is not implementing his own agenda; he's only implementing the American agenda, and the same goes for the other countries in this war.

"So, first of all, you have to fight the terrorists. Second, when you take control

of more areas, you have to fight any aggressor, any army. The Turkish, French, whoever, they are all enemies; as long as they came to Syria illegally, they are our enemies." (sana.sy/en, May 10)

Iran has been a longtime ally of Syria and played a vital role in defeating proxy armies there. A direct confrontation with Syria is, de facto, a direct confrontation with Iran. If it doesn't stop ISIS and its ally, the United States, in Syria and elsewhere, Iran says it will have to defend itself on its own territory.

The opening of the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem, the Israeli strikes in Syria, the ongoing massacres of Palestinians commemorating the Nakba, the cancelling of the nuclear deal, and other regional provocations are also aimed at a key ally of Syria, Iran and the Palestinians: the Lebanese Islamic resistance, Hezbollah. The Lebanese resistance and their allies won an impressive victory in the May 6th Lebanese elections.

The U.S. and Israel are moving in concert toward a wider war against Syria and Iran, a war for the benefit of U.S. banks, oil corporations and the military-industrial complex that would cost millions more lives in West Asia. The working class and oppressed peoples may be at different barricades around the planet, but we are all struggling for survival and a new world against this suicidal imperialist system. □

Behind Trump's anti-Iran campaign

By Deirdre Griswold

The Trump administration's decision to pull out of the nuclear agreement with Iran is yet another demonstration of the no-holds-barred ambition and arrogance of this imperialist ruling group.

The U.S. capitalist media admit that Trump's move has antagonized Washington's allies/rivals in Europe. Yet the big-business media, whether friendly to Trump or fearful of the consequences of his acts, continue to obscure the real issues. Instead, they stereotype Iran in a way that has so often been used to soften up public opinion to accept U.S. aggression.

For example, the media say that this is all about Iran's nuclear program, even while admitting that Trump is illegally pulling out of an agreement under which Iran has completely and verifiably given up any attempt to build nuclear weapons.

But how often do the media here express alarm about Israel's nuclear weapons — not just a program that might be used to build a few, but a stockpile of actual warheads? It's an open secret that Israel has been amassing nukes since 1966. The article "Israeli Nuclear Weapons, 2014" in the pre-eminent Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists estimated that by 2014 Israel's arsenal contained 80 nucle-

ar warheads, making it the third-largest nuclear power in the world.

Iran is threatened all the time by Israel, which functions as a sub-imperialist ally of the U.S. in the region, coordinating militarily with the U.S. against the other nearby countries while ferociously repressing the Palestinian people, whose land it has stolen.

For that matter, when do the media ever criticize the U.S. military-industrial establishment for keeping an inventory of nearly 7,000 nuclear warheads, while at the same time demanding that other countries "denuclearize"? As of 2017, the Pentagon reported having some 1,411 warheads actually deployed on 673 intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and strategic bombers around the world.

The capitalist media also inflame religious passions in their attacks on Iran's political leaders, most of whom are Muslim clerics. But what about the rulers of Saudi Arabia, who are on the best of terms with the White House? Their religious rule is much harsher than that practiced in Iran. For example, they carried out 48 beheadings in the first four months of this year. (The Guardian, April 26) The Saudi rulers are notorious for denying women the most basic rights. And while women make up more than half of Iran's college students, women in Saudi Arabia are cloistered and only this coming June will for the first time be allowed to drive.

But all that is minimized by the capitalist media here, because the Saudi rulers are cronies of the U.S. oligarchy, even as they carry out a genocidal war against the people of Yemen with weapons, intelligence and logistical support provided by the U.S.

The fact is, Iran having had a nuclear program and having political leaders from the clergy are not the real reasons the Trump administration has pulled out of the nuclear agreement and is now threatening Iran with economic sanc-

tions and even possible military action.

The real reason is not even mentioned by Trump or the U.S. media, although it is so obvious. Oil.

That is why the U.S. billionaire ruling class has been hostile to any popular government in Iran ever since 1951. That year the people of Iran democratically elected a secular government, headed by Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh, that nationalized Iran's oil, liberating their most valuable resource from the grip of the Anglo-American Oil Co.

Two years later, in 1953, Mossadegh was overthrown by a CIA armed coup. Washington then put the torture regime of Shah Reza Pahlevi in power, who of course did what was expected of him and welcomed back the U.S. oil companies. The CIA's point man for the coup, who actually rode on a tank into Teheran, was Kermit Roosevelt Jr. He later became an executive of Gulf Oil Co.

