Portland activists block eviction

By Johnnie Lewis
Portland, Ore.

Dec. 14—The Kinney family—owners of the now internationally famous “Red House on Mississippi Ave.”—is the last Black-Indigenous family in their neighborhood. They have been fighting foreclosure, and now eviction, since 2018.

The house, purchased in 1955, is in the Albina district—a collection of neighborhoods in the only sections of Portland where Black people were allowed to own property for most of the 20th century. The district, home to the majority of the city’s Black population, has long been under attack by developers and gentrifiers and targeted for so-called urban renewal—actually, removal. This once vibrant Black community has been destroyed.

In its place, the banks—historical redliners—and wealthy real estate developers, aided and abetted by the city’s white politicians, have built an interstate highway, a sports arena, a hospital expansion, along with thousands of new, high-priced houses, condos and apartments. For the most part, people of color, poor and working people have been priced out of Albina, where the median price of a house is now $499,000.

The Kinneys say they paid their mortgage on time but got caught up in a predatory loan scheme to take their home. Urban Housing Development LLC purchased the property in 2018, but the family remained in the house while pursuing lawsuits in state and federal court to keep the home.

After a years-long court battle over the foreclosure, a judge ordered the Kinneys evicted in September 2020. The attempt to evict the family led to a mobilization of militant support.

“Red House Autonomous Zone”

In an effort to defend the Kinney family from eviction, hundreds of Black Lives Matter, antifa, black bloc, Occupy, Popular Mobilization and other Black youth, people of color, white, queer revolutionaries have established a Red House Autonomous Zone similar to Seattle’s Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone. It involves a compound of about six square blocks around the house that includes a kitchen serving free meals and a coffee shop supporting the movement with free coffee. On Dec. 8, the compound was attacked by Portland police.

On Dec. 10, this reporter entered the compound, now behind 10-foot-high barricades, to learn more about the police assault. I was warmly greeted by defenders, offered free food but asked to not take photos. It helped that I brought a Workers World newspaper with the headline: “Evo Morales returars, Bolivians eject coup regime.”

A Black leader-organizer, asking to remain anonymous, told WW: “Early on the morning of Dec. 8, at least 50 police vehicles, sirens going off, blue lights flashing, blocked off street intersections all around here. At least 100 Portland cops and Multnomah County sheriffs—looking like Robocops—attacked the Red House.”

Police broke down the front door and assaulted the owner Michael Kinney and others asleep in the house. Deputy sheriffs arrested them and charged them with trespass in their own house. Their guests were also arrested.

The defenders were unable to stop the initial assault on the house and, in the strongest of Michael Kinney and the others inside. But very quickly the hundreds of defenders regrouped and prevented the deputies, who were backed by the cops, from taking possession of the property and house and removing its contents.

The organizer recounted how defenders armed with wooden banner and placard poles, broom handles, tree limbs, baseball bats, trash can lids and other homemade defensive weapons, in an organized and military fashion, “pushed the cops down the street and out of the neighborhood.”

Another activist told WW: “Twelve of our people were grabbed by the cops, but for lack of evidence, most were released uncharged. The Portland cops announced the same day that they would arrest no more until those arrested were actually charged with something.”

It was clear that the activists were serious about defending the Kinney family. While in the compound, this reporter was told by young activists: “We’re here to stop the eviction. We’re waiting for our marching orders.” Just then a platoon of maybe 30 people marched by, chanting in cadence, carrying poles and shields. As a former U.S. Army soldier and an organizer for the American Servicemen’s Union (1968-69), this reporter knows a military formation when they see one.

Continued on page 3
Release Mumia now!

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

The Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police has done everything possible to silence Mumia Abu-Jamal and bury his fight for justice. In February their obstruction even included filing a “King’s Bench” petition—which sidesteps and preempts all other judicial or appeal procedures—to attempt a change in venue for his appeals hearing. But Abu-Jamal’s global supporters, insisting on his innocence and demanding his immediate release, have other ideas.

Twice recently, a broad coalition of U.S. and international groups and individuals has succeeded in gaining major media coverage for the former Black Panther and journalist, who is Pennsylvania’s best-known political prisoner. On Nov. 16, former football star and Black Lives Matter activist Colin Kaepernick issued a statement in support of Abu-Jamal. This aired during a virtual press conference that included prison abolitionist leader Dr. Angela Davis, and other luminaries. Mainstream media, including CNN, have continued to raise Abu-Jamal’s case as a result.

On Dec. 9, on the 39th anniversary of Abu-Jamal’s unjust incarceration, supporters again caught the attention of the media with a live press conference in West Philadelphia near Malcolm X Park. There, less than two months earlier, anti-police brutality protesters clashed with Philadelphia police following the cop shooting of Walter Wallace, Jr.

The anniversary gathering also included a free food give-away and the launch of Abu-Jamal’s newest book, “Mumia: Incorvporated Vol. 3: Perfecting Tyranny.” Those attending were treated to free donuts and coffee as several news outlets and independent journalists covered the event, despite the bitterly cold and windy weather. (More information available at prisonradiostore.com.)

Marking the day that Abu-Jamal was shot and wrongly arrested in 1979 by a Philadelphia police officer, the event was organized by a coalition that included MobilizationMumia, Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, International Concerned Friends & Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal, and MOVE.

Speakers included Pam Africa, Minister of Confrontation for International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal; Mumia’s spouse, Wadiya Jamal; Noelle Hanrahan with Prison Radio; Yahne Ngdo from Black Alliance for Peace; Ted Kelly with the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party; Razakhan Wall of Nation TIME Judicial Research; Gabriel Bryant with the Black Philly Radical Collective, and others.

Pam Africa unveiled her local campaign to rename a Philadelphia street “Mumia Abu-Jamal Way.” Freed MOVE 9 members Janet and Janine Africa spoke and denounced the Philadelphia City Council’s recent apology for the city having imprisoned them for 41 years, calling it a “public relations stunt.” Janine Africa stated: “An apology with no action behind it is meaningless. Show us a symbol of your sincerity by releasing Mumia Abu-Jamal.”

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multilateral, multinational 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 never-ending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misoysigy, LGBTQ2S+ 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 benefit the working class. It is time to point the blame at—and challenge—the capitalist system.

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Join us in the fight for socialism!

If you are interested in joining Workers World Party contact: 212.627.2994

Workers World
147 W. 24th St., 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org

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Editors: John Catalinotto, Martha Grevatt, Deirdre Grissold, Monica Moorehead, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt
Web Editors: Albee, Harold Markowitz, Janet Mayes

Contributing Editors: LeiLani Dowell, G. Dunkel, K. Durkin, Sara Flounders, Teresa Gutierrez, Joshua Hansks, Makasi Motema, Gloria Rubac

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**Boston rallies for striking workers, farmers in India**

By Steve Gillis

Hundreds of millions of Indian workers and farmers staged the world’s largest strike on Nov. 26 and are continuing to shut down areas of the economy. On Dec. 12, the anniversary of the racist and discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act of India’s fascist-minded Modi government, the Boston South Asian Coalition brought international solidarity with these laborers to an organizing center of the world-imperialist project: Harvard Square in Cambridge, Mass.

