

# Supporters worldwide demand FREE MUMIA NOW!

By Ted Kelly  
Philadelphia

More than 100 activists assembled outside the Criminal Justice Center in Philadelphia on Aug. 30 to demand the immediate release of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man who has been held captive by the U.S. carceral state for 37 years. While demonstrators rallied on the streets below, other supporters packed the courtroom to demonstrate that the people will never tire of demanding justice for Mumia.

Lawyers representing Abu-Jamal requested a new discovery period to uncover documents that will demonstrate that Mumia's post-conviction appeals were unjustly blocked by racist and corrupt Philadelphia Supreme Court Justice and former Philadelphia District Attorney Ronald Castille. Judge Leon Tucker granted the motion for a 60-day continuance; now, lawyers will again go before Judge Tucker on Oct. 29 to demand the right to appeal Mumia's conviction.

The International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and members of the MOVE Organization were joined by Workers World Party members from Philadelphia, New York and Durham, N.C., as well as activists from as far away as France and Senegal. Among the crowd were figures like Keith Cook, district director of the North Carolina NAACP State Conference and Abu-Jamal's brother; Mireille Fanon-Mendès-France, founder of the Frantz Fanon Foundation and daughter of revolutionary philosopher Frantz Fanon; human rights activist Roger Wareham of the December 12th Movement; Claude Guillaumaud-Pujol of the Paris-based organization Libérons Mumia; and Rachel Wolkenstein, activist and Mumia's former attorney.

The day prior to the hearing, these freedom fighters participated in a press conference that included Ant Smith of Philly for REAL Justice; Pam Africa, the MOVE Organization's minister of confrontation; Marc Lamont Hill, CNN contributor and

owner of Uncle Bobbie's Coffee & Books in Philadelphia; former Drexel professor George Ciccariello-Maher; and poet and organizer Sister Empress Phile Chionesu, a longtime ally of Mumia and MOVE and director of the Million Woman March. A full video of the press conference can be found at [tinyurl.com/ybcnshsv](https://tinyurl.com/ybcnshsv).

Pledges of renewed solidarity with Mumia poured in from around the world in the days leading up to the Aug. 30 hearing. German Bundestag (federal parliament) member Zaklin Nastic wrote a letter directly to Mumia, pledging that "International Solidarity is not merely a hollow phrase; it is practical, emphatic, and brought to life by the enduring support of local support movements."

The Swedish Dockworkers Union issued a statement demanding Mumia's freedom on behalf of nearly 2 million workers globally, from the International Dockworkers Council; the Japanese Doro-Chiba railway workers union; the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, the largest union in South Africa; and the 1.4-million-strong British and Irish general workers union, Unite.

## Philly DAs conspire against Mumia

DA Castille is a bloodthirsty proponent of the death penalty and has spent his career trying to implement policies to fast-track executions, particularly for people accused of killing cops.

As a Supreme Court justice, Castille denied the appeals of men like Terrance Williams, whom Castille prosecuted as DA and whose execution he authorized. Years later, Castille had left the DA's office and been elected state justice when Williams' appeal reached the court. Williams' lawyers demanded Castille recuse himself, but he refused.

This conduct was too extraordinarily unjust even for the bourgeois capitalist legal system. In the 2016 case Williams

*Continued on page 6*



WW PHOTOS: TED KELLY

Speaking above is Pam Africa of International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and the MOVE organization. Activists from as far as France and Senegal joined the Aug. 30 rally. Pictured left: Mireille Fanon-Mendès-France and Roger Wareham.



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PUERTO RICO

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August 31, 2018

WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

## Assassination in Donetsk 11





By Martha Grevatt  
Detroit

For two weeks, Detroit has been mourning the death of Aretha Franklin, the legendary musical artist, activist and genuine philanthropist who called this city home.

From the moment the news broke of Franklin's passing, fans and admirers have stopped by her church, the historic New Bethel Baptist, to leave flowers, balloons, cards and handmade signs, or to just congregate.

Franklin's father, the Rev. C.L. Franklin, was a prominent Civil Rights leader and the church's late pastor.

For decades, Aretha Franklin has been woven into the fabric of community life here. In the past two weeks, numerous stories have been shared of how the artist generously shared her fortune and talents with Detroit. One time, she walked into a music store and bought instruments for music students in Detroit Public Schools. She then sat down at the piano and played and sang for the people in the store.

When catering her legendary parties, Franklin would order extra food and have it delivered to homeless shelters. When she saw a news story about a family's hardship, she would anonymously arrange for a check to be delivered. She often sang for local churches and organized gospel revivals.

This support has touched the heart of this oppressed city, which has been all but written off by the capitalist class — save for a few neighborhoods being gentrified and

# Aretha's Detroit bids farewell

falsely presented as evidence of a “comeback.”

Tens of thousands lined up for blocks during three days of visitation. The Charles H. Wright Museum of African-American History was open from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. Aug. 28 and 29, followed by a third day of viewing at New Bethel. There was no let-up in the long lines.

People traveled from all over the country, and the world, to say goodbye to the Queen of Soul. But it was clear throughout the days of remembrance that Detroit, the city she grew up in, had a special place in her heart — and vice versa.

Tickets to a special tribute concert Aug. 30 were snapped up in 10 minutes. Well-known performers from a range of genres — rhythm and blues, gospel, hip-hop, country, classical and jazz — came here to honor Franklin. Angela Davis was one of the guest speakers. When Davis was in jail in 1970, Franklin offered to pay her bail.

The Aug. 31 funeral was a political event. Several speakers recalled the artist's solidarity with Davis and the many concerts where she, Harry Belafonte and others raised money for the Civil Rights Movement. More recently, Franklin lent support to the Poor People's Campaign. Her deeply felt Black pride and love for the Black community were referenced repeatedly.

President Donald Trump was blasted for his claim that Franklin “worked for me on numerous occasions.” The acclaimed professor Michael Eric Dyson hammered back: “You foolish fascist! She ain't worked for you. She worked above you. She worked beyond you.”

There were a number of stellar musical performances at the funeral. Stevie Wonder, another Detroit native who retains strong ties, ended the celebration with his song “As.” With the words “I'll be loving you always,” he spoke to Detroit's enduring affection for the Queen. □

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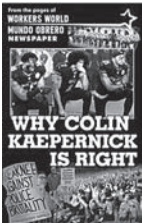
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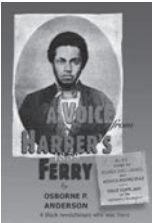
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North Carolina

# Students resist Klan on campus

By Meghan Watts  
Chapel Hill, N.C.

Barricades surrounded the stump of Silent Sam and other monuments on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on the night of Aug. 30. Silent Sam, a symbol of white supremacy that had stood at the entrance of campus since 1913, had been righteously toppled by students and the community on Aug. 20.

Students and community members were gathering for what was billed as a “dance party and speakout.” This was the third student-led protest against racism in 10 days.

As crowds of mostly students began to approach the site, a half dozen white supremacists began to approach as well. The white supremacists were quickly swarmed by the media, who attempted to give the bigots a platform. These efforts were met swiftly by counterprotesters who successfully drowned them out. Chanting “Nazis go home!” the protesters shifted the media’s attention to the night’s message: Cops and Klan were not welcome.

Anon Cole, the young man who first began shouting down the white supremacists, said: “When I saw the media interviewing these white supremacists, I was appalled. Why would they give exposure to these bigots? I had to tell them and ensure they stop.”

Almost 300 protesters had gathered for the event. There was music, dancing and free ice cream mixed in with chants of “Black Lives Matter!” and “Cops and Klan go hand-in-hand!”

However, when the white supremacists appeared, the atmosphere shifted to a decidedly more focused and passionate defense of the campus and its students. The pre-positioning of the barricades and industrial floodlights around the empty pedestal for racism became clear.

The cops escorted almost 70 white supremacists associated with Alamance County Taking Back Alamance County through the crowd, past the barricades and into the pen around the statue’s remnants. Waving Confederate and Christian flags and holding placards defending their bigotry, the ACTBAC members were protected by cops.

The anti-racist crowd continued chanting and heckling cops and white supremacists alike. As the night went on, tensions between protesters and white supremacists grew. Cops — some brought in from surrounding counties such as Guilford, Wake and New Hanover — began to chaperone the bigots back to a parking lot.

The racists were followed by protesters, who chanted and shouted down both the cops and the Klan. Then, without warning or provocation, a police officer discharged a can of pepper spray on the students, members of the media and others in the crowd.

As the numbers of protesters dwindled, cops took the opportunity to arrest three people. Two were charged with affray (breach of the peace), and one was charged with resisting an officer.

UNC-CH Chancellor Carol Folt released a statement Aug. 31 that the UNC

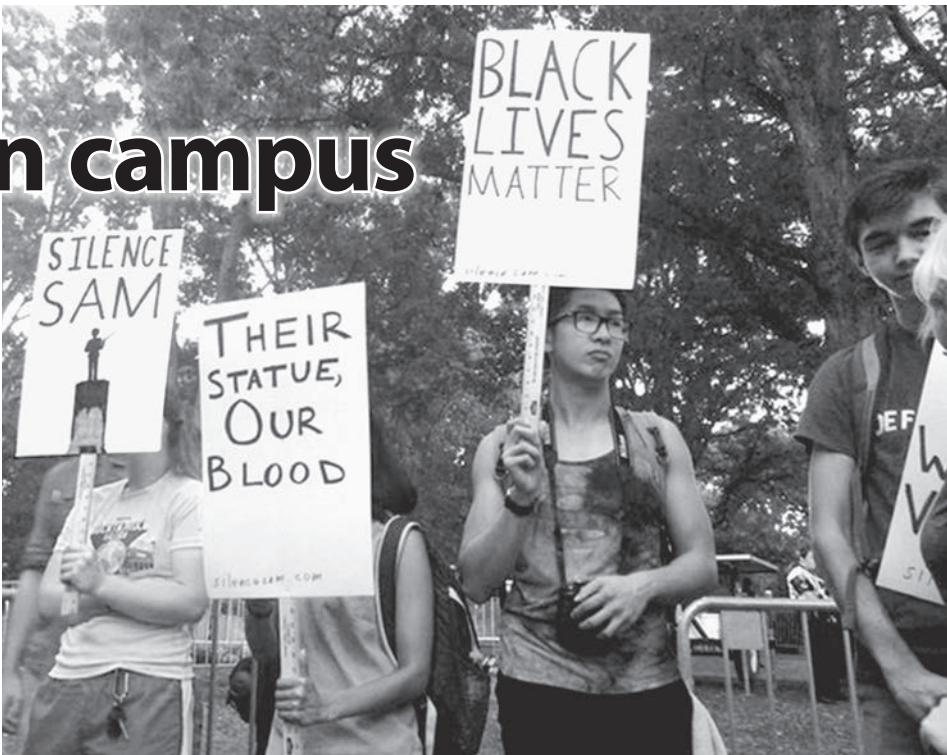


PHOTO: WUNC

Anti-racist protesters gather Aug. 30 on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

system’s board of governors had approved identifying “a safe, legal and alternative location for Silent Sam.” Folt noted the monument’s “contentious history” but failed to denounce its explicitly racist history and meaning.

Defend UNC, a coalition of students, faculty and community members, released a response to this statement later that day. The group challenged the university’s statement, pointing out its “distorted falsehoods” regarding the historic and present context of the racist statue and the fight for its removal.

Defend UNC also condemned the response of the president of the UNC state system, Margaret Spellings, as well as politicians and cops, emphasizing that they “have decided to side with white supremacy, and for that they will not easily

be pardoned.”

The protests have seen an increasingly militaristic response from campus and Chapel Hill police. However, official rhetoric from the university continues to construct a false narrative of violence and “mob rule” on the part of protesters when describing the struggle of students to remove white supremacist symbols from campus. To date, sixteen anti-racist organizers face charges stemming from the protests on campus.

