

PEOPLE'S WORLD

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Chicago police arrest 150 at immigration protest

By John Bachtell



It was supposed to be a joyous occasion. Karina and her family were celebrating her oldest son's birthday. As they were cutting the cake, they heard a knock at the door. Agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) entered, arrested Karina in front of her children and took her away for deportation proceedings.

Through tears, Karina told her story to a protest at the Chicago ICE office on Nov. 6 demanding an end to deportations and calling upon Republican leadership to quit blocking a vote on immigration reform in Congress.

Then in an act of civil disobedience, 150 leaders of faith, trade union and community activists and elected officials were arrested for blocking a street.

The protest follows similar civil disobedience actions in Washington D.C., where Illinois Reps. Luis Gutierrez and Jan Schakowsky were arrested, in Florida and in New York. Pressure is being ramped up on the GOP congressional leadership across the country to pass comprehensive immigration reform with a path to citizenship before the end of the current session.

"I have been here 14 years. I have three children who are U.S. citizens. I got a deportation order just because I was pulled over for a traffic ticket in Elgin, Ill. I spent a night in jail just like a

common criminal," said Karina. "This is not fair."

According to Father Brendan Curran of St. Pius Church, over 2 million undocumented workers have been deported, the vast majority with no criminal record. They have left behind 3 million children.

"We are here to demand of President Obama: Stop deportations. Two million are too many!" said Curran. "Our families are sacred. Congressional gridlock is tearing apart our families and our

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communities are being destroyed."

"I want to ask Speaker John Boehner to give us a vote on a humane, comprehensive immigration bill," said Rep. Danny Davis, D-Ill., who was among those arrested. "I also want to ask my president, the Honorable Barack Obama, please stop

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these deportations of all these families who are being broken.”

Alma Silva came to the United States from Mexico 17 years ago in search of the American Dream. She said it pains her that she hasn't been back since to visit her aging parents and she can't bring them here. Current immigration laws are dividing families.

“I have two children who are undocumented but are being protected by DACA (the executive order signed by Pres. Obama giving legal status to undocumented youth),” she said. “I have two more children who are American citizens. We constantly live in insecurity and fear of deportation and our family being separated. This is not just.”

Silva called upon Republicans to allow a vote. “11 million undocumented immigrants can't wait any longer,” she said.

Pro-immigration reform activists have been

targeting Illinois Rep. Peter Roskam, a high-ranking leader of House Republicans and a leader of the obstruction. His congressional district covers fast-changing suburbs west of Chicago with growing immigrant populations.

A growing number of Republican elected officials are becoming alarmed that the GOP's reputation for opposition to immigration reform will dash any chance they have of winning votes from Latinos and other immigrant communities. With pressure mounting, Reps. Jeff Denham of California and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida became co-sponsors of HR-15, the comprehensive immigration bill similar to that passed by the U.S. Senate.



John Bachtell writes for Peoplesworld.org.

Workers win election victories

By PW Editorial Board

On Tuesday, Nov. 5 workers and their allies achieved important victories. A grassroots effort in New Jersey brought a campaign for a minimum wage increase to a victorious conclusion last night. Some 256 labor, community, religious, civil rights, student, women's, and senior organizations got together to form the victorious Working Families United for New Jersey coalition. In the state of Washington there was another wage increase victory with voters approving a ballot measure to hike the minimum wage for 6,000 low-wage Sea-Tec airport workers to \$15 per hour and to provide them with sick pay and other benefits.

In Boston, Massachusetts the people elected the Democrat, Marty Walsh, an active union member, for mayor.

In Cincinnati, Ohio, the voters defeated in a landslide (78 to 2 percent) a city charter amendment that would have ended defined benefit pension plans for newly hired city employees.

In Virginia, Terry McAuliffe, the Democrat,

bested Ken Cuccinelli, the tea party Republican candidate for governor. Virginia is widely regarded as a bellwether state with last night's results not boding well for radical right wing politicians all over the country. Cuccinelli, the defeated climate change denier, has advocated elimination of minimum wage laws, abolishing Social Security and Medicaid, ending all abortion rights and barring a range of sexual activities among consenting adults. The people of Virginia last night threw that agenda into the trashcan where it belongs.

In New York, the voters overwhelmingly rejected 12 years of austerity politics by giving the Democrat, Bill de Blasio, almost 75 percent of the vote, making him the first Democratic mayor of New York City in more than 20 years. The people of the city, in electing de Blasio, took a powerful stand against an array of policies that benefit the 1 percent over the 99 percent. Election results showed that voters want good decent-paying jobs, good schools for their kids, health care and a fair share in the wealth they create.

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Detroit elects mayor in tough times

By John Rummel

The Detroit mayoral election is making national news with former Detroit Medical CEO Mike Duggan, who is white, beating the city's former police chief and Wayne County Sheriff Benny Napoleon by 55 to 45 percent.

In the August mayoral primary Duggan, who had moved to the city from a nearby suburb, was forced to run as a write-in candidate. The Michigan Court of Appeals ruled he did not fulfill the one year residency requirement of the Detroit City Charter. He was allowed to run as a write-in candidate and then surprised many by beating second place finisher Napoleon by 20,000 votes, qualifying him for ballot status in the November election.