Nearly 100 people came out in the pouring rain to denounce the U.S. and Indian governments’ violent police-state and austerity attacks against India’s multi-national working class.

Speakers from a broad range of progressive organizations applauded the occupation of New Delhi by hundreds of thousands of farmers, who have been brought to starvation by neoliberal laws slashing compensation for their produce.

Workers World Party salutes and applauds the latest massive Nov. 26 strike of 250 million plus workers and farmers that shut down India. This massive outsourcing of millions of injured workers is exactly what is needed here in the U.S. It is also why there is almost zero coverage in the U.S. corporate-controlled media of this historic workers’ mobilization against austerity and repression.

The U.S. ruling class fears what the working class is capable of when it gets inspired, organized and unified in demanding social, economic and political justice, along with reparations for centuries of crimes against Indigenous and Black and Brown peoples.

The farmers who grow the food to feed people must be defended and their rights and just compensation restored! Tohell with the new anti-farmer bills and labor codes that will reap megaprofits for the greedy agribusinesses and bosses while stifling workers rights and wages!

For more information, go to TheBostonCoalition.org.

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**Portland activists block eviction**

Continued from page 1

Since the arrests, more and more fighters have gathered behind the 10-foot-high barricades surrounding the house, where many live round the clock. People have brought in boxes of food and crates of bottled water, firewood, sleeping bags, tents, curious sheet and more. The nice smell of food cooked, along with the biting but pleasant aroma of smoke from cedar wood fires, wafted over the compound.

Barricades were strengthened in anticipation of more police attacks. Groups of a dozen or so would sometimes stand around wood fires near entrances, armed for self-defense. Oregon is an “open carry” state, meaning that most people are allowed to carry firearms openly without a permit.

**Resistence wins**

The determination to defend the last Black family in the Albina appears to have paid off. KGW News reported Dec. 10 that the developer who bought the Red House is willing to sell it back to the Kinneys at cost. As of Dec. 11, a GoFundMe campaign had raised over $289,000 — enough for the Kinneys to buy back their home under such a deal. The developer seems to be responding to public pressure — but has not yet directly contacted the family.

According to a Dec. 14 statement by the Kinney family, Portland’s Mayor Ted Wheeler has had to back down on his threat to use police to evict the family by force. The family has demanded and received a public apology from Wheeler for harm caused to the family and for violence caused by racist demoniza-

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**‘Solidarity with people, not the state’**

By Maureen Skehan

Skehan delivered the Workers World Party solidarity message at the Dec. 12 action called by the Boston South Asian Coalition in support of farmers and workers in India who are leading historic strikes.

As we come together on a rainy Saturday, there is much cause for revolutionary optimism as we lift up and learn from the mighty workers’ struggle in India today. On Dec. 15 of last year, the courageous women-led uprising in Shaheen Bagh, Delhi, was born in direct response to India’s state-sponsored violence and repression against Muslim students, workers, their fans and migrants. With women in the lead, this movement quickly spread across India and electrified the world, inspiring women workers and our class everywhere.

The strength and breadth of the Shaheen Bagh movement caused the Modi government and its imperialist backers in the U.S. and Britain to tremble with fear, seeing the organized determination of the workers and most oppressed in society fighting back. Well, they’re still trembling today after two world historic strikes have shook the Indian state and global capitalist system in just a year’s time.

Workers World Party salutes and applauds the latest massive Nov. 26 strike of 250 million plus workers and farmers that shut down India. This massive outsourcing of millions of injured workers is exactly what is needed here in the U.S. It is also why there is almost zero coverage in the U.S. corporate-controlled media of this historic workers’ mobilization against austerity and repression.

The U.S. ruling class fears what the working class is capable of when it gets inspired, organized and unified in demanding social, economic and political justice, along with reparations for centuries of crimes against Indigenous and Black and Brown peoples.

The farmers who grow the food to feed people must be defended and their rights and just compensation restored! To hell with the new anti-farmer bills and labor codes that will reap megaprofits for the greedy agribusinesses and bosses while stifling workers rights and wages!

The images of farmers breaking through blockades to march on Parliament and workers holding sit-ins and mass rallies, blocking train tracks and burning effigies of Modi — all of these would bring much holiday cheer to U.S. workers under attack, if they could see and feel the strength of this massive, coordinated fightback.

Workers here want to study and learn from the organizing methodology of workers in India, and the unions, and socialist and communist organizations — on how they reach the masses and mobilize them into an organized strike force.

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**New York City**

**Cops and landlords go hand in hand**

By Tony Murphy

With the looming, Jan. 31 expiration of the federal ban on evictions, landlords already evicting tenants — protests, stop defense and militant housing actions are spreading.

In Brooklyn, a Dec. 11 downtown protest that began at housing court made the just demand to stop all evictions during the twin pandemics of COVID and joblessness. Rallies were met by violence and arrests by the NYPD. The crowd of about 50 people faced dozens of police, two helicopters and at least ten police vans. Cops put 20 people in jail, one of them an 80-year-old woman.

Dozens of people mobilized jail support and cheered protesters when they were released from jail later that night. Their arrests and detention also exposed them to COVID. A video of the police attacking the anti-eviction protesters went viral.

— Photo and report by Tony Murphy
Now's the time to 'accelerate our efforts' to free Mumia

By Angela Davis

Professor Angela Davis, herself once a political prisoner, is a founding member of Critical Resistance, a national organization dedicated to dismantling the prison industrial complex. On Nov. 16, Davis delivered the following remarks during the virtual press conference “Freedom & Abolition: A critical moment in the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal.”

Mumia Abu-Jamal has played such a pivotal role in the processes of popular education that he led us to this critical juncture and what one might call the century-and-a-half-year-old effort to acknowledge the structural and persistent character of racism and to take seriously the demands for abolition. Abolition of the death penalty, of prisons, of the police. And so it is right and just that we should accelerate our efforts, on this new terrain, to finally free our brother.

Much attention has been focused on Philadelphia recently from the elections, to the police killing of Walter Wallace because he was experiencing a mental health crisis, to the arrest by federal agents of the teacher and co-founder of Black Lives Matter, to the remembrance of Daniel Berrigan on the one-year anniversary of his death, to the trial of former police officer Derek Chauvin for the murder of George Floyd, and Walter Wallace, and to the police killing of Walter Wallace, and racial capitalism, and specifically its centrality to policing, we gather here to demand the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners whose trials and sentences were irreparably impacted by racial capitulations. They have no other choice than to flee. Thus, the borders and the walls and immigrant detention facilities are integrally linked to racist policing and the prison industrial complex.

I think that few people know that the investigation of the killing of Daniel Faulkner, the policeman whom Mumia was accused of killing, that this investigation was conducted not by the homicide unit of the Philadelphia police department but by the “Civil Defense Unit,” which was the local police arm of [former FBI Director] J. Edgar Hoover’s COINTELPRO. His declassified 500-page FBI file shows that the Philadelphia police, in consultation with COINTELPRO, for many years had tried to paint a criminal image of Mumia. We also know that at least one-third of the police involved in his case were jailed after it was discovered that they had systematically tampered with evidence in large numbers of cases across the city of Philadelphia.