Everything was then cozy between Iran and Washington as U.S. oil companies raked in the profits — until the Iranian Revolution of 1979 overthrew the hated Shah. Out of that revolution, started by students, came the present Islamic Republic, which renationalized Iran's oil. Today's independent and sovereign Iran threatens Big Oil's domination of the entire energy-rich region.

Trump wants to be the Kermit Roosevelt of today and once again grind down Iran under the tyranny of Big Oil. He has assembled a cabinet that includes extreme war hawks John Bolton and Mike Pompeo. He's appointed a notorious torturer of Muslims, Gina Haspel, to head the CIA.

There are many reasons for anti-imperialists to get into the streets and oppose the aggressive, reactionary foreign policy agenda of the Trump administration. To defend the sovereignty of Syria. Venezuela. Korea. Afghanistan. Libya. Yemen. Honduras.

Iran must now be added to the top of the list. □

Continued from page 10

having a congressional vote.

In the interim, the prosecution was able to bring criminal charges against Glas after presenting evidence to a grand jury that was manipulated to implicate Glas in the Odebrecht scandal. The prosecutor had gone to Brazil to meet with José Conceição Santos, an Odebrecht executive who had been found guilty of corruption. Following that meeting, Santos testified against Glas, claiming he'd routed bribes to Glas through Glas' uncle. In return for his testimony, Santos was given a plea deal that resulted in a reduced sentence for his crimes.

Glas was found guilty of illicit association and sentenced under a repealed law that provided harsher punishment than current law. At this point, with 90 days having elapsed since his imprisonment, Glas was removed from the vice presidency and replaced with one of Moreno's cronies.

It is important to point out that Alianza País, a movement founded by Correa, has been fractured following Moreno's takeover through the manipulation of the judicial system and the CNE [National Electoral Council]. A majority of its members have disaffiliated from the

party, because they do not agree with its shift toward the right, and have been trying to form another party. But they have been blocked by the CNE for spurious reasons, like the names they've attempted to register under.

How could Glas be convicted on the basis of nothing more than the testimony of a convicted criminal like Conceição from Odebrecht, a company that has been involved in corruption in several countries in Latin America?

Given the rise in the current administration of people like Larrea, the CIA informant, as well as recent actions taken against leaders like [Lula] Da Silva in Brazil and [Cristina] Fernández in Argentina, we believe Glas' persecution is a continuation of the CIA's efforts to destroy progressive governments and interfere in the sovereignty of Latin American countries by engaging in "lawfare" — that is, legal warfare.

It is imperative that we defend Vice President Glas and fight against this new form of imperialist intervention. To do this, our organization is seeking to join forces with other progressive movements to form an international coalition. Please join us in our struggle to bring justice for Vice President Glas! □



Detrás de la campaña contra Irán de Trump

Por Deirdre Griswold

La decisión de la administración Trump de retirarse del acuerdo nuclear con Irán es una nueva demostración de la ambición sin límites y la arrogancia de este grupo gobernante imperialista.

Los medios capitalistas de EUA admiten que la movida de Trump ha antagonizado a los aliados/rivales de Washington en Europa. Sin embargo, los grandes medios de comunicación, ya sean amistosos con Trump o temerosos de las consecuencias de sus actos, siguen ocultando los verdaderos problemas. En su lugar, estereotipan a Irán de una manera que a menudo se ha utilizado para ablandar a la opinión pública y aceptar la agresión de EUA.

Por ejemplo, los medios dicen que esto es todo sobre el programa nuclear de Irán, incluso mientras reconocen que Trump se está retirando ilegalmente de un acuerdo en virtud del cual Irán ha renunciado completa y verificablemente a cualquier intento de fabricar armas nucleares.

Pero, ¿cuándo los medios aquí expresan alarma sobre las armas nucleares de Israel, no solo un programa que podría usarse para construir unas cuantas, sino una reserva real de cabezas nucleares? Es un secreto a voces que Israel ha estado acumulando armas nucleares desde 1966. El artículo “Armas nucleares israelíes, 2014” en el preeminente Boletín de los Científicos Atómicos estimó que para el

año 2014 el arsenal de Israel contenía 80 ojivas nucleares, convirtiéndolo en el tercer mayor poder nuclear en el mundo.

Irán está amenazado todo el tiempo por Israel, que funciona como un aliado sub-imperialista de EUA en la región, coordinando militarmente con EUA contra los otros países cercanos mientras reprime ferozmente al pueblo palestino, cuya tierra ha robado.

