

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!



OCT. 13, 2011

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50¢

FUELED BY REPRESSION, NO JOBS

'Occupy Wall Street' ignites solidarity

By Tony Murphy
New York

On Oct. 7 a Haitian community group will march from Brooklyn across the Brooklyn Bridge and join the Occupy Wall Street encampment at Liberty Plaza in downtown Manhattan's financial district. On Oct. 5 Columbia University students plan to walk out of classes and join a giant union march to the same site. A People of Color working group is now part of the encampment and meets regularly.

Occupy Wall Street is now officially New York's center of protest — and is spreading like wildfire to other cities.

The police crackdowns and mass arrests of Occupy Wall Street protesters have breathed life into the phrase "repression breeds resistance." They have also increased solidarity between Occupy Wall Street and unions, students and other groups.

Occupy Wall Street's Labor Outreach committee, comprising some 50 people, has organized actions like a disruption on Sept. 22 of a Sotheby's auction to support the art house's locked-out workers. On Oct. 4 American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 372 held a City Hall rally with Occupy Wall Street support to protest layoffs of more than 700 school support staff.

The major news is that the city's biggest unions — AFSCME DC 37, United Health Care Workers East (1199

SEIU), SEIU 32BJ, United Federation of Teachers, the United Auto Workers and the Transport Workers Union — have joined forces for a major march on Oct. 5 from City Hall to the Liberty Plaza site of Occupy Wall Street.

This followed the transit union's great show of solidarity when it filed a lawsuit against the city for making union members drive city buses carrying arrested protesters to jail. The suit was filed two days after the arrest of nearly 800 people participating in a huge march across the Brooklyn Bridge on Oct. 1.

Calling the arrests "a blatant act of political retaliation," Transport Workers President John Samuelson said: "TWU Local 100 supports the protesters on Wall Street and takes great offense that the mayor and NYPD have ordered operators to transport citizens who were exercising their constitutional right to protest — and shouldn't have been arrested in the first place." (Daily News, Oct. 2)

Even before the Brooklyn Bridge arrests, there was a violent police crackdown on a Sept. 24 march. But that only made more people join the protest activities.

Widespread media coverage of protesters being maced in the eyes at that march galvanized outrage at a Sept. 30 march of thousands that targeted police headquarters. Placards read, "NYPD: Hands off Occupy Wall Street," "Jail bankers, not protesters" and "NYPD protects bank-

Continued on page 6

OCCUPY THE U.S.!

STRUGGLE & THE STATE

6-7 EDITORIAL 10

LGBTQ LIBERATION

- Now, don't enlist! 2
- 30 years of HIV/AIDS 3

THOUSANDS MOURN TROY DAVIS 5

SAVE POSTAL JOBS, SERVICES 3

JUSTICE FOR CUBAN FIVE 8

CHE & WORLD REVOLUTION 9

U.S., U.N. DERAIL PALESTINIAN STATE 11

Socialist conference to join with 'Occupy Wall Street' Sat. & Sun.

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- ▶ Coloquios
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La conferencia está dedicada al espíritu revolucionario del héroe internacional **CHE GUEVARA**, asesinado el 8 de octubre de 1967.

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- ▶ Discussion groups
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SUNDAY 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. (9 a.m. registration)

▶ TRIBUTES TO CHE GUEVARA AND TROY DAVIS

'Don't ask, don't tell' repealed— DON'T ENLIST!

By LeiLani Dowell

After years of protest and struggle by the lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer communities and their allies, on Sept. 20 the “don't ask, don't tell” policy of legal discrimination against LGBTQ people in the military was repealed.

Yet just as when the policy was in effect, the struggle to defeat the military-industrial complex as a whole continues. LGBTQ people will continue to play a role in that struggle, from marching and speaking out at anti-war rallies to protesting when military recruiters show up at our campuses, shopping malls — and now, LGBTQ community centers. Now, as before, we have a huge role to play by refusing to enlist in the military.

The DADT policy, the result of Democratic President Bill Clinton's backtracking on campaign promises to end discrimination against gays and lesbians in the military, actually led to an increase in repression against LGBTQ people in the armed forces. In the early years of DADT — before the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and beyond required more bodies to be used as cannon fodder — gay and lesbian service members were discharged from the military in increasing numbers. These discharges would deny service members the pensions, scholarship entitlements and other benefits they had been promised at the time of enlistment.

When Army Pvt. Barry Winchell was barraged with anti-gay slurs for months in 1999, his superior officer launched an investigation into Winchell's sexuality, rather than investigating the attacks against him. That July, Winchell was beaten to death by another soldier. (Workers World, Feb. 3, 2000)

Examples like this — and the thousands of told and untold stories about anti-LGBTQ bigotry in the U.S. armed forces — make the repeal of DADT a progressive act. However, the military is already attempting to turn the repeal to its advantage. On the very day of the repeal, re-

cruiters for the Marines showed up at the gay community center in Tulsa, Okla. (New York Times, Sept. 20) Chief Anthony Briggs, public affairs officer for Navy recruiting in the District of Los Angeles, has said that the Navy will also consider recruiting in gay centers. (Pasadena City College Courier, Oct. 3)

Many soldiers enlist, especially in these devastating economic times, in order to make a decent living for themselves and their families. Once inside, they find that the military requires conformity to an agenda that creates “norms” and “others” along lines of gender, sexuality, nationality and rank. All ruling-class bosses do this in an attempt to have us fight each other, rather than fight them. However, this practice is exponentially exaggerated in the armed forces, where the goal is not only to prevent unity but also to get soldiers to kill people in other countries — and at home, when rebellions arise. At its very core, the U.S. military is anti-LGBTQ, anti-woman, racist and anti-worker — and the repeal of DADT won't change that.

In the face of the repeal, young LGBTQ workers might be increasingly drawn to enlist in the search for a job. Rather than joining the military, these young workers would be better off joining the anti-war movement and other burgeoning movements for jobs and social justice.

We must continue to show our solidarity with the people of the world by refusing to participate in racist wars of conquest. We've been doing so since the beginning of the modern LGBTQ rights movement in the U.S., when activists formed the Gay Liberation Front within a week of the Stonewall rebellion. The GLF chose its name in honor of the National Liberation Fronts that were fighting against imperialist wars in Algeria and Vietnam. (Workers World, Sept. 12, 2006)

Rather than joining the military, join the growing movement that is occupying cities across the country to demand funding for real jobs, not war. □



WORKERS WORLD
this week...

★ **In the U.S.**

'Occupy Wall Street' ignites solidarity 1
 'Don't ask, don't tell' repealed – Don't enlist! 2
 Protesters demand end to anti-immigrant repression 2
 Rallies coast-to-coast: 'Save our post office' 3
 Bus riders demand 'disability concerns' office 3
 30 years of HIV/AIDS in the U.S. 3
 Union says 'No' to austerity 4
 Union militancy stops health-care concessions 4
 Behind the UAW-General Motors contract 4
 Thousands mourn Troy Davis, victim of legal lynching 5
 Socialist Summit takes up today's struggles 5
 Thousands march on Bank of America in Boston 6
 Solidarity actions and more occupations 7
 A message from Cuban 5 on execution of Troy Davis 8

★ **Around the world**

Stop U.S. attacks on socialist Cuba 8
 Justice for the Cuban Five once again denied 8
 Workers' conference set in Tijuana 8
 Che Guevara's legacy & world revolution 9
 Talk on capitalism's decline sparks broad discussion 9
 The U.S., U.N. & Palestinian statehood 11
 Imperialists escalate aggression, maneuvers in Africa 11
 Pakistan blamed for U.S. debacle in Afghanistan 11

★ **Editorials**

The living struggle & the state 10
 Greece, banks & starvation 10

★ **Noticias En Español**

Jóvenes sin documentos 12
 Abogado enfrenta cargos por asesinato 12

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LOS ANGELES

Protesters demand end to anti-immigrant repression

Hundreds of protesters of many nationalities and ages came together on Sept. 26 for a spirited march and rally in the West Hollywood area of Los Angeles. Led by primarily Latino/a youth and students, they marched from a busy shopping mall to as close as cops would let them get to the Fig & Olive restaurant, where President Barack Obama was speaking at a fundraising dinner for wealthy supporters.

Protesters demanded an end to so-called “secure communities” and the raids, detentions and deportations of immigrants without papers. Marchers also demanded an end to U.S. wars and called for jobs and education, not incarceration. The protesters were not intimidated by the huge presence of police from the Los Angeles Police Department, the LA County Sheriff's office and other units, including truckloads of riot-control cops in full gear. Some of the participating groups included Unión del Barrio,

the Southern California Immigration Coalition, the International Action Center and the Coalition to Stop FBI Repression. Dozens of Workers World newspapers were distributed.

— Report and photo by Kris Hamel



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Workers World Party (WWP) fights for socialism and engages in struggles on all the issues that face the working class & oppressed peoples — Black & white, Latino/a, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women & men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed & students.

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Rallies coast-to-coast: 'Save our post office'

By Joe Piette

Thousands of union members and their supporters attended a total of 492 local rallies on Sept. 27. They all spoke in one voice and demanded, "Save the U.S. Postal Service." The rallies were held in front of House and Senate offices in every congressional district across the U.S. The workers' demonstrations urged lawmakers to save the USPS by supporting H.R. 1351, which would restore its financial stability.

In an impressive show of solidarity, the American Postal Workers Union, the National Association of Letter Carriers, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association joined forces with other labor unions and community members. They all opposed the most serious threat to USPS jobs since President Richard Nixon called out the National Guard against the postal strike of 1971.

The USPS is threatening to lay off as many as 200,000 workers, close up to 8,400 post offices, eliminate Saturday mail service and shut down 250 mail-processing facilities nationally. Postal officials also seek to drastically reduce medical and pension benefits for workers and retirees. The Postal Service has not received any taxpayer subsidies in 30 years.

The scheduled cutbacks would hit seniors and poor and rural communities the hardest. Post offices are being tagged for closing based on the amount of revenue they generate. Low-income and rural areas, which depend on neighborhood post offices more than wealthy urban areas, would suffer the most closings. The re-trenchment would also negatively affect the \$1.2 trillion U.S. mailing industry, with its 9 million jobs.

Postal management claims that these draconian cuts are necessary because of the decline of first-class mail due to the Internet and because of the struggling economy, which has depressed advertising mail volume.

Labor leaders contend that the Postal Service, as currently required by Congress, has tied up more than \$100 billion in overfunded retirement and health benefit accounts that could be used to avert layoffs and cutbacks.

In 2006 Congress passed a bill which imposed a burden on the USPS that no other government agency or private com-



Postal workers and supporters in Philadelphia, Sept. 27.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

pany shares. It required the Postal Service to pay a 75-year liability in just 10 years to "pre-fund" health care benefits for future retirees. This impossible-to-meet mandate totals \$5.5 billion a year.

