

Trump, capitalism incite mass shootings

Smash white supremacy!

WORKERS WORLD statement

Between July 31 and August 3, three different white-identified male terrorists killed and wounded dozens of people in Gilroy, Calif.; El Paso, Texas; and Dayton, Ohio. Three mass shootings in the U.S. in one week.

TV announcers blared that this brought the number of U.S. mass shootings in 2019 to over 250. Wikipedia and news articles everywhere put out complete or partial accounts of the heinous crimes.

Yet nowhere in the big business media was the overwhelming reason for the killings named.

Not “lack of gun control.” Not “mental illness.”

But the fact is that the U.S., all of its formal institutions and its “rule of law” are sunk deep in foundations of white supremacy, xenophobia, misogyny, Christian nationalism and anti-LGBTQ2S+ hatred and a system of murderous capitalism.

Those encouraged and practiced hatreds inflicted a terrible toll last week.

Just before the assault in Gilroy, the killer went on Instagram to recommend a book glorified by white supremacists and used to justify racism, slavery and colonialism. Then he went out and murdered one African-American young man and two Latinx children — 6 and 13 years old — and wounded many others.

The El Paso shooter posted a long manifesto, beginning with a statement that his attack was “a response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas.” He then drove 9 hours across Texas, which was indisputably part of Mexico until the U.S. stole it in 1848, to the predominantly Latinx area of El Paso, just across the border from Juarez, Mexico.

There he shot and killed 22 people and wounded at least 26 more, many gravely.

Identifications of those killed are not complete, but at least six Mexican nationals died, according to their embassy, as well as 72-year-old former city bus driver Arturo Benavides and 15-year-old high school student Javier Rodriguez. It was also reported that some of the wounded did not go to hospitals for fear of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It’s possible that others, for the same reason, did not go to the morgue to identify their loved ones.

No information has yet emerged about the ideology of the Dayton killer. But the identity of his victims brutally exposed his hatreds. The nine people he shot included his 22-year-old sister and six African-American men and women standing with or near her.

After the massacres, Trump tweeted the obligatory “thoughts and prayers.” But his real function as the preeminent governmental flag-bearer of divide-and-conquer hatred is on display constantly. At a May 19 Florida rally, he lamented that agents of the Border Patrol are not allowed to turn their guns on im/migrants and demanded, “How do you stop these people?” When someone in the crowd shouted, “Shoot them,” he made a “joke” of that.

Our question is: How do we stop him? And the racist murderers, the anti-Semitic and anti-Islamic murderers, the killers of migrants, those who kill queer and trans people, those who kill in domestic violence incidents? According to an Everytown for Gun Safety analysis, of 156 mass shootings between 2009 and 2016, 54 percent were related to domestic or family violence. (tinyurl.com/y5oyujxa) Nine African-American people were shot to death in a

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WW Commentary

Eric Garner & the ruling class police



Garner family and supporters protest outside home of killer cop Pantaleo on the fifth anniversary of Eric Garner's death, July 17, 2019.

WW PHOTO: HENRY LUNA

By Monica Moorehead

Five years ago a racist white cop, Daniel Pantaleo, put an unarmed Black man, Eric Garner, into a chokehold, on July 17, 2014, on Staten Island, N.Y. Other cops furiously compressed Garner's chest as he lay on the ground and cried out, “I can't breathe” until he died.

Pantaleo was never charged, much less indicted, for the death of Garner. In response, Garner's family and the progressive movement have continued to fight for justice.

When the U.S. Justice Department refused to file charges against Pantaleo on July 16, that latest outrage prompted multiple demonstrations in front of Pantaleo's home for several days, starting July 17, the fifth anniversary of Garner's death.

At the Democratic Party presidential debates in Detroit July 31, two Black Lives Matter protesters disrupted the candidates with chants of “Fire Pantaleo.” The outcry was directed toward New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, who is running for president in 2020.

Tamika D. Mallory, one of the protesters, stated why she confronted de Blasio on her Aug. 1 Twitter feed: “We could not sit silent while @NYCMayor Bill de Blasio misrepresented his positions on Stop and Frisk and continues to employ the police officers who killed #EricGarner, in particular Daniel Pantaleo.”

This righteous outburst helped to give national and international visibility

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Solidarity with Migrants 6-7

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147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011

workers.org
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North Carolina

Anti-racist activists win case in court

By LeiLani Dowell

Anti-racists won a victory Aug. 2 against suppression of their protest when a judge dismissed charges against two activists. The two, Jody Anderson and Enzo Niebuhr, had placed KKK-reminiscent white hoods over a statue depicting a Confederate woman and child on the grounds of the state capitol. The activists had been charged with disorderly conduct and defacing a public statue.

A statement by Smash Racism Raleigh, organizers of the April 21 protest where the two were arrested, described their efforts: “Activists allegedly climbed the monument and placed Klan hoods over its two heads to properly contextualize the statue’s role in perpetuating white supremacy and reinforcing both Jim Crow-era and modern racist violence and oppression. ...

“The Women of the Confederacy monument, as well as the other racist statues on the State Capitol grounds, have a dark history of oppression, violence and revisionism that has consistently attracted hate groups such as the KKK, the Sons of Confederate Veterans and Heirs to the Confederacy to the square for the last century.”

At the Aug. 2 trial, people’s attorney Scott Holmes pointed out that there is no law prohibiting people from climbing on the monuments or from placing objects on them. He challenged Capitol Police Officer Dustin Dobson, who outrageously claimed that putting white hoods on the monument was a “hate crime.” The prosecutor went so far as to liken that to burning crosses.

In a show of allegiance to white supremacy, however, after arresting Anderson and Niebuhr, the officer actually handed his baton to a Confederate supporter. At the trial, Dobson asserted that although he had never met this person before, he deputized the supporter at the scene.

The cop and prosecutor also maintained that Anderson’s and Niebuhr’s chants of “Fuck these racist statues! Fuck the Confederacy! Racist statues have to go!” represented abusive language. However, after a lengthy debate in court about the use of the expletive outdoors in a public space, Holmes moved to dismiss all charges. Judge William



PHOTO: SMASH RACISM RALEIGH

Hoods expose statue’s role in perpetuating white supremacy.

Lawton concurred.

In Smash Racism Raleigh’s statement before the trial, the group affirmed that it “stands in solidarity with those wrongfully arrested and condemns the actions and beliefs of the white supremacist groups who use these monuments to glorify racism and bigotry. Smash Racism Raleigh additionally condemns the actions of the state capitol police and RPD [Raleigh Police Department] for their continued support and allegiance with white supremacist organizations and their statues. We call for an end to state-sponsored racism and the removal of all tributes to white supremacy from state capitol grounds.” (Smash Racism Raleigh’s live Tweet coverage of the trial can be viewed at tinyurl.com/yy5g3l92.)

Over the past couple of years, activists throughout the Triangle region of North Carolina have challenged the presence of Confederate statues and faced the wrath of the state as expressed through cops and courts. That the judge threw out the charges in this case is a victory won through the continued mobilization of anti-racist forces in the South. □



Join us in the fight for socialism!

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward!

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans

Contact a Workers World Party branch near you:

National Office

147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta

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

Austin

austin@workers.org

Boston

284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.522.6626
boston@workers.org

Bay Area

P.O. Box 22947
Oakland, CA 94609
510.394.2207
bayarea@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.

335 Richmond Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14222
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org

Charlotte

charlotte@workers.org

Cleveland

216.738.0320
cleveland@workers.org

Dallas

dallas@workers.org

Durham, N.C.

804 Old Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27701
919.322.9 970
durham@workers.org

Houston

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

Knoxville, Tenn.

knoxville@workers.org

Minneapolis

minneapolis@workers.org

Pensacola, Fla.

pensacola@workers.org

Portland, Ore.

portland@workers.org

workers.org/wwp

Philadelphia

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

Salt Lake City

801.750.0248
slc@workers.org

San Antonio

sanantonio@workers.org

San Diego

sandiego@workers.org

Tucson, Ariz.

tucson@workers.org

Washington, D.C.

dc@workers.org

West Virginia

WestVirginia@workers.org



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Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org



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Editor: Deirdre Griswold

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Martha Grevatt, Monica Moorehead, Minnie Bruce Pratt

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Mundo Obero: Alberto García, Teresa Gutierrez, Carlos Vargas

Supporter Program: Coordinator Sue Davis

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'We demand the resignation of Pedro Pierluisi & fiscal control board'

The following statement was issued by A Call to Action on Puerto Rico on Aug. 4. The organization can be contacted at prcalltoaction@gmail.com, on their Facebook Page: A Call to Action on Puerto Rico and on Instagram: [prcalltoaction](https://www.instagram.com/prcalltoaction).

The collective A Call to Action on Puerto Rico / Un Llamado a la Acción por Puerto Rico from the Diaspora celebrates Ricardo Roselló's resignation. It is a triumph of a people already fed up with the political, economic and social abuses perpetrated by the United States and its colonial administrators against the people of Puerto Rico.

Our people demand the end of colonialism and the destitution of all representatives of the colonial empire. We understand that

the quick replacement of Pedro Pierluisi as colonial governor is an attempt of the metropolis through his dictatorial Fiscal Control Board and its colonial lackeys to try to appease the just indignation of the people, reestablish its colonial control and maintain order.

Puerto Ricans in the archipelago and Diaspora, from all sectors of society, made their demands in the streets. Their protests made clear that they will not accept any government of corrupt and unscrupulous blanquitos, nor the dictates of a Fiscal Control Board imposed by the U.S. There will be no peace for the empire nor for their colonial lackeys. It is time for decolonization. It's time for a Free Puerto Rico! #Rosellórenuncia #Telegramgate #IndependenciaparaPuertoRico #esadeudanoesnuestra #cancelthedebt #ACalltoActiononPuertoRico □



Union resolution: End the colonial status of Puerto Rico!

The resolution below was adopted by the Pennsylvania Federation Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters at their convention in July 2019.

End the Colonial Status of Puerto Rico! Freedom and Liberation for the Puerto Rican People!

Whereas, the Puerto Rican people have struggled under the yoke of oppression and colonial status from the United States for over 120 years; and

Whereas, this status has resulted in forced migration of millions of Puerto Ricans forced to leave their homes and terrible hardships suffered by the Puerto Rican people who have seen their democratic movements for self-determination

brutally repressed by the corporate masters and their servants in the United States Government who seek to continue to rob the island of their wealth and resources while keeping the people unemployed and in poverty; and

Whereas, the neoliberal assault on public resources by our corporate masters following the devastating hurricanes of Irma and Maria in 2017 has increased the oppression of the Puerto Rican people with the complicity of the United States Government that cynically denies the 4,000 deaths directly attributed to the storms and has used this false news as an excuse to withhold much needed aid in order to force the privatization of the public resources of the Puerto Rican people, such as but not limited to power, water, education and health care; and

Whereas, following a long and brave history of continued resistance against the corporate and imperialist oppressors, the Puerto Rican people have again recently risen up and demanded justice and an end to colonial oppression forcing the sitting governor out of office and showing the world that when workers stand together in solidarity they can achieve great things; and

Whereas, the challenges facing the people of Puerto Rico are not just the result of a corrupt governor but the result of 120 years of brutal and oppressive colonial rule and the struggle for a fair, autonomous, democratic process of self-determination for the Puerto Rican people;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the delegates assembled at this Twenty Third Regular Quadrennial Convention of the

Pennsylvania Federation Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters stand in solidarity with the Puerto Rican people in their efforts to throw off the yoke of 120 years of imperialist oppression and to decolonize Puerto Rico; and

Be It Further Resolved, that we call upon the United States Government to immediately increase by tenfold the aid to rebuild the infrastructure of the Puerto Rican island (water, electricity, schools, and education, etc.) and return them to the Puerto Rican people as a public asset and that we oppose all efforts by the Financial Control Board to establish an austerity program to further increase the exploitation of the Puerto Rican people and their resources. □

WW Commentary

Eric Garner & the ruling class police

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to the case, so that de Blasio was forced to pay lip service to the issue. Rosemarie Maldonado, a NYC deputy police commissioner who oversees disciplinary hearings, has recommended that Pantaleo be fired. He has been on desk duty since 2014.