COINTELPRO's role in Mumia's frame-up

As you’ve heard from Johanna [Fernandez] and others—Luke Stewart and his supporters.

I think we need to emphasize the fact that the very same forces that have driven the creation of the prison industrial complex are responsible for the fact that many people in other countries, in countries of the Global South, have seen their whole culture and economies destroyed by capitalist incursions. They have no other choice than to flee. Thus, the borders and the walls and immigrant detention facilities are integrally linked to racist policing and the prison industrial complex.

I think we need to accelerate our efforts, on this new terrain, to demand the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners whose trials and sentences were irreparably impacted by racial capitulations. They have no other choice than to flee. Thus, the borders and the walls and immigrant detention facilities are integrally linked to racist policing and the prison industrial complex.

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The framing of Mumia and his incarceration are part of a larger story of structural racism and repression linked to global capitalism, linked to racial capitalism.

Buffalo, N.Y.

By Workers World Buffalo bureau

A group of anti-racists and community members assembled Dec. 5 across the street from a park next to a low-income housing project in an industrial area in north Buffalo, N.Y. They came to oppose a parade organized by the Rolling Patriots, a white supremacist group.

The anti-racist demonstrators held signs condemning the presence of extreme right-wing groups and demanding better protections for workers facing the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Rolling Patriots often participate in anti-mask, anti-vaccine events, catering to the interests of business owners who want to remain open despite all-time-high COVID-19 infection rates in Erie County. They endanger the health and well-being of frontline workers and people of color.

The Patriots use anti-mask and anti-shutdown rhetoric to lure people in and recruit many for more violent white supremacist groups.

The parade was attended by members of the Watchmen, a local hate group that also has connections with other far-right extremist groups like the Proud Boys and the Aryan Renaissance Society.

As the Patriots’ caravan left the parking lot to start their parade, Watchmen and Proud Boys approached the anti-racist demonstrators, armed with heavy flashlights and stun guns. A short scuffle broke out, but no serious injuries occurred.

The anti-racist demonstrators held strong against the fascist threats and attacks, while Tonawanda police, Erie County Sheriffs and New York State Troopers looked on, making no arrests.

The message from the community was clear: the people of Western New York opposed to racism, whether it manifests itself openly, or hides behind anti-mask propaganda.

Buffalo, Dec. 5.

Anti-racists oppose ‘Watchmen’ hate group
Detroit
State representative confronts white supremacy

By Martha Grevatt

Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani took his road show around Michigan to franchising Black voters—to the Michigan State Legislature's House Oversight Committee on Dec. 2. At that hearing an African-American member of the committee, Rep. Cynthia A. Johnson of Detroit, raised a point of order asking why the chair was "allowing people to come in and talk" rather than address Johnson's courageous challenge, Republican Chair Matt Hall ruled her out of order.

Rep. Johnson is a Detroit community activist who is elected to the State House last year. She says that since the hearing she has received "thousands" of calls that include death threats and despicable slurs. Speaking on CNN, she compared the racist and misogynistic abuse to domestic violence, but said she is not afraid of the "cowards" who sent anonymous messages.

In a video posted on social media, Johnson defied the bigots. "This is just a warning to you Trumpsters: Be careful. Walk lightly. We ain't play- ing with you. Enough of the shenanigans. Enough is enough!" Condemning those of you who are sol- diers, you know how to do it. Do it right. Be in order. Make them pay.

Johnson's righteous response drew the ire of Michigan House Speaker Lee Chatfield who removed her from all committee assignments, including the Oversight Committee and Families, Children and Seniors Committee. Chatfield said he was "looking into further disciplinary action as the proper authori- ties conduct their own investigations." In a Dec. 9 statement he said, "We have been empow- ered by the people of Michigan to enact meaningful legislation that speaks to the needs and concerns of our constituents. We are determined to continue working towards that goal, and we will not be deterred by those who seek to undermine our work.

Johnson clarified that by "soldiers" she meant "soldiers for Christ, soldiers against racism, soldiers against domestic vio- lence, soldiers against domestic terrorism." However, rather than rush- ing to her defense, Democratic Party offi- cials, including Michigan's Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, have taken a wishy-washy tone—denouncing the threats against Johnson and her response to them. This draws an equal sign between racism and opposition to racism.

The exception is the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus, which issued a statement demanding Speaker Chatfield "apologize and reinstate Representative Cynthia A. Johnson to her committee assignments immediately." Now even Gov. Whitmer is saying Chatfield too far in removing Johnson from her committee.

Community rallies behind Johnson

Johnson's activism did not begin with her election to office. In 2015, for exam- ple, she organized "Light Walks." Held at night, the weekly walks continued for months until finally the city installed working street lights in the Dexter/Waverly area of Detroit. (Workers World, Sept. 3, 2015)

Unlike the Democratic establishment, Detroit community organizations have denounced the attacks on Rep. Johnson. Michigan United issued a statement of support, saying, "Rather than continue this futile effort to silence Black voices, lawmakers should instead unite to con- front our common enemy, the virus."

Detroit Action stated: "The call for civility from the Michigan Democratic Party is woefully insufficient as it fails to adequately support Rep. Johnson. It fails to address how Rep. Johnson's treatment is steeped in misogynoir, and fails to address the actual pain that representa- tives of color are dealing with when faced with actual death threats."


Racist attacks on legislators of color, along with racist voter suppression, serve to bolster national oppression, settler colonialism and capitalist exploitation. These attacks must be challenged at every turn. (?)

Ohio and the Central Ohio Freedom Fund. Speakers Gooson's sib- lings, uncle and mother, who all spoke lovingly of "Tank." Goodson's sixth-grade teacher, with whom he reconnected as an adult, gave remarks, along with Pastor Mike Young and speakers for spon- sor groups. The family attorney, Sean Walton Jr., spoke on many issues raised by the case, including the right of Black people to bear arms.

There had also been a rally the previ- ous evening called by Black Liberation Movement Central Ohio and Deescalate Ohio New Hemispheres Movement.

No charges in homicide

Goodson's family has made eight demands: the immediate termination, arrest and indictment of Michael Jason Meade for the murder of Casey Goodson Jr.; revocation of Jason Meade's pension; transparency in the investigation and release of all video and audio recordings; immediate release of evidence to Casey's mother, Tamala Payne; the Franklin County Sheriff's Department cover the funeral expenses of Casey Goodson Jr; the firing of Columbus Police Chief Thomas Quinlan for negligence in failing to contact the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation in a timely manner; com- mitment from Franklin County Commissioners to divest from Columbus County Sheriff's Department; and commitment from the Columbus City Council to divest from Columbus Police Department. (BQCfacebook)

According to BQC, "the investigation has been terrible from the beginning, with Columbus Police intentionally not calling in the correct people to process a police brutality incident." The state Bureau of Criminal Investigation then declined to take the case. The investigation is now in the hands of the FBI and the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Franklin County coroner ruled the cause of death as homicide. There were "multiple gunshot wounds to the torso." Since the shooting, it has come to light that Meade is a right-wing pastor who manages to find Biblical "justification" for police brutality. These views, voiced in a 2018 sermon and in his interview for his current job the same year, apparently did not raise any red flags with the sheriff's office.