In addition to overfunding pensions, the Postal Service previously exaggerated their retirees' health liability by using a 7 percent rather than a 5 percent health care inflation rate. Correcting overpayments and transferring any surplus to the retiree health fund would fully fund the Postal Service's retiree obligations and eliminate the need for further pre-funding.

Postal union leaders point out that the Postal Service would have made a profit of \$611 million over the last four years if Congress had not saddled the agency with unfair financial burdens.

Increased exploitation of postal workers

How did the USPS make \$611 million in revenue, despite the Great Recession and competition from email, Bluetooth and other technological advances?

The Postal Service workforce has declined nearly 25 percent since 2000, from 708,324 to 531,831 — a massive drop. Yet Total Factor Productivity, a measure of the Postal Service's operational efficiency, improved 10 percent over the same period.

How can productivity go up with so

many fewer workers? By using new technology and utilizing the old-fashioned means of forcing workers to work harder.

For instance, even though the USPS's delivery network increases by an average 1 million addresses every year, since 2000 they have abolished 43,974 carrier jobs. In just the last two years, more than 12,000 delivery routes have been eliminated. Every station reduced the number of carrier routes, forcing postal workers to deliver mail to more addresses. In effect, each postal worker's increased workload enabled the Postal Service to make \$611 million more in revenue.

However, it's not about just getting more profits out of workers. As in Wisconsin,

Ohio, New Jersey and other states, corporations and their politicians in office aim to attack all government unions head-on.

On Sept. 21, conservative leaders in Congress were able to push an extremely anti-workers'-rights bill out of committee. If passed by Congress as a whole, it would grant a newly established control board the authority to carry out layoffs, in spite of any provisions in collective bargaining agreements that might limit them.

In addition, H.R. 2309 mandates layoffs of retirement-eligible employees with the longest service before ineligible employees. It would also empower a newly created "solvency authority" to unilaterally cut wages and abolish benefits.

Responding to attacks by congressional anti-worker politicians as well as by USPS executives, the postal unions organized the rallies on Sept. 27. Their goal was to pressure politicians in every congressional district to support H.R. 1351. The bill has the support of 217 members of Congress and would take the unfair \$75 billion pre-funding burden off postal ledgers.

These rallies may not be the last. Some union members are agitating for more local protests as well as a national march on Washington to save the Postal Service.

Community groups as well as union activists promise to voice their opposition to postal cutbacks at a "discontinuance feasibility" meeting on the shutting down of the Port Authority Post Office in New York City on Oct. 5.

The movement to save postal jobs, postal unions and postal facilities is just getting started.

The writer recently retired from the USPS and is a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

Bus riders demand 'disability concerns' office



"Don't dis our ability" summed up the message when Warriors on Wheels and supporters demanded the Detroit city government establish an Office on Disability Concerns. Michigan Welfare Rights, the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice, the Rev. Ed Rowe, Pastor David Bullock and others joined the wheelchair basketball team, Ms. Wheelchair Michigan and other determined Warriors on Wheels activists at a Sept. 28 protest outside City Hall.

More than 20 years after the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act, deteriorating public accommodations prompted the chant, "Support us, not ignore us!" Lisa Franklin, founder and president of WOW, said improved service for people with disabilities makes life better for everyone.

Poor bus service has caused riders to lose their jobs and honor-roll students to sit in detention. At a recent City Council hearing to address the bus problems, the transportation department director admitted that half the fleet was out of service.

The city administration — which hands over millions in tax dollars to Wall Street every month in interest and debt service — has been trying to blame bus mechanics for waits of up to two and three hours at bus stops. The truth came out when mechanics' union president Leamon Wilson took the microphone: the city administration, which is devoted to cutting the number of city workers to please the bond raters, refuses to replace retirees and fill other job vacancies. This occurs while unemployment, particularly for African-American men, is sky-high in Detroit.

— Report and photo by Cheryl LaBash

30 years of HIV/AIDS in the U.S.

By Gerry Scoppettuolo

How much is the life of a person with HIV/AIDS worth? It's not worth much to the big drug manufacturers, choking on the billions of dollars in profits made from the illness of others. It's not even worth much if you live in the richest and most powerful country on the planet.

As of Sept. 1, more than 9,000 people living with HIV in the U.S. — who would normally have access to free HIV medication — have been placed on waiting lists for the government's subsidized AIDS Drug Assistance Program for people with no insurance. (National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors) Two of the states with the longest waiting lists, Florida (4,022 people) and Louisiana (1,056 people), have some of the highest HIV death rates in the U.S. (Kaiser Family Foundation)

Some individuals who were receiving subsidized meds have actually been boot-ed out of the program. In Virginia, 760

people were told to appeal to drug company charity programs, as they were being "transitioned" out of ADAP. (Washington Blade, Feb. 10) In Ohio, the financial eligibility requirement has been changed from 500 percent of the poverty level to 300 percent, resulting in 257 people being dropped from the program. (thebody.com, Sept. 23, 2010).

African Americans and Latinos/as represent 73 percent of all of those on these waiting lists — and have an HIV death rate 20 times that of whites (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

Young gay and bisexual Black men are being infected at three times the annual numbers of young gay and bisexual white men, while African-American women are 20 times more likely to have HIV/AIDS than white women.

Drug corporations that could be saving people's lives by giving away these medications are drowning in record profits. Annual reports of seven leading HIV

Continued on page 6

NEW YORK STATE

Union says 'NO' to austerity

By G. Dunkel
New York

Members of the Professional Employees Federation of New York, which represents 55,000 state employees, voted no by a 54 percent to 46 percent margin on a five-year contract which would have left workers earning less after five years than they make today. Seventy percent of the union voted, which is an unusually high number for any "public-service" union in New York.

This contract would have imposed three years of zero wage increases, 13 furlough days and higher health care premiums — in return for a promise to try to avoid layoffs for two years. It follows the national austerity campaign imposed in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and elsewhere, with

the wrinkle that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, was elected with the support of the Working Families Party.

Cuomo immediately made it clear that he intended to stop negotiating, which is against labor law in New York. The law, however, imposes no real sanctions on management. Cuomo also announced that his administration would lay off 3,500 PEF members, but they had to scramble to draw up the lists. According to the Albany Times-Union (Sept. 30), some departments were sending out layoff notices by email.

Besides sending out pink slips, Cuomo demanded another union vote and said that PEF President Kenneth Brynien and his leadership had misled the PEF and turned members with seniority against members without protection, those who were under the threat of layoffs.

The New York Times, the Daily News and a number of other media all condemned the vote as ignoring the fiscal realities of New York and dismissed the members' anger over the decision to let the tax on millionaires expire. They also pooh-poohed PEF members' anger over the outsourcing — at high cost — of work that PEF members could do.

Cuomo softened a bit eventually and said he might allow some "revenue-neutral tweaks" to the contract. He was obviously aware that the news of the "no" vote was a major morale boost for other public-service unions in New York, the state with the greatest percentage of unionized workers in the country.

PEF President Brynien

responded to Cuomo by saying, "We are anxious to discuss with the governor's negotiators how we can reach an agreement my members are willing to ratify while preserving state services and meeting the savings the state requires."

It appears that some PEF members would like to see Brynien take a more confrontational attitude toward Cuomo. They say Cuomo is trying to divide the union and point out his defense of the interests of the wealthiest New Yorkers. □

NEW YORK CITY

Union militancy stops health-care concessions

About 500 Professional Staff Congress members and supporters held a militant picket outside the Board of Trustees meeting Sept. 26, while 75 went inside to demand the City University of New York fully fund adjunct faculty health care.

CUNY agreed to fund adjunct or part-time faculty health care in the 1980s and at that time set the amount it would contribute. About

10 years ago, it upped its contribution a bit.

Since the 1980s, however, the number of adjuncts at CUNY has grown from a few thousand to over 13,000 and the price of medical care and health insurance has risen tremendously.

For years CUNY has adamantly insisted it would not pay anything more, according to the adjuncts,

who are hired because CUNY can pay them peanuts, wages far below full-time pay rates. The university said the workers should pick up the tab for increased costs, but the union refused to budge.

A militant campaign by the PSC, culminating in this rally, caused CUNY to agree to put full funding for adjunct health care in its budget request.

— Report and photo by WW New York bureau



Auto workers make no gains

Behind the UAW-General Motors contract

By Martha Grevatt
Detroit

Before workers even began to vote on the four-year contract between General Motors and the United Auto Workers, accolades were streaming in from finance capital. It "seems to have kept with the spirit of market expectations," said J.P. Morgan Chase analyst Himanshu Patel. "We see the agreement as adding only modestly to costs," noted Brian Johnson of London-based Barclays Capital.

After the UAW reported Sept. 28 that GM workers had passed the agreement, the financial service company, Standard and Poor's, immediately improved GM's credit rating from BB- to BB+. Rival Moody's has indicated it will likely follow suit. A higher rating lets a company borrow at lower interest rates.

Why have these high priests of the market bestowed their blessings on this contract?

All the givebacks from the 2007 contract will continue. Nothing that GM workers gave up during the 2009 bankruptcy will be restored. "Traditional" workers hired before 2007 get no raises. The pay increase to newer "entry level" workers will leave them making at least nine dollars less per hour than their higher-seniority coworkers.

GM CEO Dan Akerson plugged the contract in a conference call Sept. 28 with investors. Upfront "signing bonuses"

of \$5,000 and buyouts to get high-paid trades workers to leave would cost just a few hundred million dollars. Labor costs, which have fallen since 2007 from \$16 billion to \$5 billion, might go up an average of 1 percent per year. If vehicle prices follow the current 3.8 percent inflation rate, investor income will pull ahead of labor costs. Barclays is predicting an even bigger boost to GM profits, which are already \$5.7 billion for the first half of 2011. "With the cap on lower-paid Tier 2 workers lifted," an analyst suggested, "attrition could materially lower GM's all in labor cost ... by about \$300 million annually." (streetinsider.com, Sept. 21)

Union leaders push agreement

Not only are the capitalist media hailing this contract as a win-win for workers and bosses, so is UAW President Bob King. "Now that GM is posting profits again, our members are sharing in the success, while ensuring GM's continued profitability," King stated. (www.uaw.org)

What are workers gaining? There is a promise to "create or retain" 6,400 jobs, but many jobs will be offset by attrition (workers quitting, dying or retiring and not being replaced) and the closing of an assembly plant in Shreveport, La. Reopening the former Saturn plant in Spring Hill, Tenn., is tied to "innovative staffing," the same language used to reopen the Lake Orion, Mich., assembly

plant. The 40 percent with the lowest seniority were to be called back at entry-level pay. To avoid a 50 percent pay cut, workers had to transfer to Lordstown, Ohio, 200-plus miles from their families and communities.

