

Buffalo Forum



Local Publication of the
U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization

Workers of all countries, unite!

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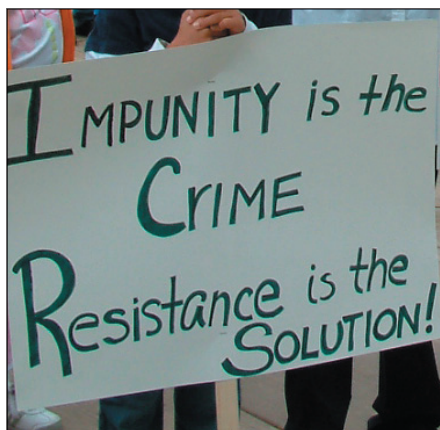
FOR A DEMOCRACY OF OUR OWN MAKING

To Contend with Government of Police Powers, Build the New

The Trump administration continues to show itself as one responsible for consolidating a government of police powers, whose hallmark is rule with impunity and arbitrary state actions. A rule of law, with a functioning political process, with functioning political parties and functioning Congress, all have been eliminated.

What remains is a dysfunctional process, where elections resolve no problems and the executive usurps police powers. This is indicated by increased U.S. aggression abroad, with more direct war against Syria underway as the U.S. has directly bombed Syrian troops and now downed a Syrian

Build the New • 3



Juneteenth Spirit of Unity and Affirmation of Resistance Overwhelms Efforts to Militarize It

Buffalo's Juneteenth celebration in MLK Park has long been one to affirm resistance to slavery and defend the fight today for equality and against state racism. Those in attendance this year could feel the positive atmosphere and sense of unity among all present. This occurred despite efforts by county and city

police to militarize the event. This included having the Erie County Sheriff's Department — known for its racism and unjust actions at the Holding Center, impose itself as leaders of the parade. This was followed by the Buffalo Police Department's tank (a Pentagon MRAP, designed for

Juneteenth Spirit of Unity • 4

POLICE IMPUNITY AT WORK

No Justice in Police Killing of Philando Castile

Minnesota police officer, Jeronimo Yanez, who shot and killed Philando Castile while he was sitting in his car, was recently acquitted of second-degree manslaughter charges. The July 2016 police killing and its aftermath was live-streamed on facebook by Castile's girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds, also in the car, along

with her 4-year-old daughter. All were endangered when Yanez fired seven times into the car, killing Castile. He was a long-time well-respected school cafeteria worker.

As is commonly the case in police killings, Yanez claimed he feared for his life. Police, armed and trained to shoot to

No Justice in Police Killing • 5

UNITE TO DEFEND RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Crime of Lead Poisoning Far Worse than State Officials Claim

Buffalo has been called "ground zero" for its serious, criminal lead poisoning problem. And while state and county officials have admitted there is a problem, the situation facing children — the ones most seriously impacted

— is actually far worse than they claim. This is in part because New York State refuses to utilize the federal standard from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) concerning what constitutes harmful lead levels.

New York insists on using a standard of 10 micrograms per deciliter of blood. This remains the case even though the CDC, back in 2012, adopted a threshold of 5 micrograms per deciliter of blood, which is equivalent to one grain of

sugar dropped in 3.3 gallons of liquid. That is, it takes only a very minute amount of lead in the blood to cause devastating injuries. The CDC admits that no levels of lead should be considered safe, **Eliminate Lead Poisoning • 2**

I • ELIMINATE LEAD POISONING

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with studies indicating even 2 micrograms can cause serious and permanent brain damage and medical disorders of various kinds.

State officials have only released data that shows the number of children with blood levels that exceed the state's threshold of 10 micrograms. Those numbers approached 300 children last year. Only those children receive minimal aid and a county inspection to determine the source of the poisoning. Even this assistance is often insufficient, as parents have stated that the county only tests for lead paint, the most common cause of lead poisoning in Buffalo, but not lead poisoning of the water.

However new data obtained by *Investigative Post* shows that the number of children whose lead levels exceed the stricter federal threshold were an estimated 1,100. Put another way: At least three times more children have harmful blood lead levels than previously disclosed. The Buffalo levels are the worst in all of upstate. Children are testing positive at more than triple the state average, and one-third of all lead poisoning cases reported in New York State outside of New York City are located in Buffalo.

State and County officials are well aware that their 10 microgram standards is not valid. In April, Erie County Health Commissioner Gale Burstein told the Erie County Legislature, "We know that levels of at least 5 [micrograms] lead to serious, permanent impairments." Even so the state and county implement the 10 microgram standard, leaving hundreds of children with no protection or assistance. This is criminal negligence on the part of the state, which is responsible for ensuring the right to safe water and housing.

Neither state nor county officials can provide a precise number of children who are diagnosed with blood lead levels of 5 to 9 micrograms because the state's data collection system is not set up to track and analyze the cases of children



whose lead levels fall in that range.

Katrina Korfmacher, a lead poisoning prevention expert and associate professor at University of Rochester Medical Center said, "If you look at data from around the country, it seems pretty consistent that there are around three times as many kids with 5-9 [micrograms] as there are kids with greater than 10 [micrograms]." State and county officials have organized to ensure that they do not have the information required to identify all the children in need, even though its now known that hundreds more being harmed and need assistance.

At the insistence of parents and child advocates, the Monroe County Health Department in 2013 began tracking the number of children who test within the CDC's threshold without the state's assistance. Elizabeth McDade, program coordinator for the Rochester Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning, explained that Monroe "developed their own system — it follows all appropriate protocols — and are the only county in New York to do so."

Buffalo has the resources, including Buffalo State and UB, and its concerned parents and teachers, to take immediate action to ensure all children with any levels of lead are provided all the care needed and their homes and schools are fully tested to remove any lead. It is clear the county and state are not taking action, and parents and teachers together need to do so. *Buffalo Forum* encourages teachers and their union to organize on this front, together with university labs and experts, so that the rights of Buffalo's children are defended.

I • BUILD THE NEW

jet. The actions, like drone warfare, are contrary to international and U.S. law, but they are done anyway.

Similarly, at home, the brutal raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), including at schools and courthouses, also contrary to state laws and policies, are increasing. ICE arrests, often of people who have lived and worked in the U.S. for decades and who are guilty of no crime, have increased by 40 percent. While Latinos are the main focus for attacks, even Iraqis are being detained. The ban on refugees persists on the ground, despite court rulings. And once again, police guilty of killing African Americans are not held accountable, as recent acquittals of police confirm, and the long and growing list of those not even charged continues.

There is also a concerted effort to further criminalize dissent. Twenty states are attempting to pass laws that in various ways make non-violent protest “illegal.” Those who disrupt traffic on interstate highways will be charged with a felony, those who wear masks, or who engage in “boisterous, unreasonably loud, or other disorderly conduct,” or heckle officials, will also be guilty of crimes. Laws also

include a ban on interfering with “the free expression of others,” clearly directed at youth who have shouted down racists and fascists attempting to speak at their schools.

At the same time, private security forces are working together with police agencies to spy on and infiltrate the various resistance movements, such as that of the water protectors at Standing Rock. They are openly in service to the major energy monopolies. Militarization of police agencies and an emphasis on pre-emptive actions, in the name of stopping “terrorism” or “violence” is also now predominating. This is evident in Buffalo, for example, with the purchase of semi-automatic rifles for police and recent efforts to militarize Juneteenth celebrations and sanction police actions to arbitrarily search backpacks and interrogate youth without cause.

