

# RESIST KILLER COPS!



Portland, Ore., Aug. 18.

PHOTO: MATTHIEU LEWIS-ROLLAND

## Portlanders push back cops, fascists

By Joshua Hanks  
Portland, Ore.

Aug. 24 – For nearly three months, thousands of people in this city have joined nightly protests, marches and demonstrations denouncing racist police brutality. While met with heavy police repression, the crowds have continued to gather undeterred, even in the face of federal officers sent by President Trump to “quell” protests in the city.

While Trump claimed an early victory, the reality on the ground showed that the federal police presence only inflamed the situation and drove even more residents to come out into the streets. After repeated use of clouds of tear gas and other violent weapons failed to stop the protests, federal officers withdrew from attempts to repress the crowds. Oregon state police came in to replace federal officers, yet those are also being pushed out of the city.

Now back in charge of “controlling” protests is the Portland Police Bureau – which drew widespread condemnation when it deployed tear gas in huge amounts in the early days of the demonstrations. Federal and state interventions having failed, the PPB is essentially back to square one.

The locations of the protests have also shifted over

time. Originally concentrated downtown across from a federal courthouse and the headquarters of PPB – which also houses the county jail – protests have since fanned out across the city into residential neighborhoods. The PPB East Precinct and the police “union” headquarters in North Portland have become epicenters of protests, with large crowds facing off against cops who are now using tear gas in residential neighborhoods.

Residents have been rattled by the presence of police in their neighborhoods. The cops often do not wear identifying badges and can legally occupy private property, such as yards surrounding people’s homes, in order to mount surprise attacks on protesters.

An Aug. 14 article in The Oregonian describes the experience of one resident, Karen Roberts, who had up to 30 unidentified officers occupy her yard. “Roberts said when they were asked to identify themselves, instead they threatened her neighbor, saying, ‘Turn your flashlight off or we will come back and arrest you – we know where you live.’” (tinyurl.com/y45qu88v)

### Police collude with fascists

As police repression continues and spreads beyond the downtown core, another familiar threat has emerged:

*Continued on page 7*

### editorial

## Abolish the police

The recent Republican convention – led by the white-supremacist-in-chief, current U.S. president and enemy of the people – rallied its troops with racist scare tactics about “civil unrest” by Black Lives Matter protesters and left-wing activists.

The Democratic convention offered an alternative, but not a solution. This party nominated for U.S. president one of the main authors of a 1994 tough-on-crime bill that wound up sentencing a hugely disproportionate number of Black and Brown people to jail. For vice president, the Democrats nominated a former California attorney general who self-describes as “top cop.”

Meanwhile, in the few days between the two conventions, the cops of racist “law enforcement” – the structure of policing that protects the interests of the U.S. billionaire ruling class – continued to gun people down.

On Aug. 22, cops shot Trayford Pellerin dead in the streets of Lafayette, La., right in his own neighborhood. Pellerin, a Black man, was on foot. His family pointed out the contrast between their loved one’s fate and that of a white man arrested recently by Lafayette cops without injury, despite his being armed with a gun and driving a stolen car.

The next day in Kenosha, Wis., cops shot Jacob Blake in the back multiple times, also in his own neighborhood. Blake, a 29-year-old African American, had just



tried to break up a local fight and was returning to his car. His sons – ages 3, 5 and 8 – were in the car and saw the cops shoot their father. Blake is expected to survive, but with unknown physical injuries. Reports on Aug. 25 say he is paralyzed from the waist down.

In response to these continuing acts of racist police brutality, hundreds of Black Lives Matter protesters immediately began marching in Louisiana and Wisconsin.

In Kenosha, Wis., local cops deluged them with tear gas and pepper spray, and the governor deployed National Guard troops. In Madison, the state capital, the

*Continued on page 8*

### COVID-19 Webinar

- Cuba’s solidarity 9
- China’s success 11

### Editorial DNC scrutinized 10

- Philly houseless defiant 2
- Post Office protests 3
- Racist cop attacks NBA executive 6
- Margaret Sanger’s contradictions 6
- N. Carolina campus openings fail 7

- Vietnam 8
- Philippines 8
- Mali coup 10

4-5

TEAR DOWN  
THE WALLS

Women in Georgia jail

Wildfires in California

Jamil Al-Amin

Bryant Arroyo

Lezmond Mitchell

Black August tribute



Philadelphia

Houseless resist second eviction effort

By Marie Kelly  
Philadelphia

Aug. 18 — An encampment of over 100 houseless people sits on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway here, steps away from the iconic art museum of “Rocky” movie fame and under the noses of the Philadelphia bourgeoisie. JTD camp is a self-declared autonomous and cop-free zone providing a safe environment at a time when the COVID pandemic is ravaging the city. A large “Black Lives Matter” banner hangs at the entrance.

The James Talib Dean camp, named to honor an organizer who died shortly after it was established in June, is the latest in a series of camps set up by local activist groups. The

JTD camp and a smaller Camp Teddy — on the site of the new multimillion-dollar Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) headquarters in North Philadelphia — show that the Kenney administration has repeatedly failed the poor.

The PHA suffers from mismanagement at best. OccupyPHA, the Workers Revolutionary Group and the Black and Brown Workers Cooperative, among others, are stepping in to fill the void created by the city’s failure to solve Philadelphia’s growing housing crisis.

An eviction notice posted by the city on Aug. 17 gave residents less than 24 hours to leave or be forcibly removed. This second attempt to sweep away the camp was halted by an injunction filed Aug. 20. The eviction threats are the mayor’s attempt to pacify residents of luxury condos lining the parkway, whose gentrifier sensitivities are upset by the presence of the camp on their doorsteps.

The camp’s message is clear. They will not disperse until Mayor Jim Kenney guarantees permanent housing for all residents of the camp. Camp organizers and supporters



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE
Activist Samantha Rise speaks as others hold makeshift shields to protect houseless encampment on Aug. 18.

rallied overnight and into the early morning of Aug. 18. They erected makeshift barricades while a strong defensive force maneuvered along the camp’s outskirts, according to Workers World Party members on the ground.

When no police had appeared by midmorning, it was clear the city had backed down. The organizers agreed to return to the bargaining table with the city, but remained firm on their demand for permanent housing. The injunction against any eviction expires Aug. 25.

Moratorium on selling public housing properties

The demands by camp organizers call for the city to transfer ownership of vacant housing properties away from the PHA, Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (RDA) and Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC). The properties would instead be placed into a permanent community land trust for permanent low-income housing, administered by local community controlled committees.

Continued on page 3

MUNDO OBRERO  
WORKERS WORLD  
this week

In the U.S.

Resist killer cops . . . . .	1
Houseless resist second eviction effort . . . . .	2
800+ protests say ‘Defend the Postal Service!’ . . . . .	3
Prisoners face wildfires and COVID-19 . . . . .	4
Fight for abolition. . . . .	4
Thousands demand new trial for Imam Al-Amin. . . . .	4
Deaths of women prisoners in Georgia. . . . .	5
The psychological impact of solitary confinement . . . . .	5
Stop the execution of Lezmond Mitchell . . . . .	5
Black NBA executive abused by white police officer. . . . .	6
Planned Parenthood’s Margaret Sanger problem. . . . .	6
No. Carolina universities’ COVID-19 explosion . . . . .	7
Philly rally demands unemployment pay. . . . .	7
No walls for billionaires. . . . .	10

Around the world

75th anniversary of Vietnam’s August Revolution . . . . .	8
Long live the memory of Ka Randy! . . . . .	8
COVID can be defeated . . . . .	9
Cuba: global leader in the fight against COVID. . . . .	9
Mass protests force out leaders in Mali . . . . .	10
How China won the COVID-19 fight . . . . .	11

Editorial

Abolish the police . . . . .	1
Not being Trump is not enough. . . . .	10

Noticias en Español

La oficina de correos . . . . .	12
---------------------------------	----

MUNDO OBRERO  
WORKERS WORLD

Join us in the fight  
for socialism!

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

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

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ2+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

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

and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people’s movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge — the capitalist system.

WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you. □

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Vol. 62, No. 35 • Aug. 27, 2020  
Closing date: Aug. 26, 2020

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Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the last week of December by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$36; institutions: \$50. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl. New York, N.Y. 10011.



# Over 800 U.S. protests say ‘Defend the Postal Service!’

By Joe Piette

Richard Wright was a postal worker in the early 1930s, before he joined the Federal Writers Project and became a renowned novelist. Two of his novels feature Black postal workers as the main characters, with perceptive descriptions of the special oppression of Black workers as they performed the repetitive tasks involved in mail processing, working under close supervision by white managers to ensure maximum exploitation of the workers.

Wright wrote about repressive conditions in the Postal Service during a time of weak and racist unions, Jim Crow and lynchings. Postal workers had to put up with the spoils system, in which the political party that won the White House gained the right to award tens of thousands of postal management jobs to its supporters, thus securing their loyalty but disrupting postal production after every election.

The postmaster general, inevitably a political crony and fixer eager to do the president's bidding, held a seat in the federal Cabinet, which oversaw this immense patronage scheme.

The corrupt patronage system ended only with the great postal strike of 1970, after which Congress passed the Postal Reorganization Act (PRA). It created a government/business hybrid run by a Board of Governors nominated by the U.S. President and confirmed by the Senate, with a postmaster general chosen by that board.

Thanks to the strengthened postal unions, plus the mass movements of the 1960s and 1970s, Black and Brown and women workers got hired by the U.S. Postal Service more easily than by private industry, where racist and sexist attitudes were harder to combat, especially in non-union businesses. Today, 40% of postal workers are women. Nearly 40% are people of color, including im/migrants.

## Board of rich white men

However, recent changes in top postal positions should be seen as serious threats to these living wage jobs. Privatization is coming, unless the people can put up a roadblock to these corporate plans.

Recent articles in the mainstream press have revealed how current Board of Governors members and the new postmaster general were appointed based on their political standing, not their knowledge of the postal industry, in violation of the PRA's anti-patronage intentions.

President Trump personally directed Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin to find board members willing to follow his directives. The result is a board made up of wealthy white men, who in turn appointed Mnuchin's handpicked Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, an XPO Logistics executive, known for his antilabor policies and giving significant financial support to the Republican Party and Trump.

David Williams, former vice chairman of the Board of Governors until his April resignation in protest of Mnuchin's involvement, told House Democrats on Aug. 20 that Mnuchin demanded new governors "come to his office to kiss the ring and receive his blessing before confirmation." (Washington Post, Aug. 22)

"I resigned from the Board of Governors because I was convinced that its independent role had been marginalized and that representations regarding an independent Postal Service for the nation were no longer truthful," Williams said. (The Hill, Aug. 20)

Ronald Stroman, who this spring also resigned from the Postal Board of Governors, severely criticized the mail delays caused by DeJoy's new work rules directives and his decision to remove mail-sorting machines and blue mail

collection boxes. When asked if DeJoy should be prosecuted for violating federal statutes against delay of mail, Stroman replied: "Whether he intended it or not, the mail is being delayed." (MSNBC, Aug. 21)

The popular conception is that mail delays are an effort by the Trump administration to suppress voting rights as part of a naked attempt to illegitimately reelect this openly racist, misogynist, antilabor, right-wing president.

Amid heavy criticism that the moves were causing delays in mail delivery and could undermine the November election, which will rely heavily on mail-in ballots because of the coronavirus pandemic, DeJoy decided to suspend his plans until after the November elections.

