



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on August 16, 2017

Member of “Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Party” Arrested for Role in Destroying Confederate Statue

Takiyah Fatima Thompson, a member of Workers World Party (WWP) and a student at N.C. Central University, was arrested on August 15 for playing a leading role in toppling a statue of a Confederate soldier that had stood in front of a county administrative building in Durham, North Carolina, since 1924.



On its own website, the WWP describes itself as “a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party dedicated to organizing and fighting for a socialist revolution in the United States and around the world.”

Thompson was arrested after activists held a press conference at NCCU. In a release, the student radical admitted that she was the woman shown in a video climbing a ladder placed against the statue and tying a rope around the soldier’s neck so that others could pull the statue to the ground.

The Durham County sheriff’s office said Thompson is charged with the following misdemeanor and felony charges:

- 14-132 Disorderly conduct by injury to a statue (Class II Misdemeanor)
- 14-127 Damage to real property (statue as a fixture (Class I Misdemeanor)
- 14-288.2(c) Participation in a riot with property damage in excess of \$1,500 (Class H Felony)
- 14-288.2(e) inciting others to riot where there is property damage in excess of \$1,500 (Class F Felony)

“The people decided to take matters into our own hands and remove the statue,” said Thompson, in a public statement. “We are tired of waiting on politicians who could have voted to remove the white supremacist statues years ago, but they failed to act. So we acted.”

In addition to Thompson, the sheriff’s office posted the names of two others who were arrested and charged with the same violations: Dante Emmanuel Strobino and Ngoc Loan Tran.

Strobino is considerably older than the others (35) and has been arrested previously. He was arrested in March 2010 in Raleigh, North Carolina, and charged with second-degree trespassing. A news article about that arrest stated that court records showed Strobino was found guilty of the same charge in Johnston County, North Carolina, in 2005. Strobino has also contributed many articles to *Workers World*, the official newspaper of the Workers’ World Party (WWP).

A program for the “Workers World Forum” published in *Workers World* listed Strobino as the guest speaker for a talk in Detroit on April 13, 2013 (“RIGHT TO WORK’: Where did it come from? Where do we go from here?”). The ad listed Strobino as “Field Organizer, United Electrical Workers Local 150; Co-organizer, Southern Workers Assembly.”

In the biographical information for Strobino, we find: “Dante Strobino has helped build militant rank-



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and-file unionism with university workers, mental health workers, state transportation workers, office workers, food service workers and municipal workers.”

This information clearly shows that Strobino is a professional organizer. This fact, along with his frequent contributions to *Workers World*, tells us that the toppling of the Confederate statue was no spontaneous case of a few overzealous college students getting carried away. Strobino’s involvement and Thompson’s membership in the WWP tell us that this was a professionally organized act of revolutionary leftist violence.

On August 15, ABC11 news in Durham spoke by phone with WWP activist Lamont Lilly. Lilly indicated that the revolutionary party is not about to end its war against Confederate monuments.

When the reporter asked her if the “protests” will continue, will more statues be torn down, Lilly responded, “I hope so.” Apparently, even the news reporter does not know the difference between protests — which can be peaceful — and acts of destructive vandalism.

In a social media post on August 15, North Carolina Governor Cooper announced he was calling upon the legislature to repeal a 2015 law that prevents removal or relocation of historic monuments. Cities, counties and the state must have “the authority and opportunity” to make these decisions, he said.

“My first responsibility as governor is to protect North Carolinians and keep them safe,” Cooper said. “The likelihood of protesters being injured or worse as they may try to topple any one of the hundreds of monuments in our state concerns me. And the potential for those same white supremacist elements we saw in Charlottesville to swarm the site, weapons in hand, in retaliation is a threat to public safety.”

Cooper’s statement was definitely a triumph of political correctness over reality. His concern for “protesters” who may attempt to topple monuments being injured (or worse) ignores several key factors. The first of these is that real “protesters” indicate their discontent by engaging in peaceful demonstrations such as marching in a manner that does not interfere with vehicular or pedestrian traffic while holding signs. The First Amendment guarantees “the right of the people peaceably to assemble,” with the key word being peaceably. There is nothing *peaceable* about engaging in destructive vandalism, which is what toppling a monument is. This is a crime, and the burden of safety for those committing a crime rests with the criminal, not the law.

The second red herring that Cooper injected into his statement was his reference to white supremacist elements such as were seen in Charlottesville. Among the things wrong with that statement was that the tragic events in Charlottesville that led to one death involved several factions — not only white supremacists, but also peaceful protesters objecting to plans to remove a statue of General Robert E. Lee from a city park. Violence erupted when counter-protesters (many of whom were radical leftists) clashed with the protesters, leading to fist fights, the throwing of water bottles, and the unleashing of chemical sprays.

Jason Kessler, one of the protest’s organizers, blamed the city government for the violence, stating, “All of the carnage that happened was because the Charlottesville city government would not recognize our right to assemble.”

While Cooper was quick to pin much of the blame for the trouble in Charlottesville on “white supremacist elements,” Sara Flounders (who like Dante Strobino contributes articles to *Workers World*) wrote an article for the *Independent Political Report* (“Workers World Party: ‘Cops and Klan, Hand in Hand’: Lessons of Charlottesville”) wherein she was identified as “a participant in the Aug. 12 Charlottesville, Va., anti-racist mobilization.”



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Flounders' diatribe noted, in part:

Workers World Party had a well-organized and bold contingent from three cities and friends from other areas in the [Charlottesville] region. Their organized street tactics helped give cohesion to the mobilization. The lead WWP banner declared: "Make racists afraid again! Smash white supremacy!"

The thousands far outnumbered the racists, and their resistance gave determined pushback and, ultimately, forced the white supremacists to disperse.

By Flounders' own admission, the WWP and its allies numbered in the thousands in Charlottesville and far outnumbered "the racists" (the Left's term for anyone who opposes their agenda).

Considering the numbers on each side in Charlottesville, and the fact that these same members of a self-described "revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party" were at the forefront of the vandalism of the statue in Durham, it seems obvious that Cooper's efforts might better be directed at supporting law-enforcement officials in North Carolina responsible for enforcing the law, instead of urging the repeal of the 2015 law that prevents removal or relocation of historic monuments.

When it is so apparent that North Carolina's heritage is under attack by radical Marxist-Leninist elements (and since Marx wrote the *Communist Manifesto* and Lenin was the first communist dictator of the Soviet Union, we might as well say "communist," rather than "Marxist-Leninist"), Cooper's response to the assault is tantamount to raising the white flag of surrender!

The soldiers of North Carolina who fought to defend the Tar Heel State — not only in the Civil War but all other wars from the War of Independence until today — would be appalled at such a lily-livered defense of their state's historic monuments.

Photo of Workers World table set up at Occupy Wall Street protest: David Shankbone via wikipedia

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