Columbus police are known for exces- sive use of force, including against demonstra- tors protesting the lynching of George Floyd. The rally crowd held up the names of Henry Green, Julius Tate Jr., Tyree King, and others killed in recent years by Columbus police and around the state.

At the protest, people chanted "Lock up Jason Meade!" and "Justice for Casey Goodson!" A march followed the rally. Solidarity demonstrations were held in other cities. (?)
Defend incarcerated workers!

By Monica Moorehead

These comments were given at the Dec. 10 webinar organized by the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party.

The theme of tonight’s webinar is “Build class solidarity with incarcerated workers: No walls in the workers’ struggle.” The PSC wanted to sponsor this webinar on International Human Rights Day — the day in 1948 that the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UDHR is a document that supposedly proclaims “the inalienable rights which every one is entitled to as a human being — regardless of race, color, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”

But as revolutionary activists, we know that these words ring hollow for those living in the belly of the beast, the U.S. — a country built on the legacy of stolen Indigenous lands, slavery, colonialism and wage slavery. We live under a capitalist system that puts profits before people’s needs; where millions of people are disenfranchised because of their nationality, gender identity, gender expression, disabilities, age and/or their social status.

And this is especially true of incarcerated workers, who are super-exploited as slave labor and are super-repressed if they are people of color, women, gender non-conforming, disabled and/or elderly. Prisoners suffer an even greater social stigma of demonization — that is, being labeled as dangerous, expendable. Therefore, millions are locked away, unseen and unheard, for years, for life — and even executed — whether they committed “crimes” or not.

Just look at all the federal executions that have occurred recently with rapid speed under Trump. Another one took place today and four more are scheduled for January.

But the incarcerated are part of our class, the working class, who are resisting terrible conditions intensified by the COVID-19 crisis, including unemployment, hunger, and evictions. Yes, incarcerated workers, be they in jails, prisons or detention centers, are also organizing and resisting decades of intolerable conditions, including COVID — especially incarcerated workers in Alabama, who are organizing a month-long work stoppage starting Jan. 1.

As someone who was born in Alabama, under the trauma known as segregation, I can only imagine the multiple trauma of modern-day slavery conditions behind these walls, especially as the U.S. Justice Department is suing the Alabama prison system for violating the human rights of prisoners.

We will be hearing about this important struggle on the inside and also how our movement on the outside can show solidarity as a movement with them.

We will also be getting an update on the almost four-decades-long struggle to free political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was falsely arrested 30 years ago, on Dec. 9, 1981, and convicted of killing a police officer in July of 1981. Mumia was sentenced to death row — until he was released into general population in 2011 due to a worldwide movement to save his life. But the struggle continues to free him from a Pennsylvania dungeon — and now Colin Kaepernick has joined this fight.

So as we prepare to usher in a new year of struggle and fightback, as we prepare to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic Attica prison rebellion, we say, “Tear down the prison walls and free them all!”

Swift Justice

‘A fight from the inside out’

These slightly edited comments are from a Dec. 10 webinar organized by the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party. Swift Justice is currently incarcerated within the Alabama Department of Corrections system.

For more on prison stoppage by the Free Alabama Movement, see Workers World, Dec. 4.

Co-moderator Devin C.: What is the Free Alabama Movement? Some have deemed the Alabama prisons as the most inhume in the U.S. Can you shed some light on some of the conditions there? Why is it important for people on the outside to show solidarity with these imprisoned workers’ January month-long work stoppage and economic blackout?

Swift Justice: I personally wouldn’t sit there and try to gauge how inhumane one prison is over another prison in the United States. Any prison that has any human rights violations is inhumane; it’s all equal in our eyes. The issue here in Alabama is showing the solidarity we have there. As you know, Alabama is a state that is calling themselves a prison reformer, a prison abolitionist, a slavery reformer, a prison education reformer, a prison education reformer, a prison 

Here in Alabama, we have seen over and over, and all throughout the years, overcrowding. Overcrowding is one of the leading factors why we have issues inside the prison such as violence and the unjustified deaths by overdoses and by natural causes as well. When you have overcrowding, you are heightening diseases, you’re heightening the issue of mental health — and you’re heightening every aspect of any prison reform that people are fighting against today.

It’s really inscribable here. Guys live in filthy areas; they live in areas that are just inches away from another man. And with this coronavirus epidemic, it is even worse — the denial of mental health and denial of medical treatment.

You would not have this [outside] in what we call “the free world.” So why wouldn’t you have us sitting like this, but you call it rehabilitation?

Devin C.: This month of economic blackout and strike will cut right through a very important moment. On Jan. 20, we will see a transition of U.S. power from Donald Trump to Joe Biden. Neither of them is committed to prison abolition. Now that Biden has won under the guise that he is a progressive alternative to Trump, how will the Free Alabama Movement move forward to appeal to people to embrace prison abolition and embrace reform?

Swift Justice: I don’t think our focus is on Biden, as much as it is on society for real. Because one thing about Biden, we already know Biden’s history. Nobody that is calling themselves a prison reformer, a prison abolitionist, a slavery abolitionist, is ignorant to the fact that Biden wrote the 1994 crime bill — which was a huge contributor to the overcrowding all over the U.S. in the federal prisons and adopted in the states.

Our focus is, we’re just going to keep moving forward. There’s nothing that’s gonna stop us from doing what we’re doing. We are dealing with the 13th Amendment itself [allowing slave labor in prisons] in a joint resolution that’s being processed through the Congress very soon, and the Department of Justice is suing the Alabama Department of Corrections.

Joe Biden, if anything, he’ll be the one who vetoes any changes. And he will not make any changes personally; the presidential powers don’t exist to that point. So we have to rely on those people that we have put these legacies in. And it’s looking good; it’s really looking good right now. Bernie Sanders has been pushing to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the heroic Attica prison rebellion, we say, “Tear down the prison walls and free them all!”

As we’ve always said, this has been a fight from the inside out, not just an outside fight. We are not going to sit back! We know as freedom fighters that nobody is going to be the “knight in shining armor.” We cannot depend on any elected official to do that.

Finally, this is all nothing but fuel to the fire. I mean, this should give spark to anybody who is in prison. As we’ve always said, this has been a fight from the inside out, not just an outside fight. We are not going to sit back! We know as freedom fighters that nobody is going to be the “knight in shining armor.” We cannot depend on any elected official to do that.

We know that we’re going to have to fight for ourselves. In order to save us, we have to save us.
Kempis Ghani Songster

‘The struggle of working people in the prison system’

These slightly edited comments are from the Dec. 10 webinar organized by the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party.

Co-moderator Monica Moorehead: We’re very excited to welcome to the panel Kempis Ghani Songster. He is the Healing Justice Organizer for the Amistad Law Project and the host of the new monthly podcast show, “Move It Forward.” He is also co-founder of Ubuntu Project and the host of the new monthly podcast show, “Move It Forward.” He is the Healing Justice Organizer for the Amistad Law Project and the host of the new monthly podcast show, “Move It Forward.” He is also co-founder of Ubuntu Project and the host of the new monthly podcast show, “Move It Forward.”