Between 2015 and 2016, Pantaleo received close to \$120,000 in salary, due to "overtime." (N.Y. Daily News, Sept. 12, 2016) New York Police Commissioner James O'Neill is scheduled to make a final decision on punishment for the killer cop in the coming weeks.

Ramsey Orta, the young Latinx man who videotaped Garner's death, was convicted on drugs and weapons charges and is currently serving a four-year prison sentence at the Rikers Island Prison Complex. His real "crime" was exposing what happened to Garner.

Not an isolated incident

The racist killing of Garner was not the first time NYC police used the chokehold method against people of color. The New York Police Department supposedly outlawed the chokehold as a method of restraint in 1993. But on Dec. 22, 1994, Anthony Baez, a Puerto Rican living in the Bronx, died when Officer Francis Livoti put him in a chokehold, after a football hit a police car. Livoti, with a sordid history of police brutality similar to Pantaleo's, was not fired.

Since Garner's death, people have brought over 800 official incidents to the Civilian Complaint Review Board about New York police using the illegal chokehold. With some cases still pending, only 2 percent of the outcomes have resulted in police facing any "disciplinary" action. (New York Times, May 9)

Counter this lack of accountability with what happened in Brooklyn and Harlem on July 20, one of the hottest days of the summer. Black youth were being harassed by New York cops for the so-called "crime" of turning on fire hydrants to cool off. The oppressive heat was compounded by Con Edison turning off power to whole neighborhoods, cutting off air conditioning. A few of the youth doused the police with water—only water.

The cops turned that into a witch hunt, with over a dozen youth targeted for round-ups. At least three have been arrested so far. These youth could face jail time if convicted, since there are now racist calls to make "dousing a cop" a felony, punishable with a sentence of 1 to 4 years in prison.

These incidents are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the many forms of police brutality — from stop-and-frisk to tasering to chokeholds on disproportionate numbers of Black and Brown people. The varying forms simply reflect the essence of why the police exist in New York City — and in every city or town, large and small, in the U.S.

Role of police under capitalism

To label individual cops as good or bad obscures the objective role of the cops in a class society where there exist rich and poor, bosses and workers, and where the ideology of white supremacy dominates every sector of society, together with patriarchy and gender oppression.

The police — along with the courts, judges, prisons, etc. — are part of the repressive state apparatus. It is an apparatus that protects the interests of a tiny, elite ruling class of bosses and bankers who super-exploit the labor and resources of millions of workers of all nationalities on a global scale to make superprofits.



Garner family and supporters demonstrate in pouring rain, July 17.

WW PHOTO: HENRY LUNA

And if the workers dare to rebel against their conditions of poverty and oppression, the state will use every weapon at its disposal to repress them — especially police occupation and mass incarceration.

There are many instances when the police will abuse or even kill a non-threatening individual like an Eric Garner, Anthony Baez or Sandra Bland just because they are members of an oppressed nation. The cops know they will not face any legal retribution. Why?

Because under capitalism, the police are above the law — because they are literally above society. And therefore, the police, just like prison guards, are not workers. The police and prison guards should be banned from the right to organize unions or be in an existing union.

People's justice for workers and for the oppressed

The working class is the only productive class in a capitalist society, whether in the industrial or service sector, whether employed, unemployed or underemployed.

The police produce nothing of value to society at all. Before Eric Garner died, he was selling individual cigarettes on the street to support his family. He happened to be a Black worker targeted by the police on that particular day.

The progressive movement, along with the Garner family, which has sacrificed so much, deserve all the credit for putting mass pressure on bourgeois politicians like Mayor de Blasio, prosecutors and the police to come to a decision about whether Pantaleo is fired or not. It is very rare to even have a debate about a cop being responsible for murder.

If there were people's justice, Pantaleo and his accomplices would have been charged, indicted and incarcerated for the murder of Eric Garner.

But this kind of justice will happen only with a socialist revolution — when the workers take power to run society to meet human needs — and sweep away all remnants of the repressive state, along with the entire capitalist system which gives it a reason to exist. □

On the picket line

By Alex Bolchi and Sue Davis

House passes Raise the Wage Act, but struggle is in the streets

The House of Representatives passed the Raise the Wage Act on July 18, which would gradually increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025, automatically update it every year after that and phase out the “subminimum wage” for tipped workers. The bill is expected to boost pay for 27 million workers, lifting 1.3 million households out of poverty. While the Congressional Budget Office says it might trigger job losses, most academic research reports there will be little or no loss. (Vox, July 18)

One day after the bill passed, activists decided to bring the bill to the “House of the People,” demanding passage outside McDonald’s from coast to coast. While the vote showed street protests are being heard, Frances Holmes, a leader of Minnesota’s Show-Me-\$15 movement, asserted, “We will keep fighting until we get a living wage where we can provide for our families with our work.” (Labor Tribune, July 29)

Unions struggle against ICE using hotels as jails

Unions and advocate groups have righteously pressured major hotel chains not to house im/migrant workers arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. “Hotels are meant to welcome people from all over the world, not jail them,” said D. Taylor, president of hotel workers union UNITE HERE. (Associated Press, July 21)

Unions have an important role in the fight for the rights of the im/migrant community — thousands of them belong to hotel unions. They’ve successfully pressured management at many big chains like Marriott and Hilton to state they don’t want to be used as ICE detention centers.

This movement is growing across industries, with airlines refusing to fly children whom ICE separated from parents. Advocates hit Motel 6 in November with a class action lawsuit after it shared lists of guests with “Latino-Sounding Names” with ICE. (Colorlines, July 22)

Although it’s a victory that CEOs of major chains oppose ICE’s lucrative contracts, 88 percent of chains are independent franchises which make their own deals. So beware where you stay on summer vacation. Who would want to patronize a hotel that’s also a jail?!

AFSCME stands up to anti-union Janus decision

Did the 2018 Supreme Court decision, Janus v. AFSCME, bankrolled by conservative billionaires and think tanks, succeed in killing public sector unions? The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the largest U.S. public sector union, only saw a 6 percent loss in 2018 — down from 1,411,877 members, including agency fee payers and retirees, in 2017 to 1,329,594 in 2018.

The Janus ruling prohibits public sector unions from collecting agency fees — also known as “fair share” dues — from workers who don’t sign up for full union membership despite their still benefiting from it. AFSCME’s winning strategy was to focus on retaining rank-and-file members, which outpaced member opt-outs 8 to 1. However, if organizing budgets have to be cut in the future, that could reduce membership.

Despite well-funded, aggressive, right-wing campaigns to cut membership, statistics show a victory for AFSCME. Although conservatives in six states sued to make unions pay back agency fees collected before the decision, which could have defunded unions, those efforts failed. In February, an appeals court rejected a challenge to “exclusive representation” — claiming union representation infringes on free speech rights — brought by the Freedom Foundation and the anti-union National Right to Work Foundation.

Even as right-wing groups seek to smear public sector unions, approval ratings of labor unions are the highest they have been in 15 years — 62 percent in favor to 30 percent opposed — according to an Aug. 30, 2018, Gallup poll. Scholars attribute that to the recent wave of historic teacher strikes. (In These Times, March 27) Solidarity forever!

Oregon passes pro-union law for public sector workers

Oregon’s pro-labor law HB 2016 was signed the last week of June. It provides strong guarantees of government employees’ right to organize and bargain collectively. The bill, due to take effect Jan. 1, 2020, reinforces the First Amendment’s guarantee that workers have the right to organize and take collective action.

Passage of this law is critical since Oregon is a key battleground state where right-wing groups like the Freedom Foundation, which is funded by the Bradley Foundation and the Koch network, have declared war on public sector unions.

Stipulations in HB 2016 make it an unfair labor practice for employers to discourage employees from joining a union or to encourage employees to revoke union dues authorization. For other pro-worker mandates, see the July 1 article by the Center for Media and Democracy posted on prwatch.org. □

Harlan County, Ky.

Coal miners up in arms again

By Johnnie Lewis

Coal miners are up in arms again. This time they are not unionized, but they are taking on the sixth-largest coal company in the U.S., and the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) is helping them out. (@MineWorkers)

The miners demand payment for lost wages from a bankrupt coal company, Blackjewel LLC. The company was supposed to post a bond with the state of Kentucky guaranteeing workers’ wages without penalty, but failed to do so. Not only have the miners lost wages, but for several months Blackjewel paid no deposits into their 401(k) retirement accounts. (thinkprogress.org)

Typical of many unorganized workers rising up these days — Amazon workers, Lyft and Uber drivers, fast food and Walmart workers demanding an end to sexual harassment and a \$15 minimum wage — these mineworkers are taking their fight to a new level; they are using social media to gain recognition and support.

On the first day of their work action, July 29, five miners using Twitter and Facebook organized themselves to block a coal train leaving a Blackjewel mine near the town of Cumberland, Ky. Standing on the tracks as a locomotive pulling a long train of filled-to-overflowing coal gondolas bore down on them, they held a sign made from a pizza box: “No Pay We Stay.” The miners intended to hold the train hostage until they were paid the wages they were owed. (wfpl.org)

Blackjewel and CSX railroad called the police, who told the miners to leave. The miners left — moving down the track, but not off it. They tweeted for reinforcements, and nine more miners came.

Again, the police told them to leave. They moved farther down the tracks and reached out again. This time dozens more miners, family members and friends came, eventually numbering hundreds, with more arriving by the hour.

The police could do nothing.

As of Aug. 5, the miners now have a large and growing encampment on and alongside the train tracks. They have tents, food distribution and portable



Miners block railroad tracks leading out of Blackjewel mine.

toilets. They play games like cornhole, played by pitching bean bags, horseshoes and cards. Besides socializing, they tweet and post to Facebook and other social media 24/7. (courier-journal.com)

Former Blackjewel miner Shane Smith told WFPL radio in Louisville, “If they can move that train, they can get us our money.” Mineworker Bobby Sexton said, “It’s a little bit of a good feeling of accomplishment [to hold the train], but we still ain’t done. We’re gonna stay here until we get some answers.” (Aug. 2)

The miners are demanding the bankruptcy court order the company to pay them wages for the coal that Blackjewel stockpiled and tried to move off the mine property for sale on the global market. Further, the miners say they have first dibs on the money to be made from the sale of that coal — because their last paychecks bounced, costing them thousands in overdrafts and bank fees.

Blackjewel had drawn down the funds in its payroll bank account to \$0, making the last checks they paid the workers no good. Meanwhile, the bankruptcy court judge allowed the company \$8 million in cash withdrawals from other company funds. (wpfl.org)

WYMT, another eastern Kentucky news outlet, has reported that Blackjewel was sold Aug. 3 for \$59 million. In all, 1,100 mineworkers in Kentucky, West Virginia and Virginia are owed \$11 million in back wages, in addition to the money Blackjewel stole by failing to make 401(k) deposits.