Retirees, who number over 400,000, got nothing and are losing a \$700 annual holiday bonus. Why? The pension fund is underfunded due to "Wall Street's continuing problems" and the fact that the ratio of UAW hourly workers to retirees is 48,500 to 405,000. (Detroit Free Press, Sept. 30) Just five years ago there were 111,000 UAW GM hourly workers.

How was this attack on workers and retirees passed? It took more than a \$5,000 bonus. Workers were told by UAW staff that if they voted "no" the contract would go before an arbitrator, who might take more away. The clause sending "unresolved issues" to binding arbitration, presumably robbing workers of the strike weapon, was demanded by the U.S. Treasury during the 2009 bailout.

The corporate-owned media did not go a day without saying that GM workers "can't strike." The intent was to have workers resign themselves to a lousy agreement. At some UAW locals, less than half the membership voted. Significantly, more than one-third of those who did vote cast a "no" ballot.

It is not true that workers can't strike; it's a question of legality. A strike could be

ruled a breach of contract and GM could seek a court injunction forcing workers back to work. Legal or not, a strike would be against GM — along with the banks, the state and an unfriendly media. With 30 million workers unemployed or underemployed, these forces have a huge army of potential strikebreakers. Still, the UAW leadership should not have used the anti-strike clause to sell a contract that will strip away what previous generations won after months on the picket line. No union should tell members they "can't strike."

Now Ford wants their employees to swallow the same rotten deal. Standard and Poor's already said it would grant the same credit rating upgrade if that happens. As of noon on Oct. 3, Ford and UAW negotiators are still meeting.

Ford workers, however, are not bound by a no-strike clause. In 2009 Ford workers voted down contract modifications patterned after the GM and Chrysler concessions. The main reason was to uphold the right to strike. The recent vote to authorize a strike if necessary was 99 percent in favor. There may not be a strike, but Ford workers will be acting with an awareness of their own leverage.

Now is the time for autoworkers to exorcise the demonic "spirit of market expectations" and reinvigorate the spirit of working-class solidarity.

Grevatt is a 24-year Chrysler autoworker and member of UAW Local 689.

'Troy was innocent, the system is guilty'

Thousands mourn Troy Davis, victim of legal lynching

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Savannah, Ga.

People started lining up outside the Jonesville Baptist Church on Sept. 21 more than two hours before the Celebration of Life service for Troy Anthony Davis was scheduled to begin. Within minutes, the line snaked around the building. By the time the opening hymn began at 11 a.m., 2,000 people had filled the pews. Most came from Savannah, Ga., but there were hundreds from Atlanta and other parts of the United States.

Davis' family, especially his sister, Martina Correia, wanted this to be a public funeral. She played a major role in motivating organizations such as the NAACP and Amnesty International to look into her brother's case. The almost four-hour program combined religious faith and prayer with personal testimony about Davis' character and love of family, and exhortations against the death penalty and a racist injustice system.

A multipaged program with dozens of pictures of Davis from his childhood and family gatherings during his imprisonment was distributed. Its pages include his written statement to supporters, photos of the numerous rallies in his defense as well as copies of letters written by prominent organizations and individuals to the Georgia Pardons and Parole Board.

Among the testimonies were moving remarks by his nephew, De'Jaun Davis-Correia, and other friends, who told of Davis' constant concern for family and of his brotherly conduct toward others on death row. Davis, whose 43rd birthday would have been Oct. 9, kept a calendar that noted special dates concerning his large family and circle of friends and supporters. One of his lawyers told the crowd that Davis stayed fully abreast of every legal proceeding and that his accounting



PHOTO: REBEL DIAZ

'I am Troy Davis' mural in the Bronx, N.Y. View from the Bruckner Expressway.

of the details of the night of the shooting never varied in claiming his innocence.

Davis repeated his innocence as he was strapped to the gurney, waiting for the deadly poison to enter his body. His final words also conveyed compassion to those who were about to kill him.

Speakers repeatedly referred to Davis' own words in a letter to his millions of supporters "to dismantle this unjust system." Ben Jealous and Edward DuBose of the NAACP, Larry Cox of Amnesty International, activist Dick Gregory and others challenged the crowd to actively oppose the death penalty.

Gregory spoke about the need to recognize this historical moment and cited the murder of Emmett Till in 1955 and the explosion of civil rights activity that followed. He said that it wasn't that many other Black men and youth hadn't been brutally killed before and even after. Rather it was that the death of Emmett Till came to encompass all the injustices felt and experienced by millions of oppressed people who then organized a mass movement to change their conditions.

Among others whose words and music brought the audience to their feet were

the Rev. Raphael Warnock, pastor of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church — where a capacity crowd rallied for Davis on Sept. 16 — and acclaimed gospel singer, Deitrick Haddon.

Davis wrote a letter just weeks before his execution which said, "This is not a case about the death penalty, this is not a case about Troy Davis, this is a case about Justice and the Human Spirit to see Justice prevail." He urged people to see that there are many Troy Davises locked up in jails and prisons in the U.S. and around the world.

"I am Troy Davis"

The slogan, "I am Troy Davis," has been repeated in U.S. cities and towns and across the globe. It recognizes that for the vast majority of people, laws, courts, jails and prisons serve only to preserve the wealth and control of a tiny minority and do not mete out justice, compassion or fairness.

In the U.S., more than 2.3 million people are incarcerated and held in cages. Their alleged crimes pale in comparison to the theft of billions of dollars by the banks and corporations, the seizures of lands and homes by trickery and force,



and the slaughter of millions of people in imperialist wars.

There were mountains of doubt created about Davis' guilt when seven of the nine trial witnesses recanted their testimony, many claiming police threats and coercion for their false statements. Additionally, no physical evidence tied him to the death of policeman Mark MacPhail. These elements of Davis' case elicited passionate support for him by millions of people.

The refusal of the U.S. judicial system — with all its layers of courts and judges — to act justly, and the Georgia Pardons and Parole Board's cowardice about providing clemency are fueling a grassroots movement. The issue is not limited to the racist and unequal imposition of the death penalty but goes to the whole system of state repression embodied in the police, courts and prisons.

At the close of the service, Davis' voice was heard, calling on people to continue the fight for justice.

As the crowd left the sanctuary, a large poster with Davis' face and the words, "Too Much Doubt," was distributed. As the funeral cars left to take the family and friends to his private burial, the chant, "I am Troy Davis. We are Troy Davis," filled the air, as the mourners became demonstrators, first lining the street in honor of the cortege and then filling the intersection in resistance.

The impact of this cold-blooded, intentional murder by the state is still to be realized, but the call has gone out: Troy Davis was innocent! The system is guilty! □

'Abolish capitalism'

Socialist Summit takes up today's struggles

By Sharon Black
Baltimore

People of all ages and nationalities, mostly from Baltimore but also Maryland's Prince Georges County and Washington, D.C., spent the afternoon and early evening of Sept. 24 in lively discussion examining the current capitalist economic crisis, its impact and prospects for change.

Larry Holmes, the keynote speaker and a national leader of Workers World Party, noted especially the occupation of Wall Street by young people, many of whom he characterized as youth who would previously have found jobs under capitalism, but who now have no future to look forward to. Holmes discussed the importance of this development in relation to the most oppressed.

He also examined the economics behind this development from a global and socialist perspective, emphasizing the movements in Spain, Greece, Italy and other countries, especially of youth. Holmes also reviewed the banking and debt crisis and its root causes, along with the capitalist crisis of overproduction,

breaking the crisis down in a way that was understandable to everyone.

Ben Carroll, a WWP and Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) organizer from North Carolina, described what was taking place with youth around the world and made a concrete call for protests at the Democratic Party National Convention scheduled for Charlotte, N.C., next summer. Joe Piette, a newly retired postal worker and union member, talked about the attacks on postal workers. Renee Washington, Baltimore All Peoples Congress and Workers World Party organizer, gave a moving account of the fight against the police killing of her fiancé in 2000 that brought her into the struggle.

Other groups made important contributions, including Ujima Peoples Progress Party, which called for support of their independent African worker-led political party, and the Rev. C. D. Witherpoon, president of the Baltimore Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who discussed the fight against racism. Spoken-word artist Ron Kipling Williams filled the hall with drumming and revolutionary poetry.

Participants remained involved in the

meeting throughout the day. During the discussions, hands went up and a variety of people asked questions. One worker wanted to know how Holmes viewed Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Students from Johns Hopkins asked about Venezuela. Activists from the Black community explored the contradictions of the Obama administration, the war on Libya and its impact on the movement.

The audience gave its undivided attention to a video from Detroit on the war against Libya featuring Abayomi Azikiwe, contributing editor to Workers World newspaper.

Berta Joubert, an editor of Mundo Obrero, and Theresa Beck, a member of the Venceremos Brigade, spoke on the need for support for revolutionary Cuba and Venezuela and the need to free the Cuban Five. Betsy Oakes, a teacher and WWP member, spoke about the fight for women's liberation and made a special appeal to recognize the sisters of Troy Davis.

Andre Powell, a leader of Baltimore WWP and also a delegate of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees to the Baltimore Metropolitan Labor Council, chaired the ses-

sions and opened with a tribute to Troy Davis: "This was a historic meeting for Baltimore. To my recollection there has never been an actual summit on socialism here. It's possible that something similar might have happened in the 30s or some other period, but not in my lifetime, not here. So we are ecstatic!"

"Over 50 people came together, half who are brand new to a revolutionary organization. Maybe they were thinking revolutionary thoughts, but now they have a revolutionary organization."

Steven Ceci, a student at University of Maryland, Baltimore County and a WWP organizer of the summit, said: "Our next task is to set up classes on Marxism. There are many people new to our group, including workers, students and community organizers, who are hungry to learn more. We will also be organizing to take a significantly broad group of activists to the national WWP conference."

Ceci concluded: "This is just a beginning. This summit tells only a small part of the story. More than 4,500 broadsheets calling for the 'abolishment of capitalism and for fighting for jobs, education, hous-

Continued on page 8

OCCUPY WALL STREET ST

Thousands march on Bank of America

Thousands of demonstrators marched on Bank of America in Boston on Sept. 30. Shouting, "Whose city?! Our city!" the protesters encircled the block-long bank, blocking the exits and bringing normal business to a halt. Two dozen people were arrested inside and outside the bank to the deafening cheers of supporters, including many youth of color, community activists and union members.

