No fascist coup!

Fight back with workers’ power

Workers World Party issued this statement about the events of Jan. 6.

The coup attempt on Jan. 6 in Washington, D.C., and the mobilization of a fascist mob numbering in the tens of thousands, must be viewed with the utmost seriousness.

While the attack took the form of an assault on Congress, the U.S. Capitol building and the “institution of democracy” — halting for hours the Constitutionally mandated approval of the presidential election — these white-supremacist forces pose the greatest threat to the working class, especially the most oppressed. Their political aim is to crush with an iron fist every expression, even the most modest, of workers rights, social justice and Black Lives Matter.

Capitalist politicians in both major parties are falling all over each other to disassociate themselves from the would-be coup makers — and from Trump the instigator. But the failure of the state apparatus, especially the police, to prevent an outright invasion — however short-lived — of the citadel of U.S. political power shows that those in power are unreliable, inept and in no way up to the task of beating back a fascist threat.

To say the Capitol police were outnumbered, overwhelmed or unprepared offers no explanation as to how the mob so readily gained control and engaged in a violent, deadly confrontation for several hours before being moved out and away from Capitol grounds. No serious examination of what has been called “the insurrection” could conclude that it was a spontaneous outburst by people misled by their leader. There were political forces who were well aware of plans to forcibly storm the building, with the open support of Trump and his cohorts.

Contrast how easily the white supremacists entered the Capitol with the brutal police suppression of Black Lives Matter protests around the country, including in Washington, D.C.

Independent class response is necessary

We cannot look to the police or the military to defend Black Lives from the lynch mob that has been building the past four years — for whom the Capitol siege was a culmination. It is even possible that the Fraternal Order of Police was in on or had advance knowledge of the conspiracy to invade Congress. White supremacists have been joining police forces around the country in droves, and the FOP endorsed Trump for president.

In any case, the rioters found sympathizers among the Capitol police — despite them losing one of their own — and there were cops, military personnel and even elected officials among the attackers.

We — the workers and oppressed within...
Pro-Palestine teenagers defy Israeli military

By Mirinda Crissman

Sixty Israeli teenagers signed an open letter on Jan. 5 explaining their refusal to be conscripted into the Israeli Defense Forces. They were rejecting the violent occupation and destruction of Palestinian lives and land by the state of Israel.

Their solidarity comes at a cost many know they will have to pay: “Some of the signatories are expected to appear before the IDF conscientious objectors’ committee and be sent to military prison, while others have found ways to avoid army service.” (+772mag.com, Jan. 6)

The Israeli teens implore their peers to ask themselves who their military “service” would actually protect. Addressing Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz, Education Minister Yoav Galant and IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi, they say:

“The Zionist policy of brutal violence towards and expulsion of Palestinians from their homes and lands began in 1948 and has not stopped since. The occupation is also poiso ning Israeli society — it is violent, militaristic, oppressive and irrational. As a result, we consider it our duty to oppose this destruc tive reality by uniting our struggles and refusing to serve these violent systems — chief among them the military.”

Going to the roots of oppression wielded by the Israeli state, they explain: “We are ordered to put on the bloodstained military uniform and preserve the legacy of the Nakba (violent expulsion of Palestinians) and of occupa tion. Israeli society has been built upon these rotten roots, and it is apparent in all facets of life: in the racism, the hateful political discourse, the police brutality and more.”

The resisters emphasize the connection between Israel’s neoliberal and military policies: “This military oppression goes hand-in-hand with economic oppression. While the citizens of the Occupied Palestinian Territories are impoverished, wealthy elites become richer at their expense. Palestinian workers are systematically exploited, and the weapons industry uses the Occupied Palestinian Territories as a testing ground and as a showcase to bolster its sales.”

Those in the imperial core of the United States could learn from the resistance of these class-conscious teens. In the U.S. as well as Israel, militant solidarity and resistance to domination inherent in capitalist exploitation.

The rulers of these criminal states will turn their imperial war inward — inflicting fascist violence on their own people — before giving up the reins of exploitation. Any temporary representational gains for oppressed groups within these empires will be made only on the backs of the most oppressed. Solidarity forever with those who are on the side of Palestinian resistance. Free Palestine! ☐

Conscientious objects to Israeli military duty at an anti-annexation protest in the city of Rosh HaAyin in June 2020

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multi- national, multinational, and multinationalized organiz ation 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 repres sion, attacks on immigrants, 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 guarantee 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 debt and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published 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. E-mail: ww@workers.org. Web: www.workers.org. Vol. 63, No. 2 • Jan. 14, 2021 Closing date: Jan. 13, 2021

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Grassroots voter turnout ousts wealthy GOP senators

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

Jan. 6 — Georgia voters made his-
tory on Jan. 5 by voting into the U.S. Senate Rev. Raphael Warnock, the first ever Black senator from Georgia.

