

SPIRIT OF MAY DAY: FIGHT BACK!

After Amazon vote: Unionize ALL workers

By Larry Holmes

The following edited remarks were made on an April 9 webinar entitled “The struggle continues — Next Steps for BAmazon Union and beyond — Organizers’ Meeting” organized by supportamazonworkers.org. Holmes is Workers World Party’s First Secretary and an organizer with the Workers Assembly Against Racism in New York City.

My heart, my solidarity goes out to the organizers and workers in Bessemer who fought so hard for this vote. The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union was outmatched and outgunned by this behemoth of a monster global capitalist corporation, Amazon. But still they did what, frankly, bigger unions should have done, who had more resources, infinitely more resources. The union took it on. But as comrade Saladin Muhammad said, this is one battle; this is the beginning.

The vote in Bessemer is not just a problem or crisis or a setback, or however you want to characterize it. It’s not just a problem for the workers in Alabama or for the workers in the South or for Amazon workers; it’s a problem for the whole working class, for the whole labor movement and for the left.

Most of us understood that we should not rely on 6,000 workers in Alabama to take on the biggest corporation in the world, a corporation that pretty much defines 21st-century global capitalism. It’s our crisis. Now labor must be challenged. This has to intensify a very necessary crisis inside the labor movement

on all levels, not just the leadership, not just the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO, but most importantly at the rank-and-file level.

That’s why I agree with Saladin Muhammad about going around and having meetings to talk to workers on a rank-and-file basis about this. The questions must be posed: What is labor going to do about this now? What is the response going to be? The only true answer is this: The working class and its organizations — not only the biggest and most important at the moment because of its resources — the organized labor movement must come up with a plan to respond to this, to organize Amazon — not just Bessemer — which has a million workers in this country, not including Whole Foods, which they own.

How are the unions going to work together? What’s their strategy? What is their plan? Which unions are going to work together and not compete with each other? How are they going to win over the militants in groups like Amazonians United and Whole Worker groups — like my good friend, Chris Smalls, the founder of the Congress of Essential Workers. They have a base in these Amazon and Whole Foods sites, and they feel alienated by the unions.

Unions are not who they run to, and they have good reasons for this; that — most of us agree on. But the problem is, the reality of the situation means that we must deal with the labor movement,

Continued on page 11

Smash police violence and white supremacy

By Monica Moorehead

May Day, International Workers Day, was born in the U.S. out of the struggle for the eight-hour day in 1886. Workers, many of them socialists and anarchists who migrated from other countries, risked their lives. Some — including the five Haymarket Martyrs executed by the state of Illinois Nov. 11, 1887 — sacrificed their lives so all workers around the world could be treated with dignity, winning better working conditions, a livable wage and decent benefits.

May Day is viewed by millions around the globe as a socialist commemoration, honored with marches, rallies and strikes where it is not a paid holiday. Over many decades, workers have used May Day not only to fight the greedy, profit-hungry bosses for economic rights, but to raise important political demands.

Fifteen years ago, on May 1, 2006 an estimated two million migrant workers, the majority from Central and South America, took to the streets in U.S. cities, large and small, sparked by the racist, reactionary Sensenbrenner legislation that would deny legal documents to allow migrants to live and work in the U.S. Joined by migrants from Africa, the Caribbean and allies, it is to date the largest May Day gathering in U.S. history. The main sentiment echoed was: “Sí, se puede” or “Yes, we can.”

Just like the socialist-inspired



Brooklyn Center, Minn., protest, April 16. More on p.3.

International Working Women’s Day, May Day is a constant reminder that every social issue is a worker’s issue. May Day 2021 carries forth that tradition.

The courageous but unsuccessful first attempt by the majority African American Amazon workers in Bessemer, Ala., to organize a union at the second-largest private employer in the U.S., has an important lesson: Classwide solidarity is decisive in pushing forward the struggle against capitalist exploitation. As long as private ownership dominates global production, no one workplace, large or small, whether a factory or a restaurant, can take on a capitalist on their own without the solidarity of the rest of their class.

Police violence is a workers’ issue

The phrase “every issue is a workers’ issue” is true in the ongoing struggle against police terror. At the present moment, there are three current incidents of state-sanctioned violence that have

Continued on page 3

Bulletin: Chauvin found guilty. Convict all killer cops! Abolish the police! More on workers.org



Celebrate Mumia Abu-Jamal’s 67th birthday. Free him now! See pages 6-7.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

TEAR DOWN
THE WALLS



In solitary for free speech 7



Viva
Ramsey
Clark! 5

Bigots thwarted 2

‘The fire has started’ 4

Trans resistance 4, 10

Editorial FedEx massacre 10

Working class activists beat back anti-choice bigots

By Devin Cole
Pensacola, Fla.
(Occupied Creek Muscogee land)

For four and a half months, abortion rights advocates have been defending the only abortion clinic in Pensacola, Fla. The defense effort is led by Workers World Party Central Gulf Coast branch, Strive (Socialist Trans Initiative) and Women’s March Pensacola. Every Saturday and most Fridays, working-class people have shown up to hold signs, chant and even set up fences made of tarp around American Family Planning (AFP), Pensacola’s reproductive health clinic.

This is to keep the patients and clinic workers safe and away from anti-choice reactionaries, who often set up horrific, photoshopped signs in front of the clinic and scream at patients and clinic workers. The “harmless” anti-choice bigots have responded to the ongoing clinic defense by verbally and physically threatening clinic defenders, going even so far as to call the police multiple times on clinic defenders who play music they don’t like.

Despite this, the clinic defenders have persisted in putting pressure on business owners not to allow the anti-choice bigots on their property. AFP is almost completely surrounded by several businesses that have all previously

remained “neutral” to the right-wingers’ presence. Finally, after four and a half months of pressure by clinic defenders, all but one of the businesses have signed a No Trespass Order, meaning that the anti-choice bigots are no longer permitted anywhere on their property.

Additionally, the road the clinic sits on was designated a “No Trespass Zone,” meaning that the anti-choice bigots can no longer stand or park anywhere on the road in front of the clinic. They are now banned from both the front and left side, which is where most of the entrances are and where patients are dropped off and picked up.

One ‘neutral’ holdout

One business has still refused to sign the order, claiming it wants to “remain neutral.” Unfortunately, its property line abuts the clinic, allowing anti-choice bigots to walk up and down the property, screaming at people inside the clinic or, even worse, at patients who have had surgery and are waiting to be picked up. So patients who have just had a safe, legal abortion procedure still have to exit where a group of hateful reactionaries can harass and berate them.

Clinic defenders, as of this writing, are continuing to mount pressure on the business to sign the No Trespass Order and remove the bigots from its property.

The clinic backs up to some woods, which are local government property and subject to its rule. So for this last business to sign the No Trespass Order would effectively ban the bigots from being anywhere around the clinic.

There is a long, violent history of reactionary anti-choice attacks on this clinic. It was bombed twice in the 1980s. In 1993 Dr. David Gunn, the OB/GYN at the clinic, was murdered. The following year, Dr. Gunn’s replacement, Dr. John Britton, was murdered by another anti-choice reactionary, Paul Jennings Hill. The clinic was firebombed in 2012. The clinic defenders are putting their safety and wellbeing on the line, but it is what must be done. And now it is paying off.



Pensacola clinic defenders stand up to bigots, Jan. 2. WW PHOTO: SHANNON P.

Continued on page 3



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, 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 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. □

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

National Office
147 W. 24th St., 2nd floor
New York, NY 10011
212.627.2994
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
PO Box 18123
Atlanta, GA 30316
404.627.0185
atlanta@workers.org

Austin
austin@workers.org

Bay Area
P.O. Box 22947
Oakland, CA 94609
510.394.2207
bayarea@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.
Boston, MA 02130
617.522.6626
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
335 Richmond Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14222
716.883.2534
buffalo@workers.org

Central Gulf Coast
(Alabama, Florida, Mississippi)
centralgulfcoast@workers.org

Cleveland
cleveland@workers.org

Durham, N.C.
804 Old Fayetteville St.
Durham, NC 27701
919.322.9 970
durham@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 3454
Houston, TX 77253-3454
713.503.2633
houston@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 34249
Philadelphia, PA 19101
610.931.2615
phila@workers.org

Portland, Ore.
portland@workers.org

Salt Lake City
801.750.0248
slc@workers.org

San Antonio
sanantonio@workers.org

West Virginia
WestVirginia@workers.org

MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD this week

♦ In the U.S.

- After Amazon vote: Unionize ALL workers 1
- Smash police violence and white supremacy 1
- Working class activists thwart anti-choice bigots . 2
- San Antonio activists take on cop ‘unions’ 3
- Portland on fire again over police killings. 3
- In Alabama ‘the fire has started!’ 4
- Students protest anti-transgender school staff . . 4
- Ramsey Clark, human rights fighter, 1927-2021 . 5
- ‘Mumia is a fighter’ 6
- Demand Mumia Abu-Jamal’s release now! 6
- Lavender and Red solidarity with Mumia! 7
- Prison punishes Bryant Arroyo for free speech . . 7
- Brick by brick, wall by wall, we will free Mumia . 7
- Trans women and police brutality in history . . . 10

♦ Around the world

- Madawaska Nation wins settlement in Canada . . 4
- Cuban unions build socialism. 8
- Raúl Castro honored 8
- Haiti at the abyss 9
- iFuera LUMA! — LUMA out of Puerto Rico! . . . 9
- Statement supporting the Syrian people. 9

♦ Editorial

- Racism, worker rights and the FedEx shooting . 10

♦ Noticias en Español

- Después del voto en Amazon 12

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

Vol. 63, No. 16 • April 22, 2021
Closing date: April 21, 2021

Editors: John Catalinotto, Martha Grevatt, Deirdre Griswold, Monica Moorehead, Betsey Piette, Minnie Bruce Pratt

Web Editors: ABear, Harvey Markowitz, Janet Mayes

Prisoners Page Editors: Mirinda Crissman, Ted Kelly

Production & Design Editors: Gery Armsby, Mirinda Crissman, Ted Kelly, Sasha Mazumder, Scott Williams

Copyediting and Proofreading: Paddy Colligan, S. Hedgecoke

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

Mundo Obrero: Teresa Gutierrez, Carlos Vargas

Copyright © 2021 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published monthly 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.



San Antonio activists take on phony cop ‘unions’



San Antonio — Black Lives Matter activists in San Antonio came out April 16 and 17 to demand an end to police killings of Black and Brown people, nationally and locally. The first demonstration, sponsored by the San Antonio Coalition for Police Accountability, Fix SAPD and others, was focused on Proposition B. This referendum on the May 1 ballot would cancel collective bargaining rights for so-called police “unions,” eliminating contract provisions that shield cops from discipline or firing — even for the most horrendous acts.

Activists, including members of several unions, picketed outside the San Antonio Central Labor Council’s meeting. Shamefully, the SACLC opposes Prop B — to the point of going door to door to urge people to vote it down. That very day, San Antonio cops had killed two people sitting in their car during a traffic stop.

The scores of people gathered at a park in the Black community to demand justice for Daunte Wright and Adam Toledo, along with all the San Antonio Police Department’s victims.

Pictured here is Deborah Bush, whose nephew Marquise Jones was killed by SAPD cops.

— Report and photo by Shelley Ettinger

Portland on fire again over police killings

By Lyn Neeley
Portland, Ore.

Protests erupted in Portland April 12 following the police killing of Daunte Wright in Minnesota. They escalated four days later after police killed a homeless white man with a history of struggling with mental health issues.

Over 100 protesters immediately responded to Wright’s murder. Calling for the abolition of police, they shattered windows and tore down light fixtures at the downtown offices of the Portland Police Bureau and Multnomah County Sheriff. The next night, they set fire to the North Lombard headquarters of the Portland Police Association, chanting: “Every city, every town, burn the precincts to the ground!” and “Say his name! Daunte Wright!”

Three days later, protests grew and intensified after a 46-year-old homeless man, Robert Douglas Delgado, was shot, the first police killing in Portland since 2019.