Kempis Ghani Songster: Thank you for having me. As Swift Justice was talking, and I was hearing the sounds coming through his phone receiver, it brought back some visceral memories from me, some cellular memories for me, because December 28 will mark my third year back in the wide open world after 30 years of incarceration.

That began in 1987, at the age of 15, for me. I was sentenced to life without parole at the age of 15 in Pennsylvania. And in Pennsylvania, life without parole is not like life in a lot of other states, where you might serve 20 years or 25 years or any number of years, and then you’re eligible to see the parole board. In Pennsylvania, life means natural life — you’re sent to prison effectively to die. Which is why we increasingly know “life” now as “death by incarceration by the state.” Because anything so final as death shouldn’t be called life. We call it what it is — death by incarceration.

The only reason why I’m on this call with you today is because the U.S. Supreme Court made some rulings, starting on June 25, 2012, with Mila vs. Alabama, saying that it’s unconstitutional to sentence children, or people under 18 years of age, to mandatory life without parole. And because it applied to me, I was eventually resentenced. But I’m still on lifetime parole — I’m on parole for the rest of my life. So I’m not entirely free, I’m still chained to the plantation.

The ‘we’ of incarcerated people

When I speak about incarcerated people, I’m going to use the term “we.” I’m not going to say “them,” because I still feel I’m talking about me, because at any given time, I could be sent back to serve out the rest of my sentence. I really appreciate being here, with you. That’s not some trite cliché thing to say. I really appreciate it, because I know that I’m not supposed to be here. In Pennsylvania and in my prison experience, the struggle is a lot like what Swift Justice was talking about. My analysis of the situation of incarcerated workers comes from my observation, as well as analysis that was grafted by people like Karl Marx and James Boggs and C.L.R. James and Hannah Arendt.

Hannah Arendt talked about a society where exchange of products has become the chief public activity, where even the laborers — because they’re confronted with commodity owners — become owners of their own labor in a manufacturing society that judges men not as persons, but as producers according to the quality of their products. It was through that lens that I started to analyze exactly what the situation was with incarcerated workers.

The value of work to someone inside

Because we were in a situation where we were already devalued as human beings, we were already squeezed out of a workforce that was increasingly automated and cybernated. We were the people that were no longer needed in the workforce. And so this society’s answer to this growing army of people who were no longer needed in the workforce was to round them up and warehouse them.

And in the situation that we found ourselves, as we entered the prison gates, we were strip-searched and told to strip down and put on this new prison uniform. As we walked through our day-to-day life in prison, we began to see that, not only are we judged as nonpersons, but we’re also judged as non-producers anymore. We’re just consuming items identified by a number.

Too few of the people that I knew would look at their new predicament with that kind of political depth, at least initially, but unless you were the walking dead, you felt the sting of being slapped by an invisible hand entering that dreary place where everyone’s status says to them loud and clear — you have no value, you ain’t worth shit to society anymore if you ever did at all. To have your labor valued even at 90 cents an hour can seem like a saving grace. Just as having a good job in free society can do wonders for a person’s self-esteem, having a job or work assignment in prison can go a long way with helping a person preserve or regain a modicum of dignity and self-worth.

Resistance and prison work

But some men behind the walls, like at the prison that I left from, we had never worked in the free world, we had been in a prison since we were children — like me incarcerated since the age of 15. So work offered people like me a sense of being grown-up and responsible, even if you felt the sting of being slapped by an invisible hand entering that dreary place where everyone’s status says to them loud and clear — you have no value, you ain’t worth shit to society anymore if you ever did at all.

In the situation of incarcerated workers who are no longer needed in a workforce that is becoming increasingly automated and cybernated, work becomes a tool to maintain and grow markets for their weapons — so also the flames of more and more war in order to create, maintain and grow markets for their weapons — so also the responses of endless war — a genocide of war campaigns on other human beings and other parts of the world. Weapon manufacturers such as General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Boeing — just to name a few — all depend on prison labor.

This has been our struggle in Pennsylvania, fighting against life without parole, which basically guarantees that the state will have an increasing number of permanently held people, so that they can squeeze, forever, every last drop of labor power they can from these individuals — from us.

Prison work and the outside world

Now moving forward, I’m seeing what the relevance of our prison struggle has to do with folks on the outside. The most problematic layer of the conditions that motivated the emergence of the movement in Alabama is the level to which the prison-based economy has been assimilated into the culture of society at large. Everybody out in society has somehow been benefiting from prison labor. And not only has everyone in prison been participating in their own exploitation and oppression through prison labor themselves, but they’ve been enabling this country’s prosecution of endless wars — a genocide of war campaigns on other human beings and other parts of the world. Weapon manufacturers such as General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Boeing — just to name a few — all depend on prison labor.

Thus, imprisoned people, if they organize properly, can very well have a significant impact on this country’s ability to destroy more lands and more people. But as the weapons industry pays politicians to stoke the flames of more and more war in order to create, maintain and grow markets for their weapons — so also they’re going to force prison labor to increase and accelerate. Becausewar-enslaved human beings are simply too valuable to release — even and especially after they educate, rebuild, rehabilitate themselves, transform themselves.

Continued on page 8
Ramsey Prison Unit

The terror of Texas

By Nanon M. Williams

Nanon Williams was arrested in 1992 at age 17 for capital murder and spent years on death row. In 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled people under 18 could not be sentenced to death. His sentence, along with 70 others, was commuted to life and he is still fighting to prove his innocence. He has earned two associate degrees, a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree; he was about to finish his second master’s, when the prison declared no one could earn two masters.

For decades Williams has published a newsletter, “The Williams Report,” with the help of his comrades in California. He began writing poems after going to death row — published in a 2000 book: “The Ties That Bind Us” — and has continued to write essays as well as several other books. With his autobiography “Still Surviving,” his words began to be heard across the country, and he became a leader against the Texas death row. Later Williams published “The Darkest Hour: Stories and Interviews from Death Row” exposing the inhumane and brutal conditions others have faced.

In a personal communication, he wrote, “For three decades they have stripped me of my freedom, of love, of having children, or even the simple act of attending a funeral. I now have grey hair, yet I am still young. I have survived hundreds of executions — abuse at a level the mind can’t fathom — and these people think I won’t challenge them on the BS they are doing here? Please.”

In a cover letter sent with this article, Williams expressed gratitude to Workers World newspaper for being a voice for the voiceless. — By Gloria Rubac

Rubac wrote an article in Workers World newspaper dated Nov. 19, “And what?” is now the question asked.

The message is being sent that if inmates in Texas prisons dare to write about the brutality, violence, abuse, terror and rising death toll within its plantation-like slave camps, prisoners will be punished.