Many more examples could be given that indicate the ruling circles and their institutions are in crisis, unable to resolve any problem and relying on use of force as their only answer. The more security forces the rulers create, public and private, and the more security measures they enforce and police powers they usurp, the more bogged down they get. And the more conditions reveal that the Constitution, courts, Congress, the old institutions simply cannot provide peace, security or a way forward. The contradictions within the ranks of the ruling class are huge and growing worse, as the fights taking place within and between the military, security, federal and state authorities indicate.

The way forward is with reliance on the people themselves and engaging



the fight for the new — new institutions, new constitution, a new political process, a new democracy of our own making that empowers the people to govern and decide. The old democracy of the rich cannot be restored. On the contrary it is necessary to break with this old in order not to be dragged down by it. Advancing and defending new content of people's empowerment and new social forms are needed. The new cannot be embodied in the old forms, like the various existing civil society organizations. Such forms in fact serve to block the new and uphold the status quo, serve to bury any new content and embroil the youth in defending the old.

Buffalo Forum is one such builder of the new, embracing the necessity for putting the issue of Who Decides? to the forefront and consistently organizing so that the response is *We Decide!* We urge all those interested in rejecting the old and building the new so as to empower the people to join with us in strengthening and developing *Buffalo Forum* as an instrument of the new and in developing additional social forms for building the new!



MORE USE OF FORCE NO SOLUTION

Buffalo Police Semi-Automatic Rifle Purchase Opposed

Buffalo police are buying approximately 115 semi-automatic rifles and 450 protective vests through a state grant. The grant is said to help local law enforcement agencies prepare for mass shootings or terrorist events, but most think the rifles will be used for urban warfare against the people. Buffalo, like all major cities, already contends with unjust violence and use of force by police. Semi-automatic rifles in the hands of plans only increases this problem. The solution lies in disarming the police and self-defense committees organized by the people themselves.

In addition, people rejected the undemocratic way in which the decision was taken. The Common Council dismissed a request

for a public hearing to discuss the rifle purchase. While plans call for the weapons to be secured with supervising lieutenants and distributed only when a “mass shooting” or “terrorist-type” event occurs, many doubt that will be the case. This is especially true given that people demonstrating against war and police brutality are often labeled as terrorists.

People are demanding more accountability from police, not more firepower. Given that police repeatedly act with impunity, including police brutality and racist killing of unarmed people, the issue of accountability is critical. And as recent court cases indicate, the courts cannot be relied on to punish the guilty. Police are rarely even charged and

even more rarely convicted.

People are also organizing against increased arbitrary police checkpoints in their neighborhoods, especially in African American areas on the east side. While city officials claim the checkpoints are to “enforce traffic regulations,” people’s experience is that they are arbitrary measures for police to stop and interrogate people, especially youth. There is no evidence that the checkpoints are dealing with serious crime, rather that they are being used to force people to accept arbitrary police actions and impunity for them. People are demanding an end to all police impunity and for the political power needed to enforce such demands.

I • JUNETEENTH CELEBRATIONS

use in Iraq) and other militarized equipment.

There was an increased police presence, estimated at more than 100, using the claim that “there might be” gang violence. As well, police implemented pre-emptive actions against the youth, demanding to search backpacks and grilling them about supposed gang affiliation, all with no cause or even suspicion. As one person put it, youth were “surrounded by police officers asking them to put their shirts on, asking them what’s in their backpacks, asking them to stop gathering with their friends.” The park casino, a public building, was also used as a detention center.

At least one man was pepper-sprayed and detained by police without cause, according to witnesses. The man had a backpack and was standing with his children near the “Edutainment” stage. When security approached him and asked him to open his backpack, he put his hands in the air, asked “Why?” and was immediately pepper-sprayed and physically restrained while police removed and searched his backpack. The attack took place in front of dozens of witnesses including many



children, who shared similar versions of the event on social media. The man was not charged with any crime and released, an indication that these various pre-emptive actions were designed to intimidate and impose an atmosphere of fear. In this the police were unsuccessful, as the spirit of resistance and unity prevailed.

People denounced the police and

stood in support of those attacked. Juneteenth has operated for years without gang violence and with youth playing an important role, in the parade, at the various booths, and as part of the crowd cheering in support. Despite the efforts by government police forces to militarize the parade, youth refused, and joined with the hundreds present to celebrate Juneteenth, a day of resistance.

I • NO JUSTICE IN POLICE KILLING

kill, are given the special privilege of using deadly force when they fear for their lives. But they are not required to show proof that the fear is justified. Just that they “thought” the person was going for a gun. In this case Castile calmly told the officer he had a gun and a permit to carry it. He made no threats, offered no resistance, made no complaints about being pulled over for such a minor violation, a broken taillight. He was asked to provide his license and registration. But as soon as he attempted to do so, Yanez shot and killed him, claiming afterwards that Castile, seated in the car, was going for a gun.

Police are very rarely charged for their killings, often of unarmed African Americans posing no threat. Indeed the case against Yanez is believed to be the first time in Minnesota history that an officer was charged in an on-duty fatal shooting, even though there have been many such killings in the state.

Police are even more rarely convicted, as jurors are instructed that the claim of fear for their lives makes police actions legitimate. The prosecution rarely challenges the racism of the state, which repeatedly promotes, and the monopoly media echoes, that African American males are a “threat,” and “violent.”

**Broad Protest Against
Police Impunity**

This acquittal was the latest example of charges against an officer, but no a conviction. In recent years, officers

in Cleveland, Pennsylvania and Tulsa, Oklahoma, have been found not guilty of manslaughter. Elsewhere, including Cincinnati and South Carolina, jurors have deadlocked on charges after a fatal shooting and failed to deliver any verdict at all.

The 2016 shooting set off large marches across the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. A gathering point then was the occupation in front of the governor’s mansion in St. Paul, which lasted for 20 days.

The acquittal did the same, as thousands protested over three days, demanding accountability for police killings and violence. As one put it, “It’s not us that were on trial, it was the system that was on trial.” Protesters gathered at the Minnesota State Capitol in downtown St. Paul and set off from there on a march, rejecting the police racist claim of “self-defense” and demanding an end to the police license to kill. Some protesters blocked Interstate 94, one of the main corridors between the Twin Cities. Eighteen people, including two journalists who were trying to film the action, were arrested. The next day organizers received an outpouring of messages from people who had been shocked at the acquittal.

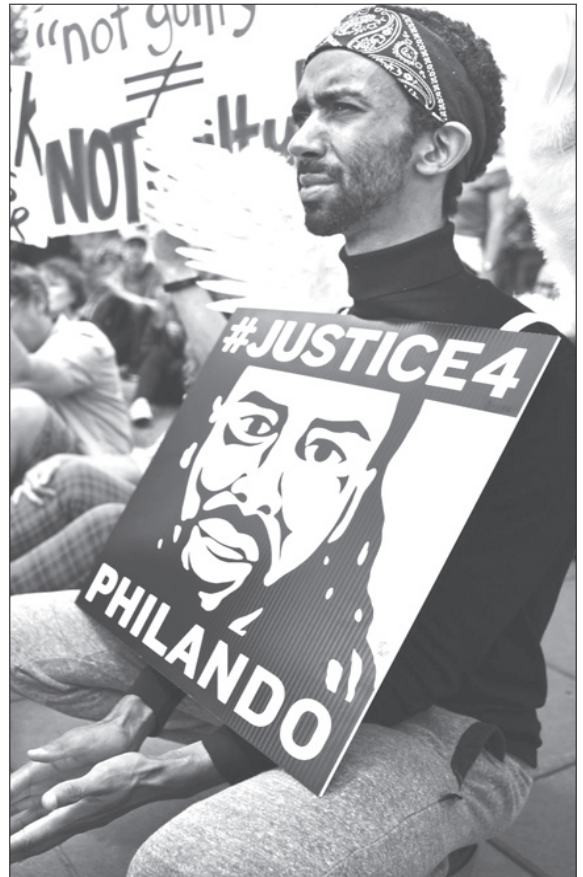
Said one organizer, “Philando’s case is one of the most blatant examples of police officers being allowed to kill people with impunity, and I think it will be a wake-up call for people who thought that at a minimum,

at least in this case, there would be some semblance of justice.”