Zakary DeLong, the cop who shot Delgado, has worked for the Portland Police Department for eight years. Before that he was a sniper in special operations with the U.S. Army Rangers in Afghanistan. DeLong was one of 19 Portland cops who “liked” another officer’s post reading “I am Darren Wilson,” referring to the Ferguson, Mo., cop who killed Michael Brown. (tinyurl.com/5db6eyt4)

Protesters attacked police vehicles and smashed windows of banks and businesses



PHOTO: SUZETTE SMITH, PORTLAND MERCURY

Protesters set fire to the North Portland Police Association building in response to the police killing of Daunte Wright.

like Nordstrom and Nike. They started fires in dumpsters downtown and outside the Apple store. Another fire blocked the mass transit light rail. At times crowds of around 100 faced off with the police.

This week’s protests were an extension of Portland’s 100 days of protests beginning last May that were sparked by the lynching of George Floyd. One of their demands was the defunding or abolition of the Portland Police Bureau. In response to the demonstrations, Oregon state government leaders banned the choke hold and eliminated use of tear gas, except in the case of a “riot,” and cut \$15,000 from the Portland Police Bureau.

A leading protester responded to these concessions in a video summarizing the effect of the demonstrations on Portland: “They threw us some bread crumbs with their first little attempt at defunding the police. It wasn’t what we asked for. We asked for \$50 million a year until the whole system has been dismantled.” (tinyurl.com/524ndmrk) □

Smash police violence and white supremacy

Continued from page 1

taken center stage.

The first is the trial of killer-cop Derek Chauvin, charged with third-degree murder, second-degree intentional murder and second-degree manslaughter charges for lynching a 46-year-old Black man, George Floyd, on May 25, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minn.

Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee and full body weight on Floyd’s neck for nine minutes and twenty-nine seconds, while Floyd could be heard multiple times saying, “I can’t breathe” and calling out for his deceased mother until he lost complete consciousness. This heinous crime was captured on videotape for the whole world to see. A verdict is expected sometime in the coming week.

In response to the murder, rebellions, including the burning down of a Minneapolis police station, broke out in the streets all over the country, lasting throughout the summer. Neither curfews, the militarized local and state police nor the National Guard could stop the angry resistance of multinational crowds led by Black Lives Matter activists. These sustained rebellions launched a countrywide

call for both “defunding the police” and “abolishing the police.”

These protests were connected to other police murders, like Breonna Taylor, the 26-year-old Black EMT worker shot multiple times March 13, 2020 while in her bed in Louisville, Ky. The cop who killed her was exonerated by a secret grand jury in September.

Second, protests broke out again in Brooklyn Center, Minn., a mere 10 miles away from the Chauvin trial, when on April 11 white police officer Kim Potter fatally shot 20-year-old Black father Daunte Wright during a minor traffic stop. Potter claimed she “mistakenly” thought she was using her taser when she fatally shot Wright.

Potter was arrested and charged with second-degree manslaughter after she resigned. Protests are continuing in the streets despite daily curfews, mass arrests and assaults on activists by the police. Solidarity actions calling for justice for Daunte Wright are occurring around the country.

And third, there is the fatal shooting of 13-year-old Adam Toledo, of Mexican descent, on March 29 in Chicago. Police body camera footage of the killing was

finally made public April 15. Toledo was shot in the chest by officer Eric Stillman in a split second, as he was putting his empty hands in the air.

As of April 18, Stillman has not been arrested or charged with the murder of Toledo. This is another reminder how the police not only criminalize Black youth but also Brown youth.

We approach the 29th anniversary of the historic, weeklong Los Angeles rebellion that began April 29, 1992 — incited by the acquittals of four white police officers for the savage beating of Black motorist Rodney King, caught on videotape. One important element has changed since then: the regular use of camera phones to create videos that go viral, serving as clear indictments of police crimes on social media.

White supremacy and police are closely connected

Police violence would not exist without the existence of white supremacy which permeates every sector of class society. The police grew out of the “slave patrols” to capture enslaved African peoples who dared to resist by escaping their life in chains.

White supremacy is an ideology that the bosses rely on to keep their profit-making system intact by dividing the multinational working class — primarily by nationality which also intersects other oppressions — misogyny, xenophobia, LGBTQ2S+ oppression, ableism and more. Historically the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, White Citizens Councils gave birth to today’s Oath Keepers and Proud Boys.

There are individual white supremacists who have, consciously or not, targeted people of color. A prime example is Dylann Roof, a self-proclaimed racist, who killed nine Black parishioners in Charleston, S.C. June 17, 2015. Unlike Floyd, Wright and Toledo, the police captured Roof alive

and even stopped to get him a hamburger before taking him into custody.

The same treatment was afforded Kyle Rittenhouse, a teenaged white vigilante, who fatally shot two anti-racist activists protesting the shooting of 26-year-old, Jacob Blake, shot in the back and paralyzed by white police in Kenosha, Wis., Aug. 23, 2020. The police allowed Rittenhouse to walk past them in their armored vehicles after the shooting before arresting him hours later. Before these shootings occurred, the police were videotaped giving water to other fascist vigilantes.

Father and son Klan members stalked and murdered Arnaud Aberly, a 25-year-old Black jogger, on Feb. 23, 2020, in Glynn County, Ga., on videotape.

Anti-Asian violence is on the rise in the U.S. due to the frenzy stirred up by Trump with his anti-China tirades during the pandemic. On March 16, vigilante Robert Aaron Long massacred eight people, seven of them women including four of Korean descent, in three massage spas outside of Atlanta.

Six Sikh worshippers died at the hands of a white supremacist in August 2012 at a temple in Oak Creek, Wis. And just recently eight FedEx workers, four of them Sikhs, were fatally shot at their workplace in Indianapolis by a 19-year-old white youth.

It is in the interest of every worker to understand that the deepening capitalist economic crisis is the root cause of more and more mass shootings and police executions. May Day must become a rallying cry, not only for organizing the unorganized and to abolish the police, but to unite and liberate our class from all forms of capitalist exploitation and fight for a socialist future, free from want and oppression.

Organize the organized at Amazon and everywhere! Fight police terror! □

Activists beat back bigots

Continued from page 2

That a disciplined group of workers and oppressed people have single-handedly mounted a campaign of pressure on local businesses to force anti-choice bigots away from an abortion clinic is extraordinary. Patients and clinic workers alike have reported to this writer and other members of the WWP-CGC branch that the presence of abortion rights advocates has made them feel better and safer at the clinic.

Abortions must remain safe and legal, and it is up to those such as the clinic defenders in Pensacola, Fla., to make sure it stays that way.

Devin Cole is a transgender Marxist organizer and writer. They are the president of Strive (Socialist Trans Initiative), a transgender advocacy organization in northwest Florida, and a member of the Workers World Party – Central Gulf Coast (Alabama, Florida and Mississippi) branch.

In Alabama ‘the fire has started!’

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

April 18 — Miners at Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood, Ala., struck April 1 and are still picketing as of this writing. On April 9 they voted 1,006 to 45 to reject a contract that would have restored only \$1.50 of a \$6-an-hour pay cut workers took in 2016 — to pull the company out of bankruptcy. The rejected contract would have continued brutal disciplinary and firing policies and dangerous working conditions. (See Workers World, “After BAmazon, Alabama mine workers go out on strike,” April 2)

Photos on social media showed workers and their children burning copies of the contract. One picture of a miner’s hand on top of a “No” ballot revealed a missing index finger — lost in a mine accident.

The miners labor in one of the world’s most life-threatening workplaces. The Brookwood mines are sunk 1,400 to 2,100 feet underground — some of the deepest vertical shaft coal mines in North America. In 2001 methane gas explosions and a cave-in at one of the mines killed 13 workers, including a former high school classmate of this writer.

Coal is extracted in the Warrior Met mines with highly mechanized “long-wall” machines. Physical dangers are omnipresent, including potential for gas explosions, strata failure that shears limbs, dust that permanently damages lungs, longwall mechanisms that cause head and neck injuries and deafening machine noise.

The Black and white members of Local 2245, United Mine Workers (UMWA) on strike are functioning in tight solidarity. As



Miners on strike in Brookwood, Ala., April 8. PHOTO: TUSCALOOSA THREAD

one said: “The union backs us ... if it wasn’t for them, that would be a death house. It is a death house.” (tinyurl.com/hb9mkr)

Solidarity with BAmazon workers

On April 11 a contingent of striking miners traveled to Bessemer, Ala. — 25 miles to the east — to attend a “Hold Amazon Accountable” rally. They were there in solidarity with the majority Black, majority female Amazon warehouse workers, who had launched a historic organizing drive against the corporate behemoth. (See Workers World, “Bessemer: the whole world is watching,” Feb. 22)

Larry Spencer, president of the Alabama Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, voiced solidarity with the miners and invited workers to join the CBTU. Amazon worker and organizer Jennifer Bates said: “We came out to fight for the rights of working people, and we aren’t going anywhere. The fire has started. Burn — let it burn!” (Listen to the rally: tinyurl.com/368yyx8v.)

The miners’ solidarity was more than symbolic. The longwall machines that

grind up their lives are their equivalent of the mechanization and robotization that Amazon uses to squeeze profit from workers’ labor power. (See Workers World, “Workers are not robots,” March 8)

A key demand by BAmazon workers seeking union representation by the Retail, Warehouse and Department Store Union was for more control over backbreaking working conditions. Amazon alleges that monitoring workers through the Mojoul SmartBelt has improved “safety,” but research suggests ramped-up robotics have actually increased injuries.

In 2019, Amazon recorded 14,000 serious injuries across its “fulfillment centers” — its warehouses — equating to an injury rate of 7.7 serious injuries per 100 employees, nearly double the industry average. Plus it’s possible that Amazon is underreporting worker injuries. (tinyurl.com/2z7w6r4h)

Alabama’s militant union tradition

The Walker Met mines in Tuscaloosa County — and other coal mines, past and present in adjoining Walker, Jefferson, Shelby and Bibb counties, like the mines of Belle Ellen, Marvel and Piper — are part of the “Birmingham Mineral District.” These mines are in the southernmost extension of the Appalachian Mountain chain in Alabama.

The exploitation of both mineral resources and mine workers has gone on for two centuries.

For just as long, that exploitation has

been met with resistance. Labor organizations, comprised primarily of African American miners, were formed in the 1870s. Alabama miners affiliated with the newly formed UMWA in 1890 as District 20. Opposition to the convict lease system sparked the largest strike in the District’s history — the Great Strike of 1894.

During the Great Depression, Alabama UMWA locals were revived under the leadership of Walter Jones, an African American organizer from Shelby County. In the 1930s the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers organized iron ore workers, who were about 80% African American. (Encyclopedia of Alabama)

The Brookwood strike and the recent Amazon organizing have been led by local Bessemer workers — children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of union heroes. For many of the miners, this is their first strike, but they proudly claim their tradition of labor militancy.

Jeff Fleenor, who has worked at Warrior Met and its predecessor for 16 years, told the Tuscaloosa Thread: “I specifically came back [for the vote] to ensure we got a fair contract and that I wasn’t the generation that let all the sacrifices that people in the UMWA fought for 90 to 100 years ago fade into obscurity. Our sacrifices pale in comparison to those at the start of the labor movement and the early years of the UMWA. I keep up on my history; I know about the Battle of Blair Mountain, Bloody Harlan and the Pittston Strike, where my dad participated. These were major milestone events that led us to where we are today. I owe it to miners of days gone by, my family and myself to fight for what we deserve.” (tinyurl.com/y2pbcm3h) □

Nearly 250 years after land theft Madawaska Nation wins settlement in Canada

By Ted Kelly

An agreement negotiated by the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation and the Canadian government April 13 has become the largest compensatory land settlement in the country’s history. The Ministry of Crown-Indigenous Relations has agreed to pay \$145 million to the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation after Canadian courts ruled that a specific 18th century settler land grab was illegal.

Townships of Algonquin-speaking Maliseet people were the most densely populated areas in Madawaska territory by the mid 1700s, when European land theft intensified. Settlers used the stolen resources of the land to develop logging and wood pulping industries, the growth of which was accelerated by the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

In 1787, European settlers, in violation of their own legally binding treaties, stole

almost 2,000 acres of land that had been reserved for the Madawaska Maliseet Nation in the northwestern corner of what is now called New Brunswick. When the railway abandoned the area in 1936, the Madawaska Maliseet began efforts to reclaim the territory. Today there are still 50,000 people who report First Nations, Métis or Inuk identity living in the region.