Guards are asking questions about who contributed to the article; statements are being made, and phone calls are currently being reviewed. Why? For what purpose? Do we not have freedom of speech, the right to assemble, to file a grievance or call our loved one to address what takes place, or contact the media to help us without fear of being persecuted? Are our constitutional rights so blantly disregarded that we still face solitary confinement, risk being shipped count- less miles away from our loved ones and then arrive at a new prison with the label that we are a threat?

Only a couple of years ago, Donsha Crump and I exposed the quota system for disciplinary charges here in Texas prisons. We made it public when a writ- ten order was found that illustrated in writing that it is a common practice in Texas prisons to give cases for a “gig.”

This was exposed by various activists as well as Workers World newspaper and eventually mainstream press. Pressure mounted. The prison system had to investi- gate and looked at various departments within the prisons. However, we know we can’t expect an institution to investigate itself and come out with results against itself. That pro- cess was not only a sham, but a warning to prison administrators to simply be smarter as they prepare for gigs.

In fact at this very moment, security audits are taking place, as well as a PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) audit. Disciplinary cases have skyrocketed within this prison, especially with the new administration. The same practice is tak- ing place along with the same measures and means of threatening us to keep the hell quiet.

What is a gig?

What is a gig? It is a paperwork hustle to rob taxpayers of money, justify reasons to keep prisoners incarcerated by writ- ing bogus disciplinary cases and justify the funding needed for prisons to obtain paper trails, falsify bogus reports for hours of disciplinary hearings supposedly held and to justify money needed for security measures never used.

In other words, a paper trail is cre- ated so budgets are increased, which at the same time proves that prisoners are a threat to society.

We see front-page stories railing about crimes committed by prisoners being released, but this pales in comparison to the horrific crimes and brutal abuse the public never sees, the crimes that aren’t on the front page. For prisoners like us to dare to challenge the nature of our incarcer- ation, who have the courage to chal- lenge a system hell-bent on destroying us, prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal, Shaka Sankofa and so many others, we end up being killed or end up rotting in prisons for decades.

If we are to change as a people or as a country, we must first look inside our prisons to support those considered to be the least of us. We must look at the poor, working-class communities whose youth are destined to be warehoused in these modern day concentration camps, where people are being executed, outright killed, tortured and abused in ways that destroy what we are.

If the government treats people less than human, what can we expect? If the system permits us for speaking out and organizing against racist injustice and abuse, then everyone’s rights are threat- ened anywhere!

The Internet has made the world a small place, and we can connect with each other globally — so let’s use that to create a better world. We can only do that by challenging the power structures that still see us as dol- lar signs, people who can produce profits, people who can be exploited. For a system to see us as mothers and fathers, or sons or daughters, or simply as human beings, change must come.

We must make fundamental change. We must make a systematic change! We can do it! Yes, we will!

Kemps Ghanie Songster

‘The struggle of working people in the prison system’

Continued from page 7

So the prison population continues to increase. Even as crime rates drop, the prison population still goes up, because people are receiving longer sentences — life with- out parole, death by incarceration — in order to hold them in prison and milk their labor power until they die.

This is why building solidarity with incarcerated work- ers is so important, because there is no separation between what goes on “outside” in society and what happens to incarcerated workers behind the walls. In fact, mass incar- ceration is our society’s response to the increased rejection of people of color and poor people from the workforce.

Mass incarceration — I’m not a fan of the term “mass incarceration.” To me, the word is “human warehousing.” It’s not mass incarceration. These are not faceless masses of people; these are human beings. They had births; their parents had dreams for them; they got families that are doing the time with them. They have faces; they have sto- ries; they have souls, and they have spirits. This is not mass incarceration.

This is human warehousing and the beginning of the movement. One of the first steps in this movement is to interrogate our own consciousness, our own perception of the issues that we’re fighting against. And that means interrogating the language that we use, right? We’re talking on this Day of International Human Rights. We have to use language in our movement that confers humanity onto people.

COVID-19 and prison

So in this human warehousing, it’s crucial that we address the issue of the pandemic. Because COVID-19 behind the walls is killing people en masse, Pennsylvania prisons have turned into volcanoes of the virus; they’re epicenters of the virus. People are dying; guards are coming in and just infecting people left and right.

And we’re screaming out at the top of our lungs, on our rooftops: “Release the vulnerable! Release the vulnerable!” And they won’t, they won’t release people.

Even though the U.N. has issued a call for countries all around the world to decarcerate — especially urging America to begin to decarcerate. Countries like Turkey have already released over 100,000 prisoners. Iraq released over 100,000 people. Countries all over are way ahead of the game.

The U.S. is using punitive measures to address a public health crisis. And this is very, very important for the rest of us in this society, because it’s an egregious and glaring con- tinuing crisis of human rights abuse.
By John Catalinotto

Venezuela’s December 6 National Assembly (AN) elections overcame the prior pro-imperialist majority in the body, described through the United Socialist Party (PSUV) into an overwhelmingly majority. President Nicolás Maduro, also of the PSUV, won big.

The imperialist politicians and corporate media, especial in the U.S. and Canada, will attempt to minimize the defeat of their puppet Juan Guaidó and disparage the legitimacy of the elections.

Elected to the AN, a constituent assembly to the last AN and appointed acting president from his party, in January 2019 Guaidó declared himself interim president of the country. U.S. and European imperialist governments quickly backed Guaidó and his fraudulent claim. They tried to mobilize all anti- imperialist Venezuela parties behind him.

In an attempt to unseat Maduro, Guaidó and his suppor ters mounted three serious maneuvers during 2019, including a barely disguised invasion over the border with Colombia. The Venezuelan armed forces backed the Maduro government, as did the popular mobilization; together they crushed these coup attempts despite U.S. backing for Guaidó.

The coup failures further split the already divided Venezuelan opposition into two major factions, both rep resenting the oligarchy. The sedentary pro-coup forces backing Guaidó were opposed by more moderate rightists wanting to work through the electoral system. They have even asked the U.S. to recognize the Venezuelan government, as all the sanctions and begin normal trade and investment.

Three of the four major oppo sition—pro-oligarchy—parties took part in the Dec. 6 elections. Guaidó refused to participate and called on everyone to boycott the election. Not everyone did.

Some 107 parties, including 97 in opposition to the government—most of them small hourglass parties—ran over 14,000 candidates for 277 seats in the AN. Seats are distributed through a combi nation of direct votes for candidates and proportional representation for parties, with large voting percentages leading to overrepresentation.

Regarding the electoral blocs whose political impact we are discussing, here are the results: PSUV bloc 69.3% (253 seats), the rightist Democratic Alliance 17.7% (18 seats), Communist Party (PCV) 2.7% (1 seat) and Homeland for All (PPC) 1.4% (0 seats).

The latter two are considered to the left of the PSUV. Maduro was re-elected overwhelming in the December elections. While the PSUV is a bourgeois party, the left has insignificant independent political weight.

The PCV has petitioned for seven seats instead of one.

Despite the precautions for COVID-19, the vote ran smoothly, and the observers—including those from pro gressive organizations in the U.S.—declared it was con ducted fairly and votes were fairly counted.

While there was a landslide victory for the PSUV, the strength of this victory is diminished by the relatively low level of participation, which was 31% of the eligible voters.