Members of Service Employees Locals 1199 and 615 led the direct action, but they were not alone. Contingents from UNITE-HERE Local 26, Verizon workers from International Electrical Workers Local 2222 and Communications Workers Local 1400 as well as members of United Auto Workers Local 2223 also took to the streets. They were joined by community activists from City Life/Vida Urbana, United4Justice, Right to the City, the Boston Workers Alliance, the T Riders Union, Jobs With Justice,

the Women's Fightback Network, the Bail Out the People Movement and many others.

Keri Evinson, vice president of CWA Local 1400, addressed cheering demonstrators in the middle of the protest, just after the arrests. "Verizon wants to take back 50 years of bargaining — we can't allow it!" she said.

The demonstration arrived at Bank of America after a mass rally on Boston Common and a boisterous march through the downtown shopping district. The action preceded the first night of Occupy Boston in Dewey Square.

— Gerry Scoppettuolo



WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN
Women's Fightback Network demands: 'Bail out women and communities, not banks!'

Fueled by repression, no jobs

'Occupy Wall Street' ignites solidarity



Wall Street occupiers march on NYPD headquarters.

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Continued from page 1
ers and billionaires."

Coverage of the police crackdown included the movement's use of the Internet to help identify Anthony Bologna as the offending officer, who not only pepper-sprayed protesters but also has outstanding lawsuits against him for similar behavior in the 2004 protests at the Republican National Convention.

All ages hit by unemployment

There's no question that police attacks have helped fuel the growth of Occupy Wall Street. What's also behind the dynamic growth of the movement, especially the spread of "Occupy" movements to other cities, is the devastating jobs crisis.

In addition to occupations in big cities

like Washington, Boston, San Francisco, Chicago, Minneapolis and Baltimore, there are others in Memphis, Tenn.; Hilo, Hawaii; and McAllen, Texas.

According to the U.S. Labor Department, more than 2 million people have been jobless for 99 weeks or more — the cutoff point for unemployment benefits in states with the highest unemployment rates.

"I'm presently unemployed for the first time in my life, at 55 years old," said Occupy Wall Street protester Albert Sgambati, who told AM New York that his teaching job at City University's research foundation slipped from full to part-time and then to none last October, when the foundation lost funding. (Oct. 2)

At the same time, many students taking part in this movement are saddled

with tens of thousands of dollars in debt with no job prospects. Another finding from the congressional report is that even though workers without a college education are more likely to be unemployed, jobless workers with bachelor degrees, and thus more school debt to pay off, are just as likely to become 99ers as jobless workers with high school diplomas.

On Oct. 2 protester Robert Cammisio held a sign at Liberty Plaza that read: "Arrested yesterday, back today." On the other side it read: "Arrest one of us and two more will appear."

The Occupy Wall Street members have shown great determination in the face of steady police harassment. As the unemployment crisis worsens, this dynamic movement will continue to grow. □

30 years of HIV/AIDS in the U.S.

Continued from page 3

pharmaceutical firms show that in just over three years (2006-2009), the seven leading manufacturers of HIV meds reaped \$159 billion in profits. These are net pure profits — that is, what is left after all costs are accounted for, including research and development, taxes, investments, raw materials and wages. A mere \$150 million would be enough to provide a year's worth of HIV meds to those who need them in the U.S.

The capitalist media constantly make false claims that drug companies must charge high prices to get back the money they have invested in making new drugs. But this allegation has been thoroughly debunked by Marcia Angell, senior lecturer in social medicine at Harvard Medical School and former editor-in-chief of the New England Journal of Medicine ("The Truth About the Drug Companies," 2004), as well as others. The government, through the National Institutes of Health, has provided untold millions of dollars in grants to initiate drug development since the 1980s.

Any money that may be invested by drug companies to make new medications comes from their profits, which are nothing more than wages gone unpaid to workers in the exploitation of their labor. Only workers create wealth, not the bosses and owners of the means of production.

In the 30 years since the first AIDS cases were reported by the government, more than 600,000 people have died from this preventable disease in the U.S., and millions more globally. Only socialism, governed by true peoples' representatives, can guarantee that in the future needless deaths will be averted by putting drug manufacturing in the hands of the people.

In socialist Cuba, HIV meds have been made available even though the U.S. blockade stopped the importation of HIV meds years ago. Today, Cuba manufactures its own HIV medications and distributes them free of charge to the people who need them. In the U.S., Merck, Pfizer and the other drug companies' distributions are only in the form of profits to their stockholders.

The difference between capitalism and socialism for people living with HIV is a matter of life and death. From 1987, when the militant group Act-Up (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) began its fight for life against the silence of the government, to 2011 and beyond: Silence = Death! Capitalism = Death! □

STRUGGLE GROWS IN U.S.



NORTH CAROLINA

PHOTO: BRYAN PERLMUTTER

Solidarity actions and more occupations

By Betsy Piette

The people are rising up. The anti-corporation sentiments that galvanized the **OCCUPY WALL STREET** protest in New York City are spreading across the U.S. and the world. The list of cities either staging or planning occupations increases by the hour.

As of Oct. 2, Occupy Together.org listed more than 160 cities across the U.S. as well as in **CANADA, MEXICO, SOUTH AMERICA, EUROPE, AUSTRALIA** and **ASIA**. So many responded to this unofficial hub set up Sept. 23 to list events springing up in solidarity with OWS that the website had to restructure to accommodate growing demand.

Massive unemployment and under-employment; mortgage foreclosures and mounting student debt; the lack of health care and educational opportunities; police brutality and incarceration; racism, sexism, homophobia and xenophobia; and the growing gap between the rich and all poor and working people are fueling this movement.

It's like someone popped the cork and built-up anger and frustration with an economic system that is proving incapable of providing basic human needs is bubbling over. The "99 percent" are a diverse mix, but share many common concerns as the global capitalist crisis intensifies.

Independent filmmaker Michael Moore described the widening protests as "an uprising of people who have had it." Real Clear Politics reported Moore as saying, "The majority of Americans are really upset at Wall Street ... so you have already got an army of Americans who are just waiting for somebody to do something, and something has started." (Sept. 30)

More than 16 cities in **CALIFORNIA** and nine in **FLORIDA** are on the Occupy Together list. There is an Occupy **COLUMBUS, OHIO**; Occupy **COLUMBUS, IND.**; and Occupy **COLUMBUS, GA**. You can also Occupy Columbia if you live in **SOUTH CAROLINA** or **MISSOURI**.

The movement extends from coast to coast — **PORTLAND, ME.** to **PORTLAND, ORE.** — and across the Midwest's traditional "rust belt" in hard-hit cities like **DETROIT, CLEVELAND** and **YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO**, which have borne the brunt of the economic downturn.

Occupy the South!

Some of the most significant actions are taking place in the South. Over the weekend of Oct. 1-2, activities in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street took place in eight **NORTH CAROLINA CITIES**, including **ASHEVILLE, WINSTON-SALEM, DURHAM** and **RALEIGH**. They included community speak-outs, demonstrations and assemblies to plan local occupations.

In **CHARLOTTE** more than 300 people gathered in Marshall Park Oct. 1 to plan a



LOS ANGELES

PHOTO: SEKOU PARKER

response to the economic crisis and budget cuts. Then they marched to Bank of America's world headquarters, chanting "Banks got bailed out, we got sold out!" and "How do you solve a deficit? End the wars and tax the rich!" Occupy Charlotte will start Oct. 8.

Durham and Raleigh held assemblies on Oct. 2. About 250 people turned out in Durham and 200 in Raleigh. In both cities, people spoke of wanting to get active and fight back against the economic crisis, having been inspired by the bold initiative of the Wall Street protests. Both assemblies discussed trying to consolidate actions planned for next week into one unified occupation in Raleigh, the state capital.

Occupy Asheville kicked off Oct. 1 with a memorial service for Troy Davis. More than 1,800 people signed up on the group's Facebook page. Participants in Occupy Asheville set up camp downtown and plan daily demonstrations.

In **TAMPA** an estimated 600 people marched with handmade signs Oct. 1 to protest "The Problem — The Banks!" They plan a larger march Oct. 6. Occupations are being organized in other Southern cities, including **BIRMINGHAM, ATLANTA, MEMPHIS, RICHMOND, SAVANNAH, NORFOLK, LOUISVILLE** and **NEW ORLEANS**.

On the West Coast, 3,500 people converged on City Hall in **LOS ANGELES** Oct. 1. About 400 people set up tents and plan to stay as long as possible. The gathering was half Latino/a youth. Trucks brought in food and water, and an area was set up with laptops for media work. The Filipino group **BAYAN-USA** and Workers World Party set up a tent featuring classes on anti-imperialist struggles and those in the U.S.

Movement spreads coast to coast

Occupy Wall Street in **SAN FRANCISCO** started Sept. 29 when hundreds of protesters hit the streets with pit stops at Bank of America, Charles Schwab, Wells Fargo and Chase Bank to denounce the impact of corporate greed. Demonstrators in **SPOKANE, WASH.**, set up a tent city before police enforced a no-camping rule. More than 100 people turned out for Occupy **SEATTLE** on Oct. 1.

DENVER had its first protest on Oct. 1, with demonstrators saying they will no longer tolerate the greed and corruption of Wall Street. Future OWS protests are planned for **PHOENIX** and **ALBUQUERQUE**, where 500 people gathered Oct. 1. In Texas, OWS actions are being organized in **HOUSTON, AUSTIN, SAN ANTONIO, DALLAS, EL PASO** and **MALLEN**.

The **CHICAGO** sit-in began Sept. 23 with a march from Willis Tower to the Federal Reserve Bank. There, 100 demonstrators set up camp, calling it their Tahrir Square.

OWS has spread to **MICHIGAN**, where **DETROIT** activists have called for the occupation of a Chase Bank branch near **WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY** campus beginning the first week in October. Activists packed the Oct. 3 meeting of the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice to organize for Occupy Detroit. A general assembly is being planned for Oct. 10 to set the time and place for the occupation. OWS groups have also been established in **LANSING, FLINT, GRAND RAPIDS**, and **ANN ARBOR**.

More than 300 people assembled in **PHILADELPHIA'S CENTER CITY** Sept. 29 to begin plans to bring Occupy Wall Street there. While mostly youth, the lively gathering included seasoned activists. The

sentiment appeared to be for setting up an occupation at a visible location near the city's stock exchange. **PENNSYLVANIA** occupations are also being planned in **PITTSBURGH, HARRISBURG, ALLENTOWN** and **WILKES-BARRE**.

In upstate **NEW YORK**, OWS has spread to **ALBANY, BUFFALO, BINGHAMTON, UTICA, ITHACA** and **ROCHESTER**.

Throughout **NEW ENGLAND**, OWS efforts are underway in **MAINE, VERMONT, CONNECTICUT, RHODE ISLAND** and **MASSACHUSETTS**. More than 3,000 rallied in Boston Oct. 1 for a march on Bank of America. The bank has announced it will charge customers \$5 a month to use debit cards to access their own money. Twenty-four people were arrested in the action.