O, para el caso, ¿cuándo los medios critican alguna vez al establecimiento militar-industrial estadounidense por mantener un inventario de casi 7.000 cabezas nucleares, mientras que al mismo tiempo exige que otros países se “desnuclearicen”? Para 2017, el Pentágono informó que había unas 1.411 ojivas desplegadas en 673 ICBM, SLBM y bombarderos estratégicos en todo el mundo.

Los medios capitalistas también inflaman las pasiones religiosas en sus ataques contra los líderes políticos de Irán, la mayoría de los cuales son clérigos musulmanes. Pero, ¿qué hay de los gobernantes de Arabia Saudita, que están en los mejores términos con la Casa Blanca? Su gobierno religioso es mucho más severo que el practicado en Irán. Por ejemplo, llevaron a cabo 48 decapitaciones en los primeros cuatro meses de este año. (The Guardian, 26 de abril) Los gobernantes saudíes son famosos por negar a las mujeres los derechos más básicos. Y mientras las mujeres representan más de

la mitad de los estudiantes universitarios en Irán, las mujeres de Arabia Saudita están enclaustradas y solo por primera vez se permitirá conducir en junio próximo.

Pero todo eso es minimizado por los medios capitalistas aquí, porque los gobernantes saudíes son compinches de la oligarquía estadounidense, incluso mientras llevan a cabo una guerra genocida contra el pueblo de Yemen con armas, inteligencia y apoyo logístico brindado por EUA.

El hecho es que el que Irán tenga un programa nuclear y líderes políticos del clero no son las verdaderas razones por las que la administración Trump se ha retirado del acuerdo nuclear y ahora esté amenazando a Irán con sanciones económicas e incluso una posible acción militar.

La verdadera razón ni siquiera es mencionada por Trump ni por los medios de EUA, aunque es obvio. Petróleo.

Es por eso que la clase gobernante estadounidense multimillonaria ha sido hostil a cualquier gobierno popular en Irán desde 1951. Ese año el pueblo de Irán eligió democráticamente un gobierno secular, encabezado por el primer ministro Mohammed Mossadegh, que nacionalizó el petróleo de Irán, liberando su recurso más valioso de las garras de Anglo-American Oil Co.

Dos años más tarde, en 1953, Mossadegh fue derrocado por un golpe armado de la CIA. Washington luego puso en

el poder el régimen torturador del Shah Reza Pahlevi, quien por supuesto hizo lo que se esperaba de él y dio la bienvenida a las compañías petroleras de EUA. El hombre clave para el golpe de la CIA, que se montó en un tanque en Teherán, fue Kermit Roosevelt Jr. Luego se convirtió en ejecutivo de Gulf Oil Co.

Todo iba acogedor entre Irán y Washington mientras las compañías petroleras de EUA obtenían ganancias, hasta que la Revolución iraní de 1979 derrocó al odiado Shah. De esa revolución, iniciada por estudiantes, llegó la actual República Islámica, que renacionalizó el petróleo de Irán. El Irán soberano e independiente de hoy amenaza la dominación por Big Oil de toda la región rica en energía.

Trump quiere ser el Kermit Roosevelt de hoy y una vez más aplastar a Irán bajo la tiranía de Big Oil. Ha montado un gabinete que incluye a los halcones extremos guerreristas John Bolton y Mike Pompeo. Ha nombrado a una notoria torturadora de musulmanes, Gina Haspel, para dirigir la CIA.

Hay muchas razones para que las/os antiimperialistas salgan a la calle y se opongan a la agenda política exterior agresiva y reaccionaria de la administración Trump, para defender la soberanía de Siria, Venezuela, Corea, Afganistán, Libia, Yemen, y Honduras.

Irán ahora debe agregarse al tope de la lista. □

Trabajadoras/es de educación y lucha de clase

Esta es una versión ligeramente editada de una charla dada en la Midwest Marxist School en Detroit en abril de 2018.

By K. Green

A fines de febrero, las/os trabajadoras/es de la educación en los 55 condados de Virginia Occidental se declararon en huelga durante nueve días. Finalmente ganaron sus demandas de huelga a pesar de ser un estado de ‘derecho-al-trabajo’ (¡por menos \$!) y el intento de los sindicatos de terminar la huelga prematuramente. Desde entonces, maestras/os de escuelas públicas en Oklahoma, Arizona, Puerto Rico y, más recientemente, Milwaukee, han participado en piquetes o han participado en paros laborales para desafiar las políticas de austeridad económica que han estancado sus salarios y destruido las escuelas públicas.