Students and the community await the university’s Nov. 18 deadline for its plan of action. In the meantime, students and community members will continue to defend their campus against white supremacy and challenge the university’s repression against students and activists.

*Watts is a student at UNC Chapel Hill.*

# Conference strategizes tearing down statues, walls

By Zachary Richardson  
Durham, N.C.

Energized by the fall of the Silent Sam statue in neighboring Chapel Hill, N.C., just days before, activists and community members representing a wide spectrum of progressive interests gathered on Aug. 25 at the historic Hayti Heritage Center in Durham, N.C., for “How to Topple a Statue, How to Tear Down a Wall,” a conference and celebration marking one year since one of Durham’s own Confederate monuments was brought to the ground.

Planned by the group Defend Durham, the conference brought together anti-racist organizers, religious leaders, student activists and anti-capitalist advocates from groups like Stop Killing Us, Comité de Acción Popular, Fight for Im/migrants and Refugees Everywhere (FIRE), Charlottesville Standing Up For Racial Justice, Duke University’s Graduate Student Union, Workers World Party, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, the Green Party and others to assess the state of the movement one year after horrific right-wing violence in Charlottesville, Va., prompted freedom fighters locally and nationally to intensify the struggle against racism — both symbolically and materially.

“I’m glad that our action has made people open their eyes and interrogate the seemingly natural order of everyday life,” said Takiyah Thompson, a Workers World member who became a national symbol of resistance when she climbed a ladder and tied the rope that brought down Durham’s statue. “When we see these monuments to white supremacy, we

have to understand that they exist as an attempt to humiliate and dehumanize all who are nonwhite. But if you want a truly humanizing experience, there’s nothing quite like physically destroying an altar of your oppressor.”

Panels covered a multitude of topics, including im/migrant rights, capitalism’s inextricable links to racism, the state of University of North Carolina student activism and the need to build political power outside the traditional U.S. two-party system. But in light of the churning controversy over Silent Sam — a small pro-Confederate rally and much larger counterdemonstration were taking place simultaneously over in Chapel Hill — the monument issue was never far from the microphone.

“My heart cries out to all of our oppressed ancestry who had to endure the racism, the rape, the murder, the nonstop killings,” said the Rev. Curtis Gatewood of Stop Killing Us, a Durham advocacy group seeking police accountability, calling the continued presence of Confederate monuments a “slap in the face.” In a breakout session, Gatewood stressed the importance of pushing for immediate reforms, such as stronger measures ensuring that police do not violate the constitutional rights of Black and Latinx people, while simultaneously combating underlying structural issues.

“The solution is not just having better police,” he said. “Everything we do has to be based upon our desire to fight institutional racism. ... I don’t care how much diversity training you get, if you’re a racist white supremacist with a badge you’re

going to murder Black people.”

While speakers addressed several topics of national importance, some discussions were more locally focused. The Rev. John Gumbo of Durham’s Shepherd’s House United Methodist Church, which serves a largely im/migrant population, discussed the difficulties his church is experiencing in a rapidly gentrifying city. After being gifted use of his building 10 years ago by another Methodist church, the predominantly white North Carolina Council of Churches is attempting to purchase the property, leaving Gumbo to fear that Shepherd’s House’s future is in danger. “Come and join us into the ministry, but don’t overtake everything [and] leave us with no place we can call home,” he said.

Other speakers raised issues of im/migrant exploitation and argued for a deeper analysis of their issues. Teresa Gutierrez, WWP member and deputy secretary general of the International Migrant Alliance, noted that many in the U.S. who hadn’t been conditioned to see im/migrant issues as any of their concern had recently been horrified by the actions of the Trump administration at the Mexican border. “To see children in cages, to see children torn away from their parents, to have parents deported and their children remaining here in the United States just shocked the senses of broad layers of the population,” she said.

While praising the many individual acts of resistance that have garnered attention in this period — from a mother hearing about Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s abuses and driving to the border in protest, to others collecting fre-

quent flier miles to donate in the service of reuniting families — Gutierrez noted that these acts weren’t enough on their own. It is “the task of the left,” she said, “the task of the working-class movement to take this moment in history, this consciousness in support of im/migrants, and take it further. ... You can’t be passionate for that Honduran mother or father and still support U.S. policies that create the most violent destabilizations [in those countries]. You just can’t do that.”

Most panelists echoed something of a universal theme: that all of these struggles were connected, and that any successes in realizing a more just world come from the people themselves.

“The hashtag that started going out after [Aug.] 14 [when the Durham statue came down] was #doitlikedurham,” said Workers World Party’s Elena Everett. “I don’t think any of the activists came up with that. It really was Durham that took that statue down. Each of us are actors on a larger historical stage, but we wouldn’t have been able to do it, we wouldn’t be able to sit here before you if it wasn’t the will of the people.” The question now, she said, was how to raise consciousness that “this movement, this community is tearing down white supremacy from Durham to Charlottesville to the White House to South Africa to all over the world; that we’re interconnected.”

Thompson, who reminded the audience that the conference was taking place during Black August and a nationwide prisoners strike, reiterated that point: “We have to tear down the wall in a physical sense, but also in an ideological sense.” □



# Lessons of an early socialist experiment

*This Part 2 of the series “What Is Socialism?” consists of an abridged version of the first half of Sam Marcy’s 1992 pamphlet entitled “Soviet Socialism: Utopian or Scientific?” In it, Marcy describes an attempt by a Welsh manufacturer in the early 1800s to overcome the horrors of newly industrialized capitalism by establishing a town in the U.S. based on communist principles. He analyzes its many achievements but also what eventually overwhelmed this bold experiment. The complete pamphlet can be read at [workers.org/marcy/cd/samsoc/index.htm](http://workers.org/marcy/cd/samsoc/index.htm).*

Not far from the Wabash River in southwest Indiana is a little town called New Harmony. Its population of about a thousand hasn’t varied much for decades. It has been seen for many years as a cultural center in a largely agricultural region.

The town of New Harmony has considerable significance from a historical point of view. It was a milestone in the evolution of socialist thought and has retained some features of social reform that have practical political significance, even today.

What makes New Harmony stand out? More than 150 years ago, when it was still a frontier town, an attempt was made to build a communist society there. There were many similar ventures at that time, but this one is notable because it was organized and inspired by one of the truly great figures of the 19th century, a Welshman named Robert Owen.

Robert Owen stands out like a giant because he did spend his considerable fortune in the cause of improving the lives of the workers. He established a number of communist societies in Scotland and in the United States and devoted the better part of his life to tireless defense of the interests of the working class.

## Robert Owen: early communist

In his book “Socialism: Utopian and Scientific,” Frederick Engels, the co-worker of Karl Marx, described how Owen’s work began at a time when the conditions of the working class in the large manufacturing towns of Britain had become frightful.

“In the industrial revolution most of his class saw only chaos and confusion, and the opportunity of fishing in these troubled waters and making large fortunes quickly. He saw in it the opportunity of putting into practice his favorite theory, and so bringing order out of chaos.

“He had already tried it with success, as superintendent of more than 500 men in a Manchester factory. From 1800 to 1829, he directed the great cotton mill at New Lanark, in Scotland, as managing partner, along the same lines, but with greater freedom of action and with a success that made him a European reputation.

“A population, originally consisting of the most diverse and, for the most part, very demoralized elements, a population that gradually grew to 2,500, he turned into a model colony, in which drunkenness, police, magistrates, lawsuits, poor laws, charity were unknown. And all this simply by placing the people in conditions worthy of human beings, and especially by carefully bringing up the rising generation.”

How different this was from the underfunded, ill-conceived social services of today, which help drag down the spirit of the people!

Engels continued:

“Whilst his competitors worked their people 13 or 14 hours a day, in New Lanark the working day was only ten and a half hours. When a crisis in cotton stopped work for four months, his workers received their full wages all the time. And with all this the business more than doubled in value, and to the last yielded large profits to its proprietors.

“In spite of all this, Owen was not content. ... ‘The people were slaves at my mercy.’ The relatively favorable conditions in which he had placed them were still far from allowing a rational development of the character and of the intellect in all directions, much less of the free exercise of all their faculties.’ And yet the working part of this population of 2,500 persons was daily producing as much real wealth for society as, less than half a century before, it would have required the working part of a population of 600,000 to create. ‘I asked myself, what became of the difference between the wealth consumed by 2,500 persons and that which would have been consumed by 600,000?’

“The answer was clear. It had been used to pay the proprietors of the establishment 5 percent on the capital they had laid out, in addition to over £300,000 clear

profit. ... The newly-created, gigantic productive forces, hitherto used only to enrich individuals and to enslave the masses, offered to Owen the foundations for a reconstruction of society; they were destined, as the common property of all, to be worked for the common good of all. ...

“His advance in the direction of communism was the turning point in Owen’s life. As long as he was simply a philanthropist, he was rewarded with nothing but wealth, applause, honor and glory. ... But when he came out with his communist theories, that was quite another thing. ...

“Banished from official society ... he turned directly to the working class and continued working in their midst for thirty years. Every social movement, every real advance in England on behalf of the workers links itself on to the name of Robert Owen. He forced through in 1819, after five years’ fighting, the first law limiting the hours of labor of women and children in factories. He was president of the first congress at which all the trade unions of England united in a single great trade association.”

## New Harmony

From 1825 to 1827, New Harmony [in Indiana], now in the hands of Owen, attracted many of the most idealistic and inventive reformers of the day, as well as women and men of the natural sciences. In addition, many jobless people found their way there, inspired by public lectures Owen gave in many Eastern cities.

The principles of the community were explained as follows: “Within the community all work was to be equal. One was to receive that which was necessary to him. The teachers’ work was to be on the same footing with the laborer, the farmer the equal of either. All were to perform to the best of their ability and receive the same compensation.” (“The New Harmony Story” by Don Blair)

In its few short years of existence, the communist society at New Harmony broke new ground. It introduced into the United States the first kindergarten, the first infant school, the first trade school, the first free public school system, the first women’s club, the first free library, the first civic dramatic club, and it was the seat of the first geological survey.

The progressive achievements of this little utopian colony inevitably became the basis for important demands taken up later by the working-class movement. The bosses are still fighting tooth and nail against such benefits and cutting them back wherever they can. To the extent that they are today more generally available to the workers, it is owing to bitter class battles across the country. How interesting that what were at that time considered utopian have now become very practical and indeed necessary.

Long after it ceased to be a communist colony, New Harmony was a social and cultural oasis. It was to become a center of both the abolitionist and the women’s movements.

## Why it disintegrated

Why did it disintegrate? The common explanation given by bourgeois critics of these early communist experiments is that they failed to reward “personal initiative” and the “rugged individualism” for which capitalist imperialism is so famous.

However, the more important reason for their failure was that they were in competition with the capitalist mode of production and dependent upon it for the purchase and sale of materials.

Owen had based his conception of communism on the view that the success of his colonies would enlist the cooperation of the bourgeoisie, who would join in when they saw how superior these societies were. He and the other great utopians, like Claude Henri Saint-Simon

## PART 2



and Charles Fourier, overlooked the characteristic feature of the capitalists: their unlimited greed and avarice driven by the profit motive. Not only does that prevent their conversion to the idea of a utopian society, but they cannot be persuaded to grant even the workers’ most meager demands without a struggle.

Appealing to the inherent goodness of these capitalists proves to be an exercise in futility. By the time Marx and Engels wrote “The Communist Manifesto,” the bourgeoisie had revealed all its basic social and political tendencies. ... Neither the philosophers nor the theoreticians of utopian idealism [during Owen’s time] could foresee the devastating class character of the society that was emerging under total domination by the bourgeoisie.

Not until Marx and Engels arrived on the scene was it possible to analyze the dynamics of the capitalist system. ... The raging class struggle made any attempt at social equality and abolition of the horrors of capitalism impossible. Socialism can only come as the product of the resolute struggle of the working class itself in irreconcilable conflict with the bourgeoisie.