Warnock is senior pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the famed church of Rev. Martin Luther King’s family, esteemed for its long history of Civil Rights activism. Billionaire Kelly Loeffler, appointed by Republican Gov. Brian Kemp last year to the Senate seat, had launched a vicious ad campaign, labeling Warnock a “radical,” a “socialist,” a “bater of America” and a “supporter of a convicted cop killer.” That last charge referred to Warnock’s strong advocacy for Troy Davis, a Black man from Savannah, Ga., whose racist trial and death sentence had gained international condemnation from hundreds of thousands of people, including the Pope. Despite evidence Davis was inno-
cent, Georgia executed him on Sept. 21, 2011.

Jon Ossoff was the other winning Democrat running for a Senate seat. He was also red-haired by incumbent Sen. David Perdue, a wealthy businessman and cousin of former Gov. Sonny Perdue, now Trump’s Secretary of Agriculture. Ossoff, the head of a documentary film com-
pany, was described as being in the pay of the Chinese Communist Party because of royalties paid to his com-
pa for a film shown on Chinese television. Perdue’s ad depictions Ossoff, who is Jewish, with an elongated nose — an anti-Semitic trope.

Both Republican candidates had ties themselves securely to Trump’s accusation that “rigged” elections were responsible for his defeat in the presidential elec-
tion. Georgia.

Both Democratic candidates, on the other hand, emphasized control of COVID, financial support for unemployed and impoverished workers and their fami-
lies, living wages, health care and education. Their tele-
vision ads showed them at demonstrations and rallies for social justice. However, they denied any support for

defunding the police.

Back in 2018, Stacy Abrams, an African American, had run for governor on the Democratic Party ticket. She narrowly lost to Republican Brian Kemp, and voter suppression of the Black community was seen by many as the decisive factor. Abrams emphasized the impor-
tance of going beyond the official Party apparatus. She

engaged the grass roots community organizations that had mobilized millions against police violence and low wages, and for health care and immigrant rights to become the ground troops for electoral victory.

Sustained outreach to young people, communities of color, LGBTQ2+, gig workers and low-wage workers resulted in hundreds of thousands of first-time voters who want systemic change and who used this elec-
tion to say that.

Year of the Nurse

The World Health Organization designated 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. That January hospital administrators surely planned to deliver their standard “angel of mercy” platitudes and pizza parties to commemorate. Then the pandemic happened, and the Year of the Nurse turned into the Year of the Nurse Labor Organizer.

Nurses became essential frontline caregivers for the thousands of COVID-19 patients crowding emergency rooms and intensive care units across the country. The inadequacies of a capitalist health care system were all too apparent to them.

National Nurses United, the union for registered nurses, held vigils across the country to mourn and honor the hundreds of nurses and thousands of health care workers who lost their lives due to COVID exposure in their workplace. Nurses as workers and union mem-
bers stepped to the forefront to demand hospital cor-

parations put patient and staff safety over profit. Nurse walkouts, protests and strikes happened in record num-
bers from Hawaii and California to Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

Nurses won major concessions in their union con-
tracts, including pay raises and safe staffing ratios. Adequate staffing and monetary compensation for this difficult job are essential to ensure nurses can provide quality patient care.

OSHA turns 50

The bill creating the Occupational Safety and Health Administration was signed into law Dec. 29, 1970 — the result of labor unions’ political pressure on Congress to respond to the rising rate of workplace injuries in the 1960s. OSHA’s budget and political pressures on the agency have never allowed it a comprehensive watchdog role over corporate capitalists. But now, 50 years later, OSHA’s enforcement capacity is especially bleak.

OSHA has an inadequate inspection system, with the number of OSHA workplace inspectors shrinking as retir-
ing inspectors are not replaced. And OSHA data on com-
pa safety records is not a transparent system, making violations hard to trace. These two factors make it very easy for corporate capitalists to evade their legal respon-
sibility in relation to workers’ health and safety.