Venezuela Analysis podcast

For a more detailed analysis of the election in English, Workers World recommends its readers listen to a podcast moderated by Margaret Flowers of Popular Resistance that features her introduction and presentations by Vijay Prashad of Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research and Paul Dobson of Venezuelanalysis. (For podcast, go to venezuelanalysis.com/analysis/19077.)

Flowers made it clear she believed the main duty of anti-imperialists working within the imperialist countries was to expose the lies and anti-Mad uro, anti-revolutionary propaganda of the corporate media and to fight to get world imperialism off the backs of the Venezuelans.

Prashad discussed the full-court press attack by U.S. imperialism on Bolivarian Venezuela over the last two decades, which he called “hybrid warfare.” War is not just the physical attack, he explained, but there is information warfare, diplomatic war, an attempt to isolate the enemy, economic warfare and war on the country’s currency. All of this has been waged against Venezuela.

The U.S. has realized, Prashad said, that while it can bomb the hell out of a country, it can’t subdue the pop ulation, thus “it can’t really win.” It tries to delegitimize the government and wage economic, commercial and financial war, creating a major currency problem, mak ing it impossible for Venezuela to recover. “It has really screwed up the political sovereignty of the country.”

It appears as though the imperialists are doing nothing to intervene, he added, but they are really heavy on the hybrid war, but also directly by the pandemic, which makes people want to stay home, and by calamitous fuel shortages in the midst of an election, which limit trans portation to voting sites.

There’s a problem for all socialist experiments that rely on commodity prices, said Prashad. Venezuela still relies on its oil exports. When the price of oil dropped, the country lost income.

He pointed to the efforts of Vietnam to find ways of bringing capital into the country to develop domestic industry. “In a message to activists in the imperialist countries, Prashad urged that they tell their government to cool it and end the hybrid war.

Dobson and the critical left

Flowers pointed out that Dobson was a leftist working within Venezuela, and he would bring up points about domesti c problems and contradictions. Besides being active in Venezuela Analysis, Dobson is an active supporter of the Popular Revolutionary Alternative (APR), a new bloc of left-wing groups formed in July whose major element is the PCV and which takes a clear anti-imperialist stance on all international issues. These parties had supported the PSUV in confrontations with the rightists in past elections.

Dobson said the main question was the turnout, low for Venezuela standards. He blamed some of it on disill uision with political leaders and argued that most Venezuelans at this time are looking for solutions to the severe economic problems. He also pointed out that there has been migration out of the country of 4-5 mil lion voters, about 20% of the voters on the books.

Venezuela has held 26 elections since Hugo Chávez was elected president in 1998, Dobson noted. Without any evidence, the U.S., the European Union and the Organization of American States wants to isolate and isolate the country—refuse to recognize the legitimacy of the election and call it a fraud.

Dobson, discussed changes in the grassroots in Venezuela regarding government programs, saying: “We’re in the seventh year of recession;” and “The gov ernment is looking to resolve some of the problems in favor of large capital.” By this he meant that some of the sectors of the economy are being opened to privatization, without addressing the problem of low wages that are not enough to feed people adequately;

Dobson also explained that because the pro-Guaidó grouping called a boycott, it meant the PSUV would win in a landslide—as happened. That meant the parties in the APR could run independently without jeopardizing the Bolivarian government. So the APR groups withdrew their support from the government in power and publicly objected to the domestic policies of the PSUV.

There are 13 different groups that make up the Popular Revolutionary Alternative (APR). The PSUV put many obstacles up to their participation. They were not allowed to participate in the national debates, and they had to run on the PCV ticket in the elections.

The APR bloc proposed a significant increase in wages, especially minimum wages, and the taxing of future increases to the prices of a package of goods. They also pushed for government-planned construction of new factories to produce necessary goods. Dobson said they were pleased with the 170,000 votes that showed a rev olationary presence among the population.

For more on sanctions, see sanctionskill.org.
The pandemic of capitalist profiteers

There is a new term to describe the super-rich: “centi-billionaires.” They are individuals whose net worth comes to over $1 trillion.

Having added $67.2 billion to his net worth in 2020, Amazon owner Jeff Bezos tops the list of global centi-billionaires: $182.9 billion as of Dec. 13, according to the Forbes website. Next in line, Tesla founder Elon Musk’s net worth of $147 billion represents an increase of over $100 billion to his wealth since 2019.

Both Microsoft founder Bill Gates—net worth of $118.3 billion—and Facebook’s Mark Zuckerberg—net worth of $118 billion—saw income gains of over $10 billion each in 2020.

Meanwhile, the 651 richest billionaires in the U.S. enjoyed a total net increase of over $1 trillion since the pandemic hit in mid-March, according to an analysis of Forbes financial data by Americans for Tax Fairness and the Institute for Policy Studies. Their current combined net worth was over $4 trillion, as of Dec. 11. (tinyurl.com/3ggeeb8)

With tens of millions out of work, and an end to employer-mandated unemployment insurance looming on the horizon, it is hard to fathom just what it means to have this much wealth—and to have done next to nothing to earn it. After all, the mega-profits of these super-billionaires come from exploiting the labor of their workers, not from their own sweat and blood.

Over a third of U.S. adults—around 83 million—are having problems paying for basic needs including food, medical bills and rent/mortgage. The gains alone of these few hundred multi-billionaires since March 2020 could feed all the hungry, house all the homeless and cover all the medical needs related to the vaccine.

If the U.S. Congress fails to pass a new relief bill, 12 million people will lose unemployment benefits on Dec. 26. Frank Clemente, Americans for Tax Fairness Executive Director, calculated: “Their pandemic profits [$1 trillion] are so immense that America’s billionaires could pay for a major COVID relief bill and still not lose a dime of their pre-virus riches.” (truthout.org)

Jeff Bezos’ net worth is bigger than the GDP of most countries. He could give everyone in Amazon’s 1.2 million full- and part-time global workforce a $750,000 bonus and still be as wealthy as he was before COVID-19.

But such a “bonus” would only begin to cover the wealth Bezos has stolen from Amazon workers by not paying them the full value of their labor, especially since mid-March, when Amazon’s business skyrocketed due to the COVID-19 lockdowns.

In 2011 the Occupy Wall Street movement emerged to focus attention on the growing wealth gap between the wealthiest 1 percent versus the 99 percent of the population struggling to get by. At that time, Bezos’ net worth was “only” $18 billion. In the U.S., 1,210 people had a total net worth of $4.5 trillion—roughly two times the number of people who are worth that today. (www.forbes.com, Mar. 9, 2011)

That just confirms that, under capitalism, wealth concentrations are concentrated at the top and in fewer and fewer hands. While the COVID-19 crisis is a contributing factor, the extreme wealth disparities and the rise of the centi-billionaires in the U.S. were also fueled by four decades of flat wages for workers, and centuries of discrimination based on race, sex, gender, sexuality, disability and more.

The vast wealth of the capitalists could be used to make the COVID vaccines free and accessible to everyone—and particularly to the most vulnerable workers and oppressed people—in the shortest possible time frame. But while they work to prevent COVID-19 in welcome, what is long overdue is a revolution to end the pandemic of capitalist profiteers.