Above all, Owen could not in his day foresee the emerging anarchy of capitalist production. The destructive force unleashed by the periodic paroxysms of capitalist crisis would not allow even a tiny oasis to carry out the systematic planning needed to build his egalitarian society. Indeed, these cooperative ventures with their more limited resources are among the first to be swept away, as later history showed. Many of the cooperative enterprises, built up by years of hard work and self-sacrifice, fell victim to the crises that the capitalist mode of production inevitably brings.

Owen started his first cooperative venture in 1800. By 1825, when he tried to develop New Harmony as an island of cooperation in a world torn by class antagonisms, the first worldwide capitalist economic crisis was under way.

Even the capitalist crisis of 1825, while short-lived, was universal in character. It vitally affected New Harmony because no community can stand alone in the face of such great devastation.

Communism as an idea has existed for centuries. Communist societies like New Harmony and New Lanark and hundreds of others were not an accident of history but a response to the meanness, inequality, poverty, etc., of class society.

The roots of communism go much further back, however. They lie deep in the primary stage of the development of human society. Primary communism was the first form of social existence of the human species.

Lewis Henry Morgan’s writings on the communal life of the Iroquois in North America confirmed what the socialist movement in Europe had deduced about early societies elsewhere before written history: that there was a universal period when property was communal, there was no state, and the products of human labor were shared equitably. These conclusions have since been fortified by the study of Native peoples all over the Americas, Asia and Africa.

Primary communism based on food gathering and hunting succumbed to private ownership because it lacked the necessary concentration and development of the means of production. But private property, while more productive, also brought subjugation and degradation, first of women.

The discovery of the early communist societies refuted the canard assiduously cultivated by apologists for the bourgeoisie: that a planned society is utopian, that humankind cannot plan its own society on the basis of common ownership of the means of production and equitable distribution of the products of labor. People had done just that for hundreds of thousands of years. □



Washington state

Education worker strikes begin again

By Jim McMahan  
Seattle

Heading into Labor Day, teachers at seven Washington Education Association locals are on strike. More walkouts could follow. Red for Ed, the national labor-community movement, has helped spur the teachers here to strike.

In Seattle, after rallies and hard work, school teachers and staff reached a one-year tentative agreement with the Seattle School District on Aug. 31. They will vote on a contract with a reported 10.5 percent pay increase in the coming days.

Extra resources for schools have been mandated in Washington state since a 2012 state Supreme Court ruling. In “the McCleary decision” the court declared the state had the paramount duty to fund K-12 public education. The WEA, along with parents and community groups, had brought the McCleary suit.

But the anti-education and anti-labor state Legislature long delayed enforcement of McCleary, which was supposed to mean extra funds for schools. Held in contempt by the state court and fined \$100,000 a day, the Legislature was finally forced to funnel billions into the ed-



PHOTO: WASHINGTON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Teachers on the picket line in Vancouver, Wash.

ucation system. The court has now ruled the Legislature is “in compliance” with the McCleary decision.

But an attorney for the McCleary plaintiffs noted the court didn’t rule on “whether the state’s plan actually fulfills

the constitutional definition of ‘ample’ funding for programs such as special education or student transportation.” (Seattle Times, June 7)

Drawing on the strength of the national Red for Ed movement, teachers are

striking now over how the new funds will be distributed. The teachers, who have long been held back from pay increases, are striking for pay as well as other resources. Washington state class sizes are among the highest in the country.

By Labor Day, over a hundred school districts in the state had not yet approved contracts with the teachers for the new school year. On the first day of school, teachers stayed out in the southwest part of the state, including Longview and Vancouver, a city of 175,000. Near Vancouver, schools at Battle Ground, Hockinson, Ridgefield, Evergreen and Washougal school districts are all being struck.

Strike authorization has been approved by teachers in a half dozen other districts.

“It’s super-encouraging, the community support we’ve had this week. Teachers have been paid too little for too long,” said Tiffany Schumacher, a teacher at Mountain View High School in the Evergreen School District. (washingtonea.org)

Community support is so strong that it has forced superintendents in Vancouver and Washougal to back away from earlier threats of legal action against the teachers. □

EPA aids Big Coal, imperils human health and planet

By Kathy Durkin

The Trump administration handed Big Coal a bonanza when the Environmental Protection Agency proposed rolling back pollution controls on coal-burning electrical power plants on Aug. 20. Andrew Wheeler, former coal industry lobbyist and acting EPA administrator, signed the plan to the cheers of Big Coal and boos from environmentalists and public health advocates. Wheeler has been dubbed “a member of the coal industry’s Hall of Fame.”

The current U.S. president pledged to rejuvenate the coal industry throughout his election campaign. He promised mine owners that he would help them increase profits and get rid of pesky pollution controls. In his first day in office, he showed his allegiance to these corporate polluters by terminating a ban on coal companies dumping waste into bodies of water.

Now, with Trump’s blessing, comes the EPA’s new policy, misnamed the Affordable Clean Energy plan. This so-called “environmental” policy is a sham that will actually increase coal-plant emissions of carbon dioxide, a major cause of global warming. Coal-fired power plants use coal combustion to generate electricity. This process is dangerous; it produces pollutants which poison the air, harm human health and contribute to climate change. Coal produces the most carbon emissions of any fossil fuel used to generate electricity.

The EPA is also proposing to weaken controls on mercury emissions. Mercury, another coal-fired power plant pollutant, damages the brain and nervous system and harms fetal development.

The new EPA measures will overturn “pollution controls on planet-warming carbon dioxide from coal-fired power plants [put in place] in an effort to move to cleaner energy sources like wind and solar power,” explains the Aug. 20 New York Times. The ACE plan also gives states the

power to decide how much to cut emissions while limiting what they can do to upgrade coal plants. That could help the dirtiest, greenhouse-gas-spewing old power plants keep operating, without installing pollution controls.

Coal is still used for 30 percent of U.S. consumers’ electrical needs. Natural gas, a fossil fuel mostly obtained by dangerous “fracking,” fills 32 percent of needs. Nuclear energy makes up 20 percent of usage.

However, cheaper renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power that are healthier for human life and the planet, are increasingly being used in the U.S. and around the world, with China in the lead.

Demand for coal has lessened while it has increased for renewable energy. U.S. solar and wind industries employ three times as many workers as does the coal industry. Coal exports have decreased, as more countries have switched to safer, cheaper solar, wind and other energy sources because of the environmental health dangers of coal and other fossil fuels.

Coal is no longer a necessity, as there is no energy shortage because of other alternatives. Yet the Trump administration is trying to sabotage moves to renewable energy. The White House is fiercely challenging California’s mandate that all electricity should come from carbon-free sources by 2045. Hawaii plans to do the same, while other states are moving in that direction.

**Human health sacrificed for profits**

By the EPA’s own admissions about its plan, the release of more carbon pollution could cause an additional 1,400 premature deaths and 15,000 more cases of bronchial disease a year. The agency’s figures show that by 2030 there could be 96,000 more severe cases of asthma, said CBS News on Aug. 21. The same day Fred Krupp, president of the Environmental Defense Fund,



PHOTO: APPALACHIAN VOICES

Mountaintop removal mining in Appalachia

stated, “The Trump plan means millions of tons more air pollution endangering our children’s health, lives and future.”

Smoke from coal plants endangers human health. Burning coal also causes other chemical reactions which release toxic airborne pollutants and heavy metals into the atmosphere. The Union of Concerned Scientists lists these pollutants, which cause cancer, heart and lung disease and neurological disorders, at tinyurl.com/ydckummk. U.S. coal power plants emitted more than 197,000 tons of soot and other airborne particulates in 2014; these impair children’s lung development and cause lung disease in adults.

Since many coal-fired plants are located near low-income African-American, Latinx and Indigenous communities, their residents will be more severely affected by these illnesses, something that is not a concern to administration racists.

The methods involved in mining coal are also dangerous and deadly to workers and nearby communities. With mountaintop mining, a common form of surface mining, explosives open the mines and automated machinery mines the coal. The mining and processing spews dust made of ultra-fine particles composed of carcinogenic metals. This dust covers the landscape and houses, and clogs waterways. This coal extraction

method has been used on more than 500 Appalachian mountains.

Michael Hendryx of Indiana University says air pollution from this type of mining leads to 1,200 additional deaths a year from heart and lung disease in neighboring low-income Appalachian communities. Birth defects also increase. (Yale Environment 360, Nov. 21)

A year ago, Trump’s appointees to the Interior Department halted a National Academies of Sciences engineering study of mountaintop mining’s public health risks. It appears this was a deliberate action to keep nearby communities uninformed about the real, local dangers of this type of mining. (NY Times, Aug. 21, 2017)

**Miners: more lung disease, fewer jobs**

Today’s coal companies are using faster-moving machines that emit more dust from silica-laced rock surrounding the coal. Airborne silica dust causes lung disease, particularly among miners. Meanwhile, the Trump administration has weakened mining safety regulations, resulting in worsening health for miners and many more serious, even fatal, workplace injuries.

Every day miners inhale this intensified coal dust, and many will ultimately suffer from respiratory illnesses, especially

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# Prisoners continue to strike!

By Workers World staff

More “inside” actions in the National Prison Strike have been reported since the Aug. 28 roundup in Workers World. (tinyurl.com/y9ssw4sa) The strike was originally called by Jailhouse Lawyers Speak for Aug. 21 through Sept. 9. One key strike demand, “End prison slavery!” refers to widespread state and corporate exploitation of prisoners who receive no or little compensation for work. This slavery is still permitted under the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

**North Carolina** – Despite denying prisoner protest or strikes to the media, the North Carolina Department of Public Services privately admits in its infraction forms that prisoners are being thrown into segregation for strike organizing.

There are rumors from prisoners of strike participation at 11 North Carolina facilities, with confirmation of organizers being put in segregation in at least two prisons. (Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee)

**South Carolina** – Prisoners are reportedly on strike in Broad River, Lee, McCormick, Turbeville, Kershaw and Lieber correctional institutions. The actions include widespread workstrikes, with only a few prisoners reporting to their jobs, and commissary boycotts. (Jailhouse Lawyers Speak)

**Georgia** – Prisoners in the main maximum state security facility, Georgia State Prison—Reidsville, have reported a strike. (JLS)

**Florida** – Five Florida facilities are evidently seeing strike activity: Charlotte

Correctional reports 40 refusing work and 100 boycotting commissary. Dade Correctional prisoners say 30 to 40 on strike. Franklin Correctional reports 30 to 60. Holmes Correctional reports 70. Apalachee Correctional reports an unknown number. (JLS)

**Texas** – In solidarity with the national strike, two prisoners in a Gulf prison messaged they are on hunger strike in segregation, as is Robert Uvalle in Michael Unit, Anderson County, who has been in solitary for most of his 25 years inside. (IWOC)

**Indiana** – Prisoners in the segregation unit at Wabash Valley Correctional



PHOTO: OCCUPY ICE-TAMPA

Institution began a hunger strike Aug. 27, demanding adequate food and an end to cold temperatures in the unit. (IWOC)

**Washington state** – Twenty people detained at Northwest Detention Center were sent to segregation on Aug. 30 after they, and eventually at least 30 others, demanded an end to a new requirement that they stand up as the warden enters each pod. NWDC is a private immigration prison located in Tacoma. On Aug. 21, about 200 people at NWDC went on hunger strike in solidarity with the National Prison Strike; about 60 people continue to hunger strike into a second week. (NWDC Resistance) □

## ‘We hear your demands’

By Los Angeles WW bureau

A noise demo was called on Aug. 21 by the Industrial Workers of the World at Twin Towers Jail, located in downtown Los Angeles. The demonstration was to let the folks behind bars hear our solidarity with their struggle, to let them know that we hear their demands.

John Parker from Workers World Party Los Angeles spoke at the event, connecting the prison-industrial complex to the military-industrial complex. He exposed the role of fascist pigs as protectors of finance capital, through racist police terror at home and imperialist wars abroad.