The miners have set up a Blackjewel Bankruptcy Victims GoFundMe (tinyurl.com/y4obclgy), asking for contributions to help with their Cumberland encampment and for emergency funds for miners’ families. □

Drop the charges now!

U.S. persecutes defenders of Venezuelan Embassy

By Ted Kelly
Philadelphia

Having failed to instigate a right-wing coup d’etat to overthrow the progressive, independent government of Venezuela, the U.S. government is lashing out against the solidarity movement here. Four members of the Embassy Protection Collective now face serious charges for so-called “interfering” with the functions of the federal government. They had defended the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, D.C., from infiltration and takeover by a mob loyal to corrupt coup leader Juan Guaidó.

At the request and invitation of the people of Venezuela, the EPC had occupied the embassy for 37 days to prevent its

seizure by U.S.-backed counterrevolutionaries. Facilitated and protected by federal police, this mob threatened, assaulted and hurled slurs at the Embassy Protectors, harassing the entire neighborhood around the embassy with strobe lights and loud noises late into the night.

Despite the ugly behavior of these right-wingers, publicly documented by progressive reporters, none were charged with any crimes.

However, EPC members Kevin Zeese, Margaret Flowers, Adrienne Pine and David Paul each face a year in prison and a \$100,000 fine for their presence inside the embassy, which not only was completely legal but had been requested by

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Northwest grocery workers prepare to strike

By Johnnie Lewis and Joshua Hanks
Portland, Ore.

Aug. 2 — “Are you aware that Fred Meyer pays \$3.53 more per hour to male workers than to female workers?”

A United Steelworkers’ member posed this question to a Fred Meyer grocery store shopper. Shoppers were shocked and stopped to listen. Most took flyers showing the facts and figures, and many signed the petition demanding that Fred Meyer “Fix the Gap.”

The steelworker, who came by the store after putting in an 8-hour shift, and his co-writing partner (a retired meatcutter and member of Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 400, were leafletting and petitioning in support of UFCW Local 555. The largest private sector union in Oregon, Local 555 represents nearly 25,000 retail grocery store workers in Oregon and southwest Washington. The local is in contract negotiations with Allied Employers, Inc., an owners group of Fred Meyer, QFC/Kroger, Safeway and Albertsons. While targeting Fred Meyer, the union believes that all chains in Allied Employers pay higher wages to men than women. “Whatever we can agree to that closes this gap for Fred Meyer will likely rectify any similar situations or patterns



Women of Local 555.

CREDIT: UFCW LOCAL 555

that may exist with other employers,” the union explained.

The “Gap” is evident at FM, where on Schedule B the average wage is \$13.69 per hour and 68 percent are women, versus Schedule A, where the average wage is \$17.20 per hour and 66 percent are men.

The two groups of workers in the same store, all doing essentially the same work — putting merchandise on shelves and providing customer service — are paid substantially different wages. When

a worker applies for a job at Fred Meyer, they are assigned to a schedule. The worker has no choice.

But not only does FM discriminate against women with regard to wages, the older the woman is the more she is discriminated against. On average women (including those not on Schedule B) aged 24 and under make \$1 an hour less than men; women 25-29 make \$1.50 less; women 35-39 make \$1.75 less. Women over 60 fare even worse — making an

average of \$2.25 an hour less than men their age. Union statistics show that men under 30 were twice as likely to get promotions as women under 30.

The major demand of Local 555 negotiators is to “Fix the Gap.” The union membership agrees. So far, 10,000 members in Portland voted overwhelmingly to strike in June if the owners do not meet their demands, which also include an hourly wage increase for all workers and improved health and welfare benefits. The other 15,000 workers in the region will participate in strike authorization votes between now and the end of August, when a final decision will be made.

While the owners cry poverty, the board of Kroger (also a major shareholder in Fred Meyer) just posted a 14 percent increase in stockholder dividends. (tinyurl.com/y6nh6pko)

The volunteers leafletting and petitioning in support of Local 555 were organized by Jobs with Justice, a labor support organization made up of Portland and Vancouver, Wash., area unions, community groups and political parties, including the Portland branch of Workers World Party.

All statistics about the workers are from ufcw555.org.

Marches outside, disruptions inside, as Dems debate in Detroit

By Martha Grevatt

As 20 Democratic Party presidential candidates took to the stage of the Fox Theater in downtown Detroit on July 30 and 31, mass demonstrations took place in the streets outside. Anti-racist protesters were loud and clear inside as well.

On the first day, thousands rallied and marched on the Fox. Their main demand was to “Make Detroit the engine for the Green New Deal.” Labor and environmental activists came together to push for green jobs in a city with some of the highest national rates of poverty, unemployment and foreclosure.

Many offered hugs and support to



WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

Union workers join mass march during Democratic debates.

Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, who joined the march in her home district. Tlaib has been the target of the most deplorable racist attacks emanating from the White House.

At the next day’s protest, called by Cosecha Detroit, hundreds mobilized on the U.S.-Canada border. On the Facebook

page for the event, organizers posed a question to the candidates: “Will you end detention and deportation on day one?”

Young militants sat down in the road leading into the tunnel to Canada. Customs and Border Patrol cops handcuffed and arrested 21, but only after they had successfully halted cross-border traffic. Supporters chanted “Sin papeles, sin miedo” — no papers, no fear.

All the arrestees were released the following day. As of this writing, no charges have been filed.

The issues of police brutality and mass deportations were brought to the national television audience when activists disrupted the debates inside the Fox

July 31. While candidate and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio was speaking, New York-based activists Tamika Mallory and Linda Sarsour began chanting “Fire Pantaleo.” Dan Pantaleo is the New York cop who murdered Eric Garner on Staten Island July 17, 2014.

Mallory and Sarsour are on the national board of the Women’s March.

Later, as candidate and former Vice President Joe Biden took the microphone, members of Cosecha Detroit began chanting “3 million deportations,” a reference to the number of undocumented immigrants deported under the Obama/Biden administration.

All these actions, directed at the Democratic candidates, show that the fight against racism and xenophobia will go on — regardless of the outcome in November 2020. □

Venezuelan Embassy defenders

Continued from page 4

the Venezuelan government.

The legitimate and democratically elected government of Venezuela, headed by Nicolás Maduro, has been able to fend off the imperialist assault on the nation’s sovereignty because of the unprecedented rallying of the Venezuelan people. Hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans have taken to the streets to condemn a small band of right-wing businessmen and politicians intent on overthrowing the government. The Venezuelan people’s message to the U.S. and the world was simple: We will not go back; we will not be recolonized.

In an open letter to the people of the U.S. in February, President Maduro wrote: “The people of Venezuela have painfully suffered social wounds caused by a criminal commercial and financial blockade, which has been aggravated by the dispossession and robbery of our

financial resources and assets in countries aligned with this demented onslaught.

“And yet, thanks to a new system of social protection, of direct attention to the most vulnerable sectors, we proudly continue to be a country with a high human development index and low inequality in the Americas.”

It is precisely these policies of the Bolivarian system that the U.S. has been seeking to destroy for the entire 21st century. In 2002, the George W. Bush administration supported a military coup that briefly unseated then President Hugo Chávez, who was immediately restored to power by a vast popular movement.

Shortly after Chávez’s death in 2013, Barack Obama declared Venezuela a “national security threat” and established a new regime of harsh sanctions to starve out the Venezuelan people and weaken their resolve. Obama’s successor, Donald J. Trump, has continued and accelerated this attack on Venezuela’s sovereignty.

“U.S. corporate power and Wall Street can’t call the shots in that country,” said Sara Flounders, co-chair of the International Action Center, at a recent event here in Philadelphia. “And that’s what they’re trying to do. They’re willing to use every tactic. Sanctions are one tactic. They’re using assassinations, drones, military threats; they’re using aircraft carriers.”

The purpose of these attacks, it must never be forgotten, is not to ameliorate a “humanitarian crisis,” as the corporate media claim. Rather, the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela is a result of these attacks. The goal of the U.S. ruling class is to reestablish hegemonic corporate control in a country that refuses to relinquish control of its own resources for the sake of global capitalists’ profits.

Eduardo Galeano wrote in “The Open Veins of Latin America,” his excellent history of the colonization of the Americas, that “no country has yielded as much for

world capitalism in so short a time; the wealth drained from Venezuela, according to Domingo Alberto Rangel, exceeds what the Spaniards took from Potosí or the English from India.”

When right-wingers who want to sell their country complain of Maduro’s authority, they long for the same kind of “freedom” referred to by a U.S. businessman back in 1953 when Caracas was still controlled by the imperialists: “Here you have freedom to do what you like with your money; for me, this freedom is worth more than the political and civil freedoms put together.”

The Embassy Protectors, on the other hand, were standing up for true freedom and dignity, for the right of the Venezuelan people’s national self-determination. Workers World supports the EPC and demands all charges be dropped!

Hands off Venezuela! Long live the Bolivarian revolution! □

Widespread militant actions against ICE

By Arielle Robinson

Activists around the country continue to participate in militant actions to shut down U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and those complicit with that agency.

On July 30, around 200 protesters in **St. Paul, Minn.**, gathered at the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building to call for closing concentration camps at the border. Jewish activists who are part of the national group, Never Again Action, organized the event. The group is named as a reminder to never again allow the conditions to occur that led to the Holocaust. The intervention was part of a national wave of actions sponsored by Jewish activists and Never Again Action.

The St. Paul protesters also called for defunding ICE and for permanent protections for all undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers. Announcing that their intention was to disrupt “business as usual,” they blocked vehicle exits at the building to prevent ICE agents from going out to conduct raids.

In **Detroit** on July 31, the second night of the Democratic presidential debates, immigrant rights activists disrupted candidate Joe Biden. They chanted “Three million deportations!” as Biden tried to defend his role as vice president with Barack Obama, who deported more immigrants than any other U.S. president before now. The action was organized by Movimiento Cosecha, which means “harvest” in Spanish, paying tribute to the long history of farmworker organizing in the U.S. The group fights for “permanent protection, dignity, and respect for the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S.”

On Aug. 1, protesters briefly interrupted President Trump twice while he was speaking during a rally at the U.S. Bank Arena in **Cincinnati, Ohio**.

In **Milwaukee** a crowd of 100 activists from Never Again Action and #jew-sagainstice rallied and marched on Aug. 1, calling for ICE to be abolished. The event was coordinated with Voces de la Frontera, a community organization led by low-wage workers, immigrants and youth. Activists gathered around the

entrances and exits of the ICE building and blocked agents from leaving in order to carry out raids and deportations, eventually shutting down the building.

Boston: Protesters drive back masked white supremacists

On Aug. 2, activists dropped a giant “No ICE, no prisons, no more cages” banner at a Boston Red Sox baseball game in Fenway Park. Then, on Aug. 4, hundreds of angry and organized pro-migrant, anti-racist prison abolitionists came together in Boston for a March Against Cages.

As activists gathered, they were confronted by a masked group of white supremacists. A video from the scene shows the activists confronting the masked white Nazis marching toward them and finally forcing them to retreat out of the area. (wcvb.com)

Activists then advanced on the American Correctional Association’s 149th Congress of Correction, held at Hynes Convention Center, and shut down the entrance for over three hours. Chants rang out, including, “No hate, no fear, refugees are welcome here”; “We must organize to survive”; and “Border walls have got to go, from Palestine to Mexico!”