Nature under settler colonialism

By Rana Baker

This slightly edited presentation was given by Rana Baker, a Palestine Ph.D. student at Columbia University, during the online Palestine Writes Festival Dec. 5. Baker’s research focuses on infrastructure and environmental resources as micro-levels of political struggle in colonial and anti-colonial contexts.

It’s a real honor to be part of this historical festival and to be among many friends and allies. I’d like to thank Susana Wulhaba and all the organizers for their tireless work and for bringing us together in the best ways despite this pandemic.

My brief presentation will address environmental politics and the possibilities of resistance in Palestine—my primary focus is Gaza.

Over the past years, the environment became an impassioned yet invisible issue within the general discourse. Scientists are no longer the only spokespersons for the environment. Environmental politics is now a matter that concerns public opinion as well. As a self-purported liberal democracy, Israel hasbara [public-relations] has expanded to public opinion as well. As a self-purported liberal democracy, Environmental politics is now a matter that concerns public opinion as well.

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It was as if the Great March acquired its legitimacy from its peacefulness rather than the principle of proportionality—something that gave rise to the March in the first place. By conditions, I obviously mean the over seven decades of Israeli violence and colonial dispossession. There are a few points I’d like to make on this.

First, while the liberal humanitarian discourse of international law can be tactically useful, I believe it is long overdue that we scholars, lawyers and activists go on the offensive. International law has never and will never provide acts of creative disruption. Second, the possibilities of resistance are imposed. The colonized do not get to choose their means of resistance. The colonized are forced to be creative given the colonizer’s tendency to eliminate all possibilities of resistance. Gazans have been confined and isolated since 2007. They do not have the option of throwing stones at the Israelis or disrupting railway and transport infrastructure. Gazans and Israelis are separated by a massive physical space. Anyone who argues the opposite is lying.

Home-made incendiary kites and balloons must therefore be understood as acts of creative disruption. They are effective precisely because they cause damage to Israel’s agricultural economy and pit Israeli settlers against their government. They are also effective because Israel’s military machine is incapable of neutralizing them. Israeli warplanes cannot bomb incendiary kites because doing so would unnecessarily cause damage to Israeli agricultural communities.

These acts of creative disruption must receive our full endorsement in public and private. If Palestinian resistance causes environmental damage, it is because there is an Israeli to resist.

It is crucial to recognize the material nature of colonialism. Israel relies on a vast military and civilian infrastructure with which the very settler colonial integrity of the state cannot survive. Sabotaging and disrupting this infrastructure lie at the heart of every liberation movement from North Dakota to Palestine. These acts are conducive to liberation, and we should not shy away from supporting them.

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World Newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorhead.

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination • Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery • Black Youth: Repression & Resistance • The Struggle for Socialism Is Key • Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights • Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice • Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior • Racism & Poverty in the Delta • Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions • Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation • Are Conditions Right Again Today? Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion

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PHOTO: IBRAHEEM ABU MUSTAFA

Palestinian resister prepares incendiary kite to cross the border from Gaza into Israel-held land. A Palestinian flap and an incendiary kite fly in southern Gaza on April 27, 2018.

PHOTO: BASHIR AHMAD

PHOTO: BASHIR AHMAD Image 61x1140 to 213x1165
En los últimos años, varias campañas se han hecho para frenar a los grandes capitanías chinas y la corrupción y la deuda han tratado de frenar a los grandes capitalistas.

El primer paso fue un acuerdo del 2013 para corregir el gobierno y el gasto gubernamental. El siguiente fue llevar a los capitalistas chinos en invirtiendo miles de millones de dólares para que los reguladores estatales consideraran maniobras apenas disfrazadas para desviar capital fuera de China. Estas no fueron inversiones que de alguna manera ayudaron al desarrollo de China.

Se ordenaron reversir compras como el hotel Waldorf Astoria en Manhattan. En el 2018, Wu terminó con una sentencia de prisión de 18 años por delitos financieros, y Anbang fue nacionalizada.

Ren Zhiqiang, un miembro de alto rango del Partido Comunista y un magnate de la vivienda que dirigía una entidad inmobiliaria estatal, fue sentenciado a 18 años de prisión en septiembre del 2020 por soborno y malversación.

La represión ha puesto fin abrupta- mente al auge del gasto mundial de las empresas chinas. Mientras que en el 2016 las fusiones y adquisiciones en el extranjero ascendieron a $200 mil millones de dólares, en el 2019 se redujeron a menos de la mitad. El objetivo era lograr un crecimiento económico más rápido mediante la apertura de China por el crecimiento y la modernización como un organismo para aumentar la comunicación entre el gobierno y la economía privada, y para ayudar al gobierno en la gestión de la economía privada y lograr el desarrollo sostenible. Tiene varios escenarios en el Congreso Nacional del Pueblo.

El pasado, su objetivo había sido construir relaciones más estrechas con entidades comerciales e industriales extranjeras y ayudar a los miembros chinos a viajar al extranjero en busca de oportunidades comerciales que ayudarían a impulsar las reformas económicas de China. Este organismo ha pedido ahora que el partido y unidades de control que le permitan al partido auditar a los gerentes de las empresas tanto en corporaciones privadas como estatales.

Se espera que los comités de supervisión de los partidos jueguen un papel más importante en las firmas tecnológicas gigantes. Una serie de nuevas regulaciones también impidieron a los inversores extranjeros tomar participaciones directas en China.

El capitalismo, tanto chino como occidental, suele recibir todo el crédito por el salto en la capacidad productiva y el desarrollo moderno en China desde 1979.

Sin embargo, precisamente porque China masiva con cerca de mil millones y en la tierra, la propiedad estatal y de los inversores, la inmensa riqueza y el hecho de que los propietarios capitalistas pueden estar haciendo algo muy diferente. Lo más importante es que se está convirtiendo a través de la Federación de Industria y Comercio de China. Esta es una poderosa organización no gubernamental que cuida de las industrias e inversión de China. La federación se estableció en 1953, una época muy diferente. Aquellos fueron los primeros días de la reorganización de la industria y la construcción de una base socialista. La federación se describe a sí misma como un organismo para aumentar la comunicación entre el gobierno y la economía privada, y para ayudar al gobierno en la gestión de la economía privada y lograr el desarrollo sostenible. Tiene varios escenarios en el Congreso Nacional del Pueblo.

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Ant se había fijado para vender accio-
nes por un valor récord de $34,4 mil millones, pero el 3 de noviembre, solo un
año después de que la compañía reali-
zó la oferta pública inicial, (OPI), más
bienes de los capitalistas emergentes a la cons-
trucción socialista. Esto significa que se repite en muchas varia-
dores, que no se pueden controlar. Ant
contó con el apoyo de grandes marcas y empresas como Yahoo! News en el 7 de noviembre.

¿Cómo es esto posible?
La política de Ant Group ha sido uti-
lizada para el beneficio de los capitalistas emergentes, y los poderosos
chinos como Jack Ma son dispuestos a
poner en aspa
er la planificación socialista. Esto significa
que la planificación socialista, han tenido un papel
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