In solidarity with the nationwide pris-

oner strike, a film screening of “Black August” was hosted by WWP at the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice on Aug. 23. The movie covers the last 14 months of the life of political prisoner George Jackson. The current strike started on Aug. 21 to commemorate the day Jackson was assassinated by San Quentin guards in 1971.

Before the screening started, solidarity statements were read from Palestinian political prisoners who have been targeted by Zionist Israel for fighting for their freedom as members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. A recording was played of Mumia Abu-Jamal speaking on current updates regard-



WW PHOTO

Prisoner support picket in Los Angeles.

ing the Move 9. A statement of solidarity was read regarding Mumia’s court date on Aug. 30. Also read were a eulogy to George Jackson, written by Huey P. Newton, co-founder of the Black Panther Par-

ty for Self Defense, and an introduction to the film. An open discussion followed.

Remember George Jackson! Solidarity with the Nationwide Prison Strike! Tear down the walls! □

# Trump pay freeze attacks POC, women workers

By M. Matsemela-Ali Odum

President Donald Trump announced on Aug. 30 that he plans to freeze a scheduled 2.1 percent pay raise as well as an annual increase based on region, known as the locality pay increase, for federal workers in 2019. Military service people have been exempted from this decision.

This announcement is another and thoroughly predictable attack against U.S. workers. Considering the overrepresentation of Black people in the federal workforce and the reduced gender pay gap for federal workers in comparison to the private sector, Trump’s pay freeze has severe intersectional outcomes in which women of color will be disproportionately impacted.

Trump’s pay freeze is being referred to as an austerity measure. Trump and conservative economists have rationalized these cuts by suggesting they will save as much as \$25 billion. Yet in many ways austerity does not adequately describe the cause and effect of Trump’s pay freeze. Central to neoliberal economic policies, austerity involves government cuts in response to increased debt.

By contrast, the freeze on federal workers’ pay raises is the direct result of Trump’s increased defense budget. In February the Los Angeles Times reported that Trump proposed a 10 percent increase in the federal defense budget, amounting to \$74 billion. Thus, Trump’s federal pay freeze amounts to a transfer of federal workers’ pay to private defense contractors.

Neoliberalism is a complicated term that conjures notions of modernized liberal social policies. In fact, it is merely a reprise of early 20th-century laissez-faire capitalism, a modernization of Adam

Smith’s thoughts in which the liberal economic rights of individuals are awarded to corporate powers. In this process, political economic power is transferred to corporations in lieu of public control.

Most progressive and liberal economists and historians chart the 1970s as the time of the rise of neoliberal policies. However, Black radical and autoworker James Boggs had chronicled the impacts of neoliberalization, which he called automation, in the 1950s. It was then that postwar suburbanization and expansion of the white American middle class were produced through massive layoffs of Black people. The last hired in wartime industry became the first fired, and the effects of these measures became known as the “urban crisis.” Neoliberalism can be seen as the moment the general public began to experience the urban crisis.

Amidst the neoliberal turn of the U.S. political economy, federal employment has been a haven for many workers of color and women. People of color are overrepresented in federal employment in comparison to the general population. In 2016 the Office of Personnel Management reported that whites made up about three-quarters of the U.S. population but only 63 percent of the federal workforce with people of color accounting for nearly 37 percent.

Half of those workers of color are Black workers. Though Black people account for 13 percent, nearly one-fifth of the U.S. population, 18 percent of the federal workforce is Black. The average federal worker makes \$90,000 annually.

In addition, women make up 44 percent of that workforce. On average, a woman in the U.S. makes 79 cents for every dollar a white man makes. However, while

the gender pay gap persists in the federal workforce, that distance is shortened to 89 cents for every dollar.

The one part of government work that remains overly white and male is defense contracting and other military-related activity. Despite Trump’s isolationist rhetoric, the military-industrial complex has

experienced a windfall of profits since his inauguration that continues to expand.

In the wake of the Supreme Court’s recent Janus decision, Trump’s pay freeze is another attack on workers and organized labor. It has disproportionate impact on the most oppressed while further enriching the already powerful. □

## Free Mumia Now!

Continued from page 1

v. Pennsylvania, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against Castille and in favor of Williams. The ruling set a precedent that judges should recuse themselves in capital cases if asked to hear an appeal to a conviction that they themselves had prosecuted.

Mumia’s lawyers are gathering similar evidence of Castille’s judicial and prosecutorial misconduct in his case. The search began when the court granted discovery more than a year ago, but DA Larry Krasner has delayed the turnover of files that may contain the proof that Castille was personally and actively following death penalty cases like Mumia’s. Krasner’s office claims they still have not reviewed more than 200 boxes of files, while some crates of documents are still, purportedly, missing.

Among the files turned over just last week was a 1988 letter that Castille sent to a state senator who was known as a virulent advocate of the death penalty, referencing Mumia and eight other capital defendants. A former assistant district attorney swore that Castille contacted her in 1990, urging the speedy execution of several death row inmates — but Krasner’s

office claims that this memo has been lost.

Despite a slick and well-financed campaign that painted him as a progressive figure who would end the death penalty in Philadelphia, Krasner is no different than any other prosecutor. Upon his election in 2017, he actually appointed Castille to his transition team — after the disgraced former justice had already been found by the U.S. Supreme Court to have unjustly sent convicts to their deaths.

Krasner’s office continues to pressure the accused into accepting plea bargains by threatening to seek the death penalty if they opt to go to trial. And, following in the footsteps of his predecessors Ed Rendell, Seth Williams and Castille, Krasner is colluding with the Fraternal Order of Police to kill Mumia Abu-Jamal by keeping him in prison for the rest of his life.

People Power, not appeals to bourgeois legality, is what will free Mumia Abu-Jamal from prison. It was the power of the people that stopped his execution in the 1990s; it was people power that rescued him from death row; and it was people power that got him the cure for hepatitis C.

Brick by brick, wall by wall, we’re gonna free Mumia Abu-Jamal! □



# Oakland rally: FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

By Reece Evans  
Oakland, Calif.

A rally to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal was held Aug. 28 at Oscar Grant Plaza in downtown Oakland, two days before a major court hearing considered Mumia's case in Philadelphia on Aug. 30. Abu-Jamal is a political activist, journalist and internationally celebrated Black writer imprisoned in Pennsylvania for over 36 years, first on death row and now under a life sentence.

The rally brought attention to the fact that evidence shows now, as it always has, that Mumia Abu-Jamal is innocent. The evidence highlighted at the Aug. 30 hearing also exposed the true nature of the "injustice system" as corrupt.

That hearing pivoted on the fact that former Philadelphia District Attorney Ronald Castille, who was key in prosecuting and condemning Mumia to death row, went on to sit on the Pennsylvania state Supreme Court and to rule on Mumia's later legal appeals, without recusing himself for conflict of interest.

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that it is unconstitutional for a judge to decide an appeal in a case where they had previously been involved at a hands-on level as a prosecutor.

On Aug. 28, the rally called for the freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners. Speakers demanded the release of other prisoners falsely accused and targeted by the racist injustice system, including Leonard Peltier, Mutulu Shakur, Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin (formerly H. Rap Brown) and Kevin Cooper.

The rally also called for solidarity with the nationwide prison strike that began Aug. 21 and continues to Sept. 9.

In addition to MC Ras Ceylon, speakers at the event included Cat Brooks, co-founder of the Anti Police-Terror Project and Oakland mayoral candidate; Gerald Smith, former Black Panther; Cephus X ("Uncle Bobby") Johnson, uncle of Oscar Grant; and representatives from various organizations including the Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Oakland Teachers for Mumia and Workers World Party.

## Labor unions for Mumia

Labor union resolutions and letters of support to "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal" were mentioned at the rally. These included an International Longshore and Warehouse Union resolution representing all 29 West Coast ports, and a letter from the Swedish Dockworkers Union. The latter called for an end to Mumia's unjust imprisonment as well as an end to the racist oppression within and outside of prison that is carried out by a reign of police and neofascist terror.

An excerpt from the San Francisco Labor Council resolution sums up the "legal" crime perpetrated to keep Mumia incarcerated:

"Whereas, the Philadelphia District Attorney's office has obstructed and covered up the evidence of Castille's personal involvement in Mumia's case, and stalled and denied the existence of memos and files showing that involvement. ... There-



WW PHOTO: TERRI KAY

fore Be it Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council demand full disclosure of all police and prosecutorial files relating to Mumia's case by the [current] Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner's office with all deliberate speed, and moreover demand the immediate release of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has been imprisoned for 36 years for a crime which he did not commit."

Long-standing and militant union support for Mumia was documented in a press release from the Free Mumia Coalition: "The Fraternal Order of Police has unsuccessfully sought Mumia's execution for decades. In 1999, longshore workers from the ILWU Local 10 shut down the ports and led a rally of twenty-five thousand in San Francisco to stop Mumia's execution. From prison, Mumia, a former Black Panther, has written nine books and recorded over 3,000 commentaries on KPFA, Prison Radio and other outlets, which inspire and educate millions around the globe who identify with his struggles for justice and equality for all of humanity."

Sponsors of the Aug. 28 rally included

Labor Action Committee To Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Workers World Party, Oakland Teachers for Mumia, Peace and Freedom Party—Alameda County, Socialist Viewpoint, Justice for Palestinians—San Jose, the Oscar Grant Committee, Love Not Blood Campaign, Anti Police-Terror Project, Answer Coalition, Prison Radio, Oakland Teachers for Mumia, Speak Out Now, Freedom Socialist Party, Socialist Organizer, Socialist Action and the Mobilization to Free Mumia.

## Action alert for Mumia!

It is urgent that we act now to bring attention to this injustice and secure freedom for Mumia. Call Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner at 215-686-8000 and tell him that former DA Ron Castille violated Mumia's constitutional rights and that Krasner must not obstruct Mumia's legal petition.

The power of the people was responsible in 2011 for getting Mumia off death row. By the power of the people we can free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners! □



WW PHOTO: JIMMY RAYNOR

Families and allies of prisoners rally at the gates of Lee Correctional Institution in Bishopville, S.C., Aug. 25.

## South Carolina prisoners Jailed in 'a modern day plantation'

Conducted after an April 15 rebellion at Lee Correctional Institution, a South Carolina maximum security prison, this excerpted interview is Part 5 of a series. (Earlier segments are available at [workers.org](http://workers.org).) Lee was the deadliest prison uprising since the Lucasville Uprising on April 11-21, 1993. (See "Lucasville prison uprising 25th anniversary," at [workers.org](http://workers.org).) Jared Ware spoke with individuals inside Lee, one of whom identified as a member of Jailhouse Lawyers Speak, a group of imprisoned human rights advocates who called for the National Prison Strike from Aug. 21 to Sept. 9. Demands and support actions are at [incarceratedworkers.org](http://incarceratedworkers.org).

hand and say, "No."

This is the type of mindset we're dealing with in the state of South Carolina today. ... [South Carolina is] in the top six or seven states as far as racial disparities [that] relates to sentencing and imprisonment rates in the nation. I think [Black people are] only like 20 to 30 percent of the population in South Carolina and over 60-something percent of the prison population.

A recent study not too long ago told us that Black people specifically were being automatically oversentenced by judges. It said if you were Black, you were 50 times more likely to get jail time for a minor offense versus if you were any other race. If you were compared to white defendants, you were over 70 percent more likely to be sentenced to longer sentences, based on your race. Everybody knows the color of the state of South Carolina when you walk into the prison system. All of this is an indicator of the nature of the beast that we are dealing with.

Even when South Carolina was going through Reconstruction, all of the Blacks that were a part of the Reconstruction phase were eventually thrown out of power, because there was a compromise between the North and the South. We have to always remember that. That's when we

get back to 1865, back to the 13th Amendment, that constitutional amendment and the compromise [to continue slavery in prison] that was reached across the table. The power dynamics in the South has never changed. And I think we're seeing the rottenness of it in today's times.