The theme of the protest was “All Cages are Connected!” with hashtag tweeting at #nomorecages, #abolishice and #nocredentialsforcamps. The action was led by Black Lives Matter; Black and Pink, a Queer-led prison abolitionist group supporting the liberation of LGBTQIA2S+ people and people living with HIV from imprisonment; and Deeper Than Water, focused on prisoner human rights and water justice.

A Deeper Than Water information sheet passed out during the march noted: “The ACA is lobbying, pushing and profiting from the mass incarceration of poor and oppressed people [in the U.S.]—now the largest number in world history—and the caging of migrant families fleeing imperialist-fueled war and economic devastation. The U.S. military creates the refugees and then cages them.

“The ACA makes \$4.5 million each year accrediting prisons, jails and



St. Paul, Minn., July 30.



Boston, Aug. 4.

WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN

detention centers that abuse people, separate families and throw children in cages. ACA-accredited facilities are guilty of widespread, documented human rights abuses including locking people in freezer cells leading to many deaths, denying medical treatment to prisoners with broken bones, and housing prisoners in solitary confinement.”

Demands of the demonstrators included to shut down the cages and camps, stop the accreditation of facilities that abuse people and violate human rights, and make the credentialing process public.

Maureen Skehan contributed to this article.

Texas WWP statement condemns mass murder

The Texas branch of Workers World Party condemns, in the strongest terms, the mass murder in El Paso and the system of white supremacy that produced it.

Reports on Aug. 3 estimate that a white supremacist murdered at least 20 people after driving over 9 hours from Dallas/Fort Worth to El Paso. His premeditated dedication to vile racism was spelled out in a white supremacist manifesto. Injuries and deaths are likely being underreported, as people fled the scene in fear of potential kidnapping by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents — to the point that people even avoided seeking medical attention for their injuries. Both the shooter’s manifesto and the deeply racist history of Texas lynch mobs must be at the forefront of this discussion.

In a country and state founded on white supremacy, we must fight the return of the lynch mob that threatens im/migrants and people of color. This latest shooter is not a one-off, but the product of an imperialist system that both encourages and depends on racism. While the media paint him as a misguided lone wolf, the fact that his ideas were shared and fostered in online message boards suggests he had a vast network of support from fellow racists energized by Trump and politicians like Ted Cruz, who casually take photos and meet with members of known hate groups.

Politicians seeking to hide white supremacy call for expanded gun control or “assistance” for people with mental health. Gun control has historically resulted in the increased incarceration of people of color, while “mental illness” is used as a scapegoat for racism. Some Democrats have found the gumption to call Trump a racist who encourages violence against im/migrants and other oppressed groups, but they stop short of addressing the system that not only allows these right-wing terrorists to go unchecked, but is responsible for placing Trump in office in the first place!

A Chicano member of WWP Dallas said, “I just ask myself: How many more times must this violence take place before we organize our communities? If white supremacy is left unchecked, I expect nothing short of another genocide of people of color.” We need a working-class movement that places the struggles of oppressed people, like those targeted in the massacre Aug. 3, at the forefront. A movement that will step forward when people of color are under attack; one that tells capitalists, “Not one more death!”

We demand justice for the victims of the massacre. We demand the abolition of ICE and the racist border, an end to concentration camps, mass incarceration and a society free of white supremacist and police terror! □



Detroit, July 31.

PHOTO: MOVIMIENTO COSECHA



Milwaukee, Wis., Aug. 1.

PHOTO: VOCES DE LA FRONTERA

Activists challenge ICE profiteers

By Betsey Piette

Shortly after Donald Trump was elected president in 2016, shares of CoreCivic Inc. and GEO Group (CXW and GEO on the stock exchange) shot up 21 and 43 percent, respectively. The two companies controlled 85 percent of the private, for-profit prison industry.

Today, facilities run by these two companies hold around 75 percent of im/migrant detainees. CXW and GEO own many of the detention centers near the U.S./Mexico border; their government-guaranteed profits average \$3,000 to \$4,000 per detainee.

Fueled by mass deportations and detentions of migrants, these companies' stock prices have skyrocketed. Yet in June 2019, due to campaigns by im/migrant solidarity activists targeting their funders, stock values plunged nearly 30 percent.

CXW and GEO operate as Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), which raise money from investors in exchange for providing access to real estate. REITs are exempt from corporate income tax, an arrangement which has encouraged private prison expansion for over two decades. However, as REITs, they are legally required to distribute at least 90 percent of their income to investors, which limits cash they have on hand. Thus, CXW and GEO depend on short-term loans and lines of credit, making them vulnerable to pressure on their investors and financiers.

Knowing this, activists attacked the industry where it hurts the most—pressuring banks, investment firms and pension funds to divest. JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo halted current and future financing to for-profit prisons in March 2019. In June and July, Bank of America, SunTrust Bank, BNP Paribas and Fifth Third Bancorp followed suit, while agreeing to meet loan obligations until maturity. PNC Bank, Barclays and U.S. Bank have yet to publicly commit to divestment.

CXW and GEO stand to lose 72 percent of private financing (estimated at \$1.9 billion) as banks divest due to pressure from anti-ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) activists, according to the Center for Popular Democracy. (Truthout, July 23)

At one point CXW's single largest investor was the Vanguard Group Inc., with shares valued at nearly \$600 million, including investments from pension funds. Vanguard owns roughly 15 percent and second-largest asset manager BlackRock owns 12 percent of CXW and GEO.

Around 20 union pension funds have an estimated \$67 million invested in CXW or GEO. Many are public pension funds that tout "environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles." The California Public Employees Retirement System, the California State Teachers' Retirement System and the Oregon Public Employees Retirement System are investors in CXW and GEO and are all ESG proponents. Borrowing from the historic divestment movement that weakened apartheid in South Africa and the current Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israeli apartheid, activists will likely call on union members to demand divestment from these companies.

Legislation is pending in New York state that would ban state-regulated banks from owning prison stock.

Workers, activists demand: Stop ties with ICE

Increasingly there are signs that workers—unionized and unorganized—are uniting against Wall Street corporations that profit off the suffering of im/migrant workers.

Palantir Technologies, a surveillance company that makes millions in profits from ICE, has come under increased pressure from tech workers and activists in several cities to stop profiteering from asylum seekers' suffering. Workers at Microsoft and Amazon have protested their companies' ties with ICE.

Pressure from employees at public relations giant Edelman resulted in the company cancelling a contract to boost GEO's public image in Florida. Work had been scheduled to start in July. As one of the world's leading public relations firms, Edelman feared risking a public relations crisis.

Hundreds of workers at Wayfair headquarters in Boston walked off the job June 26 in protest of their company's contract to furnish a Texas migrant youth

detention center. They were greeted by a solidarity gathering of over 3,000 people.

Housing, transporting and watching over migrant children is a lucrative billion-dollar business involving for-profit and nonprofit corporations alike. Nonprofits, including Southwest Key Programs, Catholic Charities and BCFS (a global nonprofit network), have all received millions of dollars in government funds to operate im/migrant child detention centers.

Military contractors, security firms, airlines, ground transportation providers and hotels also profit from ICE contracts. Aircraft Transport Services was awarded nearly \$30 million for charter flight services to transport ICE detainees. G4S Secure Solutions (USA) Inc., notorious for brutality in occupied Palestine and against Standing Rock anti-DAPL Water Protectors, received over \$17 million to transport detained im/migrants.

Harris Corporation received a \$4.8 million ICE contract for air tracking equipment. Telco Solutions got around \$2.8 million for business accounting software. (Miami New Times, July 5) ICE contractors also include Comcast, Aramark, Lockheed Martin and Greyhound.

In July, several hotel chains, including Marriott, Hilton, Choice Hotels, Best Western, Wyndham, Hyatt, IHG and MGM Resorts, released statements claiming they did not want their facilities used to detain migrants in transit to detention centers. The hotels were bowing to pressure from their employees' unions, as well as customers.

CREDO Action gathered over 120,000 petition signatures for this effort, while launching a phone campaign to call the corporate headquarters of Best Western, Red Roof Inn and Radisson, which have yet to respond. The petition is available at #nohotelsforice.

In a Teen Vogue op-ed published May 13, Natasha Uhlmann called on young people to get educated about ICE, in particular its impact on Black migrants. She urged them to become activists, push back against ICE tactics and boycott corporations that profit from ICE contracts. Uhlmann notes that young im/migrants are "paving the way through bold acts of resistance." Her important message should resonate with all generations. □

Greyhound feeling FIRE for collusion with ICE

By Makasi Motema

The state is waging war on migrants and refugees. As they flee from violence, political instability and the growing climate crisis, the U.S. is doubling down on a cruel, white supremacist policy of exclusion. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Patrol agents are rounding up migrants, placing them in detention centers with horrible conditions and deporting them back to countries where they may face death.

All people with a conscience must rise up and oppose the state's vast detention and deportation machine.

This machinery of devastation is not run by the state alone. Corporations that seek to turn a profit from human misery have joined hands with ICE and CBP. Private companies run the horrific detention centers, sell the weapons and equipment used by ICE and CBP, and charter flights to deport migrants.

If activists are to put an end to the detention and deportation machine, they must use direct action against both the public and private facilitators of this oppression. They must focus on the logistics of detention and deportation and make it impossible for the government and companies to continue these racist policies. Already, there have been incredible acts of resistance, such as the walkout on June 24 by hundreds of Wayfair workers who were protesting their company's sales to these concentration camps.

are a sign of the growing police state. People should be free to travel without jackbooted thugs stopping them to check their papers. FIRE will inform passengers of their rights, while building momentum for future actions.

By focusing on the logistics of the detention and deportation machine, im/migrant rights activists can weaken its ability to operate. ICE and CBP searches must be stopped. Holding children in detention centers must end. All deportations must be halted. Greyhound is only a first step.

As momentum builds in this struggle, so will its organizing capacity. Any company that takes part in deporting migrants or running concentration camps should be the focus of direct action. These corporations, which include Palantir that does data-mining, Amazon that provides facial recognition technology and Enterprise that supplies ICE vehicles, should be the focus of direct action. There should be no material support for ICE and CBP.

Im/migrants and refugees must also be informed of their rights. "Know Your Rights" trainings have already led to migrants and their allies fighting back against ICE raids. ICE agents have been turned away from apartment complexes by residents who refused warrantless searches. Across the country, ICE and CBP are being pushed back.

Working-class solidarity key

In Nashville, Tenn., neighbors formed a multinational human chain around a migrant family that was being harassed by ICE agents. This was a heroic action that should be repeated everywhere im/migrants are endangered.

The demands of the racist Trump regime have put a strain on ICE and CBP resources. As the movement to #closethecamps grows stronger, the fascistic ICE and CBP will grow weaker. This is how people's movements will abolish these vile agencies.

As the tide of white supremacist terror rises, it shows how necessary it is that an even greater surge of working-class solidarity meet this threat. Now is the time for our class to unite and build for the future. The power of the people must not be underestimated.