Courts Cannot Provide Accountability

What has been made clear by the continued police killings and general militarization of police, along with the firm resistance, is that the current system cannot provide justice and in fact no longer even upholds a rule of law. Despite numerous “agreements” by police agencies, from the federal forces on down, to end racist killings and impunity, they continue. The courts have shown themselves to not be a means for police accountability.

A government of police powers, with police impunity and violence and broad state-organized racist attacks of all kinds integral to it, is what is being confronted today. Which means it is necessary not only to oppose attacks, but to organize for a new direction for political affairs, one where the people’s will to end police violence and killings can prevail.



Too Many Getting Shot, Still

Abby Zimet, *Common Dreams*

The bleak news keeps coming. June 23, another white cop got away with another murder of a black man, the third such travesty in about a month. Ray Tensing's second hung jury came in the Cincinnati killing of Samuel DuBose during a traffic stop (does this sound familiar?), which was caught on Tensing's body camera. What was not caught: The Confederate flag t-shirt Tensing was wearing under his uniform, or his record of pulling over more African-Americans — 83.5% of his tickets — than any other cop on the force, or the biased make-up of the jury.

Last month, Betty Jo Shelby, another white cop, was similarly found not guilty of first-degree manslaughter after gunning down Terence Crutcher in Oklahoma after his car broke down. Crutcher was unarmed with his hands in the air, but Shelby still thought he was a scary black

guy. Shelby was even allowed to return to work, though Tulsa's police chief said he was not sure she would because it might feel "too dangerous."

Tensing at least got fired. So did Jeronimo Yanez, acquitted of first-degree manslaughter for the death of Philando Castile just days before Tensing's mistrial. After that verdict, troubling facts emerged. Investigators were found to have scoured Castile's and girlfriend Diamond Reynolds' social media history — but not Yanez' — looking for criminal activity or other dirt to re-victimize the victims. Damning, newly released dashcam video of the shooting showed a panicked Yanez screaming at a totally compliant Castile in what was widely seen as an execution.

Perhaps most disturbing is video that emerged of a distraught Diamond Reynolds and her four-year-old daughter

being held in the back of a squad car moments after Philando's shooting. Reynolds has long shown extraordinary strength, insisting to all who would listen, "I need justice." Now, with her hands behind her back, in handcuffs — why is this woman in handcuffs?!? — Reynolds alternates between furious grief and the singular composure she displayed in her own video of the shooting, complete with painstakingly remembering to call her partner's killer "sir." Reynolds' shell-shocked daughter likewise veers between calmly trying to comfort her mother and her own horror. As Reynolds struggles with the handcuffs, the girl shouts in terror, "No, please, no! I don't want you to get shot!" After her mother tries to quiet her, the girl pleads, "I don't want it to be like this anymore." Reynolds' righteous retort: "Tell that to the police."

Sandra Bland, Philando Castile and Now Charleena Lyles: Scream Their Names for All to Hear

Melissa Batchelor Warnke, *Op-Ed, Los Angeles Times*

Philando Castile was 32 years old when he was shot to death in his car by a police officer. Before Castile was shot to death, he got a haircut, ate dinner with his sister and picked up his girlfriend, Diamond Reynolds, at his apartment. The officer said he pulled Castile over for a brake light problem; an audio transcript later revealed the officer saying, "The two occupants just look like people that were involved in a robbery. The driver looks more like one of our suspects, just 'cause of the wide-set nose."

According to Reynolds' account, when asked for his license and registration Castile disclosed that he had a pistol and was licensed to carry. He then reached for his wallet. The officer told him, "Don't move."

Only 103 seconds elapsed between when the police officer pulled Castile over and when he shot Castile seven times. Several of the shots the officer fired pierced Castile's arm and left side. While

Castile was being shot to death, Reynolds' 4-year-old daughter was sitting in the back seat of the car.

Reynolds livestreamed the aftermath for 10 minutes on Facebook. Imagine the presence of mind and strength that required.

On Friday, the police officer who shot Philando Castile to death was acquitted of all charges. The officer's name is Jeronimo Yanez, and he is a free man. After the verdict, Castile's mother Valerie asked, "Where in this planet do you tell the truth and you be honest and you still be murdered by the police of Minnesota while you have your seat belt on and you're in the company of a woman and a child?"

Over the weekend, a list circulated on social media:

Philando Castile.
Terence Crutcher.
Sandra Bland.
Eric Garner.
Mike Brown.
Rekia Boyd.

Sean Bell.
Tamir Rice.
Freddie Gray.
Danroy Henry.
Oscar Grant III.
Kendrec McDade.
Aiyana Jones.
Ramarley Graham.
Amadou Diallo.
Trayvon Martin.
John Crawford III.
Jonathan Ferrell.
Timothy Stansbury Jr.
No convictions.

In 2015, Sandra Bland died in jail three days after being arrested at a traffic stop. The African American Policy Forum promoted the phrase "Say Her Name" in an effort to center violence against black women in the national conversation.

We need to say their names. We need to scream their names.

These names should ricochet off the
Scream Their names • 7

Stop U.S. Wars to End the Refugee Crisis

Code Pink for Peace

Every minute 20 people leave their homes to flee from war, terror, and persecution. The 1951 UN Refugee Convention states that refugees must be guaranteed such basic rights as housing and education, the right not to be expelled from a host country, the right not to be punished for illegal entry, and more.

On World Refugee Day, June 20, we reaffirm these rights. We also add that refugees, as well as all people, have the right to live in a world without war.

As more and more people flee from wars the U.S. is too often involved in, we call on the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations (UN), Nikki Haley, to support all governments ensuring the rights of refugees and to increase refugee entry into the U.S.

From the borders of U.S./Mexico to the Mediterranean Sea, millions across the globe are blocked or pushed back from finding a better quality of life.

The statistics are staggering:

65.6 million forcibly displaced

40.3 million displaced internally

5.3 million Palestinian refugees

2.8 million asylum seekers

However, Trump signed an executive order in January that cuts refugee resettlement funding. He is also working quietly



to reduce the number of refugees accepted from 110,000 to 60,000.

As the refugee crisis explodes, it is more critical than ever that we open our doors. Tell U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley to support the welcoming of all refugees and ensuring basic rights for refugees.

U.S. WARS AND AGGRESSION MEAN

New Inhumane Record: One Person Displaced Every Three Seconds

Inter Press Service, June 22, 2017

Nearly 66 million people were forcibly displaced from their homes last year, the United Nations refugee agency has reported.

The figure equates to “one person displaced every three seconds — less than the time it takes to read this sentence, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports, stressing the “very high” pace at which conflict

and persecution is forcing people to flee their homes.

The report Global Trends, which was released ahead of the World Refugee Day on June 20, marks a jump of 300,000 since the end of 2015. “By any measure this is an unacceptable number,” said UN High Commissioner Filippo Grandi, urging “solidarity and a common purpose in preventing and resolving crises.”

Grandi also called for properly protecting and caring for the world’s refugees, internally displaced and asylum-seekers — who currently number 22.5 million, 40.3 million, and 2.8 million, respectively.