Chief Patricia Bernard was a university student majoring in history when she learned this history and discovered that the seizure of her Nation’s land had violated a royal proclamation issued by King George III in 1763. During her research, she also learned that the first person who resisted the encroachment on reserve land by bringing the case to a local magistrate was 90-year-old Louis Bernard — her great-great-grandfather’s great-great-grandfather. (Aboriginal People’s Television Network)

The historic settlement comes just a

few months after the Mosquito, Grizzly Bear’s Head, Lean Man First Nation in Saskatchewan were awarded \$127 million for a 1905 land theft. (Global News)

Since March of last year, the federal government of Canada has now paid \$1.7 billion in land theft compensation to various First Nations in 36 separate claims, over half of the 51 total claims brought forward. Four more are currently being reviewed by the country’s high court. (Yahoo Finance)

First Nations people face widespread discrimination

Across Canada, First Nations and Inuk people face a staggering 40% unemployment rate. The Métis are people with a mixed heritage of Indigenous and mostly French European backgrounds and have a high but lower jobless rate of approximately 25%. (Statistics Canada)

Lack of adequate childcare for those



PHOTO: CANDO

“We will be consulting with the community to determine what type of land and what uses of that is going to be for,” said Chief Patricia Bernard of the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation. Shown here Oct 25, 2018, accepting a Community of the Year award.

seeking work is a major barrier to employment, and men are more likely to find work than women.

Poor housing, lack of transportation infrastructure and difficulty acquiring driver’s licenses are part of the institutional white supremacy in Canada that forces the underdevelopment of First Nations communities.

In addition to the unprecedented financial compensation, the settlement grants the Madawaska Maliseet the right to acquire 1,935 acres of land — the same amount that was stolen from them almost 250 years ago.

#LandBack, the struggle for restoration of Indigenous people’s sovereignty over occupied or stolen land, is a global anti-colonial, anti-racist movement. The liberation of oppressed nations — from Palestine to Mexico, from Nunavut to Bolivia — lies in the land.

In the words of Fannie Lou Hamer, the legendary African American sharecropper-turned-organizer and founder of the Freedom Farm Cooperative: “In order for any people or nation to survive, land is necessary.” □

Middle school students in Grants Pass, Ore., protest anti-transgender school staff

By Johnnie Lewis

In Grants Pass, Ore., a North Middle School assistant principal and a seventh-grade teacher started a petition calling for “anatomically male” and “anatomically female” bathrooms. Eighth-grader Stephanie and several of her classmates began protesting April 8.

The petition, which garnered 90 signatures, was in opposition to federal and state laws guaranteeing freedom of choice for transgender students regarding bathroom use. The laws were won through

much struggle and protests.

The students put up posters inside the school and wrote their pronouns on their foreheads and slogans on their face-masks demanding equity. Stephanie started an online petition to fire the staff members, getting more than 300 signers.

Students are now holding in-person protests in front of the school on Tuesdays and Thursdays demanding

the teacher be fired. The teacher and principal have been suspended. □



Posters protest anti-trans school staff at North Middle School in Grants Pass, Ore. PHOTO: STEPHANIE

Ramsey Clark, human rights fighter, 1927-2021

By Sara Flounders

Ramsey Clark was a founder of the International Action Center. He inspired the political activists who used the IAC's structure to defend liberation struggles, oppose U.S. wars of aggression and defend political prisoners from the U.S. to U.S.-backed dictatorships worldwide.

IAC militants joined international delegations who defied the blockade of Cuba and sanctions on Iraq, contested the U.S.-NATO war on Yugoslavia or joined the wave of resistance then sweeping Latin America. Clark guided the production of hundreds of books and videos, mass meetings, internet campaigns and demonstrations the IAC organized.

The IAC has received tributes to Clark from all parts of the world his work touched and is continuing to publish them. Please send your memories to: RamseyClarkTribute@gmail.com. See tributes from around the world at iacenter.org



WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Ramsey Clark at his 85th birthday celebration, Jan. 12, 2013.

We salute Ramsey Clark, who died April 9, an outspoken defender of all forms of popular resistance to oppression, a leader always willing to challenge the crimes of U.S. militarism and global arrogance. He remained optimistic that the power of people could determine history. His courageous voice will be missed.

Ramsey Clark will be remembered by people and struggles around the world as a prominent individual who used his name, reputation and legal skills to defend people's movements and leaders whom the corporate media had thoroughly demonized.

Clark's early belief in the U.S. role turned, through harsh experience and observation of what he considered to be U.S. war crimes, to a determination to challenge U.S. policy and defend the victims of U.S. aggressions regardless of personal cost. His actions, leadership and writings showed his political development over the past 60 years — above all, his actions.

Born into a prominent Texas family in 1927, his father Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark, Ramsey was raised to believe in the power of U.S. laws. He came of age at the apex of U.S. power at the end of World War II and experienced the U.S. empire's long decline and decay. He was appointed assistant attorney general in 1961 during the John F. Kennedy administration and attorney general during the Lyndon Johnson administration in 1967.

The 1960s power of the Civil Rights Movement and Black liberation struggle demanded sweeping change in government. As attorney general, Clark enforced desegregation of schools across the South and supervised the drafting of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Civil Rights Act of 1968. He drafted housing legislation and enforcement of Indigenous Nations' treaty rights under the Constitution.

Unlike nearly every other Cabinet level official, who leveraged their post into a multimillion dollar career after leaving government, Ramsey Clark leveraged his

role as former attorney general to act for the impoverished and voiceless.

Vietnam, Iran, Cuba, Venezuela

In 1972 he traveled to North Vietnam during President Richard Nixon's bombing campaign. He was in Tehran, Iran, in 1979, on days when millions of Iranians braved machine guns of the Savak Police and overturned the brutal U.S.-backed shah and his whole regime. He visited Cuba numerous times to challenge the U.S. blockade and expressed deep admiration for the dramatic changes the Cuban Revolution made possible.

Along with demonstrations of tens of thousands against U.S. wars in 1991 and 2003, Ramsey Clark headed significant mass meetings in solidarity with Cuba at Javits Convention Center in 1992 and with Bolivarian Venezuela at Town Hall in 2005.

Clark stood by the 1979 Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and the struggle for liberation of El Salvador in the 1980s against a U.S.-backed dictatorship. He traveled to Panama after the December 1989 U.S. invasion to document the enormous toll in life.

While many embraced the collapse of the Soviet Union as ending the Cold War and ushering in an era of peace and prosperity, Clark held the view that this would lead to endless wars of U.S. expansion and an effort to recolonize many countries.

Opposed U.S. war on Iraq

At great personal risk, Ramsey Clark traveled to Iraq during the height of the 1991 U.S. bombing. Extending personal courage to political and legal skill, he wrote a 19-point indictment of the Bush administration for War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity that resonated around the world.

The indictment became the basis of a Commission of Inquiry that held mass popular hearings in 19 countries and 26 U.S. cities. Ramsey attended every mass hearing. The final tribunal was held in New York City in February 1992 before thousands of people and international delegates. The events drew strong media coverage around the world and total censorship in the corporate U.S. media.

During the years of the deadliest sanctions on Iraq that caused the death of a half-million Iraqi children within four years, Ramsey brought international delegations each year to challenge and expose the impact of the sanctions.

These fact-finding and human rights delegations almost always included videographers, journalists and photographers to document the impact on defenseless civilian populations. He encouraged others to also organize solidarity delegations.

Following the 2003 U.S.-British invasion and occupation of Iraq, and under even more dangerous conditions, Clark traveled to Iraq numerous times. He provided legal defense for Saddam Hussein, Iraq's captured president, whom the U.S. and its Iraqi lackeys put on a show trial.

Though the outcome was inevitable, Clark was determined to expose that the real crime was the U.S. destruction of Iraq and was unapologetic for his defense



IAC Co-director Sara Flounders, Ramsey Clark and WW Managing Editor Monica Moorehead in New York, Jan. 2015

of Saddam Hussein. Three of his Iraqi defense lawyers were assassinated for their role defending him. Saddam Hussein was executed Dec. 30, 2006.

Sudan, Yugoslavia

In 1998 the U.S. bombed a small pharmaceutical plant producing the only anti-malaria drugs in Sudan, claiming it was a secret VX nerve gas facility. Ramsey immediately organized doctors, pharmacists and videographers to expose this crime against the civilian population, and led a delegation to travel there.

In the biggest and most dangerous aggression within European borders since 1945, the U.S., determined to expand the NATO military alliance into the Balkans and Eastern Europe, launched the 1999 war to dismember and destroy Yugoslavia during the Bill Clinton administration. Ramsey Clark was in Yugoslavia twice during the 78 days of relentless U.S. bombing, expressing solidarity with people under attack, documenting that the Pentagon consciously targeted civilians.

Clark gave priority to visiting bombed schools, hospitals, marketplaces, water purification plants, grain silos and pharmaceutical plants, as he did in other countries the U.S. bombed. Following the war, he drew up a public indictment of Clinton and other leaders of NATO countries and inspired a mass People's Tribunal on U.S. war crimes in Yugoslavia, whose final hearing was in June 2000.

Clark dared to meet with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic in Yugoslavia during the U.S. bombing and later at the Hague after the kidnapped president faced an international kangaroo court the U.S. established to try Yugoslav leaders. Ramsey's view was that the wrong leaders were being charged. According to his indictment for the 2000 tribunal, Clinton should have been in the dock, along with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the corresponding leaders of Germany, Britain, France and other NATO powers.

U.S. political prisoners

While much of Ramsey Clark's work focused on defense of nations under

attack by the U.S., he also defended dozens if not hundreds of political prisoners of the empire, in and outside the United States. These included Indigenous activist Leonard Peltier; and Imam Jamil Al-Amin (aka H. Rap Brown), who is held in a Super Max prison. He and Lynne Stewart were willing to defend Egyptian Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman. (For her role, Stewart was charged and imprisoned.)

He supported independence for Puerto Rico and freedom for its many political prisoners. He traveled to Peru to defend U.S. citizen Lori Berenson, held by Peru's dictatorship, and to the Philippines. He defended José María Sison against "terrorism" charges. Clark publicly supported Dr. Aafia Siddiqui, a Pakistani woman tortured in Afghanistan and serving an 86-year sentence in U.S. federal prison, as well as Mumia Abu-Jamal in Pennsylvania state prison.

He traveled to Nepal, when a revolutionary upheaval brought in a new government, and to the DPRK (North Korea) to protest against U.S. war games and nuclear threats.

Solidarity with Palestine

When Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was targeted by U.S. and Israeli forces, Clark met with him in Lebanon and later traveled to Gaza under total Israeli shut-down and met with Hamas leadership.

Clark's long years of support of the Palestinian struggle for liberation meant Zionist forces always denounced him.

Clark denounced every aspect of the "U.S. War on Terror" as a War Against Islam with endless military operations, sanctions, drone strikes, regime change operations, assassinations, secret detentions and a series of bases throughout Africa to Central Asia and the Gulf States.

In 2011, NATO imperialists took advantage of an opening provided by the Arab Spring, and the mass upsurge that overthrew the dictatorships in Tunisia and Egypt, to open a 220-day bombing of Libya and murder Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. This destroyed the country with the highest standard of living in Africa.

U.S. imperialism then turned its full efforts into pulling down the government of Syria. Ramsey traveled to Syria several times in an effort to again focus attention on the impact of U.S. subversion on civilians. Traveling at personal risk, Clark exposed what U.S. sanctions, the arming of tens of thousands of mercenaries and then bombing vital infrastructure was doing to whole countries.

Even as the decades rolled by, Ramsey maintained an intense schedule of listening to and involving activists in challenging projects, along with speaking, traveling and consulting with peoples under attack.

Flounders is a co-director of the IAC.



PHOTO: GLORIA LARIVA

Dennis Banks, Fidel Castro, Alice Walker and Ramsey Clark in Havana, Cuba, April 1993.

‘Mumia is a fighter’

By Johanna Fernandez

These remarks, edited for print, were made by Dr. Johanna Fernandez on a March 18 Workers World Party webinar, “Mumia Abu-Jamal: The Only Treatment Is His Freedom.” Dr. Fernandez is an associate professor in the Department of History at Baruch College of the City University of New York, and author of “The Young Lords: A Radical History.” She is a leader of the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home. Go to workers.org/videos to watch the entire webinar.