At Dewey Square, just two blocks from the heart of **BOSTON'S FINANCIAL DISTRICT**, 300 activists, mostly youth, pitched tents for an encampment in the shadow of the Federal Reserve Bank.

Over the weekend Occupy Boston received its first formal union endorsement from Local 7 of the Boston Ironworkers Union. Its membership has been decimated by the downturn in construction jobs brought on by the collapse of the housing bubble, bank bailouts and mass evictions.

News pundits, who coined the phrase "The Arab Spring" in reference to the massive demonstrations that rocked Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and other African and Middle Eastern countries earlier this year, are referring to the OWS movement as "The U.S. Fall." Is "The winter of our discontent" on the horizon?

Ben Carroll, Gene Clancy, Kris Hamel, John Parker, Gerry Scoppettuolo and Mike Shane contributed to this article.

Stop U.S. attacks on socialist Cuba

By Cheryl LaBash

The struggle to free the Cuban Five from unjust U.S. imprisonment, now in its 14th year, is summarized in a Sept. 28 editorial in *Granma International*. (See “Justice for the Cuban Five once again denied” in this issue.) Attempts by the U.S. government to undo the gains won by Cuban workers through the 1959 socialist revolution — including its targeting of the Five Cuban heroes — have been increasingly exposed over these years.

A U.S.-sponsored, CIA-connected network based in Florida has killed more than 3,000 people in Cuba, including Italian tourist Fabio DiCelmo in a hotel bombing, a plane full of innocents on Cubana 455 and a worker at a popular Havana department store burned by CIA-planted incendiary devices concealed in dolls. In New York City, a Cuban diplo-

mat was assassinated. Rockets were fired at the United Nations. In Washington, D.C., Chilean diplomat Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffat died in a car bombing. More terror activities aimed at socialist Cuba have occurred in Florida itself.

The corporate media hit a new low when the major reporters whipping up a frenzy about the Cuban Five during their trial were found to be on the U.S. government payroll at the same time. And now the prosecutor, Carolyn Heck-Miller, who insists that René González remain in Florida after his release from prison on Oct. 7, is intimately linked in a *Granma* article by Jean-Guy Allard to a longstanding anti-communist CIA operative — her deceased spouse. “Gene Miller ... served as an Army counterintelligence officer during the Korean War, was recruited by the *Miami Herald* as an investigative reporter and gave name to the CIA Peter



Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, René González Sehwerert, Fernando González Llort and Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez

Pan Operation that dragged more than 14,000 Cuban children away from their home and their parents,” from 1960 to 1962. (*Cuban News Agency*, Oct. 2)

Heck-Miller refused to allow admitted plane and hotel bomber Luis Posada Carriles to be indicted for anything more than immigration violations, so he walks free in Miami — in violation of a longstanding extradition treaty with Venezuela and international law governing aircraft bombings. She was instrumental in blocking the trial change of venue to Fort Lauderdale, Fla., which, although just 30 miles from Miami, has an atmosphere much less enflamed against the Five.

Although increasing numbers of U.S. residents are visiting Cuba in U.S. gov-

ernment-approved trips, the 50-year blockade to starve the Cuban people into submitting to their imperialist neighbor to the north, and the extralegal attacks and unjust incarceration of the Cuban Five are still the reality.

Cuban National Assembly of Peoples’ Power President Ricardo Alarcón wrote, “A normal relationship with the United States is unimaginable as long as any of the Five, even one, remains in prison and has not returned, free, to Cuba. Because their incarceration means, simply, that Washington continues supporting terrorism against Cuba and in that way any idea of improvement between the two nations is impossible.” □

Justice for the Cuban Five once again denied

Following is an editorial published Sept. 28 by Granma International.

René González Sehwerert, one of Cuba’s five anti-terrorist heroes, will be released from prison Oct. 7, having served in full the brutal and unjust sentence he was given.

On Sept. 16, South Florida District Judge Joan A. Lenard denied a motion submitted by René on Feb. 16 requesting that he be allowed to return to Cuba and be reunited with his spouse, daughters and parents. He has been unjustly obliged to remain in the United States for three years of probation.

This decision, after 13 years of incarceration, constitutes a deliberate additional penalty, motivated by the same desire for political revenge which char-

acterized the original judicial procedures which led to the conviction of the Five in 2001. Standing behind this decision is the U.S. government, which for years has supported terrorism against Cuba, protecting organizations and individuals — within its own territory — responsible for the deaths, pain and suffering of thousands of Cubans.

Since 1998, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González have been subjected to unusually cruel and degrading treatment. They have withstood pressure and abuse, including separation from their loved ones, with admirable integrity, never wavering in their principles, character or behavior as model prisoners.

The judge’s response to René’s motion is in no way justified and makes no sense.

It is presumed that he must remain in the U.S., where clearly his life will be endangered since it is where the most prominent anti-Cuban terrorist individuals and organizations are located.

In her response, the judge reconfirmed the sentence imposed on René in 2001, which included the absurd special and additional stipulation that, upon his release from prison, he is prohibited from “associating with or visiting specific places where individuals or groups such as terrorists, members of organizations advocating violence or organized crime figures are known to frequent.” One must ask how it is possible to comply with this stipulation if René is obliged to reside precisely “where individuals or groups such as terrorists are known to frequent.” One must ask as well, although the answer is obvious, what motivates the U.S. and its legal system to require in a legal document the protection of “individuals or groups such as terrorists” located within its national territory.

Although it is impossible to undo the injustice after so many years of unwarranted imprisonment and political attacks, the only minimally decorous action the government of the U.S. could take at this point would be to grant René permission to immediately return to Cuba, to put an end to the vengeful sentences imposed on Gerardo, Ramón, Antonio and Fernando, and to allow the return of all Five to their homeland.

The cause of the Cuban Five is known throughout the entire world. There is a wealth of information, argumentation and legal evidence which demonstrates the arbitrary nature of the proceedings

which led to their convictions and sentencing. Also widely recognized is the especially abusive treatment in prison these innocent men have received: extended periods of time in solitary confinement, lack of communication, psychological torture, unjustified family separation, limited contact with legal representatives and the denial of visits by mothers, spouses and daughters.

The people of Cuba deeply appreciate all the people and groups who have added their voices to the demand that this injustice end, state leaders and government officials, as well as renowned figures who have publicly or privately advocated for the freedom of the Five.

It is imperative that we emphatically demand that no further injustice be committed; that no additional punishment be imposed on René, putting his life in danger; that his spouse and daughters not be forced to continue living without him; and that the opportunistic policy of protecting known terrorists — and aggravating the complicity of the U.S. government — be abandoned.

The cause of Gerardo, Ramón, Antonio, Fernando and René is the irrevocable cause of the Cuban people. It is a commitment made by an entire people to end the injustice which the Five have suffered and an indication of their loyalty to those who have defended the homeland with great courage and sacrifice. Our efforts will not end until we see the Five home, in their land once again, with their loved ones and their people. □

A message from the Cuban 5 on the execution of Troy Davis

The Cuban Five are political prisoners in the U.S. who are collectively serving four life sentences and 75 years after being falsely convicted of politically motivated criminal charges while monitoring operations of anti-Cuba terrorist organizations in Miami. The following message was issued Sept. 23 by Ramón Labañino on behalf of the Cuban Five.

Brothers and sisters:

We feel deeply the horrific execution of Troy Davis. It is another terrible injustice and stain on the history of this country.

We join in the pain felt by his relatives, friends and brothers across the world. Now we have another cause, another flag, to pursue our struggle for a better world for all, free of the death penalty and barbarism.

In Troy’s honor, and all the innocents of the world, we must continue, united, until the final victory!

Our most heart-felt condolences!

Five fraternal embraces,

Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino □

Workers’ conference set in Tijuana

Come to Tijuana, Mexico, Dec. 2-4 for the 8th U.S./Cuba/Mexico/Latin America labor conference. Meet others struggling for a “better world that is not only possible, but necessary!”

Find out how the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas is building cooperative international structures outside the imperialist dollar economy and what it means for the most oppressed in the ALBA countries.

Meet family members of the Cuban Five unjustly held in U.S. prisons for opposing

U.S.-based terrorism. Join us in asking, “Will the real terrorist please stand up?” That question is answered by a new Saul Landau film in a joint presentation with the International Committee to Free the Cuban Five on Friday, Dec. 2.

Attend three days of special classes, adapted from the Cuban Workers’ Central Union’s Lazaro Pena school in Havana, just before the conference Nov. 30-Dec. 1. At last year’s conference the participants wanted to begin a school in Tijuana acces-

sible to both U.S. and Mexican workers and students. These three days are just a beginning.

Send a representative from your community, your workplace or your union if you have one. Let’s share our experiences and knowledge gained in our struggles. Help raise the funds needed! Online interest/registration and donations are accepted at laborexchange.blogspot.com or mail checks made out to Labor Exchange to P.O. Box 39188, Redford, MI 48239. □

Socialist Summit

Continued from page 5

ing and health care’ and explaining what we are concretely fighting for, from full employment to amnesty for prisoners, were distributed at schools, workplaces and communities.

“Thousands of people have read our message. Capitalism may be in decay, but there is a way out: socialism.”

Both the APC and WWP called the summit. Those in the region near Baltimore interested in classes, activities or a copy of “What we are fighting for” may call 443-909-8964 or email Baltimore@workers.org □

Che Guevara's legacy & world revolution

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

This year represents the 44th anniversary of the martyrdom of Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-Cuban revolutionary who made monumental contributions to the anti-imperialist and world socialist movements. His political determination and theoretical reflections provide tremendous lessons for workers, farmers and youth today, who face similar challenges building societies devoid of class exploitation, racism and national oppression.

After playing an instrumental role in the triumphant Cuban Revolution of Jan. 1, 1959, and the formative years of the transformation there from neocolonialist capitalism to the construction of socialism, Che intervened directly in the African and Latin American revolutions of 1964 to 1967.

In 1964, Che set out on a world tour to build a broader anti-imperialist front against the U.S. His travels took him to the People's Republic of China and various African states.

After making a speech before the U.N. General Assembly in December 1964, Che visited several African states beginning in Algeria, where the National Liberation Front (FLN) had recently triumphed in armed struggle against French colonialist occupation. He later traveled to Mali, Congo, Guinea, Dahomey, Tanzania and Egypt (then known as the United Arab Republic).

While in Ghana, Che held discussions with President Kwame Nkrumah, the political leader of the movement for African unity and socialism. Che and Nkrumah laid the basis for convening the Tricontinental Conference, which brought together dozens of revolutionary organizations from Africa, Latin America and Asia in January of 1966. The Organization of Solidarity of the People of Asia, Africa & Latin America was formed at this gathering.