**S:** For example, one of my comrades was recently released from prison over the last year or so. He was housed at Lee County at one point and he was a coordinator on the compound. He was able to organize over 150 members every week to come together positively, sit down and have discussions. ... Whenever there would be any type of altercation, they would try to talk over things first, and most often if they couldn't, then they would handle it like men and knuckle it up. But there wasn't so much knives, and people getting killed or stabbed up. All of that was calmed down for a while.

[Then] the STG (Security Threat Group) supervisor from headquarters got with the warden at that time, and they called [my friend] to a conference to explain how is it that you could have Crips, Bloods, Muslims, etc., in the same room every week and never any violence going on? The [STG] told [the warden] that [the prisoners] were "up to something." And

what did they do to [my comrade coordinating the program]? They shipped him to another institution.

To make a long story short, [then the administration at Lee] moved these guys around, piled all these guys up on one yard, waited for one thing to happen. Boom! You get the worst thing that happened in the last 25 years. [April 15] was strategically implemented.

**D:** All of this right here [in Lee Correctional] is not by accident. None of it is by accident. That's the sad part about it.

**S:** Yeah, they were used as lab rats.

**S:** I want to say for society, to them: Let he who has not sinned cast the first stone. Prisoners, some of us in here, have made mistakes and some of us did the things we did. ... But we have paid for our mistakes. Show some humanity. That's what we want society to do — show some humanity.

**D:** One last note I wanted to add. The ground is vibrating right now for a national strike Aug. 21 [to Sept. 9] throughout the nation. South Carolina is an example of what's actually occurring throughout the nation. ... People died here [at Lee Correctional] so they might want to get in back of this [strike] right here, and highlight it by mobilizing throughout the inside.

So we ask folks to support it on the outside ... really support these actions. Let the people know that wherever prisoners may decide to have a strike or a sit-in that the public is mindful, and are watching for any type of retaliatory actions that may take place throughout the process of this resistance that may be taking place across this nation. □



# Anti-fascists in Chemnitz

## ‘Heart, not hate’

By John Catalinotto

On Sept. 1, a traditional day for anti-war demonstrations across Germany, more than 4,000 anti-fascists, including both moderate and leftist forces, confronted a roughly equal number of anti-immigrant and other racist and openly Nazi elements on the streets of Chemnitz. The fascists disguised their mobilization as a “funeral march.”

The anti-fascists, marching under the slogan, “Heart, not hate,” managed to stop the march of the reactionaries at various street crossings in this industri-

al city, located in the state of Saxony in southeastern Germany. A large contingent of state and national police separated the demonstrations.

Five days earlier the fascists, with the full support of the ultra-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party and the Pegida anti-immigrant movement, swamped the Chemnitz police and ran wild through the city, chasing and sometimes catching and beating people who looked like they might be refugees, immigrants or Muslims. These were mostly people from Arab and African countries.

The fascists fed on the false news story



Anti-fascists confront racist march in Chemnitz, Germany, Sept. 1.

expressed anti-fascist sentiments and had a Cuban father, making the “funeral march” a fraud.

As in the United States, in Germany the complicity of the leading pro-capitalist politicians with the anti-immigrant movement, together with the pro-fascist sentiments of large sections of the police, makes it necessary for unions of workers and leftist parties to organize active, fighting mass movements to confront fascist and racist elements. □

# Trump, Charlottesville, Chemnitz and

By Fred Goldstein

Sept. 1 — To many progressives among the population, Donald Trump appears to be on the ropes. They are waiting for the establishment to take him down. There is great anticipation that the Democratic Party will make electoral gains and get the chance to further discredit him.

There is the mounting public evidence of Trump’s corruption. Many in his inner circle have pleaded guilty or been convicted of lying, money laundering, tax and/or bank fraud. There is his growing anxious rage expressed in his tweets against the Mueller investigation. There is also his isolation from ruling-class society as illustrated by his exclusion from the week-long and highly publicized, super-patriotic, militaristic funeral ceremonies for John McCain.

But the fascist march in Charlottesville, Va., in August 2017 and the recent fascist anti-im/migrant riot in Chemnitz, Germany, show how illusory this view is that the defeat of Trump will solve the problem of racist reaction.

No one knows at this point how the struggle between Trump and his allies, on the one hand, and the anti-Trump forces in the ruling class on the other, will turn out. But it would be fatal for progressives and revolutionaries to rely on the reactionary ruling class to defeat Trump.

Moreover, while the political defeat of Trump is important, it will not be fundamental because it will not deal with the racist, misogynist, xenophobic, national chauvinist forces that Trump has conjured up and consolidated into a reactionary base. This base is not going to go away, whatever happens to Trump. The workers and the oppressed will still have to deal with this reactionary mass. What will be needed in the future is to defeat Trumpism, not just at the polls but on the ground.

### Charlottesville — fascism shows its face

The world got a glimpse of the forces emerging around Trump at Charlottesville last year when the Klan and the Nazis united with other fascist forces in the “Unite the Right” armed torchlight parade through the University of Virginia campus in defense of a statue of Robert E. Lee, commanding general of the slaveryocracy during the Civil War.

One anti-fascist woman demonstrator was killed, a Black man was brutally beaten and many were injured as the police watched passively. Trump refused to denounce the fascists and finally said that there were good people “on both sides.”

Fortunately, the movement recovered from this assault and forced the remov-

*While the political defeat of Trump is important, it will not be fundamental because it will not deal with the racist, misogynist, xenophobic, national chauvinist forces that Trump has conjured up and consolidated into a reactionary base. This base is not going to go away, whatever happens to Trump. The workers and the oppressed will still have to deal with this reactionary mass. What will be needed in the future is to defeat Trumpism, not just at the polls but on the ground.*

al of Confederate statues in many cities, from Louisiana to Texas. The Unite the Right forces received an important blow when the movement toppled a Confederate statue in Durham, N.C.

Because of the militant resistance, the “Unite the Right 2” rally in Washington, D.C. on the one-year anniversary of Charlottesville this Aug. 10 fell flat.

### Pro-Confederate forces in high places

However, the degree to which the racist, pro-Confederate forces in the ruling class are dug in was shown by the reaction of the University of North Carolina administration to the recent pulling down of a Confederate statue in Chapel Hill, N.C.

The statue of a Confederate soldier was pulled down by students after their campaign to have the authorities remove it went nowhere. After it was pulled down, the university and the board of governors decided it should be relocated on campus. Meanwhile, arrest warrants were issued for student demonstrators.

This incident illustrates how deeply embedded pro-Confederate sympathy is in the ruling class 150 years after the Civil War. Chapel Hill is supposed to be a liberal institution. States all over the South and elsewhere have passed laws forbidding the removal of a statue without the express consent of the state historical society, regardless of the sentiment of African Americans or progressive anti-racist sectors of the population. Liberal Ivy League colleges and universities in the North have refused to budge on this matter as well.

**Racism and the face of fascism in the U.S.**

The origin of this underlying racism which penetrates U.S. capitalist society goes back to the betrayal of the enslaved people after the Civil War by the victorious capitalist class of the North.

The Northern armies occupied the Southern slave states. There was a period of Reconstruction from 1865 to 1877. Voting rights were granted for formerly enslaved peoples. Many African Americans were elected to various state and local offices. During the brief period of Re-

construction, a Freedmen’s Bureau was created and land ownership rights and other rights for African Americans, such as the right to sue, to serve on a jury, etc., were enforced by the U.S. military occupation forces.

This period of Reconstruction was ended abruptly in 1877 with the withdrawal of U.S. forces after the Hayes-Tilden Compromise, in which Rutherford B. Hayes was given the presidency in return for troop withdrawal from the South.

The political dominance of the South by the former slavocracy was restored. The formerly enslaved were resubjugated and pressed into a form of feudalism or land slavery called sharecropping. Lynching ran riot. Rigid racist segregation was enforced. The landowners once again ran the South and did so for 100 years.

There was no attempt by the Northern capitalist class to purge the South of racism and racist officials. There was no reeducation campaign among the white population. No resources were devoted to the anti-racist transformation of the South. The capitalists of the North were quite content to build railroads and shipping lines and to create banks to profit from the land slavery of African Americans. Racism was not only enforced in the South with Ku Klux Klan violence and lynchings, Black Codes, Jim Crow segregation, poll taxes, etc., but it also prevailed in the North.

**Chemnitz, fall of Berlin Wall, and end of denazification**

Fascists, right wingers, and anti-immigrant racists of all sorts have been mobilized in this country by Donald Trump. He has fomented his anti-immigrant racism on a world stage. This anti-immigrant, right-wing trend has been reflected in Europe among fascist and pro-fascist forces as well. Indeed, Trump sounds much like the European right.

On Aug. 28, the world was treated to the ugly spectacle of a mob of thousands of Nazis and anti-immigrant sympathizers arriving from all over Germany and taking over the streets of the German city of Chemnitz and hunting down immigrants “like wolves,” as the New York Times put it on Aug. 31.

The mob formed after the capitalist press triggered the event with the headline “35-Year-Old Dies after Stabbing in the City.” The rumors were that the man who was stabbed was protecting a woman from sexual assault by immigrants. Even the police had to eventually declare that rumor false.

The following evening a reported 8,000 racists occupied the center of the city and hunted down anyone they suspected of being an immigrant. There were Nazi salutes with “Sieg Heils,” which are outlawed in Germany, and chants of “We’ll get you all.”

The German bourgeois publication Der Spiegel reported that “The police in Saxony likewise hit the headlines with predictable regularity when they, for example, prevent journalists from doing their jobs or fail to mobilize enough officers, thus forcing them to stand by passively as right-wing extremists rampage through the streets.” (Der Spiegel, Aug. 31)

Chemnitz was formerly called Karl-Marx-Stadt during the period of the German Democratic Republic, before the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 and capitalism was restored as West Germany annexed the East in 1990. It is the third-largest city in the southeastern state of Saxony with a population of 250,000.

**Denazification in socialist East Germany**

After the Red Army occupied eastern Germany in 1945, the Communist Party was merged with the Social Democratic Party to become the Socialist Unity Party. In 1949 the GDR was established following the establishment of West Germany. The new government undertook a vigorous program of denazification, unlike what occurred in capitalist West Germany, or the Federal Republic.

In the capitalist West, high Nazi officials retained their pensions and got official jobs. “A total of 25 cabinet ministers, one president and one chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany — as postwar Germany is officially known — had been members of Nazi organizations.” (Der Spiegel, March 6, 2012) This list was finally forced into the public by the Left Party.

The GDR, under socialist leadership, took an entirely opposite approach. It was undoubtedly very difficult to construct a state and a society with a population that had lived under Hitler for 12 years. Nevertheless, the attempt was made.

For example, Bruno Bruni de la Motte, no socialist himself, wrote in the London Guardian on March 8, 2007: “I was born and grew up in the German Democratic

Continued on the next page



# NAFTA was bad for workers; U.S. belligerence is worse

By G. Dunkel

The North American Free Trade Agreement has helped the U.S. imperialist ruling class dominate both its junior imperialist neighbor to the north, Canada, and its neighbor to the south, Mexico — which is closely tied to Central and Latin America. At the same time it has enriched the owners at the expense of workers and farmers in all three countries.

Negotiated by the George H.W. Bush administration and signed into law by Bill Clinton in December 1993, NAFTA

has brought tremendous benefits to big U.S. corporations that can maneuver to move production to wherever it is cheapest. This is why auto production is booming in Mexico, where workers report the average auto wage is around \$2.50 — not the \$8-10 an hour U.S. companies claim but which only a small handful of highly skilled workers receive. (AP, Sept. 25).

In 2017, the Mexican automotive industry employed some 840,000 workers both for the assembly of vehicles and for the production of auto parts.

Consider this statistic from the U.S.

Department of Commerce: U.S. trade in goods and services with Canada and Mexico rose from \$337 billion in 1993 to \$1.11 trillion in 2015. This tripling of the dollar value of trade implies an even greater increase in profits.