The working class is rising. From Hawaii to Puerto Rico, mass movements are disrupting the repressive power of the state. A better world is possible. Concentrated people's power can close the camps, open the borders and abolish ICE! Join with FIRE, LWC and PPA/NY on Aug. 23. Then the revolutionary work will begin. □

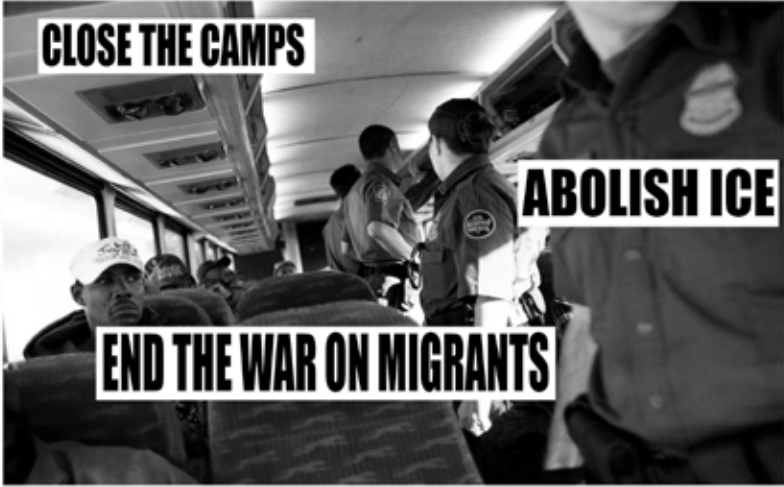
Rally at NYC's Port Authority on Aug. 23!

A major campaign begins on Aug. 23. Fight for Im/migrants and Refugees Everywhere (FIRE), the Laundry Workers Center (LWC) and the People's Power Assemblies/New York (PPA/NY) will hold a rally in New York's Port Authority Bus Terminal to demand that Greyhound kick ICE and CBP off their buses.


All over the U.S., Border Patrol agents stop and board buses where they racially profile passengers looking for undocumented im/migrants. These unconstitutional searches and seizures

ICE OFF OUR BUSES

End Greyhound collaboration with ICE!




Friday, August 23rd
6 p.m.
Port Authority
(8th Ave and 42nd)
New York City



FIRE!
FIGHT FOR IM/MIGRANTS
AND REFUGEES EVERYWHERE
FightForMigrants.org
Facebook.com/Fightformigrants

PeoplesPowerAssemblies.org
Twitter: @PPAssemblies
IG: PeoplesPowerAssemblyNYC
Facebook.com/PeoplesPowerAssemblies



LaundryWorkersCenter.org

From New York to Baltimore Why racism breeds resistance



Richard Kossally

Based on a talk titled “White supremacy over the White House: Why racism breeds resistance” by Richard Kossally at a Workers World Party Aug. 1 forum in New York City.

Donald Trump has been at it hard this past week or so. He has always been a horrible human being. He has been especially so for the entirety of his candidacy for and tenure as the president of the United States. We have become so familiar with and expect his offensive behavior that sometimes it passes with barely a comment or just becomes the butt of jokes on social media and content in internet memes — most of which is not helpful at all, because a lot of this stuff concentrates on his appearance.

There is, however, real pain, suffering and death caused by his words and policies.

Much of the harm that he has caused isn’t even quantifiable.

As a landlord, his racist housing policies caused such harm.

His words and deeds as they relate to the case of the Central Park Five caused immeasurable harm, and he has doubled down on that issue even since these young men have been vindicated. They were just boys when they were persecuted.

His sexual assaults against women, both physical and verbal, are disgusting. The trauma caused by such behavior is undoubtedly everlasting in some cases.

His administration has continued racist colonial policies against Puerto Rico. He has the blood of many Puerto Ricans on his hands due to his response — or rather nonresponse — to Hurricane Maria, and he has made vile statements against Puerto Rico’s brave resistance to austerity. The Junta there was put in place to suck Puerto Rico dry, but repression always breeds resistance. Viva Puerto Rico!

His administration has put children and adults in separate concentration camps with inadequate food and hygiene. Asylum seekers have to spend months at the border waiting for a hearing. Some turn back toward what they were fleeing. The commander in chief boasts about this as success in “protecting the border.”

Back in April a report by Mark Weisbrot and Jeffrey Sachs estimated that 40,000 people had died as a result of U.S. sanctions against Venezuela. That number is not static.

I will skip many other issues that could be a part of this presentation. Cuba, Nicaragua, Brazil, Haiti and more.

In the past week, the president’s anti-Blackness has been front and center.

None of Trump’s comments about Baltimore are due to any real concern for the people of that city.

In my estimation [U.S. Congressmember] Elijah Cummings is not a sympathetic figure, but Trump is using him to attack Baltimore, and by Baltimore I mean Black people. A statement like “Nobody wants to live there” or descriptions like “drug infested” are racist dog whistles. Trump cannot even hide his contempt for Black people when he makes ridiculous claims that he has been good for us.

He doesn’t seem to have the ability to say “Black people.” He always uses some variation of “the African Americans,” which comes off his tongue in an awkward

way. The sentiment of what he says would probably not suffer much if he said “Martians” or the N-word.

Now Trump is not completely wrong that Cummings has been an ineffective advocate for Baltimore, but he is not, as Trump claims, a racist with primary responsibility for the degradation of west Baltimore. U.S. politicians on the national level are not usually advocates for the communities that they supposedly represent, but are instead beholden to the ruling-class interests that fund their campaigns and provide lucrative jobs when they leave office.

Places like Baltimore, Md.; Flint, Mich.; and Erie, Pa., have all suffered from the flight of capital from once-vibrant manufacturing centers that had attracted large populations of Black people. In these situations, the poorest people also lack the means to move somewhere else, so they stay as long as they can. They suffer as blight increases and property values plummet.

Trump prompts NYPD dragnet against young Black men

Trump has heavily influenced the current dragnet that the New York Police Department unleashed against young Black men here in New York over a few cops getting wet. The water thrown on cops did not come from water cannons, like the ones that cops used against the Civil Rights Movement or at Standing Rock, N.D. But Trump’s responses and those of the police unions and the corporate media would make you think their very lives were put at risk.

It’s been a hot summer in New York, and many residents here can’t afford to artificially keep their dwellings cool, so we spend a lot of time outside during the daytime hours. Water from fire hydrants is sometimes used to stay cool. The fire department used to provide sprinkler caps for this purpose; they might still do so.

The occupying forces of the NYPD will use any pretext to demonize Black people or to distract us. Just a couple of weeks ago, the feds declined to prosecute the murderer of Eric Garner. Their reason was flimsy. Movement people here have responded and have visited Daniel Pantaleo [the chokehold cop] at his home a few times. There are calls to fire him.

Creating a distraction to obscure this development might be what’s behind the decision to raid communities for using water to cool down during a heatwave and for the subsequent dragnet. The charges against the youth are also revealing. They are some of the same charges brought against activists when we are in the streets — [obstructing governmental administration, criminal mischief, harassment, disorderly conduct]. These are the default charges that the cops lean on when they don’t have any good reason to arrest anyone but want to break

up a protest. This is hardly the stuff that should make national news, but the ruling class is just as aware as we are that their system is in trouble.

All charges against these youths are bogus and should be dropped. Killer cops running around in our city are a far greater danger to us. The police do not deserve our respect; they do not serve us.

In New York, we currently have another local presidential candidate. In his famous song, “Love me, I’m a liberal,” Phil Ochs says that liberals are 10 degrees right of center on issues that affect them personally. Bill de Blasio demonstrated this truth by joining in the demonization of the youth after Trump dissed him. This was actually a better time to tell how he has raised a Black son, but he is a spineless liberal. Yes, liberals are a shady bunch indeed.

Contrast Trump’s condemnation of Black people, immigrants, refugees and women with his tweet about the mass shooting at the garlic festival: “Law Enforcement is at the scene of shootings in Gilroy, California. Reports are that shooter has not yet been apprehended. Be careful and safe!” Some words seem to be missing in his tweet: white supremacist, murderer, terrorist and maybe some others. In his mind, white people can’t be any of these things. After all, there were “fine people on both sides” in Charlottesville, Va.

His targets are primarily Black and Brown populations, his hatred of women being somewhat of an exception. His personal victims have been primarily, if not exclusively, white women.

These assaults against segments of our class by Trump come from every direction. Racism continues to be the biggest barrier to unity in the U.S. and Trump has tapped into this. It comes naturally to him.

With all his cruelty, hatred and disgusting behavior, Donald Trump is actually pointing the way. The ruling class is its own gravedigger. He is telling us that he and his class hate us — all of us. As a class we need to hate them back.

More important than this hatred, however, is the flip side of the coin. The flip side is love and unity within the working class. Concentration camps for migrants and refugees, along with the concentration of so many Black and Brown people in prisons, is a basis for Black/Brown unity.

The formation of FIRE [Fight for Im/migrants and Refugees Everywhere] and the Workers’ Solidarity Day Coalition are two of our recent endeavors that will be helpful in building unity in this period.

We are indeed living in dark times, but it is always darkest before the dawn. As a pastor from Baltimore likes to say, “We are all we got, but we are all we need.” □

Biden his time

By Mumia Abu-Jamal



This column by political prisoner and journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal was posted on Prison Radio.com on July 24.

The candidacy of Joseph R. Biden Jr. for President of the United States has caused multi-

ple reactions across the land. Biden, who enters his 77th year of life, draws warm feelings from Blacks for his relationship and partnership with the nation’s first Black President Barack Hussein Obama.

While this casts a warm glow over the eight years of the Obama Administration, it ignores Biden’s long years as a U.S Senator.

That long period, which has consumed most of Biden’s life, should give us reason to support, or caution to avoid, a Biden presidency.

Biden spent over 30 years as a senator from

Delaware, and as such, has involved himself in hundreds, if not thousands, of issues.

We will only address a few here.

Biden voted to support the notorious Crime Bill of the ’90s, which sprouted prisons across the nation’s landscape. He supported a remarkable bankruptcy bill that disallowed discharge of college debt. He supported the disastrous Iraq War.

Now, people can make mistakes, as all humans do, and Biden has said, if elected, he’ll straighten out some of these errors.

But isn’t a presidential election essentially a promotion? And isn’t the time for wisdom and foresight before one votes, not after?

Biden’s senatorial career is chock-full of examples of serving the rich and the powerful at the expense of the poor and the oppressed. His positions now are fueled by ambition and Democratic desperation to trounce Trump.

It ain’t about the people; it’s about one person — Biden.

Do you elect someone who has failed you for decades, again, again — and again? □

Defend righteous rebellions against racist NYPD!

Drop all charges! No more arrests and roundups!

WORKERS WORLD statement

The New York Police Department is using instances of justified rebellious actions as an excuse to mount a racist, Central Park Five-style roundup of any and all suspects, as long as they're Black and poor.

In the wake of a media wave of reactionary indignation — incredibly, at people resisting harassing cops — local news is assisting the NYPD by running photos on TV of 15 people — all African American — “wanted” by the police for dousing cops with water in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, N.Y., and in Harlem, N.Y., on July 20. As of July 31, three young African-American men have been arrested.

The mass incarceration system is throwing out a flurry of charges — “obstructing governmental conduct,” “criminal mischief,” “harassment,” “disorderly conduct” — for righteous

expressions of opposition to the police occupation of oppressed neighborhoods.

Meanwhile, no basis could be found to even charge a white cop, Daniel Pantaleo, for putting Eric Garner, a Black man, to death with an outlawed chokehold — a killing the whole world witnessed in horror on video July 17, 2014.

It's not surprising that “liberal” Mayor Bill de Blasio has joined arch-racists former NYC Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Donald Trump in the hypocritical chorus of outrage against Black and Latinx protesters. In addition to ramping up racism, this media furor over “disrespecting police” opportunistically pushed the outrage and protests over killer-cop Pantaleo being exonerated out of the headlines.

What were the cops, whom the communities clearly want out, doing when mini-rebellions broke out in the midst of soaring heat and humidity on July 20? Breaking up crowds of people who had opened hydrants trying to get relief during a record heat wave. This was the same weekend that thousands of people were also without electricity as Con Ed shut off power to thousands of Brooklyn

residents. Not having air conditioning only intensified the crisis.