Mumia is a fighter. And he’s got a powerful movement behind him that has saved him numerous times — and we’ll continue to do that. But ultimately, we want him home. I [referenced] the vitriol with which the state approaches the figure of Mumia. And the question is, why the vitriol against Mumia? And it’s because of everything Mumia represents: his political analysis, his attention to root causes of social problems, his commitment to solidarity.

Mumia writes about domestic problems as much as he writes about international problems, and he has a critique of the state and of capitalism. This means that he represents a continuity in the Black radical tradition, a continuity in Black radical descent from the 1960s to the present. And his voice is essentially dangerous. And historically, the state has sought to make an example of people who dare challenge Empire.

So in the late 19th century, labor activists who were identified as part of the Haymarket Affair were rounded up by

the police, accused of crimes they did not commit and sentenced to death. In the early 20th century, Sacco and Vanzetti, two anarchists, were executed by the state. In the 1950s, the Rosenbergs who were communists were executed by the state. And in the post-Civil Rights Movement era, Mumia became the figure that the state wanted to make an example of to send a message to those who dare



Johanna Fernandez at a press conference for Mumia in Philadelphia, March 3. WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

resist authority, resist the state, resist capitalism, resist Empire — that this is what will happen to you.

Why is Mumia important?

So when you ask the question, “Why do we need to be with Mumia?” it’s because if we allow the state to get away with murder in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, we’re giving the state license to do the same with people who dare stand up for justice today.

The Fraternal Order of Police is the organization that has sought to silence Mumia. First through the demonization of Mumia and an attempted execution — which failed because an international movement saved his life in the 1990s. And finally, he got off death row in 2011, when the state itself determined that his death sentence was obtained unconstitutionally. The Fraternal Order of Police, whose poster child is Mumia Abu-Jamal, is the most powerful police organization in the world and its power is comparable to that of the NRA [National Rifle Association].

Mumia is important because his case is at the center of the struggle against the homicidal character of the police in the United States. And if you look at his case, a third of the police officers involved in collecting evidence in his case, within weeks of the end of his case, were convicted and jailed for corruption, and manipulating evidence to obtain convictions in unrelated cases. And if you look at the evidence in this case, the cops pretty much framed Mumia and cooked up the crime scene.

I want to go back to Mumia as a Black Panther. In the 1960s, the Black Panthers popularized the term pig, to demolish the notion that the police are our friends, and they succeeded. And by the end of the 60s, everyone knew what the term



pig represented, and it was used often in the United States. In response, the police launched a counter propaganda campaign against the Black Panthers. They emblazoned the words “to serve and protect” on their cars — you might remember this.

And essentially, this was the co-optation of the Black Panther slogan to “serve the people.” That was their more benign maneuver of co-opting what the Black Panther Party represented. The most detrimental of the maneuvers of the police ideologically was the popularization of the term “cop killer.” Cop killer became this ideological weapon that in the post-sixties period replaced the mythological rape of a white woman as the basis for the legal lynching of Black men in particular. And when you think about cop killers, you think of Black men, but the vast majority of people who kill cops in the United States are white men.

So why do we need to free Mumia, to support him, stand with him? Because he represents all of us, and he has been identified by the cops, by the Fraternal Order of Police, by the state as one of the most dangerous figures in this country because of what he stands for, which is resistance — an unrelenting determination to expose inequality, to expose the police and its character, but also to fight for a completely different world organized around human needs. A fight for Mumia is a fight for ourselves and our highest aspirations. □

Mumia Abu-Jamal’s life in jeopardy — Demand his release now!

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Family and supporters of Pennsylvania political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal became alarmed when they did not get his routine daily calls after April 10. On April 14 officials at SCI Mahanoy finally responded to inquiries from Abu-Jamal’s medical attorneys and admitted that, after complaining of chest pains, he had been taken to a hospital and was scheduled to have surgery.

The prison’s cruel and inhumane attitude toward Abu-Jamal and his loved ones could not be more evident. First the renowned Black journalist was kept incommunicado for four days. Then, the minimal information officials provided intentionally left out the name of the hospital, the nature of the alleged surgery and why he had not been allowed to call family, attorneys or medical and spiritual advisors.

This marked the second time in just over a month that Abu-Jamal became ill and was taken from the prison to a hospital, and his support network was again kept in the dark. It mirrors the state’s practice when MOVE 9 members Merle, Phil and Delbert Africa became ill in prison, but were denied family contact.

At the end of February, Abu-Jamal told family he was experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, including chest pains. The prison claimed three administered COVID tests were negative. In early March he was taken to a hospital in Allentown, Pa., where he was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and tested positive for COVID-19.

During that hospitalization, Abu-Jamal was cruelly shackled to his bed and denied family contact, until a movement outcry forced them to allow him to call supporter Johanna Fernandez. There is significant evidence, both legal and medical, that he has suffered severe harm from medical,

legal, law enforcement and judicial professionals who have not met proper standards.

Even prior to the diagnosis of congestive heart disease, Abu-Jamal suffered from hypertension, liver cirrhosis and diabetes — induced by court-documented medical neglect — and the worsening of a severe, debilitating chronic skin condition.

Virtual press conference

In response to the state’s latest attempt to murder and silence Abu-Jamal, a virtual press conference was organized by his international support movement April 15. The key demands raised were that Abu-Jamal be allowed immediate contact with his spouse Wadiya Jamal, his principal spokesperson Pam Africa, his personal physician Dr. Ricardo Alvarez and his spiritual advisor Dr. Mark Taylor; that he not be shackled over the course of his treatment so as not to aggravate his skin condition; and that as an innocent man, Abu-Jamal should be freed based on compassionate medical release. According to Dr. Alvarez, “release is his only real treatment option.”

Speakers at the press conference included Pam Africa, Wadiya Jamal, Mumia’s grandson Jamal Hart Jr., professor and lifetime activist Angela Davis, journalist and professor Marc Lamont Hill, professor Johanna Fernandez, attorney Bob Boyle, Dr. Alvarez, Erica Caines from Black Alliance for Peace, Dr. Taylor and Philadelphia Black Lives Matter activist Gabriel Bryant, who reported on the upcoming Freedom Weekend April 23-25.

Speakers stressed that it is Abu-Jamal’s basic human right to seek counsel from loved ones, supporters and advisors, especially before going into heart surgery. To deny this contact can only add unnecessary stress that could negatively impact the outcome.

Opening the event Hill stated: “Mumia is both factually innocent and legally not

guilty. At this stage in his life, after spending decades in prison, the only relief is his freedom.”

Wadiya Jamal gave a passionate appeal for justice for her spouse, expressing her anguish when he was not allowed to communicate with her for days. She reminded people that “as an investigative journalist, he was the people’s truth teller. We needed him to tell the truth. Now it is our turn to help him.” Due to international pressure on state and prison officials, she was finally able to talk with Mumia earlier in the day.

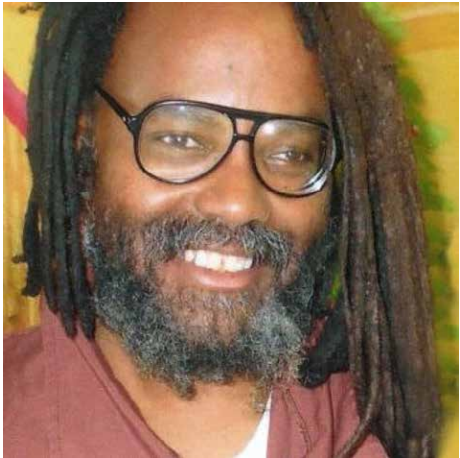
Longtime freedom fighter Angela Davis stated: “I have deep revolutionary love for Mumia, and we stand with him as he grapples with the power of the state. His predicament mirrors that of so many other people behind bars. When we win a victory for Mumia, it is a victory for all prisoners — men, women, cis and trans.”

Echoes of slavery

Dr. Johanna Fernandez with the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home said: “Prison is about control and the severing of prisoners from families and loved ones. But as soon as you start ringing the alarm, shining light on it and exposing the terror in prisons, the bully starts backing down.

“Mumia was sequestered and disappeared. Does that sound familiar? Echoes of slavery — separation from community. Prison officials would not even give straight answers to his attorneys, who have challenged this prison over medical issues in the past. He was barred from reaching out to his loved ones in the run-up to surgery. Think about the barbarity of a system that feels there are no rights of a prisoner that the state must respect. To deny this, the state is establishing conditions for failure of the surgery. We charge the state with genocide by medical neglect.”

Dr. Fernandez concluded: “Mumia is shackled to a hospital bed right now. Loud



and clear are the echoes of chattel slavery in the Americas, that developed handcuffs, shackles and fetters to control the enslaved population. This practice is now common in prisons throughout the U.S. Pennsylvania Department of Corrections administrator John Wetzel publicly denounced white supremacy, but his prisons are practicing a system of racist barbarity.”

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez, Abu-Jamal’s medical advisor emphasized: “It is a basic right that a patient be allowed to seek counsel from loved ones, supporters, spiritual advisors and chosen medical counsel. There was no call to family, and his medical lawyer has suggested that his location was kept intentionally secret. Mumia has a deeply well-founded distrust of institutions, including medical institutions, and the behavior of the PA DOC perpetuates his trauma.

“Before this week’s health emergency, Mumia Abu-Jamal was already suffering from COVID-19, congestive heart failure, hypertension, diabetes, liver cirrhosis and a worsening of a severe and debilitating chronic skin condition. Treatment can only go so far in the setting of a prison. We support Mumia from the only possible treatment, which is freedom.”

Later in the day Dr. Alvarez was interviewed by TeleSUR English about Abu-Jamal’s condition. (<https://tinyurl.com/fdt55bsw>)

As of now, Abu-Jamal’s surgery is scheduled for April 19. □

Lavender and Red solidarity with Mumia!

From the LGBTQ+ Caucus of Workers World Party

We, the LGBTQ+ Caucus of Workers World Party, are outraged, disgusted and alarmed by the continued attempts to silence and kill Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Black revolutionary political prisoner who has been inside the imprisoned nation for almost 40 years—first railroaded into a death sentence and then, because of the movement rising up to defend him, spared an execution but given a life sentence.

The capitalist imperialist state has not given up their attempts to kill Mumia; in fact, they have doubled down. Currently Mumia Abu-Jamal is suffering from severe dermatitis, has tested positive for COVID and has been diagnosed with congestive heart disease. Additionally, he has suffered from cirrhosis of the liver due to untreated hepatitis C. Efforts to get treatment for Mumia have been delayed as a part of a decades-long punishment inflicted on him



Simon Nkoli Queer Crusaders for Mumia, Philadelphia, 1999.

PHOTO: DIANE GREENE LENT

by the white-supremacist, colonialist state.

It was announced April 14 that Mumia had been taken to the hospital after experiencing chest pains and that he would undergo heart surgery. This caucus echoed and affirmed the demands of millions of Mumia’s supporters, those being:

1. Before surgery, Mumia be allowed to call his spouse, Wadiya Jamal; his long-time supporter, Pam Africa; his chosen doctor, Dr. Ricardo Alvarez; and his Spiritual Advisor, Mark Taylor;
2. Mumia not be shackled to his hospital bed, as is the rule in Pennsylvania and

across the United States; and
3. Mumia, an innocent man, be immediately released from prison.

In order to seek actual, accessible treatment for his health problems, Mumia Abu-Jamal must be released from prison immediately. He has been locked away for almost 40 years, suffering from mistreatment and negligence by the prison-industrial complex. His health is not good, and he must be properly treated, as all incarcerated persons should be.

From Philadelphia to Paris, and elsewhere across the world, supporters flooded the offices of Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf and Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner with letters, emails and phone calls demanding Mumia be released.

We, the LGBTQ+ Caucus of Workers World Party, echo and affirm this demand called out from all across the world: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal immediately! Free all political prisoners immediately! An Injury to One is an Injury to All! □

Prison officials punish Bryant Arroyo for free speech

By Joe Piette

Bryant Arroyo, an incarcerated worker at Pennsylvania SCI Frackville, was placed in isolated custody for several days—in other words, thrown in the hole, the “Restricted Housing Unit”—for suggesting on separate phone calls to this reporter, his daughter and another person that they keep recordings of their video conference calls with him. He then asked that what he says be shared through social media so the public can learn how bad the Department of Corrections treats incarcerated people.