Amazon is a prime example of a corporation that puts production and profit above worker safety — with an injury rate to prove it. Increased use of robotic tech-
nology, at Amazon and in many industries, puts signifi-
cant strain on workers as they are forced to maintain

punishing productivity levels. (tinyurl.com/3q3hbguy)

If this weren’t enough to expose the fact that the fed-
eral government serves the ruling class, consider these
facts on OSHA’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

September 2020 revisions to OSHA criteria for work-
place reporting of COVID infections among workers make it easier for businesses to underreport case counts. (Union of Concerned Scientists, Dec. 14, 2020) OSHA has only provided vague guidelines for proper measures to protect workers from infection while on the job. This laissez-faire approach on OSHA’s part has put workers at the mercy of bosses — who will cut corners when it comes to safety in order to maximize profit. This is why capitalism is a death sentence for the working class.

$15 minimum wage . . .

Too little, too late?

The Fight for $15 campaign began in 2012 and con-

continues to win victories for the working class. Black and Brown workers are leading this movement for eco-
nomic and racial justice. According to the National Employment Law Project, one in three Black work-

ers and 27% of Latina workers are in low-wage jobs. According to NELP, “these disparities are the result of structural racism . . . and an economic system rooted in chattel slavery and genocide.”

NELP published statistics in December 2020 out-

lining where the Fight for $15 activists have pushed state and local governments to pass laws requiring a $15 minimum wage. Of the states, California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York have all done so. In 13 cities, including Seattle, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., the minimum wage has already or soon will reach $15-an-hour. President-elect Biden says he will endorse a $15 minimum wage law at the federal level. (NY Times, Dec. 31, 2020).

These victories can be celebrated, but the struggle con-

continues. Applying the Congressional Budget Office Consumer Price Index updated to 2024, the Economic Policy Institute projects that the cost of living in all but 3 states will require a wage of at least $15 an hour and as high as $20-$25 in many states. This includes Pennsylvania where currently the minimum wage is still $7.25 an hour. Is it any wonder that Philadelphia has the highest poverty rate of any major city in the country?

Isn’t it clear why food insecurity is a common problem in the U.S., when food costs have nearly doubled over the past 10 years, but wages remain stagnant and at a poverty level? 😐
By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

Since Nov. 1, 2020, more than 3,000 incarcerated workers and at least 1,200 guards and staff have tested positive for COVID-19 as part of the California Department of Corrections (PA DOC). Since last March, at least 72 people belonging to the health department have died of the pandemic, the majority of those deaths since Nov. 1.

On Dec. 21, 2020, Workers World reported that incarcerated worker Arroyo, imprisoned at State Correctional Institute (SCI) Frackville, wrote: “I know that he’s experiencing during this massive COVID-19 outbreak. This is Part One of that interview.

Bryant Arroyo: What I want to say is that this whole department is really in shambles, from the top down. This facility was most likely the last to have any cases of COVID. We didn’t have any for the past seven to eight months. And what people need to understand, central office [PA DOC HQ] became aware that this facility was negative for any COVID cases, which you would think would be something that is commendable. But there is a key factor in this, that since they didn’t have any cases, they opened up the floodgates to other institutions to fill up this facility with individuals that were positive and transferred from other hotspots in order to get federal funding. The only way that they would get federal funding is if they had positive cases of COVID.

WW: Have you been tested?
BA: On Nov. 17, we both got tested, myself and my cellmate, Christopher Smith. On the 19th, I was informed my test came back negative. On Nov. 24, they had an officer come and escort my cellie downstairs to the closet where COVID tests are done and they informed him his test came back positive, but they were giving him a retest and they told him to refrain from divulging that information to me.

On November 29, RN Krep came directly to our cell and summoned Chris and said, you got to pack up because you’re going to quarantine.

My whole thing is that from the 19th, all the way to the 29th, he should have been immediately expedited to quarantine, not 11 days later. So what you did was put me in the position of handing over the role to position to control the COVID. The point is that they left him there. And they didn’t quarantine him immediately, like they did everybody else.

As a result of that, I put in a request to the superintendent, Kathy Britain, and I also put in a request to the director of health care services, Ms. Karen Holly, RN, CHCA. I have not received either of the two tests, the antibody or another COVID test, which for 11 days! Now I’m still pending the outcome as to what they are going to do.