Che revisited Algeria in 1965 and ad-



ressed the Second Economic Seminar of the Organization of Afro-Asian Solidarity. In this speech Che identified U.S. imperialism as the principal enemy of the workers and oppressed throughout the world.

In his book, "Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism," Nkrumah noted that the former colonial powers of Europe and the U.S. seek to dominate post-colonial states by controlling economic resources and political structures. Nkrumah argued that the struggle against neocolonialism posed a monumental challenge to the workers and oppressed of the world, since its existence represented imperialism's final phase of global domination. This was reflected, Nkrumah stated, in imperialism's military desperation in Vietnam, Korea, Africa and Latin America.

The leader of Ghana stressed the need for an all-union government in Africa and the strengthening of unity between Africa and Asia. "Furthermore," Nkrumah urged, "we must encourage and utilize to the full those still all too few yet growing instances of support for liberation and anti-colonialism inside the imperialist world itself."

Che intervenes in African, Latin American revolutions

Che relocated to Congo in the early months of 1965 to support the revolu-

tionary forces fighting to uphold the anti-imperialist legacy of martyred Patrice Lumumba, the first legitimately elected prime minister of that mineral-rich, central African state. The Cuban brigade and the Lumumbists were not successful in 1965, and Che, who relocated to Bolivia the next year, was assassinated by the Bolivian military in coordination with the CIA. However, their struggles were by no means in vain.

Cuba was able to provide critical support to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola in the struggle to establish Angola as a strategic base for the further independence of Southern Africa. Between 1975 and 1988, Cuba would send more than 300,000 of its own people to fight against the U.S.-backed South African apartheid system. That system sponsored the counterrevolutionary UNITA movement in Angola in an effort to block both the independence of Namibia and the total elimination of settler colonialism based in Pretoria, South Africa.

Namibia would win independence in 1990, and South Africa would be taken over by the African National Congress in 1994. The role of Cuba in these achievements has been acknowledged by the peoples of the world.

Latin America moves left

Revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada in 1979 set a pattern of anti-imperialism in Latin America. While setbacks in Grenada in 1983 prompted a U.S. invasion, and the destabilization of Nicaragua brought about the overthrow of the Sandinista National Liberation Front in 1990 (it later regained power through elections), other revolutionary movements would come to power in Venezuela and Bolivia during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Today the Bolivarian Alliance for Latin America (ALBA) and other formations have identified the necessity of an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist front throughout Latin America and the world.

This was exemplified in the response to the U.S.-NATO war against the North African state of Libya. Former Cuban President Fidel Castro and the leadership of the Cuban Communist Party labeled the so-called "no-fly zone" over Libya as a plot to intensify neocolonialist control over the continent.

The ALBA states, led by Venezuela, immediately expressed solidarity with Libya and the African Union, which also opposed the imperialist intervention. At the recent U.N. General Assembly in New York, the progressive states of Latin America, along with President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, firmly opposed the imperialist machinations to transform Libya into an outpost for exploitation and military domination of the entire region.

The movement towards greater unity among the peoples of Latin America and Africa will increasingly take on an anti-imperialist character. As Nkrumah noted in 1965, "All these liberatory forces have, on all major issues and at every possible instance, the support of the growing socialist sector of the world."

Today — as the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression poses a profound challenge to workers, the oppressed and youth inside the imperialist states — the left must place solidarity and unity with the peoples of the world as a cornerstone of the struggle. The falling standard of living among the people inside the capitalist states is directly linked to the unbridled militarism of the imperialist countries.

Ruling-class strategies to both starve workers in the "developed" regions and to reoccupy the oppressed countries are unsustainable. Workers and youth throughout the world are rising up from Wall Street to Tahrir Square, and from the factories and plantations of Colombia to the mines of South Africa. They are increasingly prepared to make the necessary sacrifices for the liberation of humanity from capitalism and imperialism. □

At Brazil conference

Talk on capitalism's decline sparks broad discussion

By **John Catalinotto**
Vitoria, E.S., Brazil

Fred Goldstein, author of "Low Wage Capitalism" and a contributing editor to Workers World newspaper, opened a conference of 579 social scientists, social workers and social work students with a penetrating Marxist analysis of the current crisis of world capitalism.

The three-day conference, which started Sept. 28, was the sixth Brazilian National Conference on Social Policy, held at the Federal University of Espirito Santo (UFES) in Vitoria, E.S., Brazil. The UFES Economics Department, which includes professors Paulo Nakatani and Reinaldo Carcanholo, has a reputation throughout Latin America for its excellent Marxist economists who have a revolutionary outlook.

Goldstein had been invited based on the faculty's response to his book and other writings on the crisis. His keynote talk was based on a paper he submitted to the conference entitled, "Capitalism at a Dead End: Job Destruction, Overproduction and Crisis in the High Tech Era — A Marxist View."

The talk brought out three main points: 1) capitalism "has abruptly and dramatically shifted into an irreversible crisis

state of decline and has reached a point at which it cannot revive itself by economic means alone"; 2) this "dead end is the absolutely inevitable outcome of the laws governing the development of capitalism, as discovered and explained by Karl Marx"; and 3) "we are at the early stages of a historic crisis that both poses great dangers but also has the seeds within it of revolutionary potential."

Goldstein showed how a series of jobless "recoveries" has led up to the present crisis and how the growth of capital has led to the growth of mass unemployment and crisis, as Marx predicted. He pointed out that the Federal Reserve and other central bankers have put \$20 trillion into propping up the system and that all this has not stopped the growth of unemployment.

Goldstein stated that a measure of the crisis of the system is that 81 million youth are officially unemployed worldwide and that an entire generation is being shut out of the labor market and has no future under capitalism. He concluded that a mass rebellion is inevitable and that the only way out of the crisis in the long run is to destroy capitalism altogether and establish a socialist society based on human need.

The talk was very well received. To read the text that Goldstein submitted to

the conference, visit www.workersworld.net and look for the title, "Capitalism at a Dead End," just below the "Abolish Capitalism" brochure.

Role of social workers in class struggle

One does not always associate social work with political activism. The conference organizers apparently see the need to connect the overall social problems of capitalist society with their day-by-day work of ameliorating the lives of tens of millions of Brazil's poor people. Any benefit wrested from the government for the most oppressed members of society involves some sort of confrontation with the government bureaucracy.

Thus the discussion at the conference was on many levels. There was direct social-work expertise, information about social benefits in different countries, education about the interaction of social-work organizations with the various governments, and an overall world political and economic analysis.

Among the other international invited speakers presenting their political analysis at the conference were Mamdouh Habashi of the newly formed Socialist Party of Egypt, speaking about the revolution in that country; Olga Pérez Soto, dean of the Faculty of Economics of the University of

Havana, who gave a history of economic developments in Cuba since 1989; and Tsui Sit from the University of Beijing, who spoke on economic developments in China and the relationship between the agricultural and industrial sectors of the Chinese economy.

Paul Bywaters, emeritus professor of social work at Coventry University of Britain, who spoke on the current government's serious attacks on the National Health Service, began by showing how last summer's rebellion in London was a political outcry from a population ignored and repressed by the regime. Greek economist George Labridinis showed how he and his colleagues used Marxism to develop a method of measuring absolute poverty.

Brazilian social work professor José Paulo Netto ended the conference with a broad-ranging talk on political issues, concluding that there must either be a struggle for socialism or the world faces a barbaric capitalist future.

For information on the other speakers and a more detailed agenda for the conference, see enps.com.br.

Catalinotto, a Workers World managing editor, attended the conference and taught a "minicourse" on "The crisis in the U.S. and the movements of resistance of the working class."

The living struggle & the state

In his groundbreaking book "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," Frederick Engels explained the evolution of the state this way: "The state is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without; rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, these classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it became necessary to have a power, seemingly standing above society, that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of 'order'; and this power, arisen out of society but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state."

The role of the state as a repressive apparatus that includes the police, the prisons, the courts, the big business media and more should be studied and understood by every activist and revolutionary not only theoretically but practically. Even though Engels wrote this book over a century ago in 1884, it is more relevant today than ever.

The state arose out of class society thousands of years ago in order to protect the private property of the exploiters and to prevent organized rebellion by the exploited to liberate themselves. Private property under capitalism comes in the form of the means of production of everything in society — from machinery to factories to office buildings.

For nationally oppressed peoples or people of color, the state, especially in the form of the police and the courts, is an everyday menace that is extreme in nature. From the South Bronx, N.Y., to South Central in Los Angeles, Black and Brown communities face repressive police occupation on a daily basis.

Sean Bell and Amadou Diallo, an African American and an African immigrant respectively, were both unarmed when they were shot to death by the New York Police Department. A 2008 class action lawsuit revealed that Black and Latino/a people were stopped and frisked in large numbers within their neighborhoods by the NYPD based on their nationality. The numbers are vastly disproportionate to their actual number in the population.

But this violent nature of the state is spreading beyond the boundaries of the most marginalized sectors. The unprecedented capitalist economic crisis is now creating suffering among those layers who were once viewed as being "middle class" or privileged, especially if they were white. The Occupy Wall Street

struggle is the most dynamic expression of the disillusionment that many white youth and others are feeling with the capitalist system.

The cops & Occupy Wall Street

The continuous bailout of Wall Street and the big banks in the trillions of dollars by the U.S. Treasury since 2008 has fueled this struggle, as many young people realize there are no jobs and no future for them. These young people have also been inspired by the heroic occupations in Tahrir Square in Egypt, Wisconsin, Spain and elsewhere. OWS is now entering its third week and with each day is attracting more and more support in New York City, around the U.S. and worldwide.

Those activists participating in the OWS protests are being educated in the living struggle on the role of the state. They have their own fresh experiences and the experiences of others. On Sept. 24, OWS activists were physically assaulted by police with pepper spray and mace following an impromptu march in the streets. And despite appeals by some activists for the police to be tolerant, at least 100 people were arrested. For many activists, it was their first time being physically confronted by the state. The acts of brutality meted out by the police were captured on videotape.

This demonstration came three days after the horrific, racist execution of Troy Davis in Georgia. All evidence pointed to Davis' innocence in the killing of a white police officer, but the facts didn't prevent his execution. A number of OWS activists had participated in protests to stop the execution.

On Oct. 2 more than 700 OWS activists were arrested attempting to march across the Brooklyn Bridge from Manhattan. Once again, an appeal to the police to let them go was ignored.

The struggle can change political consciousness within days or even hours. In response to the Sept. 24 police arrests and brutality, thousands of protesters marched from the OWS site to One Police Plaza. Two of the most popular chants were "We remember Sean Bell, NYPD go to hell!" and "The system is racist, it lynched Troy Davis!" Showing solidarity with the most oppressed was clearly an important step.