A Washington Post article revealed that additional postal restructuring plans DeJoy will introduce in November "include raising package rates, particularly when delivering the last mile on behalf of big retailers; setting higher prices for service in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico; curbing discounts for non-profits; requiring election ballots to use first-class postage; and leasing space in Postal Service facilities to other government agencies and companies." (Aug. 20)

## Thousands rally for USPS

In response to current mail delays, after weeks of signing petitions and making phone calls to Congressional members, thousands of people took part in more than 800 rallies at post offices around the U.S. on Aug. 22. Demands included a \$25 billion rescue fund for the Postal Service, repeal of an onerous 75-year pre-funding requirement and the firing of DeJoy for delaying the mail.

The American Postal Workers Union is organizing another day of post office rallies on Aug. 25. Their demands are: "Provide at least \$25 billion in immediate support for the Postal Service; Stop the mail slowdown policies introduced by Postmaster General DeJoy; Ensure public confidence in voting-by-mail by providing all necessary resources for the most timely delivery of election mail possible."

Despite a national order not to reinstall letter-sorting machines that had been dismantled over the past month, Postal Service plants in Tacoma and Wenatchee, Wash., have done just that, according to workers there. The two plants' machines were revived even though the Postal Service's head of maintenance, Kevin Couch, had ordered plants countrywide on Aug. 18 not to do so.

And at one of Milwaukee's postal



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

More than 100 people rallied outside a Philadelphia post office Aug. 22, as part of over 800 other similar rallies to save the postal service.



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

One of two demonstrations in Houston on Aug. 21 in solidarity with USPS workers.



WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

Residents before downtown Berkeley Post Office join national day of protest to "Save the Post Office." Dave Welsh, a retired letter carrier and veteran of the fight to save the Berkeley Post Office, addresses the crowd.

stations, letter carriers, as a united workforce, have refused to leave for the street until all mail has been cased (sorted), forcing management to back down and approve overtime.

## What would Richard Wright think?

Richard Wright died in 1960 when he was only 52 years old. The former postal worker is widely acknowledged as one of the most important writers of the

20th century. His eldest daughter, Julia Wright, herself an internationally known human rights leader, still pays attention to the postal service where her dad worked and the struggles of people who work there today.

After reading about growing postal resistance this week, Wright emailed this writer with a message of solidarity: "Richard is grinning: May the defiance spread !!!" □

# Philadelphia houseless resist second eviction effort

*Continued from page 2*

Organizers also want a city moratorium against PHA, RDA or PHDC buying, acquiring, obtaining, trading, auctioning or selling off properties to private entities until all PHA waiting list applicants have been housed. The moratorium would stay in place pending an independent study on the effects of mass sales and trade-offs on communities and community members. (tinyurl.com/y6b633b8)

Kelvin Jeremiah, CEO of the PHA, continues to lie and vilify individuals working tirelessly to expose the abuses of the PHA. Nadera Hood is one such individual. She routinely livestreams proof of the rampant neglect and abuse by the PHA and their strong-arm private police force.

Banned from posting on PHA facebook page, Hood is nevertheless an outspoken critic on social media, saying

that Jeremiah "continues to attempt to discredit our work by making false and defamatory statements. ...He keeps bringing up how what we are doing is unfair to the people on the waiting list [for permanent PHA housing]; however, when PHA builds new units, they do not go to people on the waiting list. PHA actually opens new applications and gives a couple days to apply, sometimes in person."

This is a very troublesome practice considering the precarious situation of houseless individuals. Alarming, PHA is in the habit of selling properties to developers who resell them at full market value. Jeremiah commands a lucrative salary and lives in an affluent neighborhood on the city's outskirts. His home is now guarded by PHA police, after being targeted with protests by houseless organizers.

The fate of the JTD camp on the Parkway and the Teddy camp in the city's

north is tenuous. Residents, organizers and supporters are pragmatic when it comes to dealing with the city, but their mood and energy remain upbeat and resolute. No one is leaving despite the city's ultimatum.

Mike Wilson, Workers World Party member and camp supporter, states the plain truth: "The rich and the powerful dictate to us what is true, legal and culturally acceptable. The main camp is surrounded by the who's who of this city. The poor and dispossessed dared to move into their fancy neighborhood. When [the poor] are sleeping in subway stations, or under a bridge, it's okay — the rich don't have to face the failures of this system."

"We need change — real change. These people literally have nothing. Go ahead and bulldoze the camps. They will re-form somehow and someday — because there is no other choice!" □



# Build solidarity with prisoners Fight for abolition!

By Mirinda Crissman

*This slightly edited talk was given at an Aug. 13 Workers World Party webinar, “From Black August to Black Lives Matter,” hosted by the WWP Prisoners Solidarity Committee.*

Revolutionary greetings from Houston, Texas, a city that contains the country’s third largest jail. The Harris County Jails sit right on Buffalo Bayou, just yards away from where the city was founded on stolen Indigenous land, and in an area that has flooded reliably through several major hurricanes in the last century. The Harris County Jail complex cages over 8,000 prisoners, most of whom are awaiting trial.

I am speaking to you from the state of Texas where 75 of the state’s 104 prisons do not have air conditioning and where temperatures often rise above 100 degrees in the summer. These prisons have a hard time retaining guards on staff. Guards who, to this day, wear Confederate uniforms.



IMAGE: KEVIN RASHID JOHNSON

According to the Marshall Project, “Several state prison units are located on former plantations where mostly Black and Brown people are still forced to work in the fields. Many still harvest cotton. These prisoners still don’t get paid in Texas. And they still face punishment if they refuse to work.”

Texas also has 26 Immigration and Customs Enforcement Detention Facilities that detain migrants who are often trying to escape the [results of] political and environmental violence by the U.S. government abroad. Migrants in detention in south Texas have risen up and practiced hunger strikes and work stoppages only to be met with brutality by guards in riot gear. These revolutionary actions to resist death are an affront to the ruling class — and an inspiration to us all.

**‘Self-determination by any means’**

From an always-present and ever-growing movement of abolitionists in Texas, to each and every one of the 38 countries

where the repressive U.S. model of prisons and policing has been exported, we are fighting for abolition like our lives depend on it. Because they do.

The U.S. empire has a violently extreme history of institutionalizing and codifying white supremacy. Prisons in form and function are monuments to white supremacy. They are concentration camps for the poor, oppressed nationalities and dissenters.

This is exemplified in this moment of global pandemic, where the rapidly accelerating and completely preventable deaths of people inside and outside prisons are an act of genocide. This does not come as a revelation, but as a call to action.

We’re not building toward reform of any of these institutions. Prisons, jails and detention centers are themselves a reform of enslavement and encomiendas. Reform gives us more of what we’ve already got — structures of ceaseless violence that continue to maintain wealth accumulation for human traffickers and perpetrators of genocide.

We are building toward abolition, toward revolution. We support diversity of tactics and the right of the oppressed to self-defense and self-determination by any means. We are fighting to redirect

stolen resources toward human needs like health care, housing, safe water and food and to transform the root causes of suffering and violence.

From Black August to today’s movement for Black Lives, we honor every revolutionary who came before us, making it ever possible to win better futures. We honor them by practicing abolition and practicing revolution everyday.

We recently reformed the Prisoners Solidarity Committee because as abolitionists, we fight the isolation of prisons, jails and detention centers and the divisions that those violently maintain. And we fight it with the most powerful weapon we have, and that’s solidarity. From Auburn to Attica in the 1970s, the Prisoners Solidarity Committee built structures of resistance centered on incarcerated people and their families and communities they were stolen from.

As a member of the original Prisoners Solidarity Committee, Leslie Feinberg has said, “The only way we can build real solidarity in our movements is to be the best fighters of each other’s oppression. It’s the kind of solidarity that’s forged in the heat of struggle that makes lasting bonds.” (“We Are Everywhere: Protest, Power, and Pride in the History of Queer Liberation”) □



## Prisoners face wildfires and COVID-19

By Judy Greenspan  
Oakland, Calif.

California is burning as the result of countless dangerous wildfires. People are being forced to evacuate their homes. But one population is not being allowed to seek sanctuary from the path of the fires and the dangerous ash-filled air: prisoners.

Prisoners are facing the double pandemic of the wildfires and spiking levels of COVID-19 in the prisons.

Prison labor has been used to fight wildfires in California since the 1940s, when the state commandeered them to replace workers drafted into World War II. Prisoners are usually paid \$1 a day for their work on the firelines.

Now COVID infections in four out of the six California prisons that train prisoner firefighters have forced authorities to hold inmates in quarantine, according to a recent New York Times article. (Aug. 22)

Incarcerated people also face mounting health hazards inside the prisons. Prisoners told a San Jose Mercury News reporter that they are not being given N95 masks to protect against the spread of COVID-19. They expressed concern because guards are entering prisons with ash on their hats and shoulders, adding to air-quality problems. (Aug. 21)

The California Medical Facility at Vacaville, which

contains a licensed hospice, holds a large group of aging prisoners as well as those with serious and life-threatening medical conditions. CMF-Vacaville and a nearby prison, California State Prison-Solano, are both in the path of a massive wildfire.

Family members and prisoners’ rights groups are vehemently demanding that the prisoners be evacuated to safety rather than forced to stay inside airless prisons. The LNU Lightning Complex Fire spreading rapidly near the Vacaville area gives prisoners there little choice -- either open their small slats and breathe in harsh smoke-filled air or sit in their sweltering cells without any ventilation. Most prisons in California are not air-conditioned.

The fires are also impacting air quality in and around prisons in California’s Central Valley and along the coast. An Aug. 22 demonstration outside Soledad State Prison was canceled due to concern that the polluted air would endanger family members and other protesters. Prisoners inside Soledad report they are quarantined in their cells, which are now airless. Soledad

has no air conditioning or central ventilation system, and prison authorities have closed access to all windows.

COVID levels have spiked at the prison since a July 20 internal raid by authorities on 200 Black prisoners.

In a targeted racist attack, guards herded inmates together in the dining hall, ransacking cells, confiscating books and legal papers, and shouting “Black lives don’t matter!” Past prisoner organizing at Soledad includes the actions and writing of George Jackson and other Black revolutionaries. (See Workers World, July 29)

The time has come for Gov. Gavin Newsom to order the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to release large numbers of prisoners who have already been severely impacted by COVID-19 and now face further danger from wildfires raging out of control.

Since the state authorities have no evacuation plans for the endangered incarcerated population, the only solution is to release them all! □



**Family and supporters of prisoners at Aug. 2 demonstration at San Quentin protest the spread of COVID inside and the refusal by state authorities to release large numbers of prisoners.**

## Thousands demand new trial for Imam Jamil Al-Amin

By Dianne Mathiowetz  
Atlanta

Imam Jamil Al-Amin, now in a U.S. prison serving 35 years to life and formerly known as H. Rap Brown, is one of the best-known Black liberation fighters of the 1960s and 1970s.

He served as chair of SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), a youth-led organization that bravely and boldly organized grassroots communities in the rural South to fight for voting rights and against Jim Crow segregation.

His compelling and dynamic speeches, delivered in rhythmic style, inspired people to join the struggle then sweeping the country. Brown was surveilled by federal agents, received death threats from the KKK and other white supremacists, and was harassed and arrested by local police

forces.

This unrelenting state repression led to Brown serving five years in a New York prison, where he converted to Islam, taking the name Jamil Albdullah Al-Amin.

Following his release, he settled in Atlanta, established a mosque in the West End of the city, and organized to provide safety and security to his community.

On March 16, 2000, events had unfolded outside Al-Amin’s neighborhood store that authorities strung together into a complex web of disinformation. After two deputy sheriffs were shot, one of whom died, there has been a train of falsehoods, disregarded evidence, state prosecutorial misconduct and all the features of a frame-up.

Al-Amin was convicted on charges related to those events on March 9, 2002, and sentenced to life plus 35 years. Then the state of Georgia secretly turned him

over to federal authorities. For the last 13 years, he has been transferred between multiple institutions, including seven years in solitary confinement at the inhumane Supermax facility in Florence, Colo.