A mental health crisis
WW: Half an hour a day out of your cells — how is that affecting everyone?
BA: It’s the other aspect of this is that there’s a lot of mental health issues. Just last night there was a fight next door to my cell, and they took both of them out.

So now one is in the hole and one is in the hospital. That’s an issue of mental health. As the pressure cooker continues, this is the result, not being able to be out and really exercise and get sunlight, a combination of factors of the monotony of the same routine over and over again, and not enough space.

My other neighbor to the right of me, Luke Arroyo, is being placed in a hole status, which is commendable. But there is a key factor here, that he’s supposed to be weaned off of it; he shouldn’t be cut right out, because his body was shaken. He was feeling different emotions. He was explaining that to me through the vents. I asked him, How did he feel? And he explained to me that he’s not feeling good but he’s trying to maintain himself so that they don’t stick him in the hole for doing something that he’s not supposed to do.

He also asked me for information with respect to an attorney. So I gave him the name of an attorney who deals with medical negligence and any type of issues dealing with the medical department. A week later, the same doctor re-prescribed the same meds.

Chris’s response was: “You have to sign up for sick call and let them determine if additional testing is needed. We don’t routinely do antibody testing.”

Holly’s response was, “If you had COVID, you would have developed antibodies. No indication for an antibody test to be completed.”

I feel it was an assassination attempt on my life. Everyone else testing positive has been treated in the hospital. That’s an issue of mental health.

As the pressure cooker continues, this is the result, not being able to be out and really exercise and get sunlight, a combination of factors of the monotony of the same routine over and over again, and not enough space.

Adoptees demand action as largest women’s prison hit by COVID-19 outbreak

The following press release was issued Jan. 5 by the California Coalition for Women Prisoners.

Chowchilla, Calif. — There is a life-threatening mass outbreak of COVID-19 at the Central California Women’s Facility, California’s largest women’s prison. In the past two weeks, there have been 500 new COVID-19 cases, representing 25% of the population at CCWF. The prison’s ineptive protocols and gross negligence have directly fueled the spread of the virus. Conditions at CFCC are so rapidly deteriorate, putting hundreds of lives at risk.

Despite having ten months to prepare for a potential outbreak, staff at CCWF have not have implementation plans or protocols in place to deal with this surge. After receiving positive COVID-19 test results, some cellmates continue to be housed together for hours on end, inevitably spreading the virus in crowded cells that house up to eight people. The units designated for quarantine are filthy, exacerbating breathing problems for those with COVID-19.

People are being denied access to needed disinfectant and cleaning supplies, although these items are absolutely essential to reduce the spread of the virus.

People with COVID-19 are not being provided consistent access to medical care or daily prescribed medications. Anxiety and depression are rapidly increasing without the availability of mental health services. People are being denied communication with family and other lifeline support on the outside, just at the time when it is most needed. Some women who asked for access to the phones and for electricity to use their tablets to email their families were hogtied and placed in cages as punishment.

“Correctional staff have verbally misinformed and deceived people who have tested positive,” says Kelly Savage of the California Coalition for Women Prisoners. “Women who get a call that they have tested positive for COVID-19 are essentially lied to about the nature of their illness, despite the outbreak being fueled by COVID-19 transmission by staff.”

Advocates at the California Coalition for Women Prisoners condemned this decision to expedite release for all medically high-risk people and swift action by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and CCWF to contain the virus as quickly as possible and save lives. People in quarantine need immediate access to health and mental health care, access to all means of communication with the outside world, and consistent education about the instruction of the virus.

On Jan. 5, a COVID test confirmed Arroyo was positive. His new cellmate John Pantell was exposed for weeks but officials have refused to test him. Arroyo was sent to RHU, where he was placed in a cell that had no electricity, no hot water. They were deprived and denied access to phone calls. And they were mistreated, treated like if they had done a disciplinary infraction.

They punish you for having COVID. It’s a quarantine and a real conflict of conscience. Because if the person has the symptoms, and the nurses come by and tell them, well, the only thing that they can do is give you as far as medication is concerned, drink water. And then instead of the 14-day quarantine, they left them there for seven days, and then they didn’t retest them before coming out to general population. Just pushed them right out on Dec. 7.

Doctors and nurses here are violating the Hippocratic Oath to adhere to and obey the principles of the medical profession, to first do no harm and treat the patient. This and this punishment! Yeah, it is a total debate.

We Are Their Voices rally outside the California Women’s Facility in Chowchilla in July 2020.