Syria Biggest Refugee Producer

According to the report, Syria remains **Defend Rights of Refugees • 9**

6 • SCREAM THEIR NAMES

hearts and consciences of each person in this country. This is where we live. This is what happens here.

Not once. Not twice. Repeatedly. Not back then. Now. Yesterday.

On Sunday morning, Charleena Lyles called the Seattle police to report a burglary. After two officers arrived at her apartment complex, they shot her to death. Both opened fire. Lyles was a 30-year-old black woman. She was pregnant. Her four children were nearby. The officers were white. They say she confronted them with a knife.

Monika Williams, Lyles’ sister, said: “Even if my sister had a knife in her hand, she weighs like nothing, even if she’s soaking wet. There’s no way you could’ve taken a taser and taken her down? There’s no way you could’ve taken a baton and knocked the knife out of her hand?”

Philando Castile.

Terence Crutcher.

Sandra Bland.

Eric Garner.

Mike Brown.

Rekia Boyd.

Sean Bell.

Tamir Rice.

Freddie Gray.

Danroy Henry.

Oscar Grant III.

Kendrec McDade.

Aiyana Jones.

Ramarley Graham.

Amadou Diallo.

Trayvon Martin.

John Crawford III.

Jonathan Ferrell.

Timothy Stansbury Jr.

Charleena Lyles.

Scream their names.

Federal Court Blocks Immediate Deportation of Iraqi Nationals

ACLU, June 22, 2017

A federal court has blocked the immediate deportation of Iraqi nationals arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) earlier this month. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) successfully sought the temporary restraining order, in a class-action lawsuit, arguing those individuals should have an opportunity to prove their lives would be in danger if they were returned to Iraq.

The ACLU challenged the government after ICE agents arrested more than 100 Iraqis — including many who have been in the U.S. for decades — in recent raids throughout metropolitan Detroit. Those arrested include Christians and Muslims, all at risk of persecution in Iraq.

Background

The ACLU filed a class-action lawsuit to stop federal immigration officials from deporting more than 100 Iraqi nationals rounded up in raids by federal agents, arguing that it is illegal to deport the detainees without giving them an opportunity to prove that they could face torture and even death if returned to Iraq.

“Not only is it immoral to send people to a country where they are likely to be violently persecuted, it expressly violates United States and international law and treaties,” said Kary Moss, Executive Director for the ACLU of Michigan.

Although many of the detainees were picked up for minor offenses in years past, the vast majority have been fully compliant with their conditions of supervision and have had no further run-ins with the law.

Most of the 114 people arrested in Michigan are Chaldean Christians, however, Shiite Muslims and Christian converts are also among the detained, all of whom fear they will face violent retribution because of their identities. Immigration agents during raids in other states also arrested dozens of Kurdish and Yezidi Iraqis. The arrests



come in the wake of a recent deal between Iraq and the U.S. that removes Iraq from the list of Muslim-majority nations whose citizens could be prohibited from coming to the U.S. under an Executive Order signed by President Donald Trump. In exchange for removal from that list, Iraq has agreed to accept Iraqi nationals sent back to the country by U.S. immigration officials, a sudden reversal of a long-standing policy against repatriation.

The negotiations are part of White House efforts to convince courts to permit the President to impose his controversial Muslim ban, which was ruled illegal by federal courts.

Government Impunity Despite Court Rulings

Among those arrested is 38-year-old Ali Al-Dilami, a plaintiff in the lawsuit and a Shiite Muslim who came to the U.S. in 1998 as a 19-year-old refugee. Al-Dilami resides in Ohio with his wife and two

children. ICE released him to the community under an order of supervision, with which he has fully complied.

Nevertheless, with no warning, ICE agents arrested him at his home on June 11. Al-Dilami, who has had three mild heart attacks in the past, according to his family, suffered a seizure when he was arrested and is now paralyzed on the left side of his body. After being stabilized, Al-Dilami was transferred to the Youngstown detention center. He fears that, if returned, he will face oppression and reprisals because of the arbitrary and indiscriminate targeting of Shiite Muslims by ISIS.

Also detained was plaintiff Jihan Asker, 41, a Chaldean mother of three children who has spent much of her life near Warren, Mich., since arriving to the U.S. at age 5. Since being arrested on a non-violent misdemeanor charge 14 years ago, Asker has fully complied with her order of supervision and encountered no other legal troubles. As a result of a petition by her daughter — a U.S. citizen, like her other two children — Asker also is eligible to seek lawful permanent residency in the U.S. However, on June 11, she too was arrested then taken to the Calhoun County detention center.

The complaint asserts, “...Petitioners, Christian and Muslim alike, cannot be removed to Iraq without being afforded a process to determine whether, based on current conditions and circumstances, the danger they would face entitles them to protection from removal.”

The raids also follow a series of stepped-up ICE raids that have targeted many Latinos in the U.S., with agents arresting residents at courthouses, their workplaces and other locations.

The ruling is at: <https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/hamama-v-adducci-ruling>. More information is at: <https://www.aclu.org/cases/hamama-v-adducci>

Visit our website: usmlo.org

NEW YORK CITY RIGHTS GROUPS DEMAND:

Federal Immigration Get Out of State Courthouses

Immigrant rights groups recently rallied outside City Hall in New York City, denouncing arrests of immigrants in state courts. Since Trump took office, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has been showing up in state courts, arresting dozens of immigrants appearing at legal hearings. Since the beginning of 2017, there have been 28 arrests statewide and another ten attempts, where lawyers and advocates were able to prevent ICE from making the arrests. Half of the arrests, 19, occurred in NYC, often by ICE agents in plainclothes.

Immigrant rights advocates were seething over the recent attempted arrest of a victim of human trafficking inside Queens Human Trafficking Intervention Court. Lawyers were able to block the detention and advocates denounced the federal government for attacking victims of human trafficking while doing little to actually stop this crime that targets women and young girls, many of them immigrants and refugees.

Under city policy, the NYPD and the Correction Department do not recognize ICE “detainer orders” to hold people picked up on relatively minor charges. By showing up in courthouses to make arrests, ICE is striving to circumvent that policy. Its blatant arrests right at the court-

houses shows that conflicts between state and federal authorities is also increasing.

Advocates continue to denounce the ICE efforts, saying it unjustly targets the immigrants involved while also blocking people from using the court system to contend with serious problems, like housing and family issues. Speakers at the rally said enforcement activity by ICE

that discourages defendants from appearing in court and discourages victims from coming forward undermines public safety for everyone. They demanded an end to the ICE attacks and called on judges and court officials to do more to block ICE from making arrests inside courthouses



and detaining people just outside the buildings. City Council Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito said the courthouse arrests are a shameful, predatory tactic making New York City less safe.

The solution lies not in more ICE attacks and enforcement, but in defending the rights of immigrants and refugees.

7 • DEFEND RIGHTS OF REFUGEES

“the world’s biggest producer of refugees” with 12 million people living in neighboring countries and away from the region. There are 7.7 million displaced Colombians, 4.7 million Afghans and 4.2 million Iraqis.

However, in 2016, South Sudan became “the biggest new factor” when peace efforts broke down in July resulting in some 737,400 people fleeing by the end of the year. In total, about 3.3 million South Sudanese fled their homes by the end of the year.

About half of the refugee population last year were children younger than 18 years of age, according the report. This is in contrast to the fact that children make up only about 31 percent of the total world population. Among its findings, the report noted that some 75,000 asylum claims were received from children traveling alone or separated from their parents.

Developing countries are hosting the majority of the world’s refugees, UNHCR reported. About 84 per cent of the people were in developing countries, themselves

robbed of resources by the U.S. and other big powers. Of that figure, one in every three people, roughly 4.9 million people, were hosted by the least developed countries.