The heat index ran over 110 degrees. With no help from corrupt institutions such as NYC Housing Authority, Con Ed or the Metropolitan Transit Authority — whose trains stopped running during rush hour on Friday, July 25 — affected neighborhoods in Brooklyn, Harlem and the Bronx took it upon themselves to deal with this dangerous situation.

Facing heat strokes and dehydration, neighborhood residents should have gotten help. Instead they got harassment and stepped-up stop-and-frisk from the vicious NYPD.

The Netflix sensation, “When They See Us,” about the Central Park Five perfectly dramatized the attitude of the police being played out now with the NYPD's stated intention of arresting 15 more people after already arresting three. Thirty years after the frameup of the Central Park Five, there's another racist dragnet where arrests of any Black or Brown person will do.

When working and oppressed people are suffering during a life-threatening

weather emergency, humanitarian exceptions should be made by the city government and the NYPD — open up the hydrants and give people an immediate, life-saving way to cool off! But that kind of compassion doesn't occur to city officials and the NYPD whose job it is to promote capitalist law and order.

Under capitalism the police are incapable of learning lessons. They exist solely to protect the rich by fomenting racism and attacking workers and the poor. If the pundits are concerned about anarchy and chaos, they should be calling for people's solutions for the rampant homelessness, joblessness and lack of health care that plague New York.

That's why we say:

- Stop the Racist Occupation of Black, Latinx & All Oppressed Neighborhoods, from Brooklyn to Harlem to the Bronx!
- Our Communities Need Services, Jobs, Health Care, Not Racist Police in the Streets or the Subways!
- Drop All Charges! No More Arrests!

□

Feds to resume racist death penalty

By Gloria Rubac

Attorney General William Barr is moving the United States backward. He is taking hard-fought civil rights gains to the dumpster. Just like President Donald Trump, he has nothing but racist contempt for people caught up in the so-called criminal justice system.

Barr suddenly announced in a Department of Justice press release on July 25 that the federal government will resume executions. It stated that the DOJ directed the federal Bureau of Prisons to set three execution dates in a five-day span between Dec. 9 and 13, with two others on Jan. 13 and 15. Notably, the last date will mark the 90th anniversary of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

The five men to be executed have all been convicted of murdering children. This is a horrific act considered by most people to be among the worst crimes. It is no accident that these prisoners were chosen—in order to elicit public support for their executions.

Since the federal death penalty was reauthorized in 1988, only three people have been executed. There has been an informal moratorium since the last federal execution in 2003. Apparently neither Barr nor Trump have learned anything during the 16-year hiatus.

Support wanes for executions

Barr's directive comes as public support for capital punishment has ebbed, down from nearly 80 percent in 1996 to less than 50 percent in 2016. Three major factors contribute to the drop in support: Research has debunked the reactionary premise that the death penalty is a deterrent to crime; publication of the fact that 166 innocent people on state death rows have been exonerated and released; and charges of racism have been confirmed in the application of the death penalty.

New Hampshire legislators voted to abolish the death penalty on May 30, making it the 21st state to ban executions. In four other states, governors have imposed moratoriums on executions.

The other 25 states still have the death penalty on their books, but the majority rarely use it. The 10 state executions that have occurred so far in 2019 have been carried out in the Southern states of Texas, Georgia, Tennessee, Florida and Alabama.

According to the Death Penalty Information Center: “The federal death penalty is authorized for a variety of crimes that directly implicate federal interests, including terrorism and espionage. However, none of the prisoners who are the subjects of the five warrants were charged with such crimes, and only one of the 62 people on federal death row has been convicted of terrorism. No one on death row has been sentenced to death for a crime involving treason or espionage.” (deathpenaltyinfo.org, July 25)

There are 62 people on federal death row, with over half — 35 — from oppressed communities: 26 are African American, seven are Latinx, one is Asian and one is Indigenous.

The federal death penalty mirrors use of this policy in the states. No matter where applied, it is a racist, anti-poor weapon, disproportionately used against African-American, Latinx, Asian and Indigenous people. Many prisoners receive inadequate legal representation in biased courts where injustice prevails.

Death penalty: ‘Racist, vile policy’

On July 26, one day after Barr's edict, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts introduced a bill that would reverse the DOJ's plans and abolish the death penalty altogether. She is a member of “The Squad” — four progressive congresswomen of color who are directly challenging the Trump administration.

Pressley, who is African American, tweeted the same day: “The same racist rhetoric coming from the occupant of the White House, who called for the execution of the #exonerated5 [Central Park Five], is what led to this racist, vile policy.”

Trump notoriously spent \$85,000 on full-page ads in New York newspapers



PHOTO: TEXAS DEATH PENALTY ABOLITION MOVEMENT

As the time of an execution nears, the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement demonstrates April 24 outside the “death house,” the Huntsville Unit which is the location of the state's execution chamber.

in 1989 calling for the execution of the Central Park Five, the Black and Latinx youth falsely convicted of rape. His ads, which ran soon after the incident, played a key role in shaping public opinion about the case.

The five men were later exonerated by DNA evidence and the real rapist's confession. Yet Trump has never withdrawn his remarks or apologized. There is the very real possibility that the exonerations would have come too late if New York had implemented the death penalty at that time.

Andrea Lyon, a Chicago defense attorney who specializes in capital cases, commented to The Atlantic magazine on July 29: “Since Trump took office, those of us in the capital-defense community have seen a sharp spike in capital prosecutions of state crimes by the federal government, and there is a shortage of counsel qualified to represent defendants in death-penalty cases. States that are perfectly capable of prosecuting cases are having jurisdiction taken from them by the federal government.”

Stop legal lynching!

Bryan Stevenson, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Ala., stated: “The death

penalty in America is a failed, expensive policy defined by bias and error. It is a direct descendant of lynching. More than eight in ten American lynchings between 1889 and 1918 occurred in the South, and more than eight in ten of the 1500 executions carried out in this country since 1976 have been in the South.” (eji.org)

Stevenson and his staff have won reversals, relief or release from prison for over 135 wrongly condemned prisoners on death row and won relief for hundreds of others wrongly convicted or unfairly sentenced.

The Trump administration's decision to return to federal executions is partly to bolster his reelection bid among racist supporters who love his “Make America White Again” programs — and to intensify state repression against the working class and oppressed.

Activists in Texas, which has executed 561 people since 1982, have strongly protested the reinstatement of the federal death penalty.

Delia Perez Meyer's brother, Louis Castro Perez, is on Texas' death row despite evidence of innocence. She told Workers World on Aug. 3: “When I heard that federal executions were being resumed, I was really appalled. The U.S.

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WORKERS WORLD editorial

Washington has taken another step to inflame international relations and raise the risk of war. On Aug. 2, Washington pulled out of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces agreement, known as the INF treaty. Back in 1987, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev had signed the treaty in a move supposed to signal a relaxation of the Cold War. The INF treaty eliminated the deployment of missiles capable of delivering weapons to a range between 310 and 3,417 miles (500 to 5,500 km).

Besides abandoning this treaty, the U.S. military is now moving to deploy such shorter-range missiles in areas that directly challenge Russia and China.

The U.S. has announced plans to deploy these weapons in the NATO countries of Europe, including those close to the Russian border. This means that the time from launch to striking a Russian target with one of these missiles could be

as short as 6 to 11 minutes. Such a short time for reaction would make nuclear war more likely than at any time since the INF and other similar disarmament treaties were signed.

The Russians, for simple self-defense, have no choice but to aim their own intermediate-range missiles at countries harboring ground-based U.S. missiles. This new U.S. deployment thus puts East and West Europeans, as well as Russians, at risk from intermediate-range missiles.

And it's not just Russia. On Aug. 3, U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper said he was in favor of the U.S. deploying ground-based missiles in Asia. That would threaten People's China, a country with a much smaller nuclear arsenal than the U.S. or Russia. China has a reported 290 nuclear devices, even fewer than the French military.

The U.S. has bases in Japan, South

Korea, Okinawa, Thailand and Australia that are within the intermediate-range distance of cities in China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. There is no way to interpret this U.S. plan to deploy these missiles as anything other than a direct threat to the peoples of the region, including those residing near U.S. bases.

A New York Times article on Aug. 4 explained it this way: "Such a move would be likely to anger China and North Korea, two countries that have long opposed the deployment of U.S. military hardware anywhere near their borders, and would most likely prompt further consternation from allies that Washington was veering dangerously close to a new arms race."

It should be noted that while much of Washington's reactionary domestic policies and rhetoric — especially the overt racism, xenophobia, misogyny and homophobia — can be blamed on the

current resident of the White House and his party, the aggression against China and Russia is bipartisan and backed by most U.S. ruling-class strategists.

This anti-INF offensive started in 2014 under the Barack Obama administration, which accused Russia of testing a cruise missile prohibited by the treaty. No evidence of Russian violations was presented. In 2015, still under the Democrats, the U.S. announced it was considering deployment of ground-based missiles in Europe. Trump seconded these decisions, and then, in 2018, Congress authorized new research to produce cruise missiles.

Thus an effective movement to stop the war threats will have to remain independent of both big capitalist parties and hold them and the Pentagon war machine responsible for putting the lives of hundreds of millions of people in danger. □

Smash white supremacy!

Continued from page 1

Charleston, S.C., church in 2015. Fifty mostly Latinx, mostly LGBTQ2S+ people were killed at an Orlando, Fla., nightclub in 2016. Eleven people were shot to death in a Pittsburgh synagogue in 2018. And on and on.

This is the deeply murderous U.S. system we live in. And those are only a few of the mass shooting deaths here. That doesn't count the millions U.S. wars have killed.

What will it take to end this?

The most moderate elements in the Democratic Party are too timid to even impeach Trump. Progressives unsuccessfully proposed impeachment for racism after his violent tweets against four Congresswomen of color.

But impeachment alone would not do justice to the victims of these horrific massacres. Legal formalities now supposedly bar the arrest of a sitting president. But murder is murder! The mounting wave of resistance against white supremacy in the U.S. wants to see Trump brought to justice.

Why would we look to the Democratic Party to save us? Look at the history of the U.S. Nothing has ever moved the ruling parties in power, whatever name they pass under, except independent mass mobilization by the people. Let's impeach the capitalist system instead!

The question is no longer the hypothetical: "What if they came for (fill in the blank)?" The massacres underscore

the truth that Jewish anti-ICE demonstrators have proclaimed: "Never Again is Now!" Now is the time to organize and be in the streets to demand a stop to the deadly attacks on Black and Brown people and im/migrants — and the hate-filled rhetoric that inspires them.

Every action in solidarity with people of color and with immigrants is important — no matter how small. Wear a button that says: "Come out against racism" and strengthen everyone who sees you. Organize a town rally or neighborhood gathering in support of im/migrants and create a place for anti-racists to gather.

Let's reach out to those we work with, to members of our union and other unions, to our neighborhood and community groups, and form coalitions to defend the im/migrants in our lives.

Watch for local actions by FIRE (Fight for Im/migrants and Refugees Everywhere) and join in. (facebook.com/fightformigrants/) Follow the International Workers' Solidarity Network (workersolidarity.net) which is building working-class consciousness and collectivity. Let's make Labor Day 2019 a day of solidarity with im/migrants!

If we find our strength together now, that is another step toward breaking the bloody grip of oppression, to ending the murders caused by white-supremacist, patriarchal capitalism. We can begin to build the long but hopeful road to revolutionary socialism where "the earth shall rise on new foundations."