PHOTO: WE ARE THEIR VOICES

Advocates demand action as largest women’s prison hit by COVID-19 outbreak
An interview with Bennu Hannibal Ra-Sun
Inside-led action takes on prison exploitation

By Devin Cole

On Jan. 5, Devin Cole spoke with Free Alabama Movement co-founder and freedom fighter Bennu Hannibal Ra-Sun about the ongoing 30-day Economic Blackout and Alabama prison strike in January, the growth of social media and prison organizing, and what it will take to build a truly structured prison and slavery abolition organization. The entire interview can be read at workers.org.

Devin Cole: Members of the Free Alabama Movement and other prison abolitionists are saying that Securus Technologies’ implementation of video visitation equipment is a front for permanently removing all in-person visitation and replacing it with video visitations only. Can you talk about these concerns and why we should do away with in-person visitation?

Bennu Hannibal: Certain members of FAM have that interpretation and are expressing it. As for myself, I haven’t seen anything specific as to what Securus and ADCO’s plan is, but that doesn’t mean it’s not a part of their overall plan. We do know that video visitation is already happening in other states, because Securus is a national brand. And we can extrapolate from those situations and think that we are already aware of what the plan is for Alabama. We also know that some county jails are already using video visitations exclusively.

Whatever the decision, we know that it will be decided by economics and not what is best for the families. Under the current model, aside from the vending machines, the state doesn’t make any money on in-person visitation.

On the flip side, they have costs associated with physical visitation, like having security staff to harass and inspect visitors, perform strip searches, etc. These are all costs to the operational budget of a prison that disappear with video visitation. So, they probably compared the numbers from what they are making off normal visitation, in contrast to what they will make off the contracts with Securus, including the other services that Securus will be charging for to use their tablets, etc., and decided that if they go to video visitation and make whatever else they will make off these contracts — that is more profitable and preferable to do.

I don’t know if they would switch to a system where in-person is only once a month, once every 90 days, or you have to earn it or whatever. But people in prison and our families should not have to pay to talk to our loved ones, and we should never be denied the basic need for human contact that all human beings need.

Securus is an unscrupulous company that has been caught and sued for providing location-tracking information to law enforcement, bounty hunters and bondsmen, which was used to track people and their family members — and that shows that they are willing to be a part of the police state and prison-industrial complex.

These companies have no incentive to be concerned with what the family members have to say or are going through. It is very clear that they have some perception of the financial exploitation that goes into prison plantation management, and they are not constrained by principles when it comes to human suffering to make their profits.

DC: The other four companies in this Economic Blackout that are being boycotted are JPay, Access Corrections, Union Supply Company and Alabama Correctional Industries. What are their roles in the slavery system of Alabama prisons?

BH: It’s not just about the Alabama prisons. Alabama doesn’t have JPay. The reason we added some of these companies to give people in other states the opportunity to be a part of the Economic Blackout protest as well, because it is affecting all races.

Even though the original idea of this economic boycott by Kinetic Justice was and has remained for the most part a statewide effort, I thought it would be wise to add other companies that provide similar services in other states to leave room for other states to get involved, to create an opportunity to build unity and to show that we are all in this together — because the actions we are taking in Alabama are related to the actions around the country.

Texas prison officials’ crimes mount at Ramsey Unit

By Gloria Rubac

Houston

“I just can’t take it anymore,” Michael Beck told other prisoners at the W. F. Ramsey Unit state prison, in Kossharow, Texas, 33 miles south of Houston. Then during the first week of January, he wrapped a fan cord around his neck and tied the other end of it to the railing on Row 2 of his cell block.

Beck leapt up and then fell 20 feet, his head hitting the steel and concrete stairwell below. Two prisoners rushed to him and carried him up the stairs. Fortunately, the cord snapped and somewhat broke his fall. After the guards stopped laughing, they handcuffed him and had him shipped to the nearby Jester IV Unit, a psychiatric prison.

No one called for medical help or provided a stretcher. Over 50 prisoners saw this horrifying event. Prison officials’ crimes mount at Ramsey Unit, and that includes falsifying state-mandated COVID data to make it look like the prison is under control.

Prison during a pandemic

Regarding protection from the virus, masks given to the prisoners are made by prisoners working in the laundry. They cut up prison bed sheets, which are so thin that this reporter can see her household lights through the fabric of the mask she was given.