His supporters and family have been fighting to win a new trial for Al-Amin, based on evidence not allowed into the 2002 proceedings. Otis Jackson, currently in a Florida prison, confessed on videotape, during an unrelated trial, to killing the Fulton County deputy sheriff in question. Jackson not only fits the description of the perpetrator provided by the surviving deputy, his testimony

corroborates other evidence found at the scene.

Pressure is being brought on the Fulton County District Attorney’s office to reex-

amine the violations of Al-Amin’s rights committed at the original trial, as well as the strength of the new evidence, and to order a new trial for Al-Amin.

Tens of thousands have already signed the petition for a new trial. The DA’s office has been flooded with calls and letters. For more information, go to [whathappened2rap.com](http://whathappened2rap.com) or [ImamJamilActionNetwork.weebly.com](http://ImamJamilActionNetwork.weebly.com).

Free Imam Jamil and all political prisoners! □



Jamil Al-Amin.



# Racist, misogynist jail system

## Deaths of women prisoners in Georgia

By Arielle Robinson  
Atlanta

Two people incarcerated in the Cobb County Adult Detention Center have died within the past two months — both women. The massive jail is about 20 minutes outside of Atlanta.

An imprisoned woman, whose name and cause of death have not yet been released, died Aug. 6. Another incarcerated woman, Stephanie Nicole White, died June 19 from what the medical examiner’s office said was coronary artery disease.

Twice prior to her death, White had complained of chest pain in addition to oral pain. Each time she complained of chest pain, she was taken to the jail’s infirmary, where an EKG test was done, and then sent back to her jail cell. Those tests were declared “normal.”

On the day she died, White complained of chest pain, shortness of breath and vomiting. When she was taken to the infirmary and given an EKG test, which supposedly showed normal results, she was again returned to her cell. Hours later, White was found unresponsive and declared dead soon after. She was 39 years old.

The deaths of these two women are significant, not only because they were people

whose lives mattered and who should not die in a cage, especially in a pandemic. Their deaths are significant because in the U.S. — with the highest prison population in the world — women are now being policed and sent to jail at disproportionately high rates. Since 1980, the rate of women being incarcerated in the U.S. has increased eightfold. ([tinyurl.com/y3edmt26](https://tinyurl.com/y3edmt26))

Although more men are in prison, since 1980 the rate at which women are being imprisoned is twice as high as the rate for men.

Black, Brown and Indigenous women face the brunt of the carceral state. Black women were imprisoned in 2017 at twice the rate for white women. Latinx women are imprisoned at 1.3 times the rate of white women. Indigenous girls between 12 and 17 years old are incarcerated at more than four times the rate for white girls.

In 2017, Georgia was reported to be among the top 15 states in the U.S. for imprisonment of women, with 70 being jailed per 100,000 in the population.

It cannot be forgotten that often women are jailed for defending themselves against an abusive male partner and/or sexual trafficker. The case of Cyntoia Brown is terribly typical. Brown is an African-American woman jailed in Tennessee for 15 years for

the “crime” of self-defense against a sexual predator. (For more on her case, see “Cyntoia Brown — free at last!” Workers World, Aug. 14, 2019.)

### Deadly conditions for Georgia prisoners

Including the two women, a total of nine prisoners have died in the Cobb County Adult Detention Center within the past two years. Others known to have died are Reginald Wilson, Jessie Myles, Bradley Emory, William Kocour, Steven Davis, Kevil Wingo and Christopher Hart.

According to the medical examiner’s office, some of these deaths were determined to be “natural,” while in Davis’ case the cause is still “undetermined.” Hart was said to have died when he ruptured his spleen after “falling in his cell.” His death was ruled “accidental” by the medical examiner’s office.

The jail said Emory committed suicide in his cell. Emory’s father said the jail was aware that his son was suicidal, did nothing to prevent his suicide and delayed informing the family of his death

A lawyer for Wingo’s family said Wingo had a medical emergency in his cell and that the jail did not tend to him.

All these deaths have occurred with Cobb County Sheriff Neil Warren in charge of the



Cobb County Jail Complex near Atlanta.

jail. In fact, the deaths of the two women increase to 43 the number of deaths occurring there since Warren’s ascendance to sheriff in 2004.

Warren has hired a law firm to supposedly look into the deaths, as well as into claims of racism, medical neglect, excessive force and other issues regarding jail staff. Activists expect no substantive results from an investigation being done by lawyers hired by the sheriff in charge of the facility, who is implicated in the ongoing abuse.

The brutal racist and misogynist conditions within the center have been made more horrific by lockdown conditions imposed in late 2019 and intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic. (See “Torture exposed in Cobb County Detention Center,” Workers World, Dec. 19, 2019.)

The deaths of incarcerated women within Cobb County Detention Center cannot be ignored. The struggle must continue so that no more women, and no more people, are jailed and die in these unjust conditions. □

# The psychological impact of solitary confinement

By Bryant Arroyo

*The following is a slightly edited commentary recorded for “Voices From the Inside” by PrisonRadio.org.*



Bryant Arroyo.

The brain and nervous system, or “the mind,” cannot function normally without stimulation. Neither can it function normally when given too much stimulus. The brain and the nervous system must be maintained in a “steady state.” A healthy mind is a product of interaction between itself and other organisms.

Along with reported intellectual impairment, perceptual deprivation [results in] psychotic-like hallucinations and effective changes in extreme behavior — including extreme boredom, restlessness, irritability, anger, unrealistic fears, anxieties, depression, physical complaints and “development of a childish sense of humor, exaggerated emotional reactions, and excessive irritation by small things.”

Prisoners become “dulled from

monotonous prison experiences during confinement.” (D. Schultz, “Sensory Restriction: Effects on Behavior,” 1965)

As prisoners are subjected to the newly imposed restrictions of confinement under COVID-19, it has become more difficult for us to engage in educational programs effectively. On Aug. 13, I witnessed a prisoner packing up his property to be on parole the next day. But the effects of sensory and perceptual deprivation this prisoner exhibited remained with him even after his release.

It will be extremely difficult to adjust to the “new-norm” because our emotional and mental mechanisms are [being] adjusted to deprivation circumstances. [Then] there [will be] little tolerance for the myriad of sensory input in normal environments. The prisoner’s anxiety becomes so great that he/she will seek a means to return to prison with its decreased input and routine experiences.

In the psychological sphere, cruel treatment and its results are not so [obviously] flagrant because mental destruction is less apparent than physical destruction. Damage to the mind is not as visible as a withered hand.

But the reality is the same: Human

impairment — as a result of destructive treatment while in prison. When treatment in prison leads to a person’s mental impairment, by definition that treatment must be seen as cruel — truly barbaric!

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PADOC) administrative imposition of solitary confinement undoubtedly constitutes a form of cruel and unusual punishment under the Eighth Amendment. The distinction between “segregation” and “solitary” is often no more than mere semantics.

The detrimental effects of isolation and idleness are just as apparent in both. Isolation as a treatment is punitive, destructive, defeats the purpose of any kind of rehabilitation efforts and harkens back to medieval times. There is no justification for such treatment unless your purpose is to dehumanize and destroy my mind.

Prisoners are entitled — as a constitutional right — to fresh air, outdoor exercise, recreation and educational programs while in solitary confinement. Now, PADOC Secretary John Wetzel has minimized the five weekly phone calls to once a week and five free email vouchers to zero a week.

The underlying reason Sec. Wetzel

previously provided us with both five phone calls and five free email vouchers was due to the restriction of the prison population from having contact visits, against CDC rules.

We [prisoners] are being denied meaningful educational and work programs under the PADOC’s imposed administrative isolation confinement.

As a result, prisoners are spending a substantial amount of time inside their cells/dormitories in absolute idleness. Such unbroken inactivity increases boredom, tension and frustration, which in turn promotes incidents of violence. The evidence reflects that idleness of this magnitude destroys the human element, internally escalating suicides, a host of medical problems, and hurts people, [in turn] hurting people.

In conclusion, I’ll depart with this final thought by [philosopher] James Allen: “They themselves are makers of themselves by virtue of the thoughts which they choose and encourage: that the mind is the master weaver, both of the inner garment of character and the outer garment of circumstances and that, as they may have hitherto woven ignorance and pain, they may know to weave enlightenment.” □

# Stop the execution of Lezmond Mitchell!

By Ted Kelly

The U.S. government has scheduled the federal execution of 38-year-old Lezmond Mitchell of the Navajo Nation on Aug. 26, despite widespread condemnation.

The Navajo Nation has formally protested the execution on grounds of tribal sovereignty. Family members of Navajo citizens who Mitchell was convicted of killing have demanded a stay. Even the prosecutor who argued for Mitchell’s conviction opposes the federal death penalty. Even in the capitalist press, the decision to go forward with the execution has drawn criticism.

Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer have called on the U.S. government to halt the execution: “The Navajo Nation and the family of the victims have not changed their position. We strongly hold to our

cultural, traditional and religious beliefs that life is sacred.”

Since the 1994 amendment of the Major Crimes Act, federal law prohibits the death penalty for any crimes committed on tribal land unless tribal authorities specifically request it. The flagrant violation of tribal sovereignty by the U.S. in scheduling Mitchell’s execution comes just months after a Supreme Court ruling that roughly half the state of Oklahoma is sovereign Muscogee (Cree) territory, a decision that could potentially affect thousands of incarcerated Indigenous people.

The legal shell game that the U.S. government plays is nothing new. It has been the policy from the beginning of colonization for imperialist authorities in North America to lie and shred virtually every treaty signed with Indigenous people.

The Major Crimes Act, originally passed by Congress in 1885 as part of the

Indian Appropriations Act, specifically legalized and institutionalized the execution of Indigenous people by the federal government. In 1865 President Abraham Lincoln ordered the largest mass execution in U.S. history when he authorized the hanging of 38 Dakota (Santee Sioux) men in Minnesota. This brutality stands in sharp historical contrast to the U.S. government’s subsequent lenient treatment of enslavers, Confederate counter-revolutionaries and Klan members during the post-Civil War Reconstruction period.

A new chapter of Indigenous resistance was written a century later. In 1968, the American Indian Movement was formed by incarcerated Indigenous leaders who became organizers in Stillwater Prison outside Minneapolis, Minn. They regarded the imprisonment of Indigenous people as a significant plank in the broader colonial policy of relocation and genocide.

Today Native and Indigenous people in the U.S. are 14 times more likely to be killed by police than their white counterparts. They are incarcerated at a rate 38% higher than the national average. A Center for Disease Control report issued this August found that Native people — at high health risk from poverty and inadequate medical care — contract COVID-19 at triple the rate of white people.

Since the recent lifting of a 17-year moratorium on the federal death penalty, 10 people have been executed by the U.S. government. Five others, along with Mitchell, are scheduled to be legally murdered over the next four months.

Stop the execution of Lezmond Mitchell! Free them all! □





# Black NBA executive abused by white police officer

By Monica Moorehead

The Toronto Raptors won their first National Basketball Association championship in Oakland, Calif., in June 2019, when they defeated the Golden State Warriors in a best of seven-game series, four games to two. When the Raptors’ president of operations, Masai Ujiri, attempted to make his way onto the winners’ platform to join in the awards ceremony with his victorious team, he was viciously pushed back by an Alameda County Sheriff’s Department police officer — not once but twice.

What makes this unfortunate incident so significant is that Ujiri is Nigerian and the officer who assaulted him, Alan Strickland, is white. The fact that the 50-year-old Ujiri was head of a multibillion-dollar team and was dressed impeccably did not matter to the police — in their eyes, he was still a Black person to be demonized.