"Solidarity Forever" begins with solidarity today. □

Down with imperialism! Up with Workers World!

The U.S. has been the world's No. 1 imperialist bully for years. That fact has been carefully covered up with self-righteous bourgeois language by the corporate media. Now, led by emperor-wannabe Trump, the soft-sell bullying has become in-your-face ultimatums, with Venezuela, Cuba and Iran the latest targets.

The New York Times and other big business media are not reporting on criminal U.S. sanctions as outright attempts at regime change via a ruling-class imposter in Venezuela. Rather, they are cheering U.S. plots to take over Venezuela's oil deposits, valued as the world's largest.

Trump is using his bully pulpit against Cuba, this year celebrating 60 years of socialist power. Not only has Trump set up tough restrictions on U.S. visits to Cuba, he has authorized U.S. companies, whose imperialist holdings were nationalized after the revolution, to sue Cuba for "reparations." There's no corporate media coverage of what socialist Cuba has accomplished to uplift its people in 60 years.

Trump ordered this year's super-militarized July 4th celebration of the origins of the genocidal, enslaving, white-supremacist capitalist U.S., while at the same time using the U.S. Armed Forces to threaten Iran striving to maintain its independence surrounded by global capitalism. The corporate media are willing



co-conspirators in covering up the real threat — U.S. imperialism.

We know you read Workers World to get the real story, free of imperialist lies and crimes. But Workers World needs your help to do our job.

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Feds to resume racist death penalty

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is taking gigantic steps backward. The many states now moving toward abolition could now have second thoughts."

That has already happened in Arizona where state Attorney General Mark Brnovich wrote a public letter to Gov. Doug Ducey asking that their state follow Washington's lead and resume executions.

In 2014, Joseph Wood was the last person executed in Arizona. He was injected 15 times with death-causing drugs before

he finally died after two hours of agony. "After about nine minutes, his mouth opened wide, his head moved up against the restraints, he bucked up against the straps and he started gulping and gasping," said his attorney Dale Baich. (KVOA.com, Aug. 2)

No humane executions

Activist Lily Hughes is a leader of the campaign to stop the November execution of Rodney Reed, an African-American man whose only crime was having a relationship with a white woman. Hughes

told WW: "My problem with the one-drug lethal injection is that all lethal injections have been proven to be the least humane method for execution so far. There is no humane way to execute people. The idea that lethal injection is a humane clinical procedure is a lie."

Hughes continued: "There have been more botched executions using lethal injection than any other execution method. They do not even know where the pentobarbital is going to come from. Is it going to be FDA [Food and Drug Administration] approved? People laying

on a gurney being executed say, 'I feel my whole body burning.' This rush to execute has nothing to do with following the law. Ultimately people will be tortured with an untested drug."

Joanne Gavin, a founding member of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement, stressed that this latest move by Trump and the DOJ is "just one more attack on working-class people and an intensification of state repression and racist oppression. But our job is to stop these new executions before they even begin." □

Algeria

Police, army allow thousands to march in protest

By G. Dunkel

For the 24th consecutive Friday, Algerians all over this vast country marched Aug. 2 to demand that the interim president, prime minister and head of the State Council resign. They chanted: “No to a military state!” and “The people want it—now.”

Some demonstrators raised chants promoting civil disobedience—likely referring to calls for limited general strikes—while others chant: “The army and the people are brothers.” But they also call General Ahmed Gaïd Salah, who is head of the army and effectively the ruler of Algeria, a “traitor.”

Tout sur l’Algérie (TSA), the major Francophone news site for Algeria, reported protests on Aug. 2 in the following Algerian cities: Algiers, Oran, Constantine, Tlemcen, Annaba, Tizi Ouzou Bejaia, Bouira, Setif, Jijel, Mostaganem, Mascara, Sidi Bel Abbes, Chlef, Tébessa, Khenchela, Tipaza, Djelfa,



Algerians march for “power to the people.”

Saida, Ain Temouchent and Tissemsilt. In some of the cities, protests took place even though the temperature was in the high 90s.

In Algiers, the capital and largest city in Algeria, armored personnel carriers from the army and the cops lined and restricted the route of march. In contrast in Oran, a seaside town in western Algeria and Algeria’s second largest city, no cops were visible along 4 kilometers of the march.

According to Huff Post Maghreb,

proportionately more women, dressed in a wide range of styles, marched in Oran than in Algiers. In Oran, some of the women carried signs reading: “No, no and no to violence against women and children.” The general sentiment was that they would march again next week “while the system is still around.”

The cops and the army have not attacked the protests with the forces they have available. They have made dozens of arrests, mainly of Tamazigh (called Berber, though they reject that term) activists like Lakhdar Bouregaa, a hero of Algeria’s 1954-62 war of independence against French imperialism, or youth activists. The Friday protests have also been raising demands to stop and reverse these arrests.

Nacer Djabi, a sociology professor at the University of Algiers and a major figure in the opposition, told the July 25 New York Times, “It would be very risky for them” to pull the trigger on the protesters. “They can’t be certain of the

instruments of repression themselves.” Djabi is referring to the soldiers in the all-volunteer army who might turn their guns around rather than fire on their brothers and sisters in the streets.

Djabi is one of the 13 people whom the protest movement has accepted as a negotiator to represent them and set up ground rules with the current regime for elections of a new government.

“It’s a question of the balance of power,” said Mohcine Belabbas, head of the opposition Rally for Culture and Democracy, a party with its base in the Tamazigh areas of Algeria. “And for now, the strength is on the side of those who want constitutional change in this country.”

The people in the streets have rejected the last two proposals for elections drawn up by the current regime, which then withdrew them. If the people manage to continue protesting through the hottest part of the year and last until September, this will put intense pressure on the regime to make acceptable concessions. □

‘Hard-leave’ Brexit conservative selected to lead Britain

By G. Dunkel

Boris Johnson—whose lies and showmanship were highly influential in having the “leave” option adopted in the Brexit referendum three years ago—won the election July 23 to become Britain’s next prime minister replacing Theresa May. He got 92,153 votes to his opponent’s 46,656.

Voting was restricted to 159,320 dues-paying members of the center-right Conservative Party. Great Britain is a country with over 64 million people, but as Johnson’s election shows, the big decisions are often in the hands of an elite few.

Brexit is the term for the process of Britain leaving the European Union. Brexit has been a contentious issue. Currently all the major British parties are themselves split between a “soft” faction which promotes Britain keeping some formal links with the EU, a “hard” faction that demands rigorous checks of people and goods at all border crossings and a third faction called “remainers,” who want Britain to stay in the EU.

The previous Conservative prime

minister, Theresa May, spent two years negotiating “soft” exit plans with the EU. All her proposals were rejected by the British Parliament. Frustrated by these rejections, she resigned and the Conservative Party elected Johnson as the new prime minister.

The major sticking point for the British ruling class is the 300-mile border between the Republic of Ireland and the six counties in the northeast that the British state still controls. This border has been completely open since 1998. Closing it would be a tremendous disruption to the economy of both the Republic of Ireland and the six counties.

Johnson has pledged to take Britain out of the EU on Oct. 31, whether or not it has a deal with the EU. He says that this removal would restore the population’s faith in democracy.

Characterization of the EU

The European Union is a free trade zone and also a single market. This allows both the free flow of capital and “the free flow of labor.” An unelected bureaucracy based in Brussels makes economic decisions that

serve European finance capital, especially the banks based in Germany and France.

EU rules have imposed wage austerity and budget cuts, dismantled social protections and insisted on deregulation throughout Europe—without input from or consultation with the people these changes seriously affect. Throughout Europe the EU bureaucracy has facilitated the increased exploitation of the working class. The rules hit hardest where the ruling bourgeoisie is relatively weak or the workers’ movement relatively strong—for example, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Italy.

The British ruling class was able to impose its own austerity rules on the workers inside its territory, without relying on the EU bureaucracy. British capitalists have successfully reduced the standard of living for large sectors of the working class. In addition, sectors of the British ruling class undoubtedly resent Germany’s dominance of the EU.

On the other hand, under Brexit, British capitalists will face a disruption of trade and capital flows after 40 years of integration in the EU.

Not just Brexit

Boris Johnson has been compared to Donald Trump. Both come from rich, elite backgrounds but pretend to be men of the people, and both are quick to use the dog whistles of flagrant racism and homophobia.

In a column he wrote for the Daily Telegraph, a major right-wing paper in England, Johnson claimed that the problem with Africa was that the British “are not in charge anymore.” On a visit to Libya, when he was foreign minister, Johnson claimed that the only thing getting in the way of an economic recovery after its civil war was “clearing the dead bodies.”

Johnson has proposed a way of cutting taxes for the rich in England, Wales and the six occupied Irish counties by sharply increasing taxes in Scotland. (tinyurl.com/y2twtfom)

The three million non-British EU citizens working in Great Britain face an uncertain future. As do the million British citizens working in the EU. □

Doce días sacuden al imperio

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golpe de estado fiscal. El pueblo de Puerto Rico aprovechó la ocasión para expresar su descontento. Como Workers World/Mundo Obrero informó en ese momento:

“Después de enterarse, en vísperas de la protesta, que la policía planeaba evitar que llegaran los manifestantes, los manifestantes comenzaron a llegar al sitio antes del amanecer de ese día y rodearon todas las entradas al hotel.

“Los manifestantes estaban decididos a evitar la conferencia a toda costa ... los manifestantes bloquearon la avenida que conduce al hotel. Aunque no fue una manifestación masiva, los manifestantes tuvieron suficiente presencia para bloquear con éxito el camino para aquellos que intentaban llegar a la conferencia.

“Los manifestantes se sentaron en medio de la avenida y construyeron barricadas con piedras. Rodearon a quienes intentaron asistir a la conferencia y trataron de desanimarlos. Mucha gente se dio la vuelta. Los manifestantes también arrojaron agua a algunas personas para desalentarlos de participar.

“Solo una presencia masiva de la policía, algunos manifestantes dijeron que triplicaba su número, permitieron la entrada de algunas personas. ... [L] a táctica tuvo tanto éxito que menos de 200 personas asistieron a la reunión de negocios, según informes de los medios de comunicación”. (Tinyurl.com/yy56jgse)

Este fue un ensayo general para la insurrección de la semana pasada.

La represión genera resistencia

La devastación física pronto siguió a la ruina financiera. En el otoño de 2017, los huracanes Irma y María azotaron a Puerto Rico. Aunque las cifras de víctimas fueron inicialmente minimizadas, el creciente número de muertos y desaparecidos se volvió demasiado grande para esconderse. Un estudio de 2018 en el New England Journal of Medicine calculó el número total de muertes en una abrumadora 4.645 personas.

La respuesta al huracán de los Estados Unidos fue insensible. Mientras que estados como Texas y Florida recibieron más de \$100 millones en las primeras dos semanas después de severos huracanes

en esos estados, Estados Unidos obligó a Puerto Rico a conformarse con solo \$9 millones en el mismo período de tiempo.

En cada etapa, la destrucción de la vida puertorriqueña y la estabilidad económica ha sido planificada y exacerbada por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Entonces, ¿qué mostraron realmente los mensajes de texto de Rosselló? Más allá de su fanatismo e insensibilidad, se reveló al mundo que el dinero, destinado a ayudar a la recuperación después del huracán María, se desvió a abogados y consultores corporativos. La información confidencial sobre los contratos del gobierno se compartió con los amigos de Rosselló en el sector privado. Y solo tres días antes de las filtraciones, el ex secretario de educación de Rosselló fue arrestado por lavado de dinero.