“We reflect on the courage of those who fled and the compassion of those who welcome them,” the Secretary-General said in his video message for World Refugee Day. He noted that more people than ever in our lifetimes are fleeing war, as the number of refugees and displaced persons rose by 300,000 since the end of 2015.

Fighting for the Sanctuary Workplace

David Bacon, davidbaconrealitycheck.blogspot.com

Sanctuary churches. Sanctuary schools. Sanctuary cities.

Sanctuary workplaces?

Albeit far from its intentions, the Trump administration has put the idea of sanctuaries on steroids — spaces free from the threat of raids and deportations. As immigrant workers, unions and their allies look for creative ways to counter anti-immigrant onslaughts, they are adopting the sanctuary framework to deal with the dangers faced on the job.

This is not just a recent response to administration threats of increased enforcement. Immigrant workers have been battling jobsite raids and firings for many years, seeking ways to prevent *la migra* (immigration agents) from using their employment to sweep them into the enforcement net. Says Wei-Ling Huber, president of UNITE HERE Local 2850, the hotel union in the East Bay area of northern California, “When we go to work, we should be valued for the contributions we make, and we should be able to do our jobs free from fear of deportations.” Those contributions should be obvious. One in every ten workers in California is undocumented. So are over half the nation’s farm laborers and 9 percent of its restaurant workers.

In April, Huber’s union went before the Oakland City Council, asking for a policy that would protect immigrants on the job. The council passed a resolution, noting it has been a “City of Refuge” since the anti-apartheid movement of the mid-1980s, a policy reaffirmed last November, just days after Trump’s election. “The City Council ... calls upon all employers to establish safe/sanctuary workplaces where workers are respected and not threatened or discriminated against based on their immigration status,” the measure stated.

Local 2850 wanted the statement as a way to define public policy, but actual implementation of an enforcement-free workplace requires more than resolutions. Ten years ago, the union headed a fight in next-door Emeryville, when the Woodfin Suites, a hotel in the southern California-based chain, fired 12 immigrant women housekeepers. Emeryville had just passed a living-wage

ordinance for hotel employees, and at the Woodfin Suites workers demanded its enforcement. The hotel accused the 12 women of not having legal immigration documents, and protests over the retaliatory firings went on for four years. Eventually the company had to pay several hundred thousand dollars in back pay. In the process, the Emeryville City Council became committed defenders of the housekeepers.

Moving further toward making the sanctuary workplace a reality, Local 2850 began negotiating protections into union contracts. The union is trying to make one key provision a standard, which cautions that “Should a federal immigration agent or a Department of Homeland Security agent demand entry into the Employer’s premises or the opportunity to interrogate, search or seize the person or property of any employee, then the Employer shall immediately notify the Union by telephone to the union’s office. Except as required by law, the Employer shall not permit the agent(s) to enter the premises without a valid warrant.”

The contract prohibits retaliation against workers because of their immigration status. Once the hotel accepts the documents provided by workers when they’re hired, it can’t go back later and use the government’s E-Verify database to revisit their immigration status.

The need for this was evident in a recent change in one hotel’s ownership, when the new owners wanted all the employees to submit new evidence of their legal status. The workers banded together and refused, thus protecting anyone who might have trouble doing so. The company backed down, and everyone went back to work. In San Francisco, when another boutique hotel chain changed hands, UNITE HERE Local 2 mobilized community pressure to stop the new owners from similarly re-verifying workers’ immigration status.

At issue is a provision of the 1986 *Immigration Reform and Control Act*, which, for the first time in U.S. history, prohibited employers from hiring undocumented workers. The law required employers to verify workers’ immigration status when they are

hired, and led to the creation of the huge E-Verify database of all workers’ immigration status.

After 1986, undocumented workers could no longer apply for Social Security numbers. Since then, to get hired, workers without papers have made up numbers or used those of other people. Employers deduct contributions from their paychecks for Social Security — about \$13 billion/year. But workers without papers cannot collect the benefits the contributions pay for. In the meantime, the government uses the discrepancy in numbers as a tool for immigration enforcement.

Another purpose of the sanctuary workplace is to prevent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents from using Social Security numbers to identify undocumented workers and force employers to fire them. In some cases, ICE (and its predecessor, the Immigration and Naturalization Service) have even sent workers to federal prison, charging that providing a bad Social Security number constitutes “identify theft.”

In Local 2850’s contract language, hotels cannot terminate workers simply because Social Security questions their numbers — a protection won by San Francisco’s Local 2 several years ago. And if undocumented employees gain legal status, and a new valid number, the company must recognize their continuing seniority and job rights.

The strategy used in the Oakland resolution, and unions’ contract language, has also become the basis of a bill introduced into the California state legislature, at the initiative of the SEIU United Service Workers West — the union for janitors, security guards and airport workers. AB 450, the Immigrant Worker Protection Act, requires employers to ask for a judicial warrant before granting ICE agents access to a workplace. It prohibits employers from sharing confidential information, like Social Security numbers, without a court order. This bill also says employers must notify the state Labor Commissioner if ICE demands employee information.

United Service Workers West, like the
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hotel unions, also has a history of fighting workplace immigration raids and firings. In 2011 Los Angeles janitors sat down in city intersections to protest immigration-based firings by Able Building Maintenance. The union fought similar firings in Stanford University cafeterias, and among custodians in the Silicon Valley buildings of Apple and Hewlett-Packard. UNITE HERE members in San Diego mounted a hunger strike outside the Hyatt Hotel over the same issue. Over 200 Molders Union members in Berkeley at the Pacific Steel foundry fought firings for almost a year.

United May Day Actions

A number of unions are beginning to train workers to act together on the job to resist raids and firings. This spring, in a session organized by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), Filipino Advocates for Justice and several other groups, workers acted out scenarios that used job action to protect each other. ILWU members from a local recycling company, Alameda County Industries, dramatized their own strike three years ago, when they stopped work to keep the company from firing employees for not having papers. In another skit, they suggested that workers take action to demand that their boss bar ICE agents from the workplace, if they have no court order. Other unions described their experiences over the past decade in organizing workers to fight off raids and firings.

As a result of this activity, unions with a significant membership of immigrants, and a history of fighting to defend them, were very visible in May Day's "Day Without Immigrants" marches. Many had participated in the crowds that shut down airports in January, in response to Trump's attempted ban on migrants and travelers from Muslim countries. As workers did in 2006 — when marches protested a bill in Congress to make undocumented status a federal felony — marchers this year protested similar threats from Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

In a highly publicized event in April on the Arizona-Mexico border, Sessions told the press that enforcement would now prioritize identity theft, among other factors.



"And it is here that criminal aliens, and the coyotes, and the document-forgers seek to overthrow our system of lawful immigration," he announced. By employing phrases like "identity theft" and "document-forgers," Sessions once again treats giving a bad Social Security number to an employer as a criminal offense. The Pew Hispanic Center estimates that over 8 million undocumented people are in the workforce, working under bad numbers, making them potentially subject to these charges.

Anger over workplace enforcement actions has a long history in California. One of the first battles took place at the Kraco car radio factory in the early 1980s. In an action that preceded the sanctuary debate by over 30 years, workers joining the United Electrical Workers stopped work to force the owner to deny entry to immigration agents. Later that decade, the Molders Union Local 164 in Oakland joined the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund in suing the Immigration and Naturalization Service over its practice of having agents bar the doors of factories, holding workers prisoner, and then interrogating them and detaining those without papers. The case went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which found the practice unconstitutional.