No one has actually yet shared such a video on social media. But Arroyo was punished just for raising the idea.

The PA DOC has actually been encouraging incarcerated people to use video conferencing with their loved ones since the shutdown of in-person visiting rooms in March 2020, supposedly due to COVID.

Guards and some prison officials say they would like to do away with prison visiting rooms for “cost savings” and “security.” In fact, video conferencing is another way for corporations to make a profit from mass incarceration. Many imprisoned workers are worried that virtual visits will permanently replace in-person visits with their families and friends, denying them

the ability to hug and touch and see each other face to face.

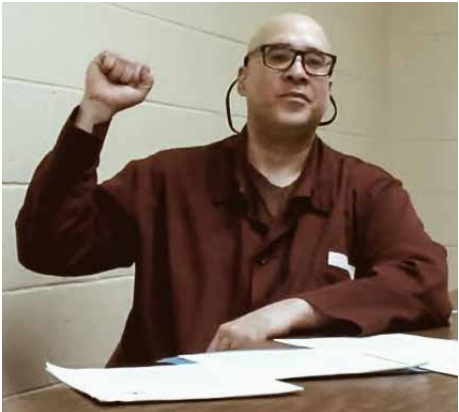
The DOC uses video technology in many other ways, such as conducting court procedures without the accused actually being in court and for virtual medical visits. The DOC has installed hundreds of surveillance cameras throughout state prisons.

While it has taken to using video cameras in many daily operations, the DOC of course reacted to Arroyo’s proposal with alarm. While prison officials are fine with using video technology to enable repression, Arroyo’s proposal to share video visits on social media would shine a spotlight on deplorable prison conditions.

There is actually nothing the prison hierarchy can do technologically to prevent the public from recording and sharing video conference visits with incarcerated people. So they went after Arroyo, though he didn’t violate any rules.

In fact, the U.S. Constitution guarantees Arroyo’s right to free speech—and that of any incarcerated person.

A hearing on whether Arroyo’s spoken words on phone calls somehow violated prison regulations took place April 5. Arroyo was made to wear a bright orange jumpsuit, with hands cuffed and chained behind his back, though he never left SCI



Bryant Arroyo on a Feb. 3 video call with Joe Piette.

Frackville. The hearing ironically took place on video through Skype, with hearing officers who were in SCI Mahanoy.

Arroyo was found not guilty on 2 of 3 charges and returned to the general population. Arroyo wasn’t guilty of anything except exercising free speech.

Officials punished him anyway, denying him access to video conference calls for 60 days. Friends and supporters of Arroyo have since been contacted by Frackville Superintendent Kathy Brittain and told their visits with him will be restricted indefinitely.

He was returned to the RHU hole April 7

for “observation” for 15 days, because officials needed to conduct “further investigation.” Why was he required to be in solitary confinement for this investigation to happen? No one would give him a clear answer to that question.

Arroyo is a well-known advocate for environmental justice who has been outspoken against abuse by the PA DOC, especially during the COVID crisis. Mumia Abu-Jamal recognized him as a “jailhouse environmentalist” in a 2013 Prison Radio column. (tinyurl.com/yh38gmnj)

After many phone calls to SCI Frackville and PA DOC Secretary John Wetzel by friends, family and community activists, Arroyo was finally released from RHU April 15. He was then transferred to another prison 25 miles away, SCI Coal Township.

Arroyo thanks everyone who made a call on his behalf. Supporters can write to him by way of the prison mail distribution company:

*Smart Communications
Bryant Arroyo, CU1126
SCI Coal Township
P.O. Box 33028
St. Petersburg, FL 33733 □*

Brick by brick and wall by wall, we will free Mumia Abu-Jamal

By Erica Caines

This lightly edited presentation was given by Erica Caines, with Black Alliance for Peace and Hood Communist editor, at an April 15 press conference to demand the immediate release of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

I am a member of the Black Alliance for Peace, and I’m also co-editor of the African revolutionary blog Hood Communists. I’m very honored to speak a bit about Mumia Abu-Jamal and his present influence on this movement era.

Mumia once said that prison is a second-by-second assault on the soul, a day-to-day degradation of the self, an oppressive steel-and-brick umbrella that

transforms seconds into hours and hours into days. In Mumia’s case, the state of Pennsylvania is deeply invested in ensuring that there will be no more days for him.

Instead of adhering to the longtime demands of the people to free Mumia, the state, including Philadelphia’s popular progressive prosecutor [Larry Krasner], has refused to do so.

Learning about Mumia’s case, I’ve gotten more opportunities to publicly advocate on behalf of his freedom. This has especially opened my eyes to the delusions of any justice being found within the U.S. justice system. It has been clear since the three-decades fight to remove Mumia from death row was won, that he is being punished for not dying, both then and now.

However, despite these realities of the prison system and his unjust trial and sentencing, Mumia’s invaluable voice and clear analysis of our material circumstances as Black people within the U.S. could be heard on Prison Radio or read in one of his many books, like “Have Black Lives Ever Mattered?” Or “Murder, Incorporated.” These were all produced from behind the prison walls, encouraging, informing and inspiring countless youth who are marching and organizing around a collective demand that our Black lives do, in fact, matter.

Mumia does not simply serve as a point of inspiration. Mumia and all political prisoners who are aging away and dying—rest in peace to Chip Fitzgerald—behind



Erica Caines

prison walls serve as a warning to any of us who refuse to normalize this settler-colonial state that depicts Blackness as innately criminal and Black people as deserving of injustice.

So brick by brick and wall by wall, we’re going to free Mumia Abu-Jamal. May we all catch one another in the whirlwind. □

Cuban unions build socialism

By Stephanie Hedgecoke
Member, Communication Workers Local 14156

What are the differences between unions in capitalist countries and socialist countries? What is labor’s role in a socialist country? I first became a supporter of socialist Cuba as a labor activist in the San Francisco Bay Area, and I learned about Cuba’s unions in the course of two trips to Cuba, 27 years apart.

In 1992, I joined a group of 22 members of over a dozen U.S. unions for the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange’s second trip. As guests of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), we visited all manner of workplaces — factories, ports, agricultural projects, hospitals, clinics and schools. We met with many Cuban union members and leaders. And we had most evenings free to explore Havana!

Our visit was during the Special Period, when Cuba lost 85% of its trade as a consequence of the fall of the Soviet Union and Eastern European socialist countries. Cuba had to make do with less than half its usual oil supply.

Many shortages resulted as the U.S. intensified its economic war on Cuba’s ability to sell its nickel ore, sugar cane and other agricultural products. Cubans made up shortages of some foodstuffs with what was available, in order to ensure adequate nutrition. In 1992, Cuba was selling its entire lobster catch to buy milk for first-grade children.

CTC Secretariat member Joaquin Bernal Camero told us: “You will never find a Cuban union leader asking for privatization of enterprise. We’re not going to give back the land to the former land-owners or corporations. Our unions are independent, but also independent of the capitalists. We don’t take a coin from the government, and all the dues collected go back into the union work.”

Membership is voluntary, yet we found



Ismael Drullet Pérez, General Secretary of the National Union of Education, Science and Sports Workers.

out that 97% of Cuban workers belonged to unions, which are entirely self-financed from dues. Cuban unionists enact their own laws and constitutions. The rank and file directly nominate and elect their own leaderships in a regular series of elections far outnumbering those of other countries.

We learned Cuba had free health care and free or affordable daycare, and rents were limited to 10% of income. Women had three months paid leave before giving birth, six months paid leave afterward and the right to return to their jobs. (Parental leave was later extended to fathers.)

The CTC reviews all new laws before they are enacted, and labor law has workers’ rights at its center. In a joint-venture hotel with Spain, the workers voted out three managers in a row before they got one who complied with Cuban labor law.

But in 1992 what most impressed me — coming from white-supremacist U.S. during the Rodney King Rebellion — was the deep respect the working people displayed toward each other and the kindnesses we visiting unionists experienced.

Our final workplace visit was to the H. Uppmann tobacco factory. The workers told us they worked six months, then took a month’s vacation. Windows were wide open while they worked with their hands, some singing, others smoking — I could be happy working there!

Going back to Cuba

In the Special Period, Cuba increased resources and built up its biopharmaceutical and tourism industries. But in 2019 former President Donald Trump invoked Title III of the Helms Burton Act, further increasing the illegal blockade’s economic strangulation, threatening the working people.

I returned in summer 2019 with the 50th Venceremos Brigade, which travels in solidarity with the Revolution to contribute materially to it. The day after we arrived, we toured Las Terrazas in the Sierra del Rosario region, where in 1968 local villagers created a reforestation plan with support from the revolutionary government.

Within eight years, the rural people in the valley had planted 6 million trees in an area totally denuded during Spanish colonization. Over 80% of the food eaten in the biosphere is locally grown, all organic. Some 7 million indigenous trees have now been planted; biodiversity of flora and fauna has recovered. In 1985,

the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization recognized the first Biosphere Reserve in Cuba.

Our guide Ida explained the impacts of global warming. Some varieties of plants have disappeared from the forest due to the heat; others are in season earlier and longer, like mangoes. The past average year-round temperature in Cuba was 75 to 77°F; in 2019 they had a new high of 103.64°F.

The next day, the Brigade sent me to work in a lime orchard to clear invasive vines choking the trees. Afterward, the local workers regaled us with a fiery recounting of historic Cuban freedom fighters on horseback, machetes in both hands, terrifying the Spanish overlords!

Later that week, several Brigadistas gathered in the camp library to hear Ismael Drullet Pérez, General Secretary of the National Union of Education, Science and Sports Workers, the largest Cuban union. Pérez said the CTC’s main mission is to represent the needs of the workers and their families before the state and society.

Workers are active in the CTC at municipal, provincial and national levels. In a national survey, Cuban workers wanted the work of the CTC strengthened.

Although there was no single opinion, it was clear “all workers understood the continued need for their trade unions in the process of construction of our socialism.” Pérez emphasized, “the enemies of the Revolution lie that the CTC is under the government. But we were a union 20 years before the Revolution. The unions were strengthened with the coming of the Revolution.”

Cuban union members meet every two months to ask questions, to get answers — in each of the 19 sectoral unions, at every level. All managers are required to account for the budget, given from the government, to a general assembly of the workers. Union membership remains voluntary, with membership held by 95% of workers in the state sector and 65% of the workers in the private sector. And as we were visiting, the entire state sector had just received significant salary increases after economic studies by the CTC.



May Day, Havana, 1992. WW PHOTO: STEPHANIE HEDGECOKE

The increased blockade by the U.S. has shut down Cuba’s ability to obtain machinery parts from overseas. Pérez said, “Our factories are old; our machinery needs parts and frequently breaks down. We keep them running through the creativity of the workers solving the problems. But we won’t accept the loss of our independence, our social justice and equity. We are not paradise, and we are not hell.”

Brigadistas asked about the private sector and what role unions have with prisoners. As blockade-imposed hardships resulted in some turning to crime, Pérez said the CTC represents those who were arrested for petty crimes of corruption; “insertados” have representation to help them transition to get work.

The CTC still has final say over new laws; workers in joint ventures can still vote out hostile managers. Pérez noted, “The Labor Code of Cuba regulates all joint ventures and private employers. Problems that come from the past we reshape and eliminate. We accept the workers as they are.”

The CTC sometimes intervenes with small employers in the private sector; for example, in one case the union had to enforce labor law against gender discrimination in restaurant work. Pérez emphasized: “We are working on this issue on an inherited legacy of slavery and colonialism — hundreds of years of colonialism vs. 60 years of revolution.”

During the COVID pandemic, tourism has taken an enormous hit. Yet Cuban science workers created their own vaccines. In 1992 Bernal Camero had said that during the Revolution, “Cuban workers occupied the factories.” Cuba’s unions continue to remain key to building socialism in that Caribbean island nation. □

Raúl Castro honored

The excerpts below are from the Cuban daily newspaper, Granma, April 17.

“Let no one doubt that as long as I live, I will be ready, with a foot in the stirrup, to defend the homeland, the Revolution and socialism,” stated Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee, who, like another Mambi or guerrilla, always ready with his horse saddled and a rifle under his pillow, reported that his task leading the political organization had reached its conclusion.