Besides deepening this solidarity, the next important lessons are that the capitalist state stands above the people, cannot be reformed, and must ultimately be smashed and replaced with a state that represents the interests of the majority of humanity based on the socialist reorganization of society.

Engels' words have stood the test of time. □

Greece, banks & starvation

The banks are exerting heavy pressure on Greece again, demanding more austerity and privatization before they will come through with any credit.

Who has given bankers the power to tell governments, which are supposed to represent the people, that they must shut down social services and lay off hundreds of thousands of workers?

It's important to understand what governments do in a capitalist democracy. Yes, most officials are appointed by parties elected in what seems like a popular vote. But they are beholden to the capitalist class in a thousand different ways and are expected to jump when the rich and powerful say so.

For politicians to be allowed to govern, they must accept the laws of capitalism. What does this mean first and foremost? They must respect the property laws, which allow a tiny and shrinking minority of the population to own and control the vast means of production. And the most compelling law of capitalism, which all capitalist governments must respect, is that the owners of capital must be able to maximize their profits, which take precedence over every human need.

Millions can be laid off from their jobs if the capitalists can't make a profit off their labor. Millions can then starve if they lack the money to buy food. Millions can become homeless if they can't pay their mortgages or their rent. It's all legal in a capitalist democracy.

But what the capitalists won't allow is for the banks, their supreme financial institutions, to show a loss. When that happens, they tell the politicians that

the governments have to pay up.

The politicians know without even being asked that they have to squeeze the money from the workers — the people who have taxes deducted from their paychecks to cover whatever the capitalist government decides is important.

Interest payments to banks? Most important. Wars? Very important for capitalist profits. Police and prisons? Very important for suppressing opposition at home.

But everything else can go on the chopping block.

Most Greek workers are very political. They know they have to fight the capitalist system to save their jobs, schools and pensions. They have mobilized, held general strikes, conducted occupations and told the Greek government, "No justice, no peace!" In response, the big capitalist powers of Europe, especially Germany, France and Britain, have growled at the Greek government, "No austerity, no loans!"

Capital is international, and so is the working class. The struggle of workers, youth and the oppressed communities for a decent life is increasingly becoming one against the capitalist system itself.

The next time you get charged \$5 for using a debit card or are informed by "your" bank that they'll charge you \$15 or \$20 a month if you can't keep thousands of dollars in your checking account — new rules that banks are imposing with no government regulations to stop them — think of what the Greek workers are doing and what Occupy Wall Street is doing. And join the struggle. □

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The U.S., U.N. & Palestinian statehood

The following remarks on the Palestinian struggle are excerpted from a talk given by Joyce Chediak at a Detroit Workers World Party forum on Oct. 1. Chediak, editor of "Gaza: Symbol of Resistance," also spoke at a WWP meeting in Cleveland on Sept. 30.

The uprooted Palestinians are at the heart of the conflict in the Middle East. The Palestinian Authority just made a bid for the U.N. Security Council to recognize a Palestinian state. This bid was not substantive, not based on the strength of the Authority on the ground, but rather symbolic. However, it was watched carefully by the Palestinian people, with many demonstrating for [this] international show of support for their rights.

While President Barack Obama has repeatedly given lip service to a Palestinian

state, when push came to shove, the U.S. government showed its real views on Palestinian self-determination when it vehemently opposed even this symbolic move and threatened to veto the PA resolution. Now the U.S. is working overtime behind the scenes, arm-twisting Security Council members to vote against the resolution — so the U.S. won't have to use its veto and stand fully exposed.

In his speech before the U.N., Obama called the U.N. the "wrong platform" for recognition of a Palestinian state. Obama referred the PA back to talks with the Israeli government, saying there was "no shortcut" to statehood.

Shortcut? After 63 years, the Palestinian people still have no state and their grievances remain unaddressed. Obama won't even allow them 22 percent of historic Palestine — the total land mass of the

West Bank and Gaza — symbolically.

Obama wants the PA to go back to talks with Israel without conditions. Twenty years of talks, under direct U.S. tutelage since the 1991 Madrid conference, have been a cover for continued Israeli and imperialist aggression.

In 20 years the number of settlers on stolen Palestinian land has tripled — to 600,000 — and Israel just announced over 1,000 more settlement housing units on land stolen in 1967.

That the U.N. is not the "right platform" for a Palestinian state reeks of hypocrisy. The U.N. was the right platform for sanctions against Libya and attempts to do the same against Syria. It was the right platform to recognize the new Libyan government, even though that is so divided it has been unable to form a cabinet.

The U.N. was the right platform to par-

tion Palestine in 1947 and to recognize Israeli statehood in 1949.

Scores of resolutions to ease the burden on the Palestinian people have been passed in the U.N. — and never enforced. But the U.S. government will not let the U.N. criticize Israel for repeated attacks on the Palestinian and neighboring Arab people. Between 1972 and 1997 Washington used its veto 32 times to defend Israeli aggression.

The U.N. does not stand above governments and above class forces. Far from it. V.I. Lenin called the League of Nations, the U.N.'s predecessor, a "den of thieves." The U.N., like its predecessor, is still bourgeois, and imperialist nations use the world body whenever they can to divert and sabotage the liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples and class struggles of the workers. □

Imperialists escalate aggression, maneuvers in Africa

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

On Sept. 30 Pentagon/Central Intelligence Agency drones assassinated Anwar Al-Awlaki and Samir Khan, two U.S. Muslim citizens. The same day came news that U.S. drones targeted southern Somalia, killing 21 people, injuring many more and forcing many to flee the Qooqani and Taabto districts.

Somalia is among at least six countries where the U.S. has carried out drone attacks that have killed many civilians. These aerial strikes take place regularly in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya, Iraq and Yemen. (Press TV, Sept. 30)

Although the White House and the Pentagon claim that the strikes target State Department-designated "terrorist" individuals and organizations, reports repeatedly show most people harmed by the attacks are unarmed and are not a threat to the U.S. government and its allies.

To justify Al-Awlaki and Khan's targeted assassinations, President Barack Obama stated that their purported group, Al-Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula, "remains a dangerous, though weakened organization." (Los Angeles Times, Sept. 30) He claimed that Al-Awlaki "called on individuals in the U.S. and around the globe to kill innocent men, women and children."

Even the corporate media have admitted that "[Al-Awlaki] was not believed to be a key operational leader, but a spokesman." (Fox News, Sept. 30)

Yet it is the U.S. military and the CIA that has killed hundreds of thousands of innocent people since the so-called "war on terrorism" began a decade ago. In Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, Palestine and Libya, the bulk of U.S. military action — with client states' support — has destabilized those states and regions more than any other forces in these areas.

AFRICOM completes joint military exercises in East Africa

In the aftermath of the seizure of Tripoli in Libya and the ongoing struggle for control of this oil-producing state, Gen. Carter Ham, commander of the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), said that this special regional force will build upon its Libyan operations to extend military involvement in other areas of Africa. The fighting continues in Libya in several areas.

The NATO-led National Transitional Council rebels who are recognized by the imperialist states as the government in Tripoli, have failed repeatedly to subdue Libyan regions that are still loyal to the Gadhafi government and have abandoned efforts to create a provisional government. Growing resistance in Tripoli has

been reported recently, with emerging anti-rebel demonstrations and the hoisting of Gadhafi loyalists' green flag.

Nonetheless, in East Africa on Sept. 16, AFRICOM began joint military exercises with East Africa Community states in Zanzibar off Tanzania's coast. Code-named Natural Fire 11, the AFRICOM-EAC exercise brought together 300 military personnel from member-states Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda.

Pentagon spokesperson Brig. Gen. James Owens stressed, "This collaboration between the EAC defense forces and the U.S. is another positive step towards a more stable and secure region." He said those gains should "have a lasting impact on" the EAC defense forces' ability "to respond to [current] and [future] challenges." (Kenya Daily Nation, Sept. 17)

Echoing AFRICOM statements, Tanzanian Defense and National Service Minister Dr. Hussein Mwinyi said, "Peace, security and stability are the lynchpins for accelerating socio-economic development. ... [The] EAC partner states recognized that collective defense enhances regional peace and security."

Yet in neighboring Somalia, U.S. intervention has fostered instability for more than three decades. That the people haven't been able to form a viable government of national unity is largely the result of Washington's interference in their internal affairs.

Even though the Pentagon and other military forces maintain a substantial presence in the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean and at the U.S. military base in neighboring Djibouti, hundreds of thousands of people need food assistance in southern Somalia. This military presence has not brought food security or lessened hostilities on land or in the waterways surrounding the Horn of Africa.

At the same time that the Natural Fire 11 AFRICOM-EAC military exercises took place, a workshop was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, of the National Nuclear Security Administration and AFRICOM on cooperative border security. The workshop involved seven East African governments, the African Union, South Africa as well as the U.S. State Department, Homeland Security, the U.N. Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, and other international organizations.

Lt. Col. Kevin Balisky, chief of the Office of Security Cooperation, said, "The Department of Defense and other U.S. Government agencies are cooperating with their counterparts in East Africa to facilitate a comprehensive approach to counter illicit trafficking. Together, we have opened a door for deeper exchanges of assistance

among regional partners." (AFRICOM, Sept. 16)

Behind U.S. security offensive in Africa

In September a security conference held in Algeria raised border patrols and the purported threat of weapons proliferation in North Africa. Gen. Ham described the region as a "powder keg" that threatened the United States and other Western nations. (The Hill, Oct. 3)

The Pentagon calls the Polasario Front, the liberation movement in Western Sahara, an impediment to U.S. objectives

in the region. The Hill says the Algerian government's failure to support the U.S.-NATO war against Libya has hampered Washington's interests in North Africa.

The oil industry's and transnational corporations' growing reliance on Africa's petroleum and other natural resources is fueling increased militarization of the continent. The people of Africa and the entire Middle East will inevitably oppose this intervention. The U.S. anti-war and peace movements must fashion their programs and demands to address these enhanced threats against the people of the region. □

Adm. Mullen blames Pakistan for U.S. debacle in Afghanistan

By **Deirdre Griswold**

Pakistani merchants can hardly keep up with the demand for U.S. flags, wrote The Telegraph of London on Sept. 29.

However, the U.S. State Department won't be cheering about this. It seems the purpose for which people want the flags is "to be stamped, trampled or burned."

Yes, U.S. imperialism has lost any grip it might once have had on the hearts and minds of the Pakistani people. They are particularly angry right now because the last thing that Adm. Mike Mullen did before retiring from his job as head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was to testify before Congress, accusing Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI, of involvement in the Sept. 13 attack on the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan.