No Texas prisoner has received visits since last March. Phone calls are allowed for some, depending on their disciplinary status. The isolation is mentally challenging. The craft shop is not open. Schooling is done via mail.

The Ramsey Unit has three recreation yards and two gymnasiums, yet they were rarely used until dozens of prisoners recently filed grievances regarding the lack of recreation time. Prison activist Nanon Williams reported, “Now they are running recreation all day and night. Before, it was only on their paperwork.”

The stress increases every day in all U.S. prisons. Jails and detention centers, where it is impossible to socially distance. At the Ramsey Unit, proper masks are not given out until after a prisoner tests positive for the virus. Then that person’s entire wing is quarantined. Only after the virus is present do prisoners on that wing get N-95 masks.

But the Ramsey Unit reportedly has 4,000 N-95 masks in storage. Williams said, “These masks are not being used to prevent the spread of the virus, but instead are used only when the virus is already present. Prisoners are being moved around, and it’s impossible to socially distance.”

No retaliation for exposing conditions!

Prisoners who write grievances or contact their families or the news media with information about conditions that are dangerous, inhumane, illegal or racist should not be retaliated against. Often, prisoners who file grievances or complain about conditions are shipped out to another prison unit, far from family and support. Or they may lose their jobs working in the kitchen or laundry and be put out in the fields. Or their parole may be denied because they are a “trouble maker.”

One particular officer, who was involved in a disciplinary case quota scam a few years ago, is now trying to find out which prisoners corresponded with the media. Lt. Joe Loper was demoted in rank. Last November when an article appeared in Workers World newspaper, the Houston Chronicle and other major media, Loper was quoted as saying that he is going to “stay on those” who specifically communicated with WW.

Prisoners say he can do this by having guards working under his command plant contraband on prisoners or enter the phone numbers of a prisoner’s relatives into a cell phone that is mysteriously found. Williams has repeatedly told WW that he follows all prison rules, but that he has a right to correspond with the media, lieutenants, and corresponded with the media. Lieut. Joe Loper ordered a quota system at the Ramsey Unit two years ago. It resulted in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice changing the policy to expressly prohibit requiring guards to meet disciplinary quotas.

After the quotas were exposed in Workers World newspaper, the Houston Chronicle and other major media, Loper was demoted in rank. Last November when an article appeared in Workers World Newspaper that had his name in it, he told prisoners who work around him that he is going to “take over” those who specifically communicated with WW.

Prisoners say he can do this by having guards working under his command plant contraband on prisoners or enter the phone numbers of a prisoner’s relatives into a cell phone that is mysteriously found. Williams has repeatedly told WW that he follows all prison rules, but that he has a right to correspond with the media and the U.S. regarding guards’ and officers’ abuses and violations. He told this reporter, “I am not in fear of my life. I do not want to get transferred from my family for reporting the wrongs that I see or writing articles or books or whatever. I am within the limitations of the governing policy here and should not be punished for doing so.”

No prisoner should be threatened with retaliation for doing what is legal. It is the carceral state that needs to be retaliated against. Prisoners torture, maim and murder every day. Not only should prisoners expose and fight against this, but it is the duty of those outside the prisons to support those prisoners.

United in solidarity, we will tear down the walls!
Fascist violence and the form of the state

By Sam Marcy

This is an excerpt from Workers World Party co-founder and Chairperson Sam Marcy’s “Fascist violence and the form of the state,” written shortly after Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency in 1981.

The spread of fascist organizations takes place in a vastly different, if not wholly new, social, political and economic situation. The entire social environment in which the spread of this evil disease takes place imparts to it a significance which far surpasses the numerical strength of these organizations. It is this which adds a really new dimension to the perils of this virulent disease.

The ‘legal’ violence of the state

Fascist violence has been endemic to the maintenance of the domination of the ruling class in the U.S. for a number of decades. It is, however, exceptionally important to distinguish between the violence which emanates directly and openly from the capitalist state and the extralegal, extragovernmental violence of fascist organizations.

The capitalist state is itself, of course, the main generator of force and violence. In its role as an instrument of capitalist domination through the working class and the oppressed, it operates as an organ of suppression in order to maintain and secure its rule over the masses.

Every capitalist state tolerates and occasionally promotes this sort of extralegal violence. The difference, however, between fascist violence and other forms of illegal violence practiced by the government should be made clear.