Strickland pushed him the first time when Ujiri tried to display his credentials. Ujiri, in a display of righteous indignation, pushed the officer back and was eventually allowed to join his team



Masai Ujiri

to celebrate.

This February, the officer brought a lawsuit against Ujiri claiming that he “suffered, and will continue to suffer, physical, mental, emotional, and economic injuries.” (CNN, Aug. 21) Ujiri filed a counter lawsuit Aug. 18 accusing Strickland of perpetrating a fraud, as the recently released police body cam shows Strickland initially physically confronting Ujiri, not the other way around. The Warriors’ president of operations, Rick Welts, made a public apology to Ujiri for the incident, stating how “embarrassed” and “heartbroken” he was. (San Jose

Mercury News, Aug. 23)

The Raptors organization issued a statement saying, “We believe this video evidence shows exactly that — Masai was not an aggressor, but instead was the recipient of two very violent, unwarranted actions.” (CNN)

The Alameda County Sheriff’s Department is defending Strickland’s actions, despite the damning evidence against him.

Ujiri issued a statement Aug. 20 linking what happened to him to the Black Lives Matter struggle. He remarked: “The video sadly demonstrates how horribly I was treated by a law enforcement officer last year in the midst of my team, the Toronto Raptors, winning its first world championship. It was an exhilarating moment of achievement for our organization, for our players, for our city, for our country, and for me personally, given my long-tenured professional journey in the NBA.

“Yet, unfortunately, I was reminded in that moment that despite all of my hard work and success, there are some people, including those who are supposed to protect us, who will always and only see me as something that is unworthy of

respectful engagement. And, there’s only one indisputable reason why that is the case — because I am Black.

“What saddens me most about this ordeal is that the only reason why I am getting the justice I deserve in this moment is because of my success. Because I’m the President of an NBA team, I had access to resources that ensured I could demand and fight for my justice. So many of my brothers and sisters haven’t had, don’t have, and won’t have the same access to resources that assured my justice. And that’s why Black Lives Matter.

“And that’s why it’s important for all of us to keep demanding justice. Justice for George [Floyd]. Justice for Breonna [Taylor]. Justice for [Elijah McCain]. Justice for far too many Black lives that mattered. And justice for Black people around the world, who need our voice and our compassion to save their lives. Those are the ties that bind us.”

A number of Raptors players, like Serge Ibaka, Fred VanVleet and Norman Powell, along with NBA coaches Doc Rivers and Rick Carlisle have come to Ujiri’s defense. □

# Planned Parenthood’s Margaret Sanger problem

By Sue Davis

Planned Parenthood of Greater New York issued a strong statement July 21 that condemned Margaret Sanger’s relationship with eugenics theory and practice. “By saying this, we disarm a tool anti-abortion opponents use to shame women of color, especially Black women, from seeking the full spectrum of sexual and reproductive health care.”

The PPGNY statement noted that its move to acknowledge Sanger’s role in the eugenics movement was not just related to the national upsurge in the Black Lives Matter movement. “It was prompted and led by Black women who have been wary of Planned Parenthood’s origins.” (New York Times, July 21)

Foremost among Black reproductive justice leaders is Loretta Ross, one of the Black women who coined the term “Reproductive Justice” in 1994. The term was much needed because “reproductive rights” didn’t reflect people of colors’ intersectional needs to access all the rights and resources that would enable them to both terminate pregnancies when they choose and raise healthy children when they choose.

Two years ago Ross wrote a prescient article addressing Planned Parenthood: “Perhaps none of the challenges facing Planned Parenthood [after Cecile Richards steps down as president] is as urgent as the racial and class divisions that shape how American women seek reproductive health care. Race and class are inextricable in America, and both interfere with access to and use of reproductive health services. ...

“In this dangerous political moment, Planned Parenthood also requires an expert on white supremacy, someone who can use an intersectional analysis to respond to [Trump’s] anti-democratic movement.” (HuffPost, Jan. 30, 2018)

## Exposing right-wing hypocrisy and lies

Anti-abortion forces, led by “Right to Life” groups initiated by the Catholic Church, swung into action only days after the U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision legalized the right to abortion in 1973.

Its prime target was Margaret Sanger, who single-handedly started the fight for “birth control” — a term she coined in 1916 when she founded her first women’s health clinic in Brooklyn. Sanger and her staff were arrested during a raid on the clinic nine days after it opened.

Charged with providing information on contraception and fitting women for diaphragms, Sanger and her sister spent 30 days in jail for breaking the law. Later appealing her conviction, she scored a victory for the birth control movement. Her clinics grew nationally and her health care organization became Planned Parenthood in 1942. Sanger has since been hailed as a reproductive rights forerunner and pioneer.

The Catholic church, which opposes birth control, fought Sanger for promoting it and for supporting eugenics, the racist theory that some people are inherently superior to others. Rooted in racism, classism and ableism, eugenics followers deemed “selective breeding” was needed to improve the genetic “quality” of the population.

The concept was not new. Plato suggested it around 400 B.C. The Nazis put the U.S. racist theory into practice.

New York University historian Linda Gordon, author of “Woman’s Body, Woman’s Right” (1976), told TIME July 21: “In the 1920s eugenics was almost universally considered good science, accepted by people on the Left and on the Right — including some Black leaders — and taught in most biology textbooks.” She added, “[I]t is a mistake to put [Sanger] in the same category as defenders of slavery and segregation.”

Eugenics theory has been used to justify racist and ableist forced sterilization. In 1927 the Supreme Court ruled 8 to 1 in Buck v. Bell that the state of Virginia could permit compulsory sterilization of anyone deemed developmentally disabled “to protect the health of the state.” This policy was used to justify sterilization of poor, uneducated, mostly women of color, people with disabilities and immigrants. A 1937 Fortune magazine poll found that two-thirds of the population supported forced sterilization for the intellectually disabled.

Racist state legislatures and courts



Rally in front of U.S. Supreme Court, May 21, 2019.

predominantly in the South promoted sterilization for an estimated 70,000 poor, mostly Black women though the mid-1970s. At the same time over 30% of women in Puerto Rico became sterilized, which they were encouraged to do so they could more easily work outside the home. Today documents in California and other states show that women prisoners, predominantly Black and Brown, have been sterilized, often without their permission.

## Reproductive justice is a human right

Historical background on Margaret Sanger puts both Catholic and Evangelical religious right-wing attacks on Planned Parenthood into perspective. These anti-abortion groups have sanctimoniously charged the organization with being racist for “promoting” abortion for Black women. Arch-reactionaries Sen. Ted Cruz and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas have railed against the organization’s alleged racism.

But isn’t it the height of hypocrisy that these biased, reactionary groups and political figures have done nothing substantive to advance the lives of women or children of color? When have they supported government services that subsidize food, housing, childcare and health care for low-income families?

All they do is disparage and stigmatize

those who seek abortions and promote hundreds of legal hurdles to prevent women and gender-oppressed people from having access to constitutional, essential reproductive health care — a human right.

The right wing continues to misuse the issue of racism to undermine reproductive justice. Dr. Rachel R. Hardeman, assistant professor of Health Policy and Management at the University of Minnesota, whose specialty is racism and maternal health, demolished Ross Douthat’s reactionary July 31 column, “Systemic racism: Planned Parenthood as a prime example,” in the New York Times.

Hardeman writes: “Historic myths about Black women’s health — steeped in racism — continue to haunt us, but the right to safe, legal abortion is not one of them. Overall, Douthat conflates the unequal impact of public policy on Black communities with the fundamental right of Black women to control our own bodies. His position reflects the ideals of a white, patriarchal society that is pushed onto minority groups that are too often set up to struggle in a society built by and for white people.

“What Black women want and deserve is access to the best medical care available, including the full range of reproductive health options so we can determine our own destiny. Our bodies are our own, and we won’t apologize for it.” □



# Opening North Carolina universities threatens COVID-19 explosion

By calvin deutschbein  
Chapel Hill, N.C.

Aug. 22 — The UNC System of state colleges and universities is the largest employer in the only state in the South where Walmart isn’t. It operates six designated minority-serving institutions (MSIs) — five Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and UNC Pembroke, which serves the Indigenous Lumbee people.

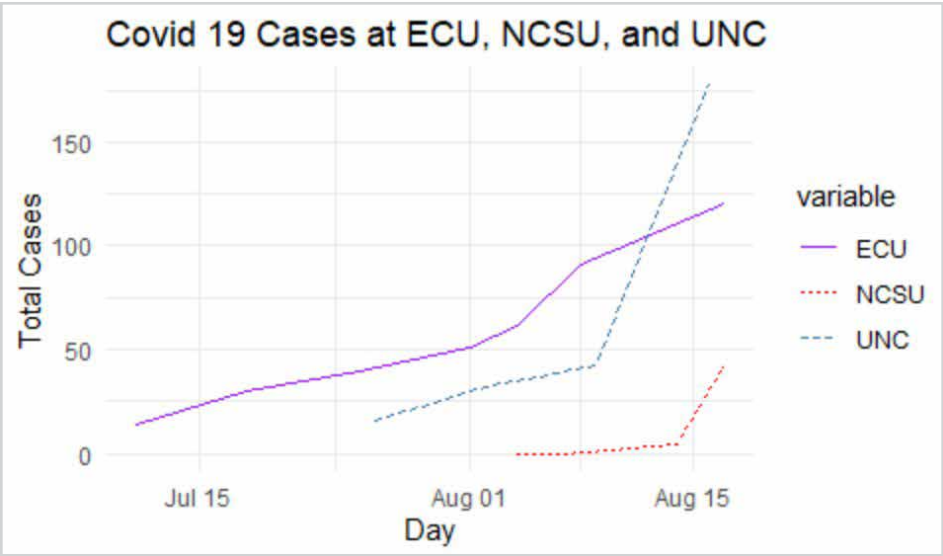
The UNC System directly employs around 45,000 staff and many more contractors, teaching 240,000 students. Its total economic impact is many times greater. Workers in the system are organized by the radical UE150 North Carolina Public Service Workers, and the system schools have strong traditions of organizing, frequently grounded in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Despite guidance from the health department not to do so, and despite worker and student resistance, on Aug. 10 three of the largest schools in the system opened for in-person instruction. These schools — UNC at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State in Raleigh and Eastern Carolina University (ECU) in Greenville — each have about 30,000 students.

In-person gatherings are inadvisable in any event during the pandemic. Here the near-total failure to address the risks of COVID-19 beyond “hygiene theatre” and empty words set campuses up for failure from day one.

By the end of the first work week, each of these three campuses had counted more than 100 positive cases for students. This overwhelmed UNC and NCSU’s quarantine capacity, which they had claimed would last a semester. Multiple clusters were reported daily.

UNC and NCSU shut down



#ShutDownECU tracked the manufactured outbreaks at UNC, NCSU and ECU.

in-person instruction effective Aug. 21. The #ShutDownECU campaign by students and the #SafeJobsSaveLives campaign by UE150 are collaborating to shut down ECU as well before it is too late.

When N.C. Central University opens for in-person instruction Aug. 24, all schools in the system will have opened for in-person instruction except UNC Charlotte. Fayetteville State (an HBCU) and UNC Pembroke opened Aug. 5, and thus far have not experienced outbreak conditions, although they all have active cases. These campuses have smaller enrollments, some 6,000 to 8,000 students.

These failures must be by the design of administrators. Reopening plans from the beginning denied campus workers hazard pay and adequate personal protective equipment, made no provision for sufficient testing for workers and students, and were based on unclear and inconsistent guidance on in-person versus remote instruction. In the UNC System, education, if considered at all, is

as distant an afterthought as safety in the efforts by wealthy white political appointees to reopen campuses.

At UNC classes were suspended only after national media attention was brought to the University, after administrators tried but failed to suppress news reports of clusters forming on campus, which indicated a total failure of their supposed program for control of COVID-19.