For the general election Napoleon battled back and closed the gap between the two but could not overcome Duggan's backing of the business community, his five to one cash advantage, and what many think was a bias for Duggan by the major media.

With the city under the rule of an Emergency Manager, services being cut and unemployment at crisis levels, frustrations and hopelessness are high. Those factors also seemed to generate sentiment for the newcomer Duggan.

This is not the first time Detroit has elected white candidates. For many years renowned and dearly loved councilperson Maryann Mahaffey was at times the top vote getter in city wide elections. The difference today is Mahaffey was a progressive who earned the trust of voters for her dedication to labor rights, civil rights and justice issues. Duggan has not acquired the same credentials.



The city's Emergency Manager's term ends in one year when the new mayor will assume full powers. No matter who had won, how to generate jobs beyond the narrow strip of downtown development taking place is critical. Absent assistance from state and federal sources, something along the magnitude the auto companies and banks received, it is difficult to imagine how those jobs will be created.

This year the city reverted to district council elections and Southwest Detroit with its large Latino population now has its first representative on the council, community activist and social worker Raquel Castaneda-Lopez.

Promising election results were seen in Oakland County. The county, once a Republican stronghold, is changing quickly. Royal Oak became the 30th city in the state to pass a Human Rights ordinance. The ballot language asked voters whether they wish to amend the city code to "prohibit discrimination based upon actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, condition of pregnancy, marital status, physical or mental limitation, source of income, family responsibilities, sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status."

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50 arrested protesting Walmart

By Eric Gordon

Over 3000 came out to a LA Walmart protest last week and to support 50 people who committed to be arrested for obstructing the road in a peaceful sit-down in front of the store. This was one of many actions that have taken place across the country, calling attention to Walmart's well-known poverty wages and oppressive working conditions.

Subcontract workers, not officially in Walmart's employ but completely subject to the corporation's anti-worker policies, and who work in warehouses in over 100-degree temperatures for close to minimum wage, have been part of this movement for dignity.

Walmart recently made a startling public admission, announcing that only one-quarter of its employees earned upwards of \$25K a year and thereby affirming that for 75 percent of its workforce, the wages earned are so low that many of them are forced to apply for food stamps or Medicaid.

The Nov. 7 action had been long planned and coordinated between the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor and the city's police department. One by one, the protesters were handcuffed and led away, to the supportive chants and cheers of the crowd, escorted to a waiting bus, brought to a nearby downtown detention center. There, they were booked, fingerprinted and released on their own recognizance in the early morning hours. It remains to be seen if there will be fines or convictions.

Decenas de miles de personas han muerto en Filipinas

Por Jim Gomez (AP)

Unas 10.000 personas habrían muerto tan sólo en una ciudad de las Filipinas luego que uno de los peores tifones de que se tenga registro provocó marejadas gigantes que arrastraron viviendas y escuelas.

Los cadáveres colgaban de las ramas de los árboles o yacían desperdigados en las aceras y los edificios aplastados. Las autoridades pronosticaron que el número de muertos podría aumentar todavía más cuando los equipos de emergencia lleguen a las zonas aisladas por las inundaciones y los deslizamientos de tierra. Incluso en las Filipinas, país que encara de forma regular sismos, erupciones volcánicas y ciclones tropicales, el tifón Haiyan parece ser el desastre natural más mortífero del que se tenga memoria en el archipiélago.

Los funcionarios locales en la isla de Leyte, la más golpeada, dijeron que podría haber 10.000 muertos tan sólo en Tacloban, la capital provincial. Poco a poco llegaban reportes de otras partes de la isla, y de las islas vecinas, en los que se indicaba de cientos de muertes más, si no es que miles, aunque no será sino varios días después en que pueda evaluarse completamente el alcance total del impacto de la tormenta. "Todos los sistemas, todos los vestigios de vida moderna como comunicaciones, electricidad, agua, dejaron de funcionar. Los medios de comunicación no funcionan, por lo que no hay forma de co-

municarse en masa con la gente", dijo el secretario del Interior, Mar Roxas.

Presidente Benigno Aquino III, que examinó el domingo desde un helicóptero los daños causados por el tifón en Leyte, dijo la víspera que las bajas "serán sustancialmente mayores". Agregó que la prioridad del gobierno es restaurar la electricidad y las comunicaciones en zonas aisladas para permitir el envío de ayuda y asistencia médica a las víctimas.

El secretario de Defensa Voltaire Gazmín dijo que Aquino "enmudeció" cuando él le comunicó la devastación causada por el tifón en Tacloban. "Le dije que todos los sistemas dejaron de funcionar", indicó Gazmín. "No hay electricidad, ni agua, nada. La gente está desesperada". En Washington, el secretario de Defensa Chuck Hagel ordenó al Mando del Pacífico estadounidense que destinara barcos y aviones en respaldo de las operaciones de búsqueda y rescate y el transporte de pertrechos de emergencia.

El presidente de la Comisión Europea, José Manuel Barroso, envió al presidente Aquino un mensaje indicando que "estamos preparados a contribuir con ayuda urgente y asistencia de ser solicitado en esta hora de necesidad". El secretario general de la ONU, Ban Ki-moon, ofreció sus condolencias y dijo que las agencias humanitarias de la organización trabajaban estrechamente con el gobierno filipino para prestar asistencia urgente.

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