In the Day Without Immigrants actions, unions and immigrant rights organizations sought to tap into this history, and linked the sanctuary workplace to the enforcement of labor rights in general. Sixty workers from Oakland and Emeryville hotels left their jobs and picketed the site of a proposed new hotel that has refused to guarantee workers'

freedom to organize. After tearing down a symbolic "Trump wall," they joined the main May Day march.

In New York City, immigrant workers at one of the world's largest suppliers of photography materials, B&H Photo Video, struck for the day, protesting a plan to relocate 330 jobs from Brooklyn, New York, to Florence Township, New Jersey. Workers have been trying to negotiate a union contract with the help of the Laundry Workers Center and the United Steel Workers, and they have accused the company of using the move to punish workers for their union support.

A thousand people marched in Yakima, in the heart of central Washington's apple orchards. Most were farm workers who had taken off work for the day, including a large contingent from the Chateau Ste. Michelle winery who belong to the United Farm Workers. [...]

A week after May Day, the country's newest farm worker union, Familias Unidas por la Justicia, marched 17 miles from Lynden to Bellingham in Washington. In addition to protesting Trump's anti-immigrant policies, farm workers demanded that Washington grower Sakuma Brothers sign a union contract. The union mounted a three-year boycott of Driscoll's Berries, which markets the berries they pick for Sakuma. Combined with strikes in the fields, the boycott forced the grower to agree to a union election, won by workers last September. Their march coincided with a hunger strike by immigrants held in Tacoma, Washington's Northwest Detention Center. Familias Unidas por la Justicia has a history of support for the center's detainees, in part because they are forced to do all the work at the privately-run prison (except guarding themselves), at an illegal wage of \$1 a day.

In the mobilizations around May Day, support grew on a national level for immigrant workers facing raids. Four unions (Communications Workers of America, Amalgamated Transit Union, National Nurses United and the United Electrical Workers) sent out a letter urging workers and labor activists to participate in the Day Without Immigrants strikes and marches.

Twenty States Trying to Make Criminalization of Dissent “Legal”

As government of police powers is consolidated across the country under Trump, various legislatures at the state level are attempting to hide these powers under the cover of laws. In what is being called the “biggest protest crackdown since the Civil Rights Era,” at least 20 states have put forward or passed laws with the intention of making protest more difficult and the punishment for expressing dissent more draconian. The right to conscience, to have and express one’s views, is being criminalized. As Chase Iron Eyes, member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe said the efforts are a means to delegitimize activists engaged in non-violent resistance. Speaking generally of the U.S. state he added: “The state will try to devise ways to squash opposition and chill the will of people who are willing to face risks to their liberty to further their cause.”

Among the measures to further criminalize dissent are:

- In North Dakota, several measures were passed during protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline, one of which makes it illegal for demonstrators to cover their faces.



- Missouri, Washington, Georgia, Nebraska, and Montana are considering similar laws.

- In Minnesota, a “pending bill would allow a state or local government to bring a civil action against people ‘convicted of participating in an unlawful assembly’ in order to recover ‘public safety response costs,’” according to Vox.

- In Wisconsin, a proposed bill would punish “anyone under the jurisdiction of the institution who engages in violent, abusive, indecent, profane, boisterous, obscene, unreasonably loud, or other disorderly conduct that interferes with the free expression of others.”

- North Carolina State Senator Dan Bishop has vowed to introduce legislation that would criminalize heckling.

- Iowa and Mississippi have filed bills that would make “blocking high-speed roads a felony.”

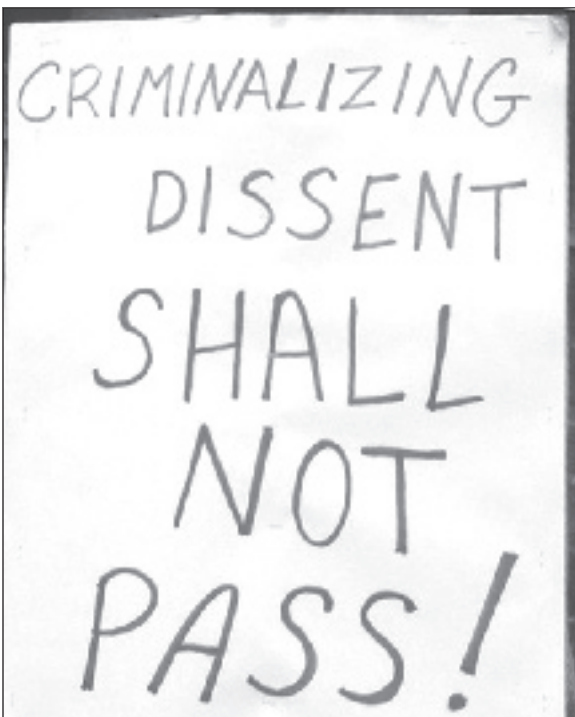
- North Dakota, Tennessee and Florida have submitted bills immunizing motorists who strike a protester if a demonstration

obstructs traffic,” *USA Today* reported.

With such measures proliferating across the U.S., even the United Nations condemned the trend as both “alarming and undemocratic.”

In Congress, Senate Republicans announced new rules making it difficult for reporters to interview lawmakers in the hallways of the Capitol. The White House has now barred reporters from making audio or video recordings of the daily press briefing.

All the measures indicate that the U.S. state, which has been composed of both a government of laws and a government of police powers, is now a government of police powers, without rule of law. Criminalization of dissent and attacks on the right to conscience are integral parts of the arbitrary state measures to block resistance and impose police powers. The laws being enacted at the state level are a means to give this government impunity a “legal” façade, when in fact rule of law has been eliminated. This is reflected in the massive spying, the on-going police killings, the broad attacks on immigrants and refugees, the state-organized racist attacks, and more. Stepping efforts to defend the rights of all and reject the government of police powers by developing a democracy of our own making is necessary.



CONSPIRACY TRIALS FOR ARRESTS AT TRUMP INAUGURATION

Protesters Resist Threat of Seventy-Five Years in Prison

Alex Kane, *The Independent*, June 23, 2017

Olivia Alsip found herself trapped. The 24-year-old activist traveled to the nation's capital from Chicago to express her ire against Donald Trump's antagonistic rhetoric targeting minorities and queer people on Inauguration Day. By 11 a.m. that morning, though, she found herself kettled by police with hundreds of other protesters with no way to go to the bathroom, eat or drink.

At one point, DC police indiscriminately pepper-sprayed the crowd, hitting a child and someone on crutches. Six hours later, Alsip was handcuffed and taken in a police van with other demonstrators to a DC jail.

The whole experience "felt like being in a cattle car of some sort and being treated as livestock rather than actual people," said Alsip.

Her troubles did not end when she was released that evening. Instead, Alsip and over 200 other demonstrators are now facing felony charges that could carry up to 75 years in prison if they are convicted. The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, which reports to Attorney General Jeff Sessions, is prosecuting the case.

Civil liberties advocates say that the demonstrators are being overcharged in an attempt to intimidate them into accepting plea bargains and in order to silence future dissent. They also say that the police response was brutal — and that the prosecutor's charges, which seek to tar the demonstrators as criminals regardless of their individual actions, are a worrying sign of how protests are being treated today.

The arrests and subsequent indictments appear to correspond to the Trump Era pattern of a shock-and-awe gambit followed by a lot of confusion and disarray.

January 20 was always going to be a confrontational day. Trump was to assume the presidency after a contentious presidential campaign filled with nasty, racist attacks on Muslims and Mexicans. Trump lost the popular vote and activists streaming into Washington that day were not about to let him forget that.