But even as their failures made national news, the UNC System doubled down. System President Peter Hans stated on Aug. 17: “The decision to adapt operations applies to UNC-Chapel Hill only, because no other UNC System institution has reported information, at this time, that would lead to similar modifications.” (northcarolina.edu, Aug. 21 press release)

Reporting is the critical factor there — within 24 hours, student reporters at NCSU confirmed the existence of previously unreported clusters on their campus. Students organized a sick-out, and the campus moved to shut down at the week’s end. Three days after his previous statement, Hans lied again: “[Reopening] is being undermined by a very small number of students behaving irresponsibly off

campus, which unfairly punishes the vast majority of their classmates who are following the rules.”

His dishonesty was insufficient to hide a COVID-19 explosion. The public finally learned that in Chapel Hill, 25 UNC students had to go to the ER for COVID symptoms on Aug. 14. That was before the first clusters on campus had been reported.

Different conditions at UNC, and to a lesser degree NCSU, may have made outbreaks both more obvious and quicker to emerge. These outbreaks, however, confirm the assessments of workers, students and public health efforts that reopening is unsafe.

As the UNC System attempts to maintain in-person instruction in the face of the impossibility of doing so, consequences will grow. In wealthy, mostly white regions like Chapel Hill, even an overburdened ER may be equipped to respond.

Other UNC system schools, especially HBCUs and UNC Pembroke, respectively, serve primarily Black and Indigenous students in their communities. City-based schools, such as UNC Greensboro and UNC Charlotte are valuable resources for their cities and their state but lack the colocated UNC Health facilities, which sit within large population centers and include a medical school.

Large public universities like Appalachian State and ECU dominate their comparatively small metropolitan areas. An outbreak there, which in-person opening threatens, could quickly overwhelm local resources. And a short glance at racial disparities in health outcomes reveals exactly that oppressed communities of color will be primarily affected.

While it will take some time to gain a clear view of the conditions on other campuses, workers and students are continuing to organize to fight for themselves and their communities. And the closure of two major universities is just a glimpse of the struggle to come. □

## Portlanders push back cops and fascists

Continued from page 1

alt-right, fascist street brawlers. A regular fixture in downtown Portland during the summer months over the past several years, these fascist goons — many of whom come from out of state — make it a point to hold violent rallies in what they view as a leftist-dominated city. On Aug. 22, fascist groups held a “No to Marxism in America Rally” in the same area of downtown where the largest Black Lives Matter rallies have occurred.

The PPB has been shown to have a cozy relationship with fascists. Media reported last year on leaked text messages showing that Jeff Niiya, PPB’s commanding officer for the rapid response team that patrols protests, had a warm relationship with Joey Gibson, leader of the Vancouver, Wash., far-right group Patriot Prayer that regularly organizes protests in Portland.

The Williamette Week revealed: “The texts also show that Niiya at times told Gibson where leftist protests were taking place, including unrelated protests as well as anti-fascist marches with people in black bloc intent on protesting Patriot Prayer. At least once, Niiya told Gibson that Portland police were not monitoring a protest hosted by the Queer Liberation

Front.” (tinyurl.com/y462yhv4)

The Aug. 22 fascist rally, occurring during a tense summer when BLM protests have grabbed headlines around the world, showed yet again that PPB has a clear bias towards fascist protesters and their sympathizers.

PPB refused to declare a riot — though they often do so with BLM protesters -- despite far-right protesters brandishing guns, spraying chemical irritants on anti-fascist counterprotesters and physically assaulting them. Witnesses reported that immediately after fascist protesters left, PPB declared the scene an unlawful assembly and began making arrests of counterprotesters.

Over the past three months, protest in Portland has faced rapid changes. From the deployment of federal officers to the presence of fascist street brawlers, there is much concern in the city from those who oppose fascism and racist police brutality.

Yet crowds have continued to come out night after night, responding to new situations and adjusting their tactics accordingly. Whatever comes next in the city, it’s a given that there will be people confronting injustice and repression in myriad ways.

The struggle started in this long summer has only just begun. □



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

## Rally demands unemployment pay

Dozens of unemployed workers and their supporters held a rally in Philadelphia Aug. 20 to demand extension of the federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, which expired July 31. The protest was called by the Philadelphia Unemployment Project and was organized by members of UNITE HERE, Philadelphia Musicians Union Local 77,

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and members of Workers World Party. Marchers led a mock funeral procession for the expired benefits down Broad Street and around City Hall, accompanied by a union bagpiper and chants of “Money for health and education, not for billionaire corporations!”

— Report by Ted Kelly



# A 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary salute to Vietnam’s August Revolution

By Comrade Tano

We live in tumultuous times, and it is during times like this that we as socialists must look to the struggles and successes of our predecessors to give us inspiration to continue our struggle. As a Vietnamese-American, I take heart in remembering the struggles of my people in their fight for independence from colonial and imperialist powers. August 19 is a special day, for it marks the 75th anniversary of the Vietnamese August Revolution!

On this day in 1945, under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh (aka League for the Independence of Vietnam), my people organized uprisings and demonstrations throughout Vietnam, with the Viet Minh eventually seizing the city of Hanoi.

Comrade Ho then declared independence for the newly formed Democratic Republic of Vietnam on Sept. 2, 1945. However, the French colonizers were not going to just allow their imperial holdings to remain free without a fight; in the early months of 1946, they arrived back in the country with full military force to re-establish control,



Viet Minh troops enter Hanoi, 1945.

causing the Vietnamese people to launch the French Resistance War.

For almost ten long, bloody years, my people fought against the invaders, until eventually the Viet Minh struck the final blow against the French at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, ending the war.

However, the test for the newly independent socialist nation had only just begun, because as soon as the French left, U.S. imperialists took their place.

Thus began what is often called the Vietnam War, a conflict we Vietnamese call “the War of American Aggression.”

(A much more fitting name, if I do say so myself.) For nearly 20 more years the brave Vietnamese, under the leadership of the National Liberation Front, fought against the most powerful military force in the world, and by 1975, declared victory as the last of the U.S. imperialists were driven out.

Why is this important, besides celebrating such an important day in the history of our Vietnamese comrades? The answer is simple: we struggle every day here “in the belly of the beast,” as Che Guevara put it, fighting for the freedom of the working class at the very imperial core. Times are tough now, but when we look at our past as socialists and see the example the Vietnamese people — my people — set for us, we should take heart. Our struggle continues, just as theirs did against the French and U.S. imperialists.

And just like my people, we will win!

*Comrade Tano is a non-binary, genderfluid person of Vietnamese descent. They choose to write under this name to protect themselves, while still supporting and celebrating their history as a Vietnamese socialist.*

## Long live the memory of Ka Randy!

By Communist Party of the Philippines

*Workers World is reprinting the following statement from the Communist Party of the Philippines that condemns the murder of Randall Echanis on Aug. 10. Since the 2016 presidential election in the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte has carried out numerous assassinations of peace activists and progressive organizers. Duterte's “War on Drugs” is responsible for at least 27,000 extrajudicial killings since 2016.*

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) condemns in the strongest terms the cold-blooded murder of Randall Echanis, Chairperson of the Anakpawis party-list and peace consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). Ka Randy, 72, was killed early this morning (Aug. 10) by armed men in his rented home in Novaliches, Quezon City.

Echanis’ murder is undoubtedly the handiwork of the Duterte fascist regime, ordered by its cabal of criminal terrorists in the National Task Force and carried out by Duterte’s death squads in the military and police. Duterte himself has publicly ordered his military and police forces to hunt down consultants of the NDFP after he terminated peace negotiations in 2017.

The extrajudicial killing of Echanis is a vicious attack against the democratic forces who continue to stand firm even in the face of the all-out attacks of the tyrannical regime against the people and their civil and political rights. It was carried out by state forces in the most treacherous of manners in the vain hope of terrorizing the people and cowering them into submission. It forms part of the continuing scheme of the Duterte regime to consolidate its fascist reign through murder and other acts of state terrorism.

The regime has stepped up its attacks in its desperation to quell the seething unrest amid the deepening socioeconomic and public health crisis and rising discontent in both the cities and countryside.

All democratic forces must unite and condemn the murder of Ka Randy. They must demand that Duterte himself be made to pay for the Echanis murder as well as for the murders of fellow peace consultants Julius Giron and Randy



Randall Echanis

Malayao. They must not relent in their demand for justice for the thousands of others who have been killed, imprisoned, tortured and terrorized in the course of the fascist regime’s fake drug war, bloody counterinsurgency, war against the Moros and all-out drive of political repression and state terrorism.

**A hero of the Filipino people**

On behalf of all revolutionary forces, the Communist Party of the Philippines extends its deepest sympathies to Echanis’ wife, children and family, friends and comrades in the national democratic movement. Having devoted most of his life to the cause of national and social liberation, Ka Randy is, indeed, a hero of the Filipino people. He was a stalwart of the cause of the workers and peasants and was a unifying force among the different classes and sectors.

The CPP pays tribute to Ka Randy as an ageless revolutionary fighter. He was among the thousands of young activists who joined the revolutionary mass movement in the late 1960s and fought courageously against the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship. When martial law was declared in 1972, he joined the armed struggle and was among the pioneers of the New People’s Army (NPA) during its period of expansion and growth in the northern Luzon regions.

He was captured, tortured and incarcerated under the Marcos dictatorship. He was again arrested and detained under

the Aquino and Arroyo regimes. He later continued to work for the national democratic cause by advancing the cause of land reform in all possible fields of democratic struggle. He became known as one of the pillars of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, as well as the Anakpawis party-list.

Because of his advocacy for the cause of the peasantry and the toiling people, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines asked him to serve as one of its consultants in peace negotiations,

specifically on the matter of land reform. He gave his expertise in the NDFP efforts to prepare its draft Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER) which outlines the measures necessary to address the key issues at the core of the civil war in the Philippines, with land reform and national industrialization as the centerpiece programs.

Among the Red fighters during his younger years, Ka Randy was known by his nom de guerre as Ka Makar, which he said was not only a tribute to Macario Sakay, erstwhile Filipino revolutionary who continually fought with arms against the American colonial forces in the early part of the 20th century, but was also an acronym for “Maso” [sledge hammer] and “Karit” [sickle]. Indeed, as a revolutionary fighter, Ka Randall always firmly held the hammer on the one hand, and the sickle on the other, worked to build the worker-peasant alliance, and upheld the cause of the proletariat to his last breath.

The Party and the entire revolutionary movement will forever uphold the memory of Ka Randall Echanis. Uphold his example of selfless and untiring service to the toiling masses and people.

Justice for Ka Randall Echanis! Long live the memory of Ka Randy!

End the tryanny and terrorism of the Duterte fascist regime! □

## Abolish the police

*Continued from page 1*

Department of Corrections building was set on fire. People spray-painted a telling slogan on the building of Manufacturers and Commerce, which lobbies for big business: “You have stolen more than we could ever ‘loot.’”

It was the voice of the people’s righteous rage at unending racist murder and incarceration, cop brutality, economic and “legal” injustice.

This voice will only grow stronger as people confront the pandemic health crisis, exploding evictions, a jobless abyss and hunger. It can’t be stifled by the political programs of either existing capitalist party in this so-called “democracy.”

A few months ago, massive and historic

Black Lives Matter protests erupted in every corner of the U.S., sparked by a cop’s deliberate 8-minute, 46-second execution of an African American man, George Floyd. This inexorable mass pressure imposed rapid change.

The call to “Disarm, defund and abolish the police!” is now penetrating the DNA of the mass movement. It’s a demand they absorb wisely, as part of the need for the larger structural changes that are becoming ever more necessary for the very survival of working and oppressed people.