Jerry Dias, president of Canada's largest private-sector trade union, Unifor, told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in August that "NAFTA was bad for Canadian workers, [U.S.] American workers, and especially Mexican workers."

Unifor has been very active in trying to build ties with the Mexican union movement. It has invited Mexican trade union leaders to Canada, its leaders have gone to Mexico, and it has raised Mexican issues in a number of demonstrations throughout Canada. Unifor represents most of the 88,000 workers in the Canadian auto assembly industry and the 120,000 workers making auto parts.

### NAFTA crushes Mexican farmers

NAFTA devastated Mexican farmers. CBS News estimated in 2006 that 2 million Mexican farmers had lost their livelihood due to imports of highly subsidized U.S. corn, beans and rice. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated that 900,000 small Mexican corn farmers were forced off their farms to look for work elsewhere because U.S. agribusiness could undersell their corn.

This flood of displaced farmers into Mexico's labor market contributed to the drop in real wages and to rising unemployment rates during the first 10 years of NAFTA. Displaced farmers who couldn't find jobs in Mexico were forced to migrate to the United States.

Trump's assertion that NAFTA is the

"worst agreement ever" for U.S. business or workers is simply his own demagoguery. He claims that by importing less and exporting more, ordinary U.S. people will gain. Some see Trump's stance as a bargaining ploy for the U.S. to get more from Canada and Mexico and pay less. This approach does nothing to benefit U.S. workers.

Mexico's outgoing president, Enrique Peña Nieto, wanted to sign quickly before the Dec. 1 transition, when his successor, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, takes office. It would be a last success for Peña Nieto and remove a major problem from the plate of López Obrador.

But the main reason why Mexico gave in was Trump's threat to impose tariffs on all automotive imports, not just impose a quota. This would devastate the Mexican economy and destroy the employment of nearly 900,000 people. It would also affect U.S. workers who make parts that Mexican manufacturers include in the products they make for export.

The Canadian economy is more capable of withstanding U.S. threats than Mexico's. A good example of Canada's strengths is the tight links between plants in Canada and the U.S. auto industry for over 50 years. A 2004 study showed that 257,000 jobs in Michigan and \$13 billion in annual production depend on the crossing between Detroit and Windsor, Ontario. Any action on Trump's part to harm or destroy the Canadian auto industry would have a major impact on these quarter-million jobs.

NAFTA had already hurt the interests of working people in the three countries. Trump's belligerent approach to trade risks making the lives of Mexican, U.S. and Canadian workers even harder. □

# the struggle

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Republic. Our school books dealt extensively with the Nazi period and what it did to the German nation and most of Europe.

"During the course of their schooling, all pupils were taken at least once to a concentration camp, where a former inmate would explain in graphic detail what took place. All concentration camps in the former GDR were maintained as commemorative places, 'so that no one should forget.' The government itself included a good proportion of those, including Jews, who had been forced to flee Hitler fascism or who had been interned.

"In the East, thousands of new teachers had to be found overnight, as those tainted by the Nazi ideology were not suitable to teach a new postwar generation, and this resulted in schools having under-trained and inadequate teaching staff for some years; all lawyers were replaced, too...."

### Nazism revived by capitalist Germany

De la Motte continued, "In [capitalist] West Germany thousands of leading Nazi army officers, judges who had sent Jews and leftists to their deaths, doctors who'd experimented on concentration camp victims, politicians and others, were left unscathed and continued in their professions."

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the return to capitalism brought a quick shift. From the very outset there were demonstrations against immigrants. Nazism and right-wing politics resurfaced in the form of anti-immigrant racism and xenophobia.

It is no surprise that 29 years after the restoration of capitalist exploitation and with the creeping world economic crisis hitting Germany, including the youth and the petty bourgeoisie, the neo-fascist movement should take on the tone of a racist, anti-immigrant crusade.

In the U.S, even more than in Europe, racism in one form or another has always been the cutting edge of fascism and the face of political reaction.

### Capitalist class never tried to root out racism

It is no accident that the KKK and Nazis rallied around Barry Goldwater in his run for president in 1964. It is no accident that Richard Nixon started his presidential campaign in 1972 with a racist "Southern strategy" to bring Southern Democrats into the Republican Party in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement.

It should also be noted that in 1982 Ronald Reagan began his presidential campaign in Philadelphia, Miss., with

Confederate flags flying — in a city where three Civil Rights workers had been murdered in 1964 by the Klan during the voting rights campaign in the South. And Bill Clinton, besides passing racist legislation on mass incarceration, the death penalty and "terrorism," during his election campaign showed his racism by going back to his state of Arkansas to witness the execution of a mentally disabled Black man.

### Fascism at the border

Right now ICE and the Border Patrol are carrying out fascist measures against immigrants by deliberately separating families, as well as rounding up workers everywhere.

So the capitalist class has now had 150 years to root out racism and has not made any serious effort to do so. The capitalists have shown that they feel it is in their class interests to perpetuate racism.

They never instituted a thoroughgoing anti-racist educational campaign of making every student in school go to photo exhibits of lynchings to be narrated by families or neighbors of victims. Slave quarters were not preserved as exhibits for mandatory visits so no one would ever forget. And importantly, compensation was not paid to the victims of slavery nor were they given the lands of the plantation owners for whom they labored.

In short the capitalist ruling class has always preserved racism rather than destroy it, just as the German ruling class has never made a determined effort to root out Nazism.

The revolutionary forces in the U.S. must organize for struggle against the revived, concentrated racist base that has been fostered by Trump. The progressives, revolutionaries and advanced workers must also be prepared for struggle after Trump, because anti-immigrant and anti-Black racism is a lethal weapon the bosses keep in reserve for times of crisis. □

# EPA aids Big Coal, imperils human health and planet

Continued from page 5

Black Lung disease. More than 76,000 miners have died from this illness since 1968. (Newsweek, Jan. 27) The worst form of the incurable disease now affects more Appalachian coal miners than ever, including newer, younger miners.

David Blakley, epidemiologist with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, has said, "As a percent of all miners, we're seeing more of it than we've ever seen before." It could affect one in five miners. (npr.org, May 22)

Meanwhile, the number of coal jobs has been drastically reduced because of acceleration in mechanization and technology. Although the current president promised more jobs to desperate miners

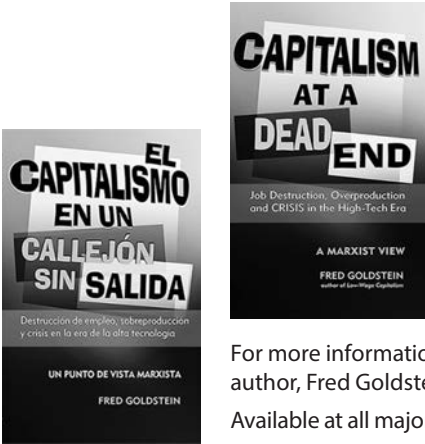
to get their votes, his words were empty promises. While there were 250,000 such jobs 40 years ago, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 51,800 coal mining jobs as of Dec. 31.

Only 1,100 coal jobs were added nationally in 2017, while several coal-producing states have lost mining jobs. Coal companies have shuttered. The huge, mechanized mining sites are increasing production and profits — but with fewer workers. Miners are desperate to obtain these jobs to feed their families.

The current mining methods used by coal companies have impoverished formerly coal-dependent communities in Appalachia and elsewhere. Former miners and their relatives are left with only low-wage jobs, if any, and damaged health.

The United Mine Workers website emphasizes, "If miners want to reduce their exposure to respirable coal mine dust, they need to join the union. No one else will provide them the protections they need on the job."

Unions are crucial in the fight for workers' protections, especially now as the corporations, with their ally in the White House, wage war on workers' rights and lives. What is needed is worker solidarity and militant action to protect health and safety, demand jobs and pensions and guarantee the survival and flourishing of communities and the planet. □



### Capitalism at a Dead End

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

### El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to **LowWageCapitalism.com**

Available at all major online booksellers.



# Today is still labor day

The official “Labor Day” has now passed in the U.S.

But guess what? Today is still “labor day” — as is every day.

Because against the shark-teeth of capitalism, workers are still in the fight of our lives for wages we can live and thrive on, for health benefits and housing we can afford, for jobs that don’t break us down but give us satisfaction and respect.

A militant, independent, rank-and-file labor movement in the U.S. is mandatory to wage this struggle successfully. It’s crucial that workers not fall for either the bait or the crumbs thrown out by bosses or bourgeois politicians.

For instance, the “official” Labor Day in September: Did you know that the federal government put that in place in 1894 to defang a rising, militant workers’ movement that celebrated its “labor day” in May with rebellions and strikes?

May 1 was declared International Workers’ Day in 1889 by socialists in memory of the Haymarket Martyrs, who fought for an eight-hour work day. By 1894 millions were unemployed and in the streets after a U.S. capitalist economic crash. By May of that year, hundreds of railroad workers of the Pullman Company and the American Railroad Union struck, closing down all rail traffic passing through key Midwest links. President Grover Cleveland called out U.S. troops to put down the strike with bloody repression — and then he pushed a pro-

posal through Congress for an “officially recognized” Labor Day.

What a reminder that a militant workers’ struggle — the struggle of labor against capital — will never win if we wait for “official recognition” before we make demands or take action.

In Boston this Labor Day, the streets were taken over by hundreds of workers who are not waiting.

Low-wage Marriott hotel workers advanced into the heart of the financial district at Prudential Center on Sept. 3. This was no symbolic march.

Shouting “¡Si se puede!” “Yes, we can!” and “What kind of power? Union power!” the property maintenance workers, door attendants, window cleaners and food service workers flooded the streets. They sat down to block traffic, and at the Sheraton Boston they announced a strike authorization vote. The workers are represented by Local 26, Unite Here.

In Labor Day coast-to-coast militancy, almost a thousand Marriott Hotel workers also demonstrated in San Francisco for living wages. Seventy-five workers were arrested. An overall demand was “One job should be enough!”

Despite the vicious, continuing push-back and repression from bosses, workers are surging again. Today, the struggle may be for “enough.”

Workers create everything. Some day, on the road to socialism, the cry from workers will be for everything. □

# Syrian army prepares to retake Idlib province

By Karin Leukefeld  
Damascus

Thousands of soldiers, elite units, heavy military equipment — the Syrian army is present in the south and west of Idlib province. The scenario is similar to what preceded the liberation of East Aleppo, the eastern suburbs of Ghuta, and the southwestern provinces of Dera’a and Quneitra.

Helicopters circle the province and drop leaflets calling on the combatants to surrender: “The war is about to end” and “Time to stop the bloodshed.” The people of Idlib should agree to reconciliation “as our people have done in other parts of Syria.”

Idlib has become a kind of “dumping ground” for all those armed combat groups who oppose a ceasefire and agreements with the government, and who want to capture Damascus and turn Syria into a religious state. Their motto is “God can defeat them.” They are close to al-Qaida or the “Islamic State” (IS) and are considered “terrorist groups.” In the framework of the “fight against terrorism,” Syria and its allies can continue to fight them despite agreements on cease-fires or “de-escalation areas.”

The other category of fighting groups in Idlib is described and supported by the Western NATO countries and the Gulf states as “moderate rebels.” This spectrum includes various militias and remnants of the “Free Syrian Army.” The motto of their struggle is “Stop tyranny.” As regards content and in their behavior, they hardly differ from the first category of [“terrorist”] fighters.

In May 2018, in order to better control them and separate them from the extremist combat units, Turkey urged the “moderate rebels” to form a “National Liberation Front.” So far, however, Ankara has not succeeded in gaining real control over that front. A few days ago, its leadership called for an ongoing war against Damascus and wants to defend the province of Idlib in any case.