Ending his presentation of the 8th Party Congress Central Report, on the gathering’s opening day, Raúl expressed the satisfaction of having fulfilled his duty and conveyed his confidence in the future of the homeland, but emphasized his unchanging commitment to participate as a member of the party ranks. “I will continue serving as one more revolutionary fighter, ready to make

my modest contribution until the end of my life,” he insisted.

The moving historic moment sealed the reading of a Central Report which, in a clear and objective manner, reviewed what had been done over the last five years, with respect to each of the country’s strategic issues.

The first session of the Congress, which will continue through April 19, was also attended by Political Bureau members Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, President of the Republic; José Ramón Machado Ventura, second secretary; and Esteban Lazo Hernández, President of the National Assembly and Council of State; as well as other Party and government leaders.

In his opening remarks, Machado Ventura asserted that the Party constitutes “a guarantee of national unity and a synthesis of the ideals of dignity, social justice and



Raúl Castro Ruz at the 8th Congress of the Cuban Communist Party, April 16.

independence of generations of patriots who preceded us and those who have made these ideas their own, over all these years of struggle and victory.” □

Haiti at the abyss

By G. Dunkel

According to the Miami Herald, not a single vaccination against COVID-19 had taken place in Haiti as of April 9. Lack of planning, no health system, bureaucratic inertia were all given as reasons. (tinyurl.com/fkz9s75a)

Eighty percent of Haitians live on less than \$2 a day. (tinyurl.com/yfkf5jp9) The minimum wage is \$6.41 for an eight-hour day. The official unemployment rate is over 13%, but most jobs are catch-as-catch-can — loading trucks, digging ditches, pushing carts, selling sugar water in the market and so on.

Food insecurity is high. Relief Web estimates that 4 to 5 million Haitians experience acute hunger, going without food for a considerable period of time. If you don't work in Haiti, usually you don't eat. In major cities there are foreign-funded nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that might provide some spot relief.

Kidnapping has been both a political and financial tool in Haiti. A special U.S. SEAL force kidnapped Haitian President Bertrand Aristide to exile in the Central African Republic in February 2004. The Haitian bourgeoisie has hired gangs to kidnap political rivals.

As times have grown harder and rivalries sharper, gangs have adopted kidnapping as a fundraising affair that lets them pay for their neighbors' support, buy weapons and support a more-than-subsistence lifestyle. Their targets have broadened.

Associated Press reported that, in December 2020, a woman in Port-au-Prince — who made her living selling hot dogs in the market and recruiting students for a cosmetology school — was kidnapped from a car that a friend was driving. Her friend's family raised enough money to get her back, but she is still afraid to go to work. (tinyurl.com/ep7kaamr)

On April 1, Holy Thursday, the Gospel Kreyol Ministry was livestreaming its service from Haiti when a group of armed people burst into the studio and kidnapped the well-known pastor and the organist,

leading them away under full view of the cameras. The church put up a GoFundMe page and freed the abducted members. The kidnappers haven't been caught.

Bus drivers, who generally rent or own their own bus and run their businesses on a cash basis, have been a particular target. Kidnappers take the bus — their transportation out of the situation — along with the driver's cash, and can rob the passengers. The drivers and their communities have begun fighting back with strikes and road barricades, often made of burning tires. (Miami Herald, April 14)

Drivers have reported at least one instance of cops working to clear an "accident" on National Route 1 that had caused traffic to back up so kidnappers could seize the bus drivers and their vehicles.

Accelerating crisis

On April 12, five Catholic priests, one of whom was French, two nuns and three laypeople were seized on their way to an investiture service. The Archdiocese of Port-Au-Prince immediately issued a statement requesting their release. The kidnappers were asking for \$3 million.

On April 15, the Catholic hierarchy asked all Haitians to participate in a work stoppage and also to pray for the kidnapped priests and the others. The 11 Haitian bishops came to the Church of St. Peter in

Petionville, Port-Au-Prince, and officiated at a mass before a packed congregation, with a large crowd gathered outside.

As the bishops' procession was leaving the church, the mostly young crowd — with fists in the air — began chanting "Nou bouke!" ("We're fed up!") over and over, along with "Aba Jovenel!" ("Down with Jovenel!") — Jovenel Moïse, the current president of Haiti who has refused to obey the constitution and leave office.)

Cops then fired tear gas into the church; some panicked people collapsed into the pews; others rushed out. There were no immediate reports of asphyxiation, but it can happen when tear gas is used in a confined area.

History of U.S. interference

The response of the U.S. government has been muted. The State Department has issued its most severe level of warning on the danger of traveling to Haiti and has urged the government there to improve the security situation. But the current U.S. ambassador to Haiti, Michele J. Sison, is not functioning as such, having been nominated to be assistant secretary of state for international organization affairs.

This is a milquetoast response from a U.S. government whose secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, directly intervened in Haiti in 2011 to make Michel Martelly



A protest against kidnapping in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital.

president. Martelly's party, the Haitian Party of Tèt Kale (PHTK) in 2016 picked Jovenel Moïse, a businessman, to be president, with the blessing of U.S. diplomats.

The U.S. openly attacks Haiti's autonomy when that suits U.S. economic and political interests — starting with the U.S. 1804 economic blockade of the country after Haitian liberation fighters under Jean Jacques Dessaline crushed the French slave masters to win independence.

Currently the U.S. appears to be using NGOs like Human Rights Watch to indirectly intervene.

It is clear that the U.S. is actually supporting the slide of Haiti into an economic and political abyss, as a warning to poor countries oppressed by imperialism against asserting their own road to development.

Twitter @dunkel_greg.

¡Fuera LUMA! — LUMA out of Puerto Rico!



Call to Action on Puerto Rico demonstrated April 13 in New York City's Union Square to say ¡Fuera LUMA! — LUMA out!

We demand the cancellation of this \$1.5 billion colonial government contract with LUMA. This is a company created to privatize Puerto Rico's energy network. It will drive the increase in electricity rates and use financially weak companies to support its privatization work. With the sole objective of obtaining federal funds, LUMA may withdraw, leaving the island at the mercy of any disaster if such transfers do not materialize at the level or on the schedule provided. LUMA promotes the continuous use of fossil fuel consumption by promoting natural gas as the main source of energy.

— Report by Lorraine Liriano, WW photo by Toni Arenstein

Statement supporting the Syrian people

The following introduction and statement was issued by the United National Antiwar Coalition April 14:



Pro-Western Syrian exiles have initiated a statement supported by a number of "progressive" individuals and organizations. The statement is titled, "Erasing people through disinformation: Syria and the 'anti-imperialism' of fools." In this statement, which supports the goal of the U.S. and its allies of regime change in Syria, the authors attack those who have consistently supported an end to intervention in Syria by the U.S., NATO, Israel and other repressive states in the Middle East. Their statement was signed by a number of people in the U.S. and around the world. UNAC was one of the groups that this statement criticized.

The war on Syria has been an especially divisive issue for the peace movement, so we and others have put out the statement below explaining our position. If you agree with this statement, we ask that you sign as an individual or an organization. Go to unac.notowar.net.

As the Biden Administration took office in the U.S., one of their first actions was to increase U.S. troop levels in the northeastern region of Syria currently occupied by the United States and its proxies. Shortly thereafter, the United States bombed a Syrian town on the eastern border killing as many as 30 Syrians, purportedly to target hostile "Iraqi militiamen" or to "send a message"

to Iran. U.S. proxies are selling Syrian grain in Turkey, and a U.S.-based corporation now operates a refinery in the Syrian territory occupied by U.S. troops and proxies.

Last year, Congress passed the Caesar Sanctions as an amendment to the massive Defense Appropriations Bill. These sanctions cause the Syrian people to go without the basic necessities such as food, energy and medicine. They have destroyed the Syrian currency and are literally causing starvation. At this time, it is impossible, even for the United Nations, to bring aid into Syria.

Moreover, these sanctions block reconstruction and the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees from impoverished camps in surrounding states. Syrians can't return if there is no potable water, food or housing for their families. Meanwhile, the only Syrians who can receive international aid are those in U.S.-occupied territories and those in areas controlled by the U.S. ally, Al Nusra/Al Qaeda.

There has been a recent swell of anti-Syria propaganda, supported by prominent activists on the "left." This has included attacks on the majority of the U.S. antiwar movement, which has focused on opposing U.S. and outside aggression against Syria and which supports the right of Syria to defend its national sovereignty against this outside aggression. The clear fact is that the U.S. government, along with its allies in NATO, Israel and other reactionary Middle Eastern states, is the primary cause of the current devastation of the Syrian people. The U.S. and its allies have facilitated the entry into Syria of tens of thousands of foreign fighters to support their regime-change agenda.

As with the lies about weapons of mass destruction that led to the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq, the U.S.

and its allies have put forth accusations about Syria using chemical weapons and terror against its own people, which have now been totally discredited and disproved.

Therefore:

1. We condemn the illegal occupation of Syrian territory by U.S. forces and their proxies and their illegal and unprovoked military attacks on Syrian soil and Syrian people.
2. We condemn the ongoing theft of Syrian oil and Syrian grain by U.S. proxies, resources desperately needed by the Syrian people.
3. We condemn the so-called Caesar Sanctions, illegal, immoral unilateral coercive measures.
4. We condemn the U.S. war on the Syrian Republic and the callous violation of Syrian sovereignty.
5. We demand the withdrawal of ALL U.S. troops and U.S. funding of foreign mercenary forces and U.S. funding of armed, internal opposition forces from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, and a lifting of the U.S. naval blockade of Yemen.
6. We demand an end to illegal U.S. sanctions on Syria.

Initial signers: United National Antiwar Coalition, Syria Solidarity Movement, Black Alliance for Peace, U.S. Peace Council, Hands off Syria Coalition, Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War, Popular Resistance, Arab Americans for Syria, Youth Against Empire, International Action Center, Veterans for Peace, Freedom Road Socialist Organization, Socialist Action, Hands off Syria — Australia, BAYAN USA. □

Racism, worker rights and the FedEx shooting

The mass shooting April 15 at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis took the lives of eight workers and injured seven more. Half of those slain were members of the Sikh community, and one was a young African American woman. The murderer, 19-year-old Brandon Hole, killed himself after the shootings took place.

There have been many hate crimes against Sikhs, especially following the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center. Haters ignorantly linked the turbans worn by Sikh men with Osama Bin-Laden. In 2012 six people were killed and four injured in an attack on a Sikh house of worship — a gurdwara — in Oak Creek, Wis.

Immediately following the Indianapolis massacre, the Sikh Coalition explained in a statement: “It was no accident that the shooter targeted this particular FedEx facility where he had worked and knew was overwhelmingly staffed by Sikhs. This was not a crime of convenience or a spur of the moment attack; it was one of methodical planning and selection which echoes the targeting of Asian American spa parlors in Atlanta exactly one month ago. The people that were shot and killed were not random targets.” (sikhcoalition.org)

Historically and now, white supremacists from the Klan to the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys have never had trouble obtaining the tools they use to terrorize the

Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, Arab, Muslim, Jewish, LGBTQ2S+ and other communities. They can get weapons, explosives, lumber and fuel for cross-burnings, propaganda leaflets, media access, rally permits, police protection — and in this era, internet and social media access.

Young white men with white-supremacist views — the profile of many mass shooters — have no trouble gaining access to firearms, including semiautomatic weapons.

We are all told the fascists have a First Amendment right to spread hatred. But racist ideology — recklessly fomented during the Trump administration — fuels racist violence.

Like Amazon workers, FedEx workers need a union

The white supremacy driving so many mass shootings is the number one tool that capitalists use to keep the working class divided — and unorganized.

Package handlers and drivers at FedEx earn on the average \$14-15 an hour; drivers at UPS make about \$10 an hour more. The difference? FedEx, number 70 on the Fortune 500 list of wealthiest companies, is nonunion. Lower wages have helped FedEx earn billions in profits annually, most recently almost \$900 million in the quarter ending Feb. 28.

Safety of the workers who make them rich is not a

priority for FedEx bosses. Last November, Leannell “Troy” McClenton filed a wrongful death lawsuit against FedEx over the 2019 death of his son, Detate Young, who was killed on the job when an unlocked door holding piles of packages swung open. Young, who was in the way, was crushed.