As part of an evolving path toward socialist revolution, Workers World Party continues to add our voice and energy to the demand: “Defend the people! Arrest the cops! Disarm, defund and abolish the police!” □



COVID can be defeated:		
Cuba, China, Venezuela & Vietnam lead the way		
	Deaths	Cases
U.S.	173,125	5.5 MILLION
China	4,706	89,523
Venezuela	297	35,697
Cuba	88	3,408
Vietnam	25	993

By calvin deutschbein

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage uncontrollably in the U.S., it must be understood that it doesn't have to be this way. Many countries around the world, especially those building socialism, have been able to effectively combat the pandemic, using the tools of a planned economy and robust national health care systems to prioritize the health of their populations.

On Aug. 20, Workers World Party held a webinar

entitled "COVID can be defeated: Cuba, China, Venezuela and Vietnam lead the way." This event brought together organizer and solidarity activist perspectives from these countries, which are leading the way globally in combating the virus.

In those countries, governmental policies have involved and empowered the workers to prevent the novel coronavirus from reaching the pandemic conditions which are occurring in the U.S., and throughout much of the rest of the capitalist world.

Speakers included Lee Siu Hin, of the China U.S. Solidarity Network and National Immigrant Solidarity Network, who discussed China's highly successful actions to combat the disease. Dr. Rosemari Mealy, of the N.Y.-Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition, and a board member of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, raised the socialist island's effective measures to control the virus.

William Camacaro, representing the Bolivarian Circle Venezuela Solidarity, explained the impact of COVID-19 on the country and the government's response. And Dr. Ngô Thanh Nhân, of the Việt Solidarity and Action Network and Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign, told of that country's public health campaign to treat and control the virus. Under 30 lives have been lost there from the illness.

As of Aug. 24, the U.S. has led the world with the highest rate of infections and highest death count because the health — and very lives — of workers, especially oppressed people, are secondary to profits being made for the ruling class. More than 178,000 people have died. Tens of millions of workers have lost their jobs, with an untold number of renters facing evictions.

Meanwhile, the wealth of U.S. billionaires has grown to an astounding \$637 billion during the pandemic! The cruelty of capitalism is on full display during this major health crisis.

*The webinar can be viewed in its entirety at [workers.org/videos/](https://workers.org/videos/)*

## Cuba: a global leader in the fight against COVID-19

By Rosemari Mealy

*This is a slightly edited talk given at a Workers World Party webinar on Aug. 20 on "COVID can be defeated: Cuba, China, Venezuela and Vietnam lead the way." View the entire webinar at [workers.org/videos/](https://workers.org/videos/).*



Rosemari Mealy

I would like to thank Workers World for the opportunity to participate in this webinar. COVID-19 can be defeated by recognizing the heroic people of Cuba, China, Venezuela and Vietnam who are all facing in some form or another sanctions, blockades and or strategies to sabotage every aspect of their socialist governments' economic, social and cultural policies.

The U.S embargo or blockade of Cuba has now entered its sixth decade of unsuccessful attempts to wreak havoc on that nation. We cannot talk about how Cuba has been able to defeat COVID without first acknowledging that for 60 years Cuba has faced the longest trade embargo in history.

First imposed in 1960 under the Eisenhower administration with the prohibition of export of all products except for foods, medicines and medical supplies, the U.S. embargo of Cuba is in essence a relic of the Cold War initiated by the capitalist West to undermine socialist developments in the Soviet Union, China and, by 1960, Cuba.

Notwithstanding the ending of the Cold War with the collapse of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1991, Congress in the years since has continued to pass — and presidents have signed into law — legislation strengthening the embargo. The Helms-Burton Act is unquestionably the most draconian as well as the most controversial of the laws; the embargo cannot be ended without congressional concurrence through legislation.

Cuba is not isolated internationally and has survived and is supported by an overwhelming majority of the countries in the world.

Despite the blockade during the global pandemic, Cuba has shown the way in confronting COVID-19. First and foremost, most of the trajectory of this pandemic, like all pandemics, is based on the overall condition and organization of the society. Cuba is a socialist society where, from the very beginning of the triumph of the revolution, health care, education, housing and the protection of workers were built into the new Socialist Constitution.

### 'Health care is a human right' in Cuba

Health is considered a human right. The country's health care system is one of the world's greatest contributions because it operates both horizontally and vertically. By that I mean the delivery of health is integrated.

In every community there is a family doctor who lives over the polyclinic and among staff in the community. So, you have a tertiary health system which was created and sustained throughout its revolutionary history.

Cuba has a relatively high number of medical workers per capita. Officials say there are currently about 90,000 in the country of almost 11.5 million people. Decades, years, months and weeks before COVID19 ever arrived on the island — because of how the health system is structured — the government and the entire health care system, including scientists, knew where every person lived, who was at risk, what vaccines and medications they had, by going door to door in every neighborhood, making home visits with a nurse and sometimes Promotora de Salud (community health workers).

Having six decades of experience like no other country or health system, they had the skills, the technology, scientific advances and human capital to deal with combatting outbreaks and epidemics. Cuba had the experience of first developing and using interferons to arrest a deadly outbreak of the dengue virus in 1981. That experience catalyzed the development of the island's now world-leading biotech industry. The protocol Interferon — only one tool of many that Cuba has — played a crucial role in some of those previous outbreaks and epidemics, often saving seriously ill patients' lives.

Since the appearance of the first cases of COVID-19 on March 11, Cuba has reported 3,408 cases. As of today, Aug. 20, 2,794 people have recovered out of a population of 11.5 million, 526 people remain ill and there have been 88 deaths. There have been no fatalities since Aug. 4.

Compare this to the state of Georgia, which has a population of 10.5 million people. Some 22,664 people have been hospitalized since February, and there have been 4,840 deaths. The current active number of cases is 239,133, compared to Cuba's 526 patients who are still ill. Recovery rate in Georgia is 2%. The recovery rate in Cuba is 82%. Georgia has 455 times more people who still have the virus.

### Socialist gov't and an informed people

In Cuba, the strength of combatting COVID is reflected in the will of the socialist government, its scientists, medical personnel and informed people. There is contact tracing and people are coming together to coordinate the sewing of masks and distribution of food to the elderly and physically challenged. Recently, when there was a spike of cases in the provinces of Havana and Artemisa, the country reinstated the curfew.

Cuba is leading the way to defeat COVID, not in a selfish way or in its own self-interest. First and foremost, the country is a recognized world leader in the development of antiviral drugs and therapies for cancer, diabetes complications, and most recently for COVID-19. More than 45 countries have requested the country's Interferon Alpha 2B protocol.

These therapies are being used around the world to treat patients and have been particularly effective helping older and more at-risk patient populations. I think the most encouraging breakthrough occurred over the past few days when Cuba announced: "The central state enterprise management group BioCubaFarma reports having received permission to begin clinical trials of a Cuban candidate vaccine Identified as FINLAY-FR-1 to prevent COVID-19, capable of producing a strong immune reaction to a SARS-COV-2 infection." (Granma, Aug. 20)

Cuba was one of the most prepared countries in the world for COVID-19. In many countries fighting the pandemic Cuba is also making major international contributions with the Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade.

If I may close by saying this internationalism has been exemplified right here at home through the IFCO (Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization) partnership with the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM) scholarship program since 1999. ELAM has trained over 35,000 doctors from 138 countries, including graduating 195 U.S.-trained doctors.

In a post-embargo world, U.S. hospitals and research institutions would have direct access to Cuba's drugs, therapies and doctors to potentially improve the standard of care for millions of citizens of the USA in the defeat of COVID-19.

### What you can do!

Contact elected officials to demand that they focus on the Cuban drug known as Interferon Alfa 2B, which has been produced in China since 2003 by the Cuban-Chinese joint venture ChangHeber. Demand that the drug be allowed in the U.S. as a protocol to treat COVID-19.

Endorse the Save Our Lives Campaign which, among other demands, is calling for incorporating Cuba's Interferon Alfa 2B Recombinant in clinical trials in the U.S., Canada and the World Health Organization (WHO), and the granting by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration of approval for Cuba's Interferon Alfa 2B Recombinant.

Call on elected officials to demand the repeal of Helms-Burton or to temporarily suspend the Cuban embargo, which would enable Cuba to obtain the humanitarian aid and medical supplies that it needs to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

Contact and organize local city councils to pass resolutions that support these initiatives while calling for an end to the blockade.

Consider joining the next IFCO Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba.

*Dr. Rosemari Mealy is with the New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition and on the Board of IFCO/Pastors for Peace.*



# Not being Trump is not enough

Once every four years, the two major capitalist parties in the United States get unlimited prime-time media, with much hoopla, to promote their candidates for U.S. president and vice president. The four-day Democratic National Convention that ended Aug. 20 offered far less than usual, which cannot just be blamed on COVID-19.

Other than officially nominating their candidates — Joe Biden for president and Kamala Harris for vice president — the DNC offered no substantial promises and proposed no significant programmatic changes. The overwhelming message was “Vote for Joe Biden because he is not Donald Trump.”

Even their primary slogan, “Build Back Better,” sounds eerily similar to Trump’s 2016 slogan “Make America Great Again.” With a lot of promises but few specifics, the platform totally ignores the crisis of a global capitalist system which was unraveling even before the coronavirus pandemic struck.

Biden calls for more testing and mandatory mask wearing to address the

COVID-19 crisis. But the prospect of “Medicare for All” was dropped from the DNC program. During the pandemic, more than 40 million people in the U.S. have lost their jobs and health insurance at the same time. Yet Biden failed to offer a plan to address the health care crisis. He has even said that as president he would veto a Medicare for All bill, should one reach his desk.

Thousands of people die each year in the U.S. because they cannot afford health care. The disproportionate death toll in communities of color during the pandemic is a direct result. While polls show overwhelming voter support for Medicare for All, the DNC leaders appear to be more concerned about protecting the profits of Big Pharma and the health insurance companies.

The DNC platform supports raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour — by 2026. If the minimum wage had kept up with inflation, it would now be closer to \$20 per hour.

One specific item on Biden’s website calls for another federal bailout of the

auto industry. The Obama/Biden administration’s \$80 billion bailout of that industry in 2009 resulted in massive layoffs and significant concessions from auto workers’ unions, including their right to strike. And the DNC leadership dropped a call to end fossil fuel subsidies and tax breaks from the party’s program.

Biden’s website makes no mention of his foreign policy views. The DNC’s international policy platform comes at the end of its 91-page document — perhaps because both capitalist parties differ little when it comes to defending U.S. imperialism’s global domination.

After Palestinian-American activist Linda Sarsour, a supporter of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, offered advice at the convention on how the DNC could engage Muslim voters, the Biden campaign publicly disavowed her. The DNC platform does not criticize Israel’s occupation of Palestine. It supports Israel’s claim to Jerusalem as its capital.

Following months of massive protests against police brutality in U.S. cities, large

and small, supporting Black Lives Matter and calls for defunding the police can no longer be considered “far left.” Numerous state and local governments have cut police department funds; some are even looking to abolish them. But Biden does not support defunding the police — he calls for more money for police reforms already proven ineffective.

During an Aug. 23 interview with ABC’s David Muir, Biden even criticized Trump for suggesting “a bill to cut one-half billion dollars out of local police support.” This should come as no surprise, considering that in 1994 then-Senator Joe Biden (in cooperation with the president of the National Association of Police Officers) drafted the controversial legislation for Clinton’s crime bill, seen by many as the trigger for mass incarceration.