The “terrorist” combat groups are dominated by the successor organization to the Nusra Front, which is now called Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS, Alliance for the Conquest of the Levant). According to its own statements, the HTS has 37,800 fighters and controls Idlib. In a bloody power struggle with former allies, the organization prevailed in 2017. New reactionary groups had emerged at that time (Jaiah Al-Badia with 2,800 fighters and Al-Malahim with about 1,700 fighters). Remaining IS units are located in the southeastern border area between the provinces of Idlib and Hama. Their number is unclear. They are rejected by the other militias.

Whether “terrorist” or “moderate” — there is pronounced competition between all groups. Bloody power struggles among them have caused more victims in their own ranks since 2017 than in struggles with the Syrian army. Ammunition and food warehouses, bases, headquarters and convoys go up in flames. Two hundred and twenty leaders of various groups have been specifically murdered or died in shootings since the end of April.

Each combat group has imposed new “administrative structures” on its sphere of influence. Schools, courts, public insti-

# Puerto Rico resists

By Cheryl LaBash and Berta Joubert-Ceci  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

A dramatic, torch-lit nighttime march through the streets of the Isla Verde neighborhood denounced the second anniversary of the U.S.-imposed Fiscal Control Board dictatorship on Aug. 31. Ranging in age from families with babies in strollers and elementary school children to elders, participants gathered at dusk in a Banco Popular parking lot. Fiscal Control Board Chairperson Jose Carrion III has deep family ties with this bank.

The lead banner, “Lucha por la independencia, contra la junta Rebélate!” [Fight for independence, rebel against the junta!], was followed by a single woman who held high a huge black and grey Puerto Rican flag — muting its vibrant red and pale blue colors as a symbol of resistance. Then a contingent twirled and danced with large red silk-screen “Ahora” flags to the beat of chants and protest songs. Large placards, mounted on polyvinyl chloride pipes painted black, displayed main demands and themes: no privatization, no recortes (cuts), the government is anti-worker, fuera policía (police, get out), no cenizas (coal ash), and to be poor is not a crime.

A heavy presence of riot-equipped police stood on every corner of this busy thoroughfare, reinforced with patrol cars and motorcycles flashing blue lights. Restaurants and shops lined one side of the march route while international hotel chains and high-rise condominiums lined the other, between the road and the nearby beach. The march stopped at the San Juan hotel to salute the workers there who labored tirelessly during Hurricane Maria, when the hotel was used to house

U.S. agencies like the Federal Emergency Management Agency instead of providing shelter for families who lost their homes.

At the end of the march the police, shoulder to shoulder and backed by motorcycles, blocked the entrance to the Marriott Hotel to protect it from the final rally. Marriott is trying to take the People’s Beach and encampment adjacent to this hotel, in order to construct a parking lot and further destroy hurricane-resistant eco-features.

While the amplified voices of leaders of the organizations that united for the action rang out, vacationers forced to park on the roadside dragged their bags across the boulevard and around the rally. Speakers included representatives from teachers’ organizations, political parties and socialist and independence organizations. The final speaker called for moving from protest to organizing popular disobedience to the junta and its complicit government.

A leaflet distributed by organizers called for a #DiaDelDesempleo (day of unemployment) picket at the Fortaleza on Sept. 3, and actions on the anniversary of Hurricane Maria, Sept. 20, and to mark the 150th anniversary of El Grito de Lares, the first major revolt against Spanish colonialism that began on September 23, 1868.

## Reactions

These writers are in Puerto Rico gathering testimony directly from people who are affected by the historic hurricane of colonialism; they are preparing to put the U.S. on trial for 120 years of crimes against Puerto Rico at an International Tribunal on Oct. 27 in New York City.

Even in everyday interactions, the anger of ordinary Puerto Rican people smolders just below the surface. A Puerto Rican grocery store manager’s friendly expression changed when he described how domestic businesses are being squeezed out by the subsidy for U.S. investments.

Products like eggs “el pais” — produced in Puerto Rico by Puerto Rican establishments — are quickly snapped up and preferred by many shoppers. Yet in 2011 some 70 percent of eggs consumed here were imported, according to a Consumption Table from the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture.

The parking attendant, at the lot we used during the demonstration, gave us back the money we paid when he saw a leaflet for the International Tribunal in New York. He said, “You are helping our people.” The demonstration itself earned enthusiastic horn honks; workers came out of restaurants to take pictures.

Puerto Rico needs solidarity and reparations, not charity. Put the U.S. colonial crimes on trial Oct. 27 in New York City. More information and resources are at [PuertoRicoTribunal.org](http://PuertoRicoTribunal.org), on Facebook and @PRTribunal on Twitter. Make a donation to help bring people from Puerto Rico to testify at [gofundme.com/tribunalpuertorico](http://gofundme.com/tribunalpuertorico). □

Endorse the

PEOPLE’S TRIBUNAL

on

U.S. Crimes against Puerto Rico

**On Oct. 27, 2018**, at 9 a.m. in the Holyrood Church/Iglesia Santa Cruz in New York City, join Rafael Cancel Miranda and other Puerto Rican and international personalities and organizations at the **PEOPLE’S TRIBUNAL on U.S. Crimes Against Puerto Rico**.

To request information, email: [TribunalPuertoRico@gmail.com](mailto:TribunalPuertoRico@gmail.com); to endorse type “Puerto Rico Tribunal” in the subject line. Website: [PuertoRicoTribunal.org](http://PuertoRicoTribunal.org) • Facebook: [Puerto Rico Tribunal](https://www.facebook.com/PuertoRicoTribunal) **Donations are urgently needed**. Please send your contribution to: [Puerto Rico Tribunal](https://www.gofundme.com/tribunalpuertorico), P.O. Box 34249, Philadelphia, PA 19101 Online: [gofundme.com/tribunalpuertorico](https://www.gofundme.com/tribunalpuertorico)



# Behind Donetsk leader’s assassination

By Greg Butterfield

Alexander Zakharchenko, prime minister of the anti-fascist Donetsk People’s Republic, was assassinated on Aug. 31 when an explosion ripped through the Separ restaurant in the capital city of Donetsk.

Zakharchenko’s bodyguard, Vyacheslav Dotsenko, was also killed. Twelve other people were injured in the blast, four of them severely, including Finance Minister Alexander Timofeyev. Natalia Volkova, a youth activist, received third-degree burns over 60 percent of her body. (Donetsk News Agency, Sept. 1)

Denis Levin, a communist worker from Ukraine living in political exile in Donetsk, told Workers World that the restaurant was often frequented by families and children.

Twelve people were taken into custody on suspicion of participating in planning and carrying out the bombing. According to DPR authorities, the terrorist act was carried out by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), through operatives trained by U.S. and NATO military and intelligence services. (Sputnik News, Aug. 31)

Zakharchenko, a small businessperson and the son of a coal miner, participated in the anti-fascist uprising and militia movement in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine, following a right-wing coup in Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, in early 2014. The coup was backed to the hilt by the United States, which actively collaborated with local oligarchs and neo-Nazis.

In April 2014, with U.S.-NATO support, the Ukrainian regime opened up a brutal war against the people of Donbass. The war has so far cost more than 10,000 lives, according to the United Nations. That May, popular referenda established



200,000 gathered in Donetsk Sept. 2 for funeral of Prime Minister Alexander Zakharchenko.

Donetsk and Lugansk as independent people’s republics.

Zakharchenko became prime minister of the DPR in August 2014. As a respected militia fighter without strong political ties, he was seen as a compromise figure between the left-leaning and anti-establishment forces that led the Donbass uprising and the more conservative, pro-capitalist forces backed by the government of the Russian Federation.

Donbass desperately needed the support of neighboring Russia, then and now, as it is cut off from food, medicine, equipment and other basic needs by a Western blockade.

Zakharchenko was closely identified with the Minsk accords, a set of agreements he signed in early 2015 with the participation of Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine, to end the war and bring about a peaceful resolution to the conflict. However, the Western-backed government in Kiev, headed by President Petro Poroshenko, has never respected the accords. The Ukrainian side continues to shell residential areas along the line of conflict, including the outskirts of the Donetsk capital.

Despite popular disenchantment with the Minsk accords and the difficulties caused by the blockade, Zakharchenko remained personally popular as a symbol of the united front against the Ukrainian regime.

Zakharchenko usually wore his militia fatigues, emphasizing the state of siege of the republic, and was frequently seen at the front among the soldiers defending against the Ukrainian Armed Forces and neo-Nazi battalions. In February 2015, he was wounded in action during one of the last battles that successfully turned back a Ukrainian military offensive.

He had a down-to-earth style modeled after one of his heroes, Fidel Castro, and frequently went among the residents of the republic to listen to their problems. He established an online video dialogue with residents of Ukraine and areas of Donbass under Ukrainian occupation. His style was credited with bringing a sense of daily normalcy back to the war-battered capital city.

Zakharchenko’s assassination was condemned by the governments of the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic. (SANA, Sept. 1) Russian Presi-



Alexander Zakharchenko (center) during the battle of Debaltsevo in Feb. 2015.

dent Vladimir Putin offered his personal condolences to the people of Donetsk. (TASS, Aug. 31)

On Sept. 2 tens of thousands of people came to the Donetsk Opera House, where Zakharchenko lay in state, to pay their final respects. Some 200,000 people lined the streets for his funeral procession. (Novorossia News, Sept. 2)

### Why now?

Other assassinations have been carried out by the SBU in Donetsk, notably of two popular militia commanders close to Zakharchenko, known by their military call-signs Givi and Motorola.

There were also earlier attempts on Zakharchenko’s life, most involving car bombs and sniper attacks.

However, the assassination of the prime minister through a terror attack on a civilian target in central Donetsk is at a whole other level. Such an act could not have been carried out by a politically, economically and militarily dependent regime like Ukraine’s without high-level U.S. approval.

As if to underline the U.S. role in the murder, the following day Ukrainian President Poroshenko stood side by side with NATO head Jens Stoltenberg at the Washington funeral of war criminal Sen. John McCain, who was part of the bipartisan bloc that helped bring the Ukrainian junta to power during the Barack Obama administration. (Interfax-Ukraine, Sept. 3) McCain famously shared a platform with Ukrainian fascist Oleh Tyanybok in Kiev before the 2014 coup.

So it’s important to ask: Why was Zakharchenko assassinated now, and in this way?

Of course, an attack like this is meant to sow fear in the residents of Donbass

and shake confidence in the government of the anti-fascist republic. In this respect it failed, as shown by the defiant mass outpouring for Zakharchenko’s funeral.

But the attack must also be seen in an international context.

Zakharchenko’s assassination came as the Syrian Army, with support from its Russian, Iranian and Hezbollah allies, moves to retake Idlib province,

one of the last strongholds of the Western-backed contra armies in Syria. (See article by Karin Leukefeld on page 10)

Just days before, the Russian military warned that U.S.-backed forces could stage another “false flag” chemical weapons attack in Idlib, of the sort used so frequently to justify prolonged Western intervention in Syria. Syria’s representative then presented evidence of such a plan to the United Nations. (FARS News Agency, Aug. 29)

Was the assassination of Zakharchenko a warning to Moscow and its allies, an act of retaliation for their exposure of the planned provocation in Idlib?

Throughout the long imperialist war to dismember Syria, Ukraine has frequently been used by the West as a looming threat against Damascus’ ally — the threat of a second front on Russia’s Western border that could flare up at any moment.

It also comes amidst the deepening internal struggle inside the U.S. ruling-class political establishment over which direction the Pentagon war machine and CIA is to take: further toward war with Russia, as advocated by Democratic Party and establishment Republican Party leaders, or toward other targets, including Iran and China, as preferred by Trump.

Anti-imperialists and anti-war activists must not disregard the assassination of the Donetsk leader as a local event of limited significance. Instead they should see it as a warning sign of the need to redouble efforts to reach out to poor and working people here, to counter the anti-Russia witch hunt, and to mobilize to stop U.S. intervention everywhere!