Workers at the FedEx World Hub in Memphis, where Young worked, complain about the speed of work and the dangerous conditions. Thousands of the company’s 500,000 workers worldwide have tested positive for COVID.

At the Indianapolis facility, workers are not allowed to have their phones with them while they are working. This meant they could not call for help after their co-workers were shot. Their relatives, frantically calling to find out if they were among the victims, could not reach them.

This is the 21st century high-tech version of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist tragedy in New York City and the Imperial Foods chicken processing plant fire 80 years later in Hamlet, N.C., fires which killed 146 and 25 workers respectively. In both cases the workers were locked in by the bosses.

Without a union, the workers did not have a voice to demand safe working conditions.

Union YES! White supremacy NO! □

Trans women and police brutality throughout history

By Princess Harmony

The “protect and serve” motto emblazoned on police vehicles acts as cover for their aggressive and oppressive activities against people of color and working and poor people in general. Among groups most impacted are trans women, who have been oppressed and maligned openly for centuries. Throughout the 20th century, trans women and our self-expression were repressed legally and violently.

Possibly the most blatant example of state-sanctioned violence against trans women was in Nazi Germany. During their rise to power, the Nazis launched attacks against the Institute for Sexual Science that researched the trans phenomenon and helped trans women transition. The Nazi regime treated trans women as homosexual men, twisting the knife.

Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler gave speeches targeting gay people, essentially saying that sexuality is not a private affair but a key problem in their racist, sexist, and queerphobic ideology. Being queer was harmful to the “Master Race.” While the main targets of the Holocaust were Jewish, Roma and Slavic people, the Holocaust remains one of the largest state-organized assaults on queer people — who were made to wear the pink triangle.

In the U.S., it was once illegal in many localities to “dress as the opposite sex.” In fact, some towns still have rules like that today, though they may not be enforced. These repressions forced trans women, cross-dressers, and other gender nonconforming people to go underground, or to hide who they were.

In response to both police and community mistreatment, they rebelled!

From Cooper’s Donuts to Stonewall

One of the very first recorded instances of trans and gender nonconforming people rebelling against police and social tyranny was the Cooper’s Donuts “riot” in May 1959 in Los Angeles. Little information is kept on this uprising because it was a revolt by trans people. They threw everything that wasn’t nailed down at police and burnt police cars to a crisp. They forced the cops to flee, though they returned with more force and the revolt was defeated.

History is hidden by the victors — the Los Angeles Police Department successfully

hid that aspect of our history.

The next trans and gender nonconforming rebellion in the U.S. was the rebellion at Compton’s Cafeteria in San Francisco’s Tenderloin in 1966. It was illegal to “impersonate a female,” so trans women, drag queens, and cross-dressers went underground. Due to the fact that they were so oppressed, they had to turn to underground economies, such as sex work or drug dealing. This was a fact of life and still is.

In this environment, dirty cops took advantage of their situation by shaking down queer people for sex or money acquired from selling drugs. This mistreatment set the stage for a queer organization — Vanguard — to come on the scene.

Vanguard demanded equal rights and protections for the trans and gender nonconforming community. In August 1966, the management of Compton’s Cafeteria called the police to arrest people for violating the “female impersonation” law. Someone spilled coffee on the management, sparking a rebellion. When the rebellion started, it was 60 trans people fighting for their rights, lighting fires and battling the police.

The biggest and most well-known queer uprising is the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion in New York City. This was not an exclusively trans event, but many trans women and other trans feminine people were present and fought hard for trans people.

Sylvia Rivera was chief among them. About Stonewall, she said, “Once the tactical police force showed up, I think that really incited us a little bit more. Here this queen is going completely bananas, you know, jumping on, hitting the windshield. The next thing you know, the taxicab was being turned over. The cars were being turned over, windows were shattering all over the place, fires were burning around

the place. It was beautiful, it really was. It was really beautiful. I wanted to do every destructive thing that I could think of at that time to hurt anyone that had hurt us through the years.”

Another elder there was Marsha P. Johnson. Like Rivera, she was a founder of Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries. In an interview that was reprinted in a book about STAR, she talks about being arrested for “prostitution” simply because she was a Black gender nonconforming person. This sort of thing continues to this day.

In 1992 Johnson’s body was found floating in the Hudson River, cause of death officially “undetermined,” but there is strong evidence she was murdered.

Police still target trans women of color

In the 21st century, abuses of trans women by police continue. In 2006, a trans woman in New York City, Mariah Lopez, was arrested for walking while transgender unofficially and “loitering with the intent to solicit” officially. When she was in police custody in the Sixth Precinct, she was called “he/she,” “it” and “f*ggot.” Police beat her and refused to take her to the hospital, acting like it was no big deal to beat up a trans woman just because she was trans.

When Lopez was transferred to the Department of Corrections, she was abused by guards who didn’t believe her story about being abused by the police while in NYPD custody. On top of that, they called her a “f*ing f*ggot.” On July 18, 2006, she was additionally charged with “assaulting officers.” Because she couldn’t afford bail and couldn’t stand the living conditions of prison, she took a plea deal to get out.

According to “Injustice at Every Turn: National Transgender Discrimination Survey,” 25 percent of trans women have



Sylvia Rivera (left) and Marsha P. Johnson

been disrespected by the police. It’s also stated that trans people of all genders are treated with extreme disrespect based on their economic status. People of color (Indigenous, Asian, Black, Latinx, and multiracial) all reported that they had been abused by the police. Responders across the board — from trans feminine to trans masculine people — reported discomfort with police interactions.

Transgender women are often harassed and abused by cis police but escape with their lives. This is not always the case. In 2002, Black trans woman Nizah Morris was murdered by Philadelphia police officers while being escorted home after she got drunk in an integrated queer bar. In 2020, Roxanne Moore was shot to death by police in Reading, Pa. She was in the middle of a mental health crisis and wielded a gun that couldn’t actually fire. Protesters in Reading came out with Black Lives Matter signs and the queer and trans people of color flag.

Fortunately, alongside the tireless work of activists in many locales, trans women are fighting for their dignity. In February 2021, the State of New York finally repealed its “walking while trans” law. Trans women can no longer be arrested on suspicion of being sex workers, at least not officially.

But the white supremacist heterosexist bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie will never entirely make us equal to cis people. Only a revolution can do that and we need to remember that.

For all the trans people afraid of police, we can join revolutionary organizations that fight for the memory of our elders. □

After Amazon vote: Unionize ALL workers!

Continued from page 1

because the labor movement has the resources, the infrastructure, the muscle and the power. And the workers and the militants that have been organizing Amazon and Whole Foods are brave, strong; they're salting Amazon and Whole Foods, but they can't do it by themselves. It's important for the unions — not to ignore them and not to dismiss them — but you've got to work with them and win them over. Another critical reality is the largest percentage of the working class is not in the union movement. But they must be told that even though they only order, if they can afford to, from Amazon, they're important to the struggle.

Of course, it's the workers who work for Amazon and Whole Foods who are critical to organizing Amazon and Whole Foods. But the rest of us who are part of the working class, we're on the outside; we are in the tens of millions on a global basis. We are in the hundreds of millions, but we have a stake in this; this is our fight.

That's why some of the mass mobilizations that we helped to organize Feb. 20 and March 20, in solidarity with the union fight in Alabama, were important. Those actions helped push the labor movement, which on many levels was not even involved in Alabama, to get involved in it. What we are saying now is that a part of our reaction to what happened yesterday and today is the disclosure of this vote, which made our days more difficult; we have got to respond to that.

What's important is that the left, that is seriously concerned about the working class and that is in this fight and not just observing it, has to find its voice.

And we have to try to get others to come with us and say: No. We're going to demand an end to this union busting that Amazon is involved in, the multi-million-dollar union busting that they brought to bear on these workers in Alabama. No.

We've got to say that, while at the end of the day, the decisive struggle will be based on the workers in these workplaces, the whole working class has got to be mobilized to say we demand that Amazon and Whole Foods, and whatever other entities that have workers that it buys because it's so rich, we have to demand that they accept the unionization of the workers.

The working class has to say that's a very necessary complement to the



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Larry Holmes speaking at March 20 rally for Amazon Bessemer workers in New York City.

workplace organizing. I want to just mention some strategies going forward which I hope that others will echo on, disagree with or add to.

Strategies for moving forward

A lot of us are organizing around the right-to-organize legislation known as the PRO Act, which is progressive, good and helpful. But it does not include recognizing card collection as the basis of an employer having to recognize a union. They still have to go the National Labor Relations Board route, which was a big problem in Alabama. We want “card check” that organizes collecting those cards, and once you have enough of them, that should be it.

The boss has to sit down and negotiate with you, end of story. That's not in the PRO Act. We've got to demand its inclusion in the PRO Act. Also that bill is hung up in the Senate, which makes it easy for President Biden and others to say they're for it, but basically do nothing about it. We're trying to understand why Biden has got all these powers and said he's like FDR, pro-labor, but waited until the middle of the campaign to say something, not at the beginning.

Why doesn't he issue an executive order or series of executive orders that essentially puts the right to organize the PRO Act into law right away, including card check? We want to hear what people think about that and maybe organize a campaign around that to use that

executive order.

We want to talk about the formation of workers assemblies. In the example and spirit of what the Southern Workers Assembly has done, we can learn a lot. Where the labor movement is weak in the South, the Assembly has filled the vacuum.

They have organized workers in states where it's illegal to be in a union, where you can't pay dues, but they've done it. They've got much to teach us. And the way the union movement is now, it's not welcoming, except in the most rare instances, to migrant workers, to undocumented workers, to incarcerated workers, to sex workers, to trans workers, to gig workers, to Uber drivers. Who's going to organize these assemblies?

These workers assemblies, organized on a local basis, attempt to both organize workers and support unions and struggles and solidarize themselves with ongoing workers' struggles locally and internationally.

They are essential at this time to transforming the working-class movement and making it radical, making it inclusive and not exclusive. And it's up to us. We can't wait for somebody else to do it.

May Day 2021 is coming up. How can we make May Day meaningful to what happened in Alabama, to the right-to-organize legislation, to organizing the unorganized? Should we issue a national call for May Day actions or with some key issues that we recommend that activists around the country take up?

Left unity is crucial

I want to speak to the need for left unity. In a lot of ways what we saw over the past two months in organizing the national days of solidarity with the workers in Alabama, was a kind of left unity. It wasn't organized; it wasn't groups that got together and talked to each other. But all of a sudden this group was doing it and that group and these groups that don't work together, despite a lot of

differences on big and small issues, not minimizing that.

But clearly for any of us who are serious, we can't make any motion — we can't do anything unless there's some serious left unity. Our organizations alone are too small. If we just want to comment on stuff, if we want to criticize, which is necessary, that's okay. But if we want to do something, if we want to actually

do something that makes a difference to transforming our class, to organizing workers, to transforming the working-class movement, to changing what it is now to what it should be, we got to work together.

Different organizations, socialists and communists worked together in the 1930s. They did it from Minneapolis to Flint to everywhere — they did it. We've got to move in that spirit. The Democratic Socialists of America, by far the biggest left grouping and not a homogeneous group politically, even they are not big enough. And those of us in

smaller groups, where we don't have the size in certain areas, we have the experience to be helpful.

So as we move forward, let's try to do what we did over the past two months. If we can do that, and we're really serious, I don't think there's any end to what we can do. The main point — and I'm repeating myself — is that it's one thing to have a meeting and sit aside and comment and criticize. And that's important, especially if it educates and doesn't demoralize views, or isn't just cynical.

But we also have to be concerned about what we can do when we've worked together. And if we have to struggle over the kind of structures that we need for real left unity, let us do that. But let us do that honestly. And let us do that with revolutionary determination to have an impact on the future. □

Is Workers World essential to you? Then support it now!

COVID-19 has exposed everything wrong with capitalism in the U.S.:

- No national system provides free health care for all. Inadequate access to care, including vaccines, for Black, Latinx, Indigenous, im/migrant and poor communities, results in their high rates of COVID-caused illness and death.
- No provisions to support workers and their families with childcare, housing or other necessities.
- No guaranteed jobs or livable income. The pandemic downturn hurt millions of workers; nearly 24 million are still jobless, furloughed or have experienced wage and hour cuts.*
- No mandatory paid sick time or benefits for essential workers.
- Lack of sufficient nutritious food; hunger is widespread.