Trump is horrible. But at this historic time, when workers and oppressed are challenging the economic chaos, systemic racism and police brutality that are the pillars of the capitalist system, not being Trump is simply not enough. Keep it in the streets! □

# Mass protests force out leaders in Mali

By G. Dunkel

After months of agitation and protests — some going on for days, involving thousands of people and substantial injuries — the Malian Army arrested President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta (IBK), Prime Minister Boubou Cissé and the entire cabinet Aug. 18.

The June 5 Movement— Rally of Patriotic Forces, known as M5-RFP, which had been a main force leading the protests, welcomed the army’s move. Thousands of people cheered as the army moved the arrested politicians through Bamako, as shown on video by France 24.

The international community as a whole condemned the army and demanded Keïta’s reinstatement. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) suspended Mali’s membership, prohibited financial transactions between its members and Mali, and closed all its borders with the country.

France condemned the army’s arrests and demanded Keïta’s reinstatement. The former colonial overlord in Mali currently has 5,100 troops stationed in the country, mainly in its central and southern regions. They are fighting against several jihadist



Bamako, Mali.

militias. The U.N., which has a “peace-keeping” force MINUSMA of 14,000 soldiers in northern and eastern Mali, also condemned the army’s arrests.

**U.S. drones in the Sahel**

Not to be left out, J. Peter Pham, U.S. State Department special envoy for the Sahel region tweeted, “The US is opposed to all unconstitutional changes of government whether in the streets or by security forces.” The U.S. has a major drone base

in Niger, which borders Mali to the east and supplies operational intelligence to the French and U.N. forces.

In neighboring countries — such as Senegal, Guinea, Niger and Burkina Faso — there is a palpable sense that the eruption in Mali could be contagious. This is visible in comments on Internet sites of residents of those countries. For example, El Hadji Diouf, a lawyer and political leader in Senegal, warned its President Macky Sall against excusing the “coup makers in Mali.” ([tinyurl.com/y3hwnl5](https://tinyurl.com/y3hwnl5))

The countries in or near the western Sahel region — including Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad — face the same problems that exist in Mali. Skilled workers like teachers and nurses have not been paid for months. Youth can’t get jobs or an education. People lack medical care, especially necessary in this time of plague. Armed jihadist groups are confronting governments’ armed forces, while there are imperialist interventions. Tensions exist between ethnic groups. To a greater or lesser degree, all of Mali’s neighbors are afflicted by these issues.

Mahmoud Dicko, and the anti-capitalist Party for African Solidarity and Independence, headed by Oumar Mariko. One banner in the big Aug. 11 protest read “IBK and his party work for the French.” Sign slogans read: “France is a terrorist state,” “Stop the genocide of France in Mali” and “This regime is Mali’s coronavirus.”

In a press release, Mariko points out that IBK has to get permission from France or rebel groups to go to certain areas of Mali. This relationship says the government does not have control of the country and is not secure, as was reported by the Belgian bimonthly magazine *Solidaire* on July 30. When the Malian army deployed in the northern town of Kidal near the Libyan border, it had to be accompanied by U.N. forces. (Associated Press, Feb. 13)

## French troops intervene

After the defeat of Libyan leader, Moammar Gaddafi, and his murder by U.S.-backed forces in 2011, soldiers in his army, with their heavy weapons, moved south the following year into the Sahel, mainly into Mali and its neighbor Niger. In 2013 when the separatist movement made significant progress in northern Mali and the central government was on the verge of collapse, the French army intervened rapidly and decisively.

This 2013 intervention is well described in “The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu,” written by Joshua Hammer. Hammer also well describes the essential role that U.S. special forces played.

Mali is a strategically important country for world imperialism, as it is in the center of West Africa, bordering seven other countries, and is rich in resources. Uranium mined and produced in Niger and Mali provides one-third of France’s electricity. Mali also has oil and major gold deposits and other minerals.

Almost all the African migrants seeking a job or a decent economic future in Europe now come through the Sahel. European Union officials fear that if the governments in the Sahel fall apart, it would cause a steady flow of refugees which could become a flood EU leaders would find destabilizing. This is a crisis created by years of imperialist underdevelopment and exploitation of Africa. □

# No walls for billionaires

By Deirdre Griswold

Stephen K. Bannon may be in big trouble. Or maybe not. Pals of the very rich rarely pay for their crimes. It is generally the poor who are held in jail — which can be a death sentence in this COVID-19 pandemic.

And who is Bannon? A key player in ultraright Breitbart media who became the mastermind of Trump’s 2016 election campaign, which got the real-estate magnate into the presidency. After leaving his post as Trump’s “Chief Strategist,” Bannon has been connecting neofascist European parties with neo-Nazi groups in the U.S.

On Aug. 20, Bannon and several alleged co-conspirators were arrested for fraud and charged with siphoning money from

a supposed charity called “We Build the Wall.” The money they pocketed came from donations to build Donald Trump’s wall against migrants on the southern border.

It’s more than ironic that Bannon was arrested while enjoying life on the 150-foot yacht of a fugitive Chinese billionaire, Guo Wengui. There are no walls to keep billionaires out of this country — only poor people.

Guo, of course, is no impoverished immigrant. He owns a 9,000-square-foot apartment facing Central Park in New York City. Guo is wanted in People’s China on a bunch of corruption charges, but is hailed here as a “refugee” from communism.

Bannon’s arrest may be a sign that Trump isn’t expected to win the next election. But don’t hold your breath. □



# How China won the COVID-19 fight and what this means for the world

By Lee Siu Hin 李小軒

This Aug. 15, the city of Wuhan in China — the first city to report a COVID-19 outbreak early this year — after 76 days of lockdown to fully contain the virus that had started in early April, kicked off something unimaginable for the rest of the world: a Beer Festival and a Water Festival. There were tens of thousands of visitors, beer drinking, music performance and yes — a pool party!

Many Western net citizens saw this with disbelief and jealous rage, but some argued that the U.S. and Europe needed to reflect on it. “Westerners would rather believe some completely unfounded conspiracy theory than admit China did something right,” net citizen luigi concluded on Twitter.

How did China succeed in fighting COVID-19 in such a short time? Seven key reasons: efficiency, science, coordination, commitment, people's war, cooperation and effective leadership.

When the coronavirus struck China, the whole country went into battle mode and united with one thing in mind: to defeat COVID-19. After its success, China did not hesitate to help other countries.

The specific components to China's success are:

- Strict quarantine
- Mass testing
- Building makeshift hospitals to isolate everyone with symptoms or who had contact with the patients
- Unwavering, top-down, nationally coordinated logistical support from the government
- Government and personal accountability and responsibilities
- International coordination and open exchange, especially working with the World Health Organization
- Trust in science and experts
- Health apps to trace everyone
- Quickly developing and adopting new IT technologies to fight the virus and rebuild the economy
- National efforts to rapidly develop medical technology to fight the virus, including gene sequence analysis, drug and vaccine development, innovative clinical treatments and the adoption of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM)
- Wearing masks from the beginning

“Reality has proven that China's methods and systems work,” stated Chen Jianguo, president of Tongji Medical College in Wuhan.

When the virus first appeared in Wuhan in late December 2019, no one knew exactly what was happening. Within two to three weeks it quickly spread across the city like wildfire, catching everyone off-guard, but the government immediately took bold actions by announcing a national emergency, ordering a total lockdown of the city, and sending tens of thousands of medics to fight a “people's war” against the virus. The epic battle paid off. In less than three months, China completely contained the virus.

On Jan. 23, China quickly and decisively ordered the lockdown of Wuhan, a

city of 11 million people. It was the largest lockdown in history. Two days later, the entire Hubei province, affecting a total of 45 million people, was closed for the next three months in an effort to completely stop the spread of the virus.

The “lockdown” meant that every resident had to completely stay indoors 24/7 for the next three months.

## Staffing and volunteers

Lockdown was just the beginning. The Chinese government poured massive amounts of resources, medical equipment, tens of thousands of medical staff, volun-

teers, military and construction workers into Wuhan and Hubei to support the “people's virus fight.”

Within a few hours of the lockdown, a total of 42,000 volunteer medics from across the country began arriving to support Wuhan and Hubei, with 35,000 arriving between late January and April in the capital city of

Wuhan, the epicenter of the early outbreak.

In addition, in 10 days, 12,000 workers came to build two special makeshift infection hospitals, Huoshenshan and Leishenshan, that now would be able to treat thousands of COVID-19 patients.

The Chinese military, better known as the People's Liberation Army (PLA), sent 340 military medical teams with thousands of military medics as well as logistics teams across Wuhan and Hubei province. Many were young military medic students in their early twenties.

Furthermore, throughout the lockdown in Wuhan, another 580,000 community volunteers were mobilized to help the residents. Since no one could go out shopping, the neighborhood councils organized volunteers who became the community “fixers” for everyone's tedious tasks; they helped elders, organized grocery shipments, and drove around daily to deliver medicine to families.

Most volunteers and medics were under 30 years old — the so-called ‘90s generation. Many said they wanted to show that they were grown-up, responsible people. They actively signed up for tasks on the frontline. Most of them liked going on these military-like missions, and chose to stay away from home and their families for weeks, even months. People called them “retrogressors,” heroes who choose to rush into a disaster zone and save people's lives.

In China, it's always the custom that government officials and Communist Party of China (CPC) members are the first to be mobilized onto the front line. Throughout the lockdown in Wuhan and Hubei province, young CPC members were actively involved on the medical frontline. Half of the hospital staff, frontline workers, port workers, custom officials and volunteers from around the country were party members under the age of 30.

China understands that an important part of winning the fight against the virus involves public servants behaving responsibly and accountably and earning trust from the people. By April 13, 29.77 million party members and officials were working on the frontline across the country. Out of that number, 2,337 got infected by the virus and 396 sacrificed their lives. Most of the deaths were not from the virus but from being killed in car accidents

or working themselves to death at the frontline.

## Logistical support

Logistical support was very critical in winning the virus war. In early January, at the beginning of the outbreak, China quickly ran out of personal protective equipment (PPE). Wuhan's daily PPE needs included 60,000 protective suits, 125,000 medical masks, and 25,000 medical goggles. By comparison, China normally produces only 30,000 protective suits per day.

With the belief in “united we win,” China quickly mobilized national efforts — including state enterprises across the country — to ramp up existing PPE production and build new PPE production lines. In weeks, by mid-February, the PPE crisis in China was over. Every medical staff person was fully protected with the so-called “moon suit,” without the need to reuse.

In addition, in order to boost the testing capacity, the Chinese government quickly mobilized, coordinated and stocked public and private testing facilities with test kits. One good example is BGI, a Chinese genetics and screening company. Within a few days it built the Huo-Yan Laboratory, a fully functioning COVID-19 testing center in Wuhan capable of testing tens of thousands of people.

## Helping the world

COVID-19 is a global health crisis. In order to truly win the pandemic fight, the world should unite and work together.

Having enough PPE supplies domestically, China started to donate and commercially export medical equipment and PPE to save lives around the world.

From March 1 to April 30, China released 71.2 billion yuan (\$10.2 billion U.S. dollars) worth of epidemic prevention supplies for export. That included 27.8 million face masks, 130 million protection suits, 73.1 million COVID-19 test kits, as well as 12.57 million infrared thermometers, 49,100 ventilators, 124,000 patient monitors, 43.63 million goggles and 854 million pairs of surgical gloves. In addition, China helped build Huo-Yan laboratories around the world in Serbia, Saudi Arabia, Brunei, Iraq, United Arab Emirates and more places.

## Wuhan ends lockdown

By April 8, Wuhan ended the lockdown that had begun on Jan. 23. By April 15, in a short 76 days, China had won the virus fight. Wuhan's makeshift Huoshenshan Hospital was decommissioned after 73 days of operation. The hospital had admitted 3,059 patients suffering from COVID-19; 2,961 of them had been successfully treated and discharged.