This is the best tribute we can pay to fallen anti-fascist Alexander Zakharchenko. □

# Irish journalists arrested for exposing British imperialism

By Christian Noakes

Police in Ireland’s occupied territory arrested investigative journalists Barry McCafferty and Trevor Birney on Aug. 31 in connection with the documentary “No Stone Unturned,” which they helped make. The film investigates the 1994 Loughinisland Massacre, in which members of the loyalist terrorist organization Ulster Volunteer Force opened fire on a pub, killing six and wounding five. This indiscriminate killing was meant to terrorize Catholics in the occupied six counties.

Commonly referred to as “Northern Ireland,” this portion of Ireland is still occupied by British forces and subjected to British law. The 1922 partition between this territory and the rest of Ireland has plagued the country, and it endangers the largely Catholic nationalist community cut off from their brothers and sisters in the Republic.

The stubbornly insatiable drive to maintain British imperialism is at the root of the Troubles — three decades of intense conflict and turmoil during which the Loughinisland Massacre took place.

Survivors and family members of the slain civilians have long suspected collusion between the UVF and the Royal Ulster Constabulary — an imperialist police force in the occupied six counties with a long history of violence and close connections to loyalist paramilitary organizations. The RUC has since changed its name to the Police Service of Northern Ireland, but has retained its role in the imperialist order.

Suspensions of collusion were stoked by destruction of the getaway car, DNA evidence and RUC interview transcripts. It also came to light that although the names of the suspects were known in the first 24 hours, police tipped the men off and did not question them for another two months. The suspected shooter,

Ronald Hawthorn, was a member of the British military and a well-known UVF member tied to several other acts of violence against Catholics.

After several earlier reports, a recent investigation has confirmed what many had known all along — that the colonial police force conspired with the UVF in the murders. However, details still were omitted to protect the perpetrators — at least one of whom was likely an informant.

The documentary helped shed further light on the reality of loyalist terrorism and the issue of loyalist paramilitary collaboration with the British imperialist state. Investigators were able to decode reports to assign identities to the protected UVF men. Charges have yet to be brought against any of those implicated in the murders.

Conversely, McCaffrey and Birney — accused of stealing pertinent information that the police withheld from the families — were arrested for exposing

the truth of the Loughinisland Massacre and the collusion. Clare Rogan, the spouse of one of the people murdered in 1994, called the arrests “the latest attempt to deter the work of families and journalists who seek to shine the light on the dark levels of collusion at the heart of the British state.” (krw-law.ie, Aug. 31)

For all its stark brutality, the Loughinisland Massacre and its cover-up by the British state are far from unique. On the contrary, this perpetual injustice is completely in line with the history of British imperialism in the six counties and in all of Ireland, as well as in other countries subjected to its genocidal tyranny.

The British government still refuses to release 50 million documents relating to the unsolved murders of more than 3,000 people during the Troubles. To do so would no doubt implicate the state in perpetrating and covering up many of these murders. □



# Héroes de Honduras: Margarita Murillo, ¡presente!

Por Teresa Gutierrez

Los niños y jóvenes de Honduras un día verán a este período de la historia con gran lamento. La política imperialista de EE.UU. ha resultado no solo en una migración forzada masiva, sino también en décadas de brutal inestabilidad y agitación en su querida patria.

De hecho, el fotoperiodista Tomás Ayuso señala que los jóvenes de Honduras han acuñado una frase de su limitada esperanza: “el derecho a envejecer”, ya que la muerte y la incertidumbre se han convertido en las principales opciones para la gran mayoría de los jóvenes. (NPR, 19 de agosto)

Pero estas condiciones también han dado lugar a queridos héroes.

Una de ellas es Margarita Murillo, una líder campesina revolucionaria que fue asesinada por escuadrones de la muerte el 27 de agosto de 2014.

Cuatro años después de la muerte de Margarita, sus hijos y el movimiento de resistencia hondureño en la ciudad de Nueva York conmemoraron su vida el 25 de agosto con filmaciones, discursos, comida y música en el Centro de Acción Internacional.

Debajo de la pancarta, “¡Seguimos exigiendo justicia! ¡Margarita vive!”, contaron la historia de esta líder por sus tres

hijos, que ahora residen en Nueva York, y por otros.

## Una vida heroica

Margarita tenía 54 años cuando la encontraron acibillada. Tres hombres con pasamontañas, que estaban conectados con escuadrones de la muerte de derecha, la mataron mientras trabajaba en los campos en su pueblo El Planón en el norte de Honduras.

Montserrat, una de las hijas de Margarita, le dijo a TeleSur en el 2017: “Fue el momento más difícil de mi vida. Fue el momento en que mi madre se convirtió en mártir de la resistencia hondureña”.

Los hijos de Margarita han solicitado asilo político en los EE.UU. Y planean continuar su trabajo. Dos de sus hijos ya han logrado asilo.

Su familia y el movimiento describen la vida de Margarita como una vida llena de anhelo de justicia. Se hizo activista a una edad temprana y entendió, basada en la pobreza de su propia familia, la necesidad no solo de la lucha sino de la liberación total. Margarita relató en una entrevista de radio que su familia había sido tan pobre que a veces se veían obligadas a comer hierba para sobrevivir.

Margarita se vio profundamente influenciada por la creciente ola de resis-

tencia revolucionaria en América Central. Durante su vida, viajó a El Salvador y a Nicaragua para ayudar al movimiento en esos países: una verdadera internacionalista.

A los 13 años, se unió a la Unión Nacional de Campesinos. A los 15 años, participó en la Marcha del Hambre, que se ha convertido en una marcha anual en Honduras, donde la falta de comida es constante.

Pero Margarita no solo anhelaba el derecho a la alimentación. Ella luchó para exigir que la tierra se le diera a quienes la trabajaban. Participó en ocupaciones de tierras y sobrevivió solo porque escapó cuando muchos de sus camaradas fueron asesinados.

Margarita experimentó la represión a una edad muy temprana. A los 16 años, fue violada, torturada y golpeada. Sin embargo, nada detuvo su anhelo de justicia. A medida que crecía, se convirtió en una miembro destacada del FNRP (Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular) de Honduras. Ayudó a establecer la Federación de Mujeres Campesinas y el Centro Nacional de Trabajadores de Campo, así como el Foro del Valle de Sula.

Cuando la presidencia progresiva de Manuel Zelaya fue anulada en el 2009 por un golpe de estado orquestado por

ACOMPANANOS AL 4to ANIVERSARIO  
EN CONMEMORACIÓN DEL ASESINATO  
DE NUESTRA MADRE Y LÍDER CAMPESINA

**MARGARITA MURILLO**



FECHA:  
AGOSTO 25, 2018

HORA:  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

INVITA:  
FAMILIA MURILLO

LUGAR:  
CENTRO SOLIDARIO  
147 W. 24TH STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10011, SEGUNDO PISO  
ENTRE 6 Y 7 AVENIDA  
PARADA 23  
TRENES C.J

ESPERAMOS CONTAR CON SU PRESENCIA.  
¡SEGUIMOS EXIGIENDO JUSTICIA! ¡MARGARITA VIVE!

los Estados Unidos, Margarita luchó aún más. Ella no quería simplemente una elección justa, ella quería que el país se liberara totalmente de las corporaciones multinacionales.

A pesar de que sus dos hijos fueron secuestrados y golpeados, Margarita siguió luchando. Samuel, uno de esos hijos, reside en Nueva York y ha obtenido asilo. El Primero de Mayo en Nueva York, Samuel y su familia marcharon con fotos de Margarita.

Montserrat, a pesar de estar retenida en la frontera junto con su hija bebé en las “hieleras”, el centro de detención super frías, sigue siendo optimista. Ella, Samuel y su hija Kenia, hijos de Margarita, continúan inspirando a todos los que conocen. Ellos luchan igual que su madre.

Montserrat dice siempre: “Mi madre era una luchadora. Renunció a su vida por el movimiento de resistencia.”

Al igual que Berta Isabel Cáceres Flores (Lenca) de Honduras, quien también fue asesinada por los escuadrones de la muerte, Margarita seguirá viviendo. Viven en las luchas de sus hijos y en todos los jóvenes que luchan hasta la victoria de su patria.

Margarita Murillo, ¡Presente! □

# Ocupar ICE SATX, un faro de esperanza

Por Andrew Perretta

San Antonio, 4 de agosto – Ocupar ICE SATX, la ocupación de 24 horas de SATX comenzó oficialmente con una asamblea general el 17 de julio, así como canto y carteles mientras se armaba el campamento. El campamento está ubicado en el borde del estacionamiento de la Oficina de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas en un tramo de césped que técnicamente no es propiedad de la ciudad o ICE, cuya oficina discreta se encuentra debajo de un paso superior de la carretera.

Compañeros de todo el espectro de la izquierda se reunieron en San Anto, Tejastlan, para mostrar solidaridad y apoyo a las familias indígenas/latinx encarceladas bajo la política de separación ilegal de la familia estadounidense. Estuvieron allí para dar apoyo moral a los presos, algunos de los cuales aún no han recibido la atención médica necesaria.

Presentes fueron los Boinas Marrones Autónomos, la Red de Estudiantes

Autónomos y la Red Contract Todo, cuyos miembros formaron el movimiento Ocupar ICE SATX y representan una muestra representativa de grupos de izquierda descentralizados en el centro/sur de Texas.

Durante los últimos 18 días, la ocupación ha continuado con tres o cuatro personas presentes a lo largo del día y aproximadamente el mismo número por la noche durante la primera semana. A medida que aumentaba la conciencia y el apoyo, creció en la segunda semana a aproximadamente el doble de esos números.

Los ocupantes han realizado mítines de ruido la mayoría de los días de la semana, generalmente con unas 15 personas, y por la tarde, cuando los autobuses con detenidos están programados para llegar. El canto, los gritos de los megáfonos, el canto y el clamor de los objetos domésticos haciendo percusiones improvisadas se podían escuchar a través del vecindario. Curiosos empleados de ICE acudieron en masa a sus ventanas, y

agentes de Seguridad Nacional se congregaron en el estacionamiento, repletos de equipos tácticos y perros de servicio, en una respuesta urgente a la protesta legal, no violenta y bajo la ley.

Los ocupantes levantaron sus voces, recordando que “Nadie es ilegal en tierra robada” y aconsejando a los espectadores a “¡Renunciar a su trabajo!”. Esto atrajo la atención de los equipos locales de TV, lo que a su vez causó que el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional redirigiera o cancelara el transporte en autobús de prisioneros en varios días.

Los reaccionarios del “Frente Patriota”, aspirantes a kossacks que son parte del pogromo de inmigración de Estados Unidos, intentaron atacar el campamento el sábado 29 de julio por la mañana. Pero los ocupantes se mantuvieron firmes, sin violencia. No se desencadenarían en reacción, y solo incurrirían en vandalismo leve y una bandera robada. “Asher”, un ocupante del campamento, declaró: “ICE tiene un gran interés en las operaciones

de los grupos nacionalistas blancos. El trabajo de ICE es la realización de los manifiestos de esos grupos”.

La noticia del ataque se extendió a los miembros de la comunidad que luego salieron y mostraron aún más apoyo durante la segunda semana. Los amigos de los ocupantes y los ciudadanos locales interesados de un amplio espectro racial y de clase donaron artículos necesarios: comida, sillas, mantas, juguetes, crayones, pañales y otros artículos para niños.

Alrededor de 50 familias viajan a las instalaciones de ICE cada mañana de lunes a viernes para tratar de visitar a sus seres queridos encarcelados y buscan información sobre sus casos de inmigración. Para los niños y padres que visitan a los prisioneros, el campamento ahora tiene suministros muy necesarios, una despensa completa y refrigeración improvisada.

Una noche típica en Occupy SATX consiste en cocinar, escuchar música y reflexionar sobre las acciones directas de cada día—un faro de esperanza. □

Invitación para que su organización endose TRIBUNAL del PUEBLO sobre los Crímenes de EUA contra el PUEBLO de PUERTO RICO



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