- Institutionalized racism, sexism, anti-im/migrant, anti-LGBTQ2S+ bigotry, ableism. Police brutality continues unabated.
- Incarcerated people are kept in prisons where COVID-19 is rampant.
- Class system rigged in favor of the 1%. Billionaires' wealth increased by \$1.3 trillion since the pandemic began.
- Congress allocated \$740 billion for the Pentagon, while government programs providing for human needs are insufficient or nonexistent

Workers World provides the theoretical and organizational ammunition needed to crush this inhumane system and create one that supports the working class and all oppressed people: socialism. The need for that becomes clearer every day during this devastating pandemic,

when everyone has been called upon to show solidarity and form a united front.

Please consider putting your money where it will really help achieve that goal.

We established the WW Supporter Program 44 years ago, so readers could promote the working-class truth needed for revolutionary change. Members receive a year's subscription to WW, a regular letter about timely issues and one, two or three (respectively) free subscriptions for friends for a donation of \$75, \$100, \$300 — or more. Members can receive the book: “What Road to



WW PHOTO: TONI ARENSTEIN

Socialism?” upon request. (Or read it at workers.org/books/.)

WW articles are being posted daily at workers.org. During the pandemic, printed copies are being mailed out once a month. Issues will be printed and mailed out more frequently as soon as the crisis lifts.

Write monthly or annual checks to Workers World. Mail them to Workers World, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or contribute at workers.org/donate/.

We are grateful for your help in building Workers World!

*Economic Policy Institute, March 2021.



MO FOTO: G. DUNKEL

Larry Holmes en la manifestación del 20 de febrero para los trabajadores de Amazon Bessemer en la ciudad de Nueva York.

Después del voto en Amazon: La organización laboral es un derecho

Por Larry Holmes

Los siguientes comentarios editados fueron realizados en un seminario web del 9 de abril titulado “La lucha continúa — Próximos pasos para el sindicato de BAmazon y más allá — Reunión de organizadores” organizado por supportamazonworkers.org. Holmes es el Primer Secretario del partido Workers World Party/ Partido Mundo Obrero y organizador de la Asamblea de Trabajadores contra el Racismo en la ciudad de Nueva York.

Mi corazón, mi solidaridad está con los organizadores y los trabajadores de Bessemer que han luchado tanto por este voto. Los trabajadores del comercio minorista, mayorista y de los grandes almacenes se vieron superados por este monstruo de la corporación capitalista global, Amazon.

Pero aun así hicieron lo que, francamente, deberían haber hecho los sindicatos más grandes, que tenían más recursos, infinitamente más recursos. El sindicato lo asumió. Pero como dijo el camarada Saladin, esto es una batalla; es el comienzo.

La votación en Bessemer no es sólo un problema o una crisis o un revés, o como se quiera caracterizar. No es sólo un problema para los trabajadores de Alabama o para los trabajadores del Sur o para los trabajadores de Amazon; es un problema para toda la clase trabajadora, para todo el movimiento obrero y para la izquierda.

La mayoría de nosotros entendió que no deberíamos confiar en 6.000 trabajadores de Alabama para enfrentarse a la mayor corporación del mundo, una corporación que prácticamente define el capitalismo global del siglo XXI. Es nuestra crisis. Ahora hay que desafiar al gremio laboral. Esto tiene que intensificar una crisis muy necesaria dentro del movimiento obrero a todos los niveles, no sólo en el liderazgo, no sólo en el Consejo Ejecutivo de la AFL-CIO, sino sobre todo a nivel de las bases obreras.

Por eso estoy de acuerdo con Saladin Muhammad en ir de un lado a otro y celebrar reuniones para hablar con los trabajadores de base sobre este tema. Hay que plantear las preguntas: ¿Qué van a hacer los trabajadores ahora? ¿Cuál va a ser la respuesta?

La única respuesta verdadera es ésta: La clase obrera y sus organizaciones -no sólo la más grande e importante en este momento por sus recursos- el movimiento obrero organizado debe idear un plan para responder a esto, para organizar a Amazon -no sólo a Bessemer- que tiene un millón de trabajadores en este país, sin incluir a Whole Foods, que es de su propiedad.

¿Cómo van a trabajar juntos los sindicatos? ¿Cuál es su estrategia? ¿Cuál es su plan? ¿Qué sindicatos van a trabajar juntos y no competir entre sí? ¿Cómo van a ganarse a los militantes de grupos como Amazonians United y Whole Foods United, como mi buen amigo Chris Smalls, fundador del Congreso de Trabajadores Esenciales? Tienen una base en estos sitios de Amazon y Whole Foods, y se sienten alienados por los sindicatos.

Los sindicatos no son a los que acuden, y tienen buenas razones para ello; en eso estamos de acuerdo la mayoría. Pero el problema es que la realidad de la situación significa que debemos tratar con

el movimiento obrero, porque el movimiento obrero tiene los recursos, la infraestructura, el músculo y el poder. Y los trabajadores y los militantes que han estado organizando a Amazon y a Whole Foods son valientes, fuertes; están salpicando a Amazon y a Whole Foods, pero no pueden hacerlo solos.

Es importante para los sindicatos — no ignorarlos y no descartarlos — pero hay que trabajar con ellos y ganarlos. Otra realidad crítica es que el mayor porcentaje de la clase trabajadora no está en el movimiento sindical. Pero hay que decirles que aunque sólo hagan pedidos,

si se lo pueden permitir, a Amazon, son importantes para la lucha.

Por supuesto, son los trabajadores que trabajan para Amazon y Whole Foods los que son fundamentales para organizar a Amazon y Whole Foods. Pero el resto de los que formamos parte de la clase trabajadora, estamos fuera; somos decenas de millones a nivel mundial. Estamos en los cientos de millones, pero tenemos un interés en esto; esta es nuestra lucha.

Por eso fueron importantes algunas de las movilizaciones masivas que ayudamos a organizar el 20 de febrero y el 20 de marzo, en solidaridad con la lucha sindical en Alabama. Esas acciones ayudaron a empujar al movimiento obrero, que en muchos niveles ni siquiera estaba involucrado en Alabama, a involucrarse en ella. Lo que decimos ahora es que una parte de nuestra reacción a lo que ocurrió ayer y hoy es la divulgación de esta votación, que hizo nuestros días más difíciles; tenemos que responder a eso.

Tenemos que decir que, aunque al final del día, la lucha decisiva se basará en los trabajadores de estos lugares de trabajo. Toda la clase obrera tiene que movilizarse para decir que exigimos que Amazon y Whole Foods, y cualquier otra entidad que tenga trabajadores que com- pre porque es muy rica, tenemos que exigir que acepten la sindicalización de los trabajadores.

La clase obrera tiene que decir que eso es un complemento muy necesario para la organización en el lugar de trabajo. Sólo quiero mencionar algunas estrategias para avanzar, de las que espero que otros se hagan eco, estén en desacuerdo o añadan algo.

Estrategias para avanzar

Muchos de nosotros nos estamos organizando en torno a la legislación sobre el derecho a organizarse conocida como Ley PRO, que es progresista, buena y útil. Pero no incluye el reconocimiento de la recogida de tarjetas como base para que un empresario tenga que reconocer a un sindicato. Todavía tienen que ir por la ruta de la Junta Nacional de Relaciones Laborales, lo que fue un gran problema en Alabama. Queremos una “comprobación de tarjetas” que organice la recogida de esas tarjetas, y una vez que se tengan suficientes, eso debería ser todo.

El jefe tiene que sentarse y negociar contigo, y punto. Eso no está en la Ley PRO. Tenemos que exigir su inclusión en la Ley PRO. Además, ese proyecto de ley está atascado en el Senado, lo que facilita que el presidente Biden y otros digan que están a favor, pero básicamente no hacen nada al respecto. Estamos tratando de entender por qué Biden tiene todos estos poderes y dice que es como FDR, pro-laboral, [pero] esperó hasta la mitad de la campaña para decir algo, no al principio.

¿Por qué no emite una orden ejecutiva o una serie de órdenes ejecutivas que esencialmente conviertan en ley el derecho a organizar la Ley PRO de inmediato, incluyendo el control de tarjetas? Queremos escuchar lo que la gente piensa sobre eso y tal vez organizar una campaña alrededor de eso para usar esa orden ejecutiva.

Queremos hablar de la formación de asambleas de trabajadores. Con el ejemplo y el espíritu de lo que ha hecho la Asamblea de Trabajadores del Sur, podemos aprender mucho. Allí donde el movimiento obrero es débil en el Sur, la Asamblea ha llenado el vacío.

Han organizado a trabajadores en estos donde es ilegal estar en un sindicato, donde no se pueden pagar cuotas, pero lo han hecho. Tienen mucho que enseñarnos. Y tal y como está ahora el movimiento sindical, no es acogedor, excepto en los casos más raros, para los trabajadores migrantes, para los trabajadores indocumentados, para los trabajadores encarcelados, para los trabajadores del sexo que son trabajadores trans, para los trabajadores de gigas, para los conductores de Uber. ¿Quién va a organizar estas asambleas?

Estas asambleas de trabajadores, organizadas a nivel local, intentan tanto organizar a los trabajadores como apoyar a los sindicatos y las luchas y solidarizarse con las luchas obreras en curso a nivel local e internacional.

Son esenciales en este momento para transformar el movimiento obrero y hacerlo radical, hacerlo inclusivo y no excluyente. Y depende de nosotros. No podemos esperar a que otro lo haga.

Se acerca el Primero de Mayo de 2021. ¿Cómo podemos hacer que el Primero de Mayo, dentro de unas semanas, sea significativo para lo que ocurrió en Alabama, para la legislación del derecho a organizarse, para organizar a los no organizados? ¿Deberíamos hacer un llamado nacional para las acciones del Primero de Mayo o con algunas cuestiones clave que recomendamos que los activistas de todo el país asuman?

La unidad de la izquierda es crucial

Quiero hablar de la necesidad de la unidad de la izquierda. En muchos sentidos, lo que vimos en los últimos dos meses al organizar las jornadas nacionales de solidaridad con los trabajadores de Alabama, fue una especie de unidad de la izquierda. No estaba organizada; no eran grupos que se reunieran y hablaran entre sí. Pero de repente este grupo lo estaba haciendo y ese grupo y estos grupos que no trabajan juntos, a pesar de muchas diferencias en temas grandes y pequeños, sin minimizar eso.

Pero está claro que para cualquiera de nosotros que sea serio, no podemos hacer ningún movimiento — no podemos hacer nada a menos que haya una unidad seria de la izquierda. Nuestras organizaciones por sí solas son demasiado pequeñas. Si sólo queremos comentar cosas, si queremos criticar, que es necesario, está bien.

Pero si queremos hacer algo, si queremos realmente hacer algo que marque la diferencia para transformar nuestra clase, para organizar a los trabajadores, para transformar el movimiento obrero, para cambiar lo que es ahora a lo que debería ser, tenemos que trabajar juntos.

Diferentes organizaciones, socialistas y comunistas trabajaron juntos en los años 30. Lo hicieron desde Minneapolis hasta Flint y en todas partes, lo hicieron. Tenemos que movernos con ese espíritu. Los Socialistas Democráticos de América, que son la mayor agrupación de izquierda y no son un grupo homogéneo políticamente, ni siquiera ellos son lo suficientemente grandes. Y los que estamos en grupos más pequeños, donde no tenemos el tamaño en ciertas áreas, tenemos la experiencia para ser útiles.

Así que, a medida que avancemos, tratemos de hacer lo que hicimos en los últimos dos meses. Si podemos hacerlo, y somos realmente serios, no creo que haya fin a lo que podemos hacer. El punto principal -y me estoy repitiendo- es que una cosa es tener una reunión y sentarse a un lado y comentar y criticar. Y eso es importante, sobre todo si educa y no desmoraliza las opiniones, o no es simplemente cínico.

Pero también tenemos que preocuparnos por lo que podemos hacer cuando hemos trabajado juntos. Y si tenemos que luchar por el tipo de estructuras que necesitamos para una verdadera unidad de la izquierda, hagámoslo.

Pero hagámoslo honestamente. Y hagámoslo con la determinación revolucionaria de tener un impacto en el futuro. □