The last volunteer medics left on April 26 with tens of thousands of residents saluting their departure.

## China continues the fight

To prevent a second Wuhan outbreak, China decided to test the entire population. By May, in less than two weeks, China had tested almost every one of its 11 million residents to check if any missing clusters with COVID-19 remained.

From mid-June to early July, Beijing had a small COVID-19 outbreak. The city quickly mobilized within a few hours and locked down dozens of communities near the virus's ground zero. Within two weeks, the city had completed 11 million tests, finding 74,000 residents who had exposure to the virus. Some 300 were sent



Lee Siu Hin

to the hospital for treatment. Others with exposure were ordered to self-quarantine for 21 days.

In order to successfully mobilize quick citywide testing, the Chinese government had to utilize every possible resource, recruiting thousands of health care workers and support staff into the campaign. The city promoted the drive via fliers, social media posts and loudspeaker announcements. Every resident had to be tested and traced by mobile apps.

In addition, Chinese authorities released timely data in an open, transparent and responsible manner so the people had dynamic, clear and important information to fully understand the government's policies, strategies and measures. Making sure the public is fully informed is the key to establishing strong social consensus.

## China's success was not luck

China's success was not luck. The Chinese have a strong sense of social responsibility for collective action, and people trust in the government and follow its instructions. They believe that “United We'll Win.” People felt proud to actively participate in the nationwide people's war against COVID-19.

Other countries that took similar steps, mostly socialist countries like Cuba, Vietnam and Laos, also quickly recovered from the crisis.

In July, according to “CoronaShock and Socialism,” by Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research, socialist governments worldwide — like Cuba, Venezuela, Vietnam, and Kerala, India — were better able to deal with the virus, because they employed strategies like China's and had “a science-based approach.” They had a public sector that they could rely upon for the production of the materials they needed to combat the virus, and they cultivated public action “in order to substantially break the chain of infection.”

## Conclusion

In conclusion, China's virus fight has been clearly much better and more successful than in the U.S. and Western countries.

Ipsos, a global market research firm, issued an Aug. 17 consumer confidence report based on interviewing people from 24 countries. China ranked the highest in consumer confidence due to its post-COVID rapid recovery, receiving 72.9 points. The U.S. received the lowest confidence due to its failure in combating the virus and its high unemployment rate, receiving only 48.3 points.

*Lee Siu Hin is a long-time Chinese-American activist with low-paid immigrant workers, currently working on a community health project. Lee is national coordinator of the National Immigrant Solidarity Network (ImmigrantSolidarity.org), Action LA Network (ActionLA.org) and China-US Bi-National Activist Solidarity Network (chinadelegation.org). Lee's book “Capitalism on a Ventilator — Impact of COVID-19 in China vs. U.S.” will be co-published with the International Action Center in August. For more information, email activistweb@gmail.com and twitter @siuhin. He'll be traveling back to China on Aug. 24 for his activism and medical work.*





En Washington, D.C., el 15 de agosto en la casa del Director General de Correos Louis DeJoy para denunciar sus órdenes de recortar los servicios postales y coludirse con la supresión de votantes.

## ¡Detengan el ataque de Trump a la oficina de correos!

Por Joe Piette

Si 150 millones de personas votan por correo en noviembre, no abrumaría al Servicio Postal de los Estados Unidos, que procesa diariamente más de 472 millones de correos. Pero los funcionarios postales, en aparente coordinación con los esfuerzos del presidente Donald Trump para suprimir los derechos de voto, han promulgado acciones que retrasan la entrega del correo.

Este es un intento desnudo de reelegir ilegítimamente a esta administración abiertamente racista, misógina, anti-laborista y de derecha. Si su plan tiene éxito en privatizar el Servicio Postal de propiedad pública de 245 años, los ricos ideólogos pro-Trump, que se oponen a proporcionar servicios públicos donde se pueden obtener ganancias privadas, tendrían otra razón para celebrar.

La red del servicio de más de 31.000 oficinas de correos emplea a más de 600.000 trabajadores postales. El cuarenta por ciento son mujeres y casi el 40% son personas de color. Entregan correo a todas las direcciones del país seis días a la semana.

El nuevo Director General de Correos, Louis DeJoy, un aliado de Trump, ha impuesto reglas de trabajo que eliminan las horas extras y evitan que los trabajadores se aseguren de que todo el correo sea procesado y llevado a los buzones por los carteros, evitando que el correo se entregue a tiempo. A medida que la pandemia ha reducido el volumen de correo, más de 600 máquinas clasificadoras de correo están siendo suspendidas o incluso destruidas, lo que provoca más retrasos. Esto ignora la probabilidad de que el volumen de correo aumente si mejora la economía o la situación de la pandemia.

DeJoy, o “DeLay” como lo llaman muchos trabajadores postales, ha donado millones de dólares a las causas de Trump y del Partido Republicano. Posee más de \$30 millones en acciones de XPO Logistics, una empresa contratista que procesa correo para USPS, un claro conflicto de intereses!

Como dijo este escritor en este periódico el 25 de mayo, otro aspecto problemático es el “terrible historial laboral de DeJoy, plagado de acoso sexual, discriminación, aceleración, lesiones en el lugar de trabajo, uso excesivo de temporales, clasificación errónea de trabajadores como contratistas independientes y bajas por enfermedad inadecuadas durante la actual pandemia.” ([tinyurl.com/y5dfu755](https://tinyurl.com/y5dfu755))

Los trabajadores postales con poco personal y con exceso de trabajo informan

de incidentes en los que el correo no sale durante días o no sale en absoluto. El presidente de la Unión Estadounidense de Trabajadores Postales, Mark Dimondstein, dijo al informativo, The Atlantic, que los cambios eran “desmoralizantes” para sus miembros: “Están ordenando a los trabajadores que dejen el correo para otro día. Eso va en contra de nuestro ADN”. En cuanto a la supuesta justificación de la reducción de costos de DeJoy, Dimondstein enfatizó: “No se le llama la Empresa Postal de los Estados Unidos. ¡Se llama Servicio Postal de los Estados Unidos!” (14 de agosto)

La administración Trump también instaló caballos de Troya en la Agencia de Protección Ambiental y los departamentos de Educación, Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano de EE.UU. y otras agencias federales. Todos ellos se enfocan en brindar oportunidades de lucro a las corporaciones en lugar de promover el bien común.

### Retrasar el correo, suprimir el voto

Los clientes han presentado miles de quejas a funcionarios postales, líderes políticos y la prensa. Los medicamentos, los cheques, las facturas, los pedidos en línea y otros correos se retrasan, a veces durante días y semanas, a medida que el correo se acumula en grandes acumulaciones en las instalaciones postales.

La posibilidad de que las boletas por correo se retrasen ha ganado titulares de los medios, ya que el presidente número 45 constantemente tuitea afirmaciones falsas de que tales boletas son más propensas al fraude. Esta mentira socava la confianza del público en la capacidad del USPS para entregar boletas en blanco a los votantes y luego devolverlas a las autoridades electorales de manera segura y rápida.

Todos los estados han utilizado con seguridad la votación por correo, algunos durante décadas. Es una práctica universal en Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah y Washington.

Se espera que un número récord de personas voten por correo este año debido a la pandemia.

La eliminación de las cajas de recolección postal de las esquinas de las calles de Estados Unidos sin el aviso requerido de 30 días, especialmente en vecindarios de bajos ingresos y comunidades de color, refuerza la sospecha de que Trump y sus partidarios están tratando de suprimir el voto por correo.

Celina Stewart, de la Liga de Mujeres Votantes no partidista, comentó: “La desaceleración es otra herramienta en la caja de herramientas de la supresión de votantes.



Los trabajadores postales han estado luchando para defender sus derechos y el servicio público del USPS durante décadas. Aquí, miembros del Sindicato Estadounidense de Trabajadores Postales se manifiestan en su convención en Pittsburgh, el 21 de agosto de 2018.

Eso no es ningún secreto. Creemos que esta es una táctica de supresión de votantes”. (Washington Post, 14 de agosto)

Los derechos de voto se han restringido severamente por motivos de raza, género y clase desde las primeras elecciones presidenciales de Estados Unidos en 1788, cuando solo se permitía votar a los hombres blancos con propiedades. El sistema bipartidista limita la posibilidad de un cambio real mediante elecciones. Para manipular aún más el sistema, las dos grandes empresas han utilizado históricamente la supresión de votos. La privación sistémica del derecho al voto abunda, con tácticas que incluyen las leyes de identificación de votantes y la manipulación de los derechos de los votantes, rediseñando los distritos electorales para disminuir particularmente el peso de las personas de color, las comunidades de bajos ingresos y de inmigrantes.

### Historia de la corrupción política

El equipo de etiqueta de Trump y DeJoy no son los primeros en politizar el Servicio Postal. El presidente Andrew Jackson, admirado por Trump, estableció un “sistema de despojo” después de su elección en 1828, mediante el cual el partido que ganó la Casa Blanca obtuvo el derecho de otorgar decenas de miles de empleos postales a sus partidarios, asegurando así su lealtad. El director general de correos, inevitablemente un compinche político y un preparador ansioso por cumplir las órdenes del presidente, se convirtió en un miembro del gabinete que supervisó este inmenso plan de patrocinio.

Jackson buscó notoriamente expandir el saqueo capitalista para obtener ganancias a través de la apropiación de tierras indígenas, a menudo para expandir la esclavitud de personas de ascendencia africana. Exilió por la fuerza a miles de indígenas en el Camino de las Lágrimas, una acción genocida en la década de 1830. En 1835, Jackson colaboró con su director general de correos para suprimir el correo contra la esclavitud de los abolicionistas del Norte.

El corrupto sistema de mecenazgo sólo terminó con la gran huelga postal de 1970, tras la cual el Congreso aprobó la Ley de Reorganización Postal. Creó un híbrido gobierno-empresa dirigido por una junta

de gobernadores nominada por el presidente y confirmada por el Senado, con un director general de correos elegido por esa junta. La mayoría de los miembros actuales de la junta son nombrados por Trump, que eligieron a DeJoy, violando las intenciones anti-patrocinio de la PRA.

### ¡Las corporaciones fueron rescatadas! ¡El servicio postal se agotó!

El USPS normalmente es autosuficiente, financiando operaciones con sus propios ingresos sin usar dinero de los contribuyentes. El Congreso aprobó una ley en 2006 que requiere que el Servicio Postal financie los beneficios de salud de los jubilados durante 75 años en el futuro. Esa onerosa carga anual de \$5.5 mil millones no se impone a ninguna otra agencia gubernamental o corporación privada.

Con estos costos innecesarios, combinados con los efectos financieros de la pandemia, el USPS puede quedarse sin fondos dentro de un año. Así que la Junta de Gobernadores de Correos solicitó \$75 mil millones en asistencia financiera de emergencia, comparable a las enormes sumas que el Congreso dio a las grandes corporaciones en el proyecto de ley de estímulo de la primavera.

La Cámara de Representantes aprobó un plan de rescate postal de \$25 mil millones en mayo como parte de la Ley HEROES, pero el Senado no actuó al respecto antes de suspender la sesión para las vacaciones de verano. El 13 de agosto, Trump declaró descaradamente que se opone a la financiación propuesta por USPS porque quiere dificultar la expansión de la votación por correo.

Los trabajadores postales y sus partidarios han organizado peticiones y campañas de llamadas a funcionarios del Congreso y del USPS para exigir la aprobación del plan de rescate del Servicio Postal, la derogación del requisito de pre-financiación de 75 años y el despido de DeJoy por retrasar el envío. Es solo cuestión de tiempo hasta que se lleven a cabo más acciones militantes contra la represión de votantes y trabajadores. (Consulte Facebook Save Our Postal Service).

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