La secretaria Julia Keleher, republicana de Filadelfia, fue una figura clave en la ejecución de los brutales recortes de educación de PROMESA. Incluso las escuelas para discapacitados no estaban a salvo de su política de austeridad implacable.

El pueblo de Puerto Rico no solo estaba

acosado por el sexismo y la homofobia, sino por la deuda predatoria y la brutal austeridad, el desastre climático y el capitalismo del desastre, el imperialismo insensible y el colonialismo humillante. Las llamas del descontento habían estado ardiendo durante años antes de que estallaran para envolver a la administración colonial de la isla.

La lucha en Puerto Rico es una lucha contra el imperialismo, y es probable que no termine ahora que Rosselló ha renunciado. Al emprender esta lucha, el pueblo puertorriqueño ha dado el ejemplo a todos los que luchan contra la opresión.

El poder del pueblo es extraordinario, y cuando se concentra, ningún imperio puede resistir su fuerza.

Este artículo, de un activista afro-puertorriqueño, se basa en una charla en la reunión del Workers World Party/ Partido Mundo Obrero el 25 de julio en la ciudad de Nueva York que abordó el tema “Lucha contra el racismo y la soberanía nacional”.



FOTO: GREEN PARTY ALLIANCE OF PUERTO RICO FACEBOOK

San Juan, Puerto Rico, 23 de julio.

Huelga de Puerto Rico

Doce días sacuden al imperio

Por Makasi Motema

30 de julio — Miles de personas se apiñaron frente a la mansión del gobernador, La Fortaleza, a la vez que policías antidisturbios, armados hasta los dientes unieron sus escudos cerrados. “La Fortaleza” estaba bajo asedio. Aquí y allá, el cielo nocturno brillaba con la luz ámbar de las llamas distantes. Durante 12 días, los manifestantes asaltaron barricadas y se enfrentaron valientemente a balas de goma, gases lacrimógenos y granadas de destello. ¿Por qué? Su demanda fue la abdicación inmediata del gobernador de Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló.

Esta última conflagración fue provocada por la publicación de mensajes de texto confidenciales entre el gobernador y sus aliados. Sus mensajes estaban cargados de lenguaje homofóbico y sexista y de “bromas” insensibles sobre el creciente número de muertos tras el huracán María. EZso fue la gota que derramó el vaso.

Se hicieron repetidos intentos para asaltar la mansión del gobernador, y las

multitudes crecieron rápidamente de miles a cientos de miles. Rosselló intentó la reconciliación, prometiendo permanecer en el cargo pero renunciando a una campaña de reelección. No fue suficiente.

El 22 de julio, después de 10 días de agitación, los puertorriqueños lanzaron una huelga general.

Millones cerraron la carretera principal que atraviesa San Juan. Dos días después, Rosselló anunció su renuncia. ¿Cómo pudo el pueblo de Puerto Rico derrocar al gobernador en menos de quince días? ¿Y qué los impulsó?

Los medios corporativos se han centrado en Rosselló y sus comentarios despreciables, por conveniencia. Atribuir la culpa de la actual agitación a la desagradable falta de carácter de un hombre es conveniente para los intereses corporativos. Oscurece el papel del capital financiero para estimular el dolor y la ira del pueblo puertorriqueño. Cualquier recuento exacto de la crisis actual debe comenzar al menos desde el 2016.

Fundamentos de la sublevación actual

La Ley de Gestión, Supervisión y Estabilidad Económica de Puerto Rico, o PROMESA, se promulgó en el 2016. PROMESA fue diseñada por la ley federal de los EE.UU. para reestructurar la deuda adquirida por el gobierno puertorriqueño en las últimas décadas. El plan era simple: implacable austeridad.

Los miembros de la junta de PROMESA no elegidos implementaron un plan de recortes presupuestarios aplastantes. Se cerraron casi 200 escuelas, se redujo el gasto en pensiones y atención médica, y el salario mínimo por hora para los trabajadores menores de 25 años se redujo a \$4,25 (comparado con \$7,25 en el continente). Estaba claro lo que se prometía, y se entregaba, al pueblo puertorriqueño: la humillación se montada sobre la indignidad.

Ningún pueblo podría soportar esa degradación indefinidamente, ni podrían sobrevivir a tales dificultades. En estas condiciones, la rebelión era inevitable.

Lo peor es que la crisis de deuda de Puerto Rico se debió por completo a las maquinaciones de Wall Street. La economía puertorriqueña recibió un golpe fatal cuando el sector manufacturero se retiró de la isla en busca de salarios más bajos. Los bancos ingresaron y compraron bonos del gobierno puertorriqueño que se vendieron para cubrir el déficit presupuestario y proporcionar servicios esenciales a la gente.

Pero la economía nunca se recuperó y la deuda continuó acumulándose. Esto no era asunto de Wall Street. La ley de los Estados Unidos exige que su propiedad colonial no pueda declararse en bancarrota como lo hacen los municipios del continente. En cambio, la ley federal obliga a Puerto Rico a cumplir con sus obligaciones de deuda antes de pagar los servicios esenciales. Una política horrible para la gente, pero excelente para los traders de bonos.

El 31 de agosto de 2016, la clase capitalista lanzó una conferencia en el hotel Condado Plaza Hilton para celebrar su

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¡Defiende rebeliones justas contra la policía de Nueva York racista!

¡Desestimación de todos los cargos! ¡No más arrestos ni redadas!

Declaración WWP-PMO

El Departamento de Policía de Nueva York está utilizando instancias de acciones rebeldes justificadas como una excusa para organizar una redada racista al estilo de la de los Cinco de Central Park de todos/as y cada uno/a de los/as sospechosos/as, siempre que sean afroamericanos y pobres.

A raíz de una ola mediática de indignación reaccionaria - increíblemente, en contra de las personas que se resisten a acosar a los policías - las noticias locales están ayudando a la policía de Nueva York publicando fotos en la televisión de 15 personas, todas afroamericanas, “buscadas” por la policía por rociar a los policías con agua en la sección de Brownsville de Brooklyn, Nueva York, y en Harlem, Nueva York, el 20 de julio. Al 31 de julio, tres jóvenes afroamericanos han sido arrestados.

El sistema de encarcelamiento masivo está lanzando una serie de cargos: “obstrucción de la conducta gubernamental”, “travesuras criminales”, “hostigamiento”, “conducta desordenada”, por expresiones justas de oposición a la ocupación policial de los barrios oprimidos.

Mientras tanto, ni siquiera se encontró ninguna base para acusar a un policía blanco, Daniel Pantaleo, por matar a Eric Garner, un hombre negro con un estrangulamiento ilegal: un asesinato que el mundo entero presenció con horror en video el 17 de julio de 2014.

No sorprende que el alcalde “liberal” Bill De Blasio se haya unido al ultraracista ex alcalde de Nueva York Rudolph Giuliani y Donald Trump en el coro hipócrita de indignación contra los manifestantes negros y latinos. Además de aumentar el racismo, este furor mediático por la “falta de respeto a la policía”

empujó de manera oportunista la indignación y las protestas por la exoneración del policía asesino Pantaleo fuera de los titulares.

¿Qué estaban haciendo los policías, a quienes las comunidades claramente quieren fuera, cuando estallaron mini rebeliones en medio del calor y la humedad el 20 de julio? Rompiendo multitudes de personas que habían abierto hidrantes de agua tratando de obtener alivio durante una ola de calor récord. Este fue el mismo fin de semana en que miles de personas tampoco tenían electricidad cuando Con Ed cortó el suministro eléctrico a miles de residentes de Brooklyn. No tener aire acondicionado solo intensificó la crisis.

El índice de calor superó los 110 grados. Sin la ayuda de instituciones corruptas como la Autoridad de Vivienda de Nueva York, Con Ed o la Autoridad Metropolitana de Tránsito, cuyos trenes dejaron de funcionar durante la hora pico el viernes 19 de julio, los vecindarios afectados en Brooklyn, Harlem y el Bronx se encargaron de lidiar con esta situación peligrosa.

Enfrentando golpes de calor y deshidratación, los residentes del vecindario deberían haber recibido ayuda. En cambio, fueron hostigados y aumentaron las detenciones y registros de la policía feroz de Nueva York.

La sensacional serie de Netflix, “When They See Us” (Cuando nos ven), acerca de los cinco Central Park escenificó perfectamente la actitud de la policía que está jugando ahora con la intención declarada de la policía de Nueva York de arrestar a 15 personas más después de arrestar a tres. Treinta años después del complot orquestado contra los cinco de Central Park, hay otra red racista donde se planean arrestos de cualquier persona en

particular afro-estadounidenses o latinxs.

Cuando las personas trabajadoras y oprimidas sufren durante una emergencia climática que pone en peligro la vida, el gobierno de la ciudad y la policía de Nueva York deben hacer excepciones humanitarias: ¡abran los hidrantes y den a las personas una forma inmediata para refrescarse y salvar vidas! Pero ese tipo de compasión no se le ocurre a los funcionarios de la ciudad y al Departamento de Policía de Nueva York, cuyo trabajo es promover la ley y el orden capitalistas.

Bajo el capitalismo, la policía es incapaz de aprender lecciones. Existen únicamente para proteger a los ricos fomentando el racismo y atacando a los

trabajadores y a los pobres. Si las autoridades están preocupadas por la anarquía y el caos, deberían otorgar soluciones a las personas para la indignancia, el desempleo y la falta de atención médica que azotan a Nueva York.

Por eso decimos:

- ¡Detener la ocupación racista de los barrios negros, latinxs y todos los oprimidos, desde Brooklyn hasta Harlem y el Bronx!
- ¡Nuestras comunidades necesitan servicios, trabajos, atención médica, no policías racistas en las calles o en el metro!
- ¡Desestimen todos los cargos! ¡No más arrestos! □

‘Exigimos la renuncia de Pedro Pierluisi y la junta dictatorial’

4 de agosto de 2019 — El colectivo A Call to Action on Puerto Rico / Un Llamado a la Acción por Puerto Rico, desde la diáspora rebelde, celebramos la renuncia de Ricardo Roselló. Es el triunfo de un pueblo ya harto de los abusos políticos, económicos y sociales perpetuados por los estados unidos y sus lacayos de patio en contra del pueblo puertorriqueño.

Nuestro pueblo exige el fin del coloniaje y la destitución de todos los representantes del imperio colonial. Entendemos que la rápida sustitución de Pedro Pierluisi como gobernador colonial es un atentado de la metrópoli por medio de su Junta Dictatorial de Control Fiscal de tratar de reestablecer su control, apaciguar la justa indignación del pueblo y mantener el orden colonial.

Puertorriqueños en el archipiélago y la diáspora, de todos los sectores del pueblo, dejaron sus reclamos claros en las calles. Dijeron claramente que no aceptarán ningún gobierno de blanquitos, corruptos e inescrupulosos, junto con la junta dictatorial impuesta por los Estados Unidos. No habrá paz para el imperio ni para sus lacayos. Es hora para la descolonización. ¡Es hora para un Puerto Rico Libre!

#Rossellórenuncia # Telegramgate #IndependenciaparaPuerto Rico #esadeudanoesnuestra #cancelthedebt #ACalltoActiononPuertoRico

Contáctenos: pccalltoaction@gmail.com. Página de Facebook: A Call to Action on Puerto Rico.

Instagram: pccalltoaction.