But what was surprising to many protest-

ers was the dramatic police response... which began even before the events of January 20. An undercover DC cop infiltrated the planning meetings of Disrupt J20, a group organizing the day of inaugural protests, according to court documents. The police later used the information gathered at the meetings to pinpoint an organizer whose house was raided as part of an effort to gather information for a criminal case against the demonstrators.

On the day of the inauguration, police pepper sprayed peaceful protesters and indiscriminately launched explosive devices called "stingers" at the crowd, according to a report by the DC Police Complaints Board. The report also notes that police pepper sprayed demonstrators "without issuing a warning or command," and swept many people into custody without probable cause.

Police body camera footage obtained by *The Independent* appears to confirm allegations raised by the complaint board. Police can be seen firing flash grenades at cordoned-off demonstrators and showering them with pepper spray.

Among those arrested were legal observers and reporters. Past Indy contributor Aaron Cantú was among the journalists detained. In the aftermath of the crackdown, the Committee to Protect Journalists said the arrest of reporters was "clearly inappropriate" and could "send a chilling message to journalists covering future protests." Charges were eventually dropped against most of the journalists swept up by police, but Cantú was charged with felony rioting.

"What happened on J20 is the police envisioned themselves as a militarized force and acted accordingly," said Ria Thompson-Washington, the executive vice-president of the National Lawyers Guild.

Use of Conspiracy Charges in Absence of Evidence

Civil liberties advocates find especially disturbing is the prosecution's apparent strategy. With the first of the trials set for



March 2018, there is scant evidence to substantiate the severity of charges against the activists. Only a handful of defendants who allegedly committed acts of rioting are named in the indictment. The rest of the indictment refers to "members of the conspiracy" to riot. Little evidence is offered other than that the alleged conspirators wore dark clothing. The indictment notes that protesters chanted, "F--- capitalism," among other slogans. [...] After the mass arrests, every one of the detained demonstrators had their cell phones confiscated.

The arrests and subsequent indictments appear to correspond to the Trump Era pattern of a shock-and-awe gambit followed by a lot of confusion and disarray. Yet, despite the gravity of the charges, many of the defendants are banding together, instead of informing on one another, which they believe the prosecutors want. Over 100 have signed on to a "points of unity" statement, pledging to refuse to cooperate with prosecutors against other defendants.

"Part of the [prosecutor's] tactics have to do with getting people to roll on each other, to talk about each other, to make false confessions," said Alexei Wood, a freelance photographer and one of the defendants who signed the "points of unity" statement. "When people have to consider fear in a decision-making process, they might plea to something that they didn't do. That doesn't feel like justice to me at all. I want to be out

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Leaked Documents Reveal Counterterrorism Tactics Used at Standing Rock

Alleen Brown, Will Parrish, Alice Speri, *The Intercept*

Leaked documents and public records reveal a troubling fusion of private security, public law enforcement, and corporate money in the fight over the Dakota Access Pipeline.

A shadowy international mercenary and security firm known as TigerSwan targeted the movement opposed to the Dakota Access Pipeline with military-style counterterrorism measures, collaborating closely with police in at least five states. Documents provide the first detailed picture of how TigerSwan, which originated as a U.S. military and State Department contractor helping to execute the global war on terror, worked at the behest of its client Energy Transfer Partners, the company building the Dakota Access Pipeline, to respond to the indigenous-led movement that sought to stop the project.

More than 100 internal documents leaked to *The Intercept* by a TigerSwan contractor, as well as a set of over 1,000 documents obtained via public records requests, reveal that TigerSwan spearheaded a multifaceted private security operation characterized by sweeping and invasive surveillance of protesters.

As policing continues to be militarized and state legislatures around the country pass laws criminalizing protest, the fact that a private security firm retained by a Fortune 500 oil and gas company coordinated its efforts with local, state, and federal law

enforcement to undermine the protest movement has profoundly anti-democratic implications. The leaked materials not only highlight TigerSwan's militaristic approach to protecting its client's interests but also the company's profit-driven imperative to portray the nonviolent water protector movement as unpredictable and menacing enough to justify the continued need for extraordinary security measures. Energy Transfer Partners has continued to retain TigerSwan long after most of the anti-pipeline campers left North Dakota, and the most recent TigerSwan reports emphasize the threat of growing activism around other pipeline projects across the country.

Internal TigerSwan communications describe the movement as "an ideologically driven insurgency with a strong religious component" and compare the anti-pipeline water protectors to jihadist fighters. One report, dated February 27, 2017, states that since the movement "generally followed the jihadist insurgency model while active, we can expect the individuals who fought for and supported it to follow a post-insurgency model after its collapse." Drawing comparisons with post-Soviet Afghanistan, the report warns, "While we can expect to see the continued spread of the anti-DAPL diaspora ... aggressive intelligence preparation of the battlefield and active coordination between intelligence and security elements

are now a proven method of defeating pipeline insurgencies."

The leaked documents include situation reports prepared by TigerSwan operatives in North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Illinois, and Texas between September 2016 and May 2017, and delivered to Energy Transfer Partners. They offer a daily snapshot of the security firm's activities, including detailed summaries of the previous day's surveillance targeting pipeline opponents, intelligence on upcoming protests, and information harvested from social media. The documents also provide extensive evidence of aerial surveillance and radio eavesdropping, as well as infiltration of camps and activist circles.

Additional documents, obtained via public records requests, consist of communications among agents from the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Justice Department, the Marshals Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, as well as state and local police. The "Intel Group," as its members refer to it, closely monitored anti-Dakota Access protests in real time, scooped up information on the water protectors from social media, and shared intelligence.

Included among the documents obtained via public records requests were "daily intelligence updates" developed

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about being in solidarity with everybody."

While it is rare to face such serious charges for demonstrating, overzealous prosecutors have similarly charged protesters in other jurisdictions. Charges of felony rioting, for instance, were common when police arrested demonstrators at Standing Rock, the protest camp set up to block the Dakota Access Pipeline. Such clampdowns on protest also took place while President Obama was in office. [...]

"We expect the Trump administration to be much more harsh for protesters, for people who dissent and for those who

defend those who dissent," said Ria Thompson-Washington of the National Lawyers Guild. "The J20 charges are an indicator for what will happen when other cases like these arise." [...]

State lawmakers in the Trump era are also taking it upon themselves to squelch dissent. In response to the recent upsurge in activism across the country, Republican lawmakers in 18 states have introduced bills to restrict the right to protest. In Minnesota, for instance, elected officials want to pass a bill that would increase penalties for demonstrators who block traffic. In Missouri

and Washington State, lawmakers want to ban masks at protests — a prohibition that already exists in New York and other parts of the country.

Meanwhile, the inauguration protesters face a long year of traveling back and forth to DC for court dates — and that is even before their trial starts. Said Olivia Alsip, "We're facing a maximum of 75 years, which is multiples of the amount of time I've been alive. This case isn't really about what's right and what's wrong. It's about smothering any form of dissent that occurs that's a threat to the state."

Crisis of Political System Deepens as People Say No! to May

Workers' Weekly, Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

The result of the June 8 General Election has been a catastrophe for Theresa May and the Conservative Party as well as the ruling circles which are now left to pick the chestnuts out of the fire during the Brexit negotiations.

The Conservatives won 318 seats, down from 331 (including the Speaker), and eight short of an overall majority, while the Labor Party won 262, up from 232. The desperation of the ruling class is such that they have counseled Theresa May to stay on as Prime Minister even though the strategy she campaigned on to get a mandate for "strong and stable government" lies in tatters. With difficulty May is attempting to come to an arrangement with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) from the north of Ireland in order to form a government. This has in turn given rise to fears that the "Irish question" will once again cause havoc with the plans of the ruling class to pursue its anti-social, anti-national agenda in peace.