The anger this created was not because the Pakistani people are so fond of the ISI. It is because Mullen's testimony set up Pakistan for more drone attacks and other illegal acts of war carried out by the U.S. on Pakistani soil.

As Comrade Shahid of the Pakistan USA Freedom Forum told Workers World, Mullen was pushing for the "Cambodiaization" of the war. This refers to when the U.S. invaded Cambodia in 1970 — a desperate attempt to rescue imperialism's effort to defeat the liberation forces in neighboring Vietnam by spreading the war.

Mullen's testimony was another example of the Pentagon pushing its pro-war agenda — and demanding from Congress the money for it — beyond where the civilian government has decided to go. President Barack Obama had to contradict Mullen publicly only a few days later, on Sept. 30, and admit that the U.S. has no clear intelligence to back up Mullen's charge.

At the same time, Obama showed that

he would not go far to resist the war-hawks. He authorized the expansion of drone attacks in Pakistan's border area near Afghanistan. He had to publicly assure the Pakistanis, however, that there would be no "boots on the ground" — no U.S. invasion, which many had feared after Mullen's testimony.

The reaction inside Pakistan to Mullen's threat had been swift and overwhelming. After countless demonstrations where U.S. flags were trampled and burned, the leaders of all political parties held a conference to denounce Mullen and deny his charges.

It speaks to the declining influence of U.S. imperialism all over the world that even with tens of thousands of troops and an endless stream of high-tech weaponry, it has been unable to defeat the resistance to foreign occupation in Afghanistan — one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world!

The military brass and their corporate sponsors in the last decade have managed to squeeze trillions of dollars out of the U.S. Treasury in the name of patriotism and fighting terrorism. But the wars have done nothing to revive capitalism, which has been in the tank for at least three years. Now the resulting budget crisis is coming back to haunt the politicians, who are told they must cut every social service, laying off hundreds of thousands of postal workers and teachers and nurses, so the Pentagon and the bankers can be paid.

As resistance to all this grows inside the United States itself, it is becoming harder and harder for the imperialists to carry out their agenda of recolonizing the world. The harder they push in places like Pakistan, the more they undercut their own puppets and collaborators and spur on the mass struggle. □

CAROLINA DEL NORTE

Jóvenes indocumentados/as bloquean calle de acceso a universidad

Por Elisa Benítez Hernández
Charlotte, Carolina del Norte (NC)

El 6 de septiembre unos/as manifestantes ocuparon la calle con una pancarta que leía: “Ya no vamos a permanecer en las sombras”.

Siete jóvenes indocumentados/as bloquearon el tráfico frente al colegio comunitario Central Piedmont en Charlotte, Carolina del Norte. Esta desobediencia civil fue para protestar por la falta de acción del Partido Demócrata, la severa agenda anti inmigratoria de los partidos Republicano y del Té, y contra el atroz precio de la matrícula para estudiantes de “fuera-del-estado” impuesta a los/as estudiantes indocumentados/as para asistir al colegio comunitario.

El evento comenzó con un mitin donde varios/as jóvenes compartieron sus historias y anunciaron públicamente su condición de indocumentados/as. Alrededor de 200 personas de todas las edades y procedencias se reunieron en apoyo de su mensaje y de sus valientes acciones. A la manifestación siguió una marcha. Finalmente los/as jóvenes se sentaron en medio de una intersección en la zona céntrica de Charlotte, provocando el cese del tráfico en cuestión de minutos. Con todas sus fuerzas gritaban ¡“Indocumentados, pero sin miedo! ¡Indocumentados, pero sin avergonzarnos!”!

Los/as arrestados/as por desobediencia civil incluían a Alicia Torres, de 25 años,



de Carrboro, NC; Angélica Velazquillo, 25 años, de Charlotte; Manuel Vázquez, 21 años, de Raleigh; Santiago García, 20, de Asheville; Cynthia Martínez, de 20 años, de Sanford; Martin Rodríguez, 20, de Hamptonville; y Marco Saavedra, 21 años, de Cincinnati.

Sin embargo, la policía también se fue a la carga, arrestando a un total de 15 personas ese día. Incluidos tres jóvenes indocumentados más, dos paramédicos voluntarios, un transeúnte y dos miembros de FIST (siglas en inglés, Lucha contra el Imperialismo, Unámonos) de la ciudad de Raleigh.



MO FOTOS: DANTE STROBINO

Los/as que eran indocumentados/as fueron llevados/as y procesados/as de inmediato en una cárcel en el condado de Mecklenburg, Carolina del Norte. Sus casos estaban en manos del ICE, la Agencia de Inmigración y Aduanas, esperando con incertidumbre a ver si serían puestos/as

en libertad o deportados/as. Afortunadamente, todos/as fueron liberados/as la noche siguiente y los procedimientos de deportación fueron retirados. “A mi hasta me dieron mi número de extranjero—todo estaba preparado para mi salida y el porqué no me sacaron, no lo sé”, dijo García.

No fue una coincidencia que la fecha en que los/as jóvenes hicieron su acción, el 6 de septiembre, era también la fecha del lanzamiento de la Convención Nacional Demócrata para el año próximo. El objetivo de los/as jóvenes era hacerle saber al Partido Demócrata que no aceptarían palabras vacías. Domenic Powell, aliado del

equipo DREAM de NC dijo: “Esto es lo que tenemos que hacer porque se trata de jóvenes cuyas vidas están en el limbo. Si los demócratas piensan que vamos a seguirles, tienen que recordar que están tratando con jóvenes idealistas que no tienen nada que perder”.

Los/as jóvenes detenidos/as están frustrados/as porque las cosas se han puesto peores para ellos/as. Ahora están obligados/as a pagar la matrícula de fuera-del-estado y sólo pueden inscribirse en las clases después de que todos/as los/as demás residentes estadounidenses se hayan matriculado. □

Abogado defensor de Abu Ghraib enfrenta cargos por asesinato

Por Dolores Cox

Se les ha pedido a enfurecidos/as activistas anti guerra que llenen la sala del Tribunal el 11 de octubre en apoyo a Paul Bergrin, un abogado que ha intentado responsabilizar a militares y funcionarios gubernamentales por la tortura en la prisión de Abu Ghraib en Irak.

El ex presidente George Bush y el secretario de defensa Donald Rumsfeld son ciertamente culpables de crímenes de guerra, junto al ex vicepresidente Dick Cheney, el subsecretario de defensa Paul Wolfowitz y el asesor de la Casa Blanca Alberto Gonzales (quien más tarde se convirtió en fiscal general de Estados Unidos). Estos criminales de alto nivel mintieron deliberada e intencionalmente, negando todo conocimiento de las técnicas de tortura en Abu Ghraib. La tortura es ilegal y viola la Convención de Ginebra y las leyes sobre los reglamentos para combates e interrogatorio del mismo Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos.

Bergrin, un renombrado abogado defensor de personas pobres y de color, ex militar y ex fiscal, ha estado luchando agresivamente para enjuiciar a Bush y a Rumsfeld por los abusos en Irak. Bergrin fue uno de los primeros en sacar a la luz

los documentos que autorizaban las prácticas de encapuchar, desnudar y utilizar perros en Abu Ghraib.

En 2004 y 2005 Bergrin trató de hacer que Bush y Rumsfeld rindieran cuentas. Cuando Bush anunció en 2004 que quería que se destruyera Abu Ghraib, Bergrin obtuvo una orden judicial para detener las acciones de Bush, declarando a la prisión como una escena de crimen.

Bergrin también ha sido el único fiscal en la historia militar de Estados Unidos en ganar el derecho de poner a un alto funcionario militar, el coronel Michael Steele, en la silla de los acusados. En el 2006 Steele comandó una unidad de la División Aerotransportada 101 en Irak. Bajo su mando, civiles iraquíes fueron detenidos varias veces y pueblos regularmente atacados por soldados estadounidenses. Una de estas redadas, la llamada Operación Triángulo de Hierro, implicó el asesinato de cuatro iraquíes desarmados en una isla en la provincia norteña de Salahuddin. Los soldados, uno de los cuales representa Bergrin, recibieron órdenes de disparar a cualquier iraquí hombre de edad militar que se viera. Por cierto, en la película “Black Hawk Down” se basa en las acciones del coronel Steele en Somalia.

A Steele se le confirió inmunidad a

cambio de su testimonio pero todavía no ha subido al estrado. En enero 2007, una semana antes de que el caso fuera presentado en corte, Bergrin fue detenido por cargos infundados. Como resultado, el caso de la Operación Triángulo de Hierro nunca fue enjuiciado. El soldado que Bergrin defendía, Corey Clagett, como consecuencia aceptó un acuerdo con el fiscal. Él y otros dos soldados fueron llevados a un tribunal militar, encarcelados y sentenciados de 10 a 18 años de prisión.

En abril 2009, Bergrin anunció públicamente en el Star Ledger de Newark su intención de reabrir uno de los casos de Abu Ghraib después de que la administración Obama circulara documentos que implicaban a la Casa Blanca en la autorización de tortura en Abu Ghraib. Bergrin trató de exonerar a Clagett de nuevo y además exigió que Clagett fuera procesado en EE.UU., no en Irak, para que el público estadounidense supiera más de lo que estaba pasando.

El mes siguiente Bergrin fue detenido por segunda vez bajo una serie de cargos. En la audiencia de fianza en Newark, N.J., los fiscales entablaron una petición de detención por un agente especial de la Administración de Cumplimiento de Leyes sobre las Drogas (DEA por sus siglas en inglés), aseverando que Bergrin no debía

ser puesto en libertad bajo fianza porque tenía bienes en el extranjero, cuatro pasaportes falsos y había mandado a un informante del FBI a asesinar a un testigo. Los medios corporativos también han estado difamándolo injustamente.

Aunque ninguna de las declaraciones del fiscal fue corroborada, la juez Madeline Arleo negó la petición de fianza e incluyó una multa de \$50.000. Bergrin fue inmediatamente llevado a confinamiento solitario por nueve meses — y permanece en prisión hoy en día.

El 11 de octubre el juicio de Bergrin está pautado para empezar en la corte federal en Newark. La juez ha decidido que él puede defenderse, pero tendrá que llevar puesto un brazalete de choque eléctrico mientras que esté en la corte para que los mariscales federales le puedan dar choques si se acerca demasiado al lugar del jurado o si camina más allá de su estrado designado.

Mientras tanto, la prisión de la Bahía de Guantánamo sigue abierta. Y la tortura y los asesinatos de civiles del Cercano Oriente por el gobierno estadounidense se han hecho algo “aceptable bajo ciertas condiciones” — todo bajo el pretexto de la llamada “guerra contra el terrorismo”.

Por más información vea www.paulbergrin.org. □