Cada vez que las/os trabajadoras/es de la educación se involucran en la lucha de clases, las/os izquierdistas (y uso este término como se usa coloquialmente en EUA, en términos generales: aquellas/os que se oponen a divisiones jerárquicas de la sociedad basadas en clase, raza, género y otros factores) se involucran en un viejo argumento sobre el sistema educativo bajo el capitalismo. Desde la huelga de West Virginia, este argumento ha estado circulando de nuevo, por lo que me gustaría hablar brevemente sobre algunos de sus fundamentos y algunos de sus usos indebidos. Entonces me gustaría explicar por qué nosotros, como comunistas, apoyamos a las/os trabajadoras/es de la educación cuando ejercen su poder para resistir los ataques de la clase dirigente.

Durante mucho tiempo, las/os izquierdistas han estado conscientes del papel potencial del sistema de educación pública en apoyar las relaciones sociales capitalistas que refuerzan el poder de la clase dominante. Las escuelas controladas por el estado capitalista pueden usarse para transmitir la ideología de la clase dominante, asegurando la transmisión del capital cultural a través de las generaciones y socializando a los niños en las jerarquías dominantes del ser.

Algunos argumentos llevan estas conclusiones un paso más allá al afirmar que las/os maestros, por su participación en dicho sistema, están condenados a transmitir la ideología de la clase dominante a pesar de que ellos mismos son de clase trabajadora. Este argumento a menudo se hace al comparar maestros con policías. Las personas que hacen esta comparación afirman que las instituciones de educación desempeñan el mismo papel que las instituciones de represión armada porque el estado capitalista las administra a ambas y el estado quiere reproducir las relaciones sociales capitalistas a toda costa.

Superficialmente, hay similitudes entre esas dos instituciones, escuelas y prisiones. Ambos son generalmente administrados por el estado, aunque a veces se privatizan. Ambas implican control físico sobre las/os jóvenes. Pero las diferencias importantes entre estas instituciones tienen que ver con quién y por qué existen en primer lugar.

La policía es responsable ante el esta-

do y su ley en primer lugar. Son entrenados, socializados y obligados a respetar leyes que sistemáticamente favorecen la propiedad, el patriarcado y la supremacía blanca. La policía moderna surgió como una forma para que la clase dominante controle grandes grupos de personas: trabajadores en huelga e insurrecciones de esclavos.

Tanto el origen como la función actual de la policía son tales que instituir el control directo de la comunidad sobre esta institución - hacer que la policía rinda cuentas directamente a las personas que viven bajo la ley - terminaría con la vigilancia tal como la conocemos. La policía como institución se define por su papel en un sistema de dominación: a esta institución no le importa si las personas que tienen que vivir de acuerdo con estas leyes están de acuerdo o no con ella. No hay forma posible de reformar la policía sin cambiar fundamentalmente la naturaleza de la vigilancia.

La educación pública, por otro lado, no es, en su origen, un proyecto que sirva a la clase dominante. Fundamentalmente, las/os maestros tienen el potencial de ejercer mucha más autonomía que la policía en el desempeño de su trabajo. Esto no significa que la educación pública no pueda ser utilizada por la clase dominante para reproducir las relaciones sociales que favorecen al capital y mantienen la desigualdad y la supremacía blanca. Una escuela puede ser una herramienta para la disciplina social, una incubadora para una fuerza laboral obediente y una forma para los liberales apoyar

la mitología de la meritocracia en EUA.

Pero la educación pública universal y gratuita también puede ser, y ha sido, algo por lo que las comunidades oprimidas y de clase trabajadora han luchado y contra la cual la clase dominante se ha opuesto con vehemencia.

Esto se debe a que la escolarización no siempre ha sido únicamente un proyecto de la clase dominante en la forma en que ha sido la policía, y porque, cuando la escolarización ha amenazado convertirse en tal proyecto, las/os estudiantes, padres, maestros y sus comunidades se han resistido. Las/os maestros y sus sindicatos han luchado por mantener la interferencia legislativa, que sirve a los intereses de la clase dominante, fuera de sus aulas.

Además, las/os educadores en huelga a menudo plantean demandas que ponen de manifiesto objetivos radicales más allá de sus propios salarios (aunque esas demandas son justas y válidas también). En Oklahoma, las/os trabajadoras/es de la educación incluyeron específicamente en sus demandas un llamado para derogar una exención de impuestos a las ganancias de capital, que beneficia en gran medida a los ricos, y redujo los fondos para las escuelas públicas.

La huelga de docentes de marzo en Puerto Rico contra el cierre de escuelas públicas y la expansión de las escuelas autónomas para reemplazarlas fue una batalla en la lucha más grande contra la privatización de servicios públicos con fines de lucro instigada por EUA. Las/os maestros de Arizona incluyeron en sus

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