Some of the observations which have emerged from the results include that:

- The vote against the Conservatives was a vote against the neo-liberal austerity agenda.
- The youth participated in the election and they voted against the Conservatives because of the austerity agenda.
- The metropolitan areas, particularly London, chose the Labor Party
- The Liberal Democrats made no headway on the promise to hold a second referendum on Brexit. They were rejected because of their sell-out when they formed

a coalition with the Conservatives.

- Both the Scottish Labor Party and Scottish Conservatives made headway in Scotland at the expense of the Scottish National Party (SNP) which wanted to reverse the Brexit decision from the Referendum. Labor succeeded in making the issue one of the SNP not combating austerity, while the Conservatives succeeded in making the issue that a second independence referendum would be a diversion. The advance that the Scottish Conservatives made there contributed to buoying the Tory vote but was not enough to win seats lost elsewhere.

- In the north of Ireland, Sinn Féin and the DUP made headway at the expense of the Social Democratic and Labor Party and the Ulster Unionists respectively. This is also seen to represent support for an anti-austerity agenda.

- The referendum vote in favor of Brexit did not translate into support for May or take it away from Labor Party leader Corbyn.

- Attempts to destroy the Labor Party on the eve of the election utterly failed. The gamble of those who organized the revolt of Labor Members of Parliament (MPs) against Corbyn was as ill-advised as the gamble of those who advised May to call an early election.

- The consequences of the disastrous "gamble" that the Conservatives' weak majority in the Parliament could be turned into a strong majority by calling an early election have yet to fully reveal what they have in store for May's leadership and for

the Conservative Party itself. What else lies in store for the ruling class, besides the utter mockery and derision expressed for May from all quarters, is yet to be seen.

- The Conservatives also ran a terrible campaign organized by one of the private firms that the ruling class hires nowadays to run elections. These private firms have replaced political parties as primary organizations which link the voters to the system called a representative democracy. They think that depoliticizing the polity by making the character of one's opponent the target of attack is the way to run successful elections, despite the people's hatred for attack ads.

The refusal of the ruling party to discuss substantive issues makes it impossible to give the impression that the people decide the agenda of an election and provide a mandate for the next government. In this election, thanks to the presence of Corbyn who eloquently presented the need for an anti-austerity agenda, the people were able to express their rejection of this idea. There was also the matter of the Conservative Manifesto which was, to the chagrin of the Conservatives themselves, "peppered with arsenic" as a member of the Conservative Party put it. All of it revealed how detached the Conservative Party is from the concerns of the working people in Britain who found in Corbyn a champion for their demand to turn things around in favor of the working people, not the rich.

The Conservative election call has been

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by TigerSwan that were shared with law enforcement officers, thus contributing to a broad public-private intelligence dragnet. In the internal situation reports, TigerSwan operatives comment frequently about their routine coordination and intelligence sharing with law enforcement. The intel group went so far as to use a live video feed from a private Dakota Access security helicopter to monitor protesters' movements. In one report, TigerSwan discusses meeting with

investigators from North Dakota's Attorney General's Office.

TigerSwan's internal reports and the intelligence briefings shared with law enforcement name dozens of DAPL opponents. Some of those named are well-known activists, while others have minimal public affiliation with the water protector movement. The reports' authors often comment on camp dynamics, including protester morale and infighting, and speculate about

violent or illegal actions specific individuals might take and weapons they might carry. The documents reveal the existence of a "persons of interest" list as well as other databases that included identifying information such as photographs and license plate numbers.

The situation reports also suggest that TigerSwan attempted a counterinformation campaign by creating and distributing content critical of the protests on social media.

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a debacle for the ruling circles, including for the police powers used in connection with the Manchester and London Bridge attacks. Police powers are the lynchpin of May's "strong and stable" approach but what came to the fore was its hypocrisy and irrationality. Meanwhile Corbyn used the situation to emerge as the champion of the police against cuts. Added to this, the revelations on how the security services actually trained these terrorist forces to intervene in Libya and Syria has shown how the state is behind these attacks in the first place.

Taken together, the election results show that the arrangements imposed on society in the mid-19th century keep rulers who represent the capitalist class -- who are not fit to govern -- in power, and the people out of power. These arrangements are in profound crisis because they are no longer seen to provide a mandate which expresses the will of the people. The crisis in which the political system called a representative democracy is mired is such that it cannot sort anything out. It has not given May a mandate for Brexit with "strong and stable" leadership, and has



shown her leadership to be the opposite of "strong and stable" with a rejection of her appeal for a mandate. Meanwhile, another election is in the offing whose outcome is far from predictable.

A lot is being put down to the impact of personalities on the outcome, but such discussion is a distraction from the substantive issues. It only serves to disinform and depoliticize the polity. Instead of building institutions and arrangements which are under their control and engaging in democratic renewal, the working people are to believe in the courage and convictions of people like Jeremy Corbyn even though it is the system which disempowers them and requires renewal.

The ineptitude of Theresa May only

compounds the crisis in which the system of representative democracy is mired but is not its cause. Similarly, promises to reverse the anti-social offensive require an organization which empowers the people. The electoral and governance system which claim to represent "the people" and the "national interest," when in fact they represent the private interests of oligopolies which operate on an international scale, have to be replaced. The private interests are engaged in cut-throat competition to control the assets of various states so as strengthen their global striving for domination. It is crucial to take this into account when working out a way forward which favors the working people. (*rcpbml.org.uk, June 14, 2017*)

Negotiating with the DUP — The Conservatives' Second Bad Move

The Conservative Party is negotiating with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) which is a reactionary formation from the north of Ireland. This is an all-round bad move on the part of the Conservatives. The first bad move was to call the general election three years early with the expectation that they would receive 50 more seats. Instead they lost 13. Now, their second bad move is to negotiate with the DUP.

The DUP has ten seats the Conservatives covet. It is trying to wring concessions from the Conservatives about the arrangements to be implemented in the north of Ireland. However, these arrangements are already set in the Good Friday Agreement. Any deal with the DUP in effect puts them in the government. Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams already pointed out that this merely exposes the pretence that the British government is the "honest broker" between the "two traditions" in Ireland. It further underscores the

fact that the British government is neither neutral nor impartial. Of great significance is that if there is no agreement between the DUP and Sinn Féin by June 29, the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly moves to direct rule from Britain. This is bad enough, let alone if the DUP is an integral part of the Conservative government.

Reports indicate that as of June 13, DUP leader Arlene Foster has not returned to Belfast as expected, and it seems evident there is going to be some kind of a "confidence and supply arrangement" announced soon. Foster indicated that the deal would include issues related to Brexit, "counter-terrorism" and "doing what's right" for the economy of the north of Ireland.

It is known that the DUP is very keen not to have a "hard border" with the south, and wants more public spending in the north which only serves to bring to the public eye that the British government is neither

impartial nor neutral, as Gerry Adams has said time and again. To be "neutral" and "impartial" is what the Good Friday Agreement demands of the British government. To destabilize Ireland after destabilizing the entire British Isles would be nothing short of jumping from the frying pan into the fire.

The fact is that Theresa May is really only three seats short of a majority in the British Parliament because Sinn Féin elected seven Members of Parliament (MPs) who will not take their seats. Under the corrupt cartel party system another option would be to buy off three MPs from other parties with inducements negotiated in secret while presenting it all as being for the greater good of providing stability going into the Brexit talks. However, should the Conservatives do that, it would be their third bad move!

(*Workers' Weekly, June 14, 2017*)