Violence practiced upon the working class and the oppressed is therefore a concomitant element of the rule of the oppressing and exploiting bourgeoisie. Notwithstanding the viciousness, ferocity or magnitude of the violence which the ruling class visits upon the oppressed, it must nevertheless be considered as violence within the framework of the bourgeois legal (“democratic”) system.

Such violence must be differentiated from, and not be confused with, the extra-legal, extragovernmental violence, which will happen when a depression multiplies the suffering and fear in all of society and overwhelms and paralyzes the government and the system? What happens if there’s a financial market crash? What happens if the most oppressed rise up again?

The most organized forces of the neo-fascist movement that Trump has emboldened have a plan that mimics their predecessors in Europe in the 1920s. Whether or not they will be able to realize their plan is the question. These elements are planning to use aggressive tactics, including the use of arms, in order to create a governing crisis.

The neo-fascists understand that when the capitalist state responds to the crisis, it may be obliged to arrest a fascist or two. But this would be done to cover the real targets of state intervention, which are the radical movement, the oppressed sectors of the working class and the working class as a whole.

The best way to safeguard against such a scenario is for the working class to commence preparing for a classwide uprising and struggle that will secularize and demoralize any plan the capitalist state has to crush the working class, either through fascist forces in the streets or state intervention and repression.

Part of our job, in the meantime, will be pulling all workers into the struggle to liberate as much of the left and the masses from the stranglehold of the Democratic Party. When Biden and others in the ruling class talk about resuscitating democracy from Trump and Trumpism, they really mean rescuing capitalism, as well as preventing the development of a real class struggle against a capitalist state.

There will be working class political and organizational transformation. In the 1920s, the labor movement went through one of its most important transformations. It embraced the millions of industrial workers. To a greater or lesser extent, the labor movement has gone through other changes since that time. It has had to organize teachers and health care workers, government workers and millions of service workers, many of them women and workers of color.

Now, the workers’ movement must go through another transformation—one that is no less challenging than previous transformations, but is even more essential at this stage. The working-class movement must embark on the journey that transforms it into a revolutionary movement, which speaks in the name of the entire working class and has, as its ultimate goal, the end of capitalism.

The discussion on how promotion of the formation of workers’ assemblies should be viewed in the context of the need for the transformation of our class. The act of promoting workers’ assemblies is in and of itself important, even critical at this time. It is saying to all those listening that the working class has to organize itself, no matter what its circumstances and conditions are at present.

What do workers do if their circumstances do not make them eligible for membership in a traditional labor movement? There must be somewhere for these workers to go in order to be in the workers’ movement. Also, promoting workers’ assemblies is promoting working-class consciousness and working-class solidarity. Ultimately, a workers’ assembly movement that is successful could very well be the basis of a workers’ movement that can struggle for dual power.
Jan. 6 riot exposes
Two faces of U.S. ‘democracy’

By Monica Markham

What occurred on Jan. 6 at the U.S. Capitol was shocking but not surprising.

What was shocking was the sight of thou-
sands in a majority white, neofascist ter-
rorist mob — with no masks and no social dis-
tancing — overwhelming the supposedly
high security sanctuary of the offices of U.S.
Congresspeople, claiming that the Nov. 3 elec-
tion was stolen.

Since losing the election on Nov. 3, Trump
had given a clarion call to his mass base to mobi-
ize to come to Washington, D.C., to protest the
certification of Joe Biden’s electoral victory and his
becoming the next U.S. president on Jan. 20.

There were numerous other attempts on Jan. 6
throughout the country where Trumpites laid
siege to no viable goal.

These domestic terrorists were captured by
social media smashing windows, wearing
T-shirts and gear with anti-Black and anti-Se-
mitic slogans, marching in the crowd with
fascist flags and symbols, trash offices and
brutally班长g weapons in the faces of
Capitol police.

No doubt many of these same forces marched
in Charlottesville, Va., in 2017 in retaliation of acts
of left, anti-racist activists, who were tearing
down Confederate and other reactionary statues
especially in the Deep South.

The state, especially the Capitol and local
police and other agencies, handled the rioters with
glare gloves. Some of the police were caught
on camera opening barricades, encouraging the
rioters to storm the Capitol buildings. Some of
the police even allowed terrorists to take self-
ies, showing off the same symbols many observers
would describe
those actions as a love fest between the police
and the rioters. In fact, it has been reported that
a number of police officers from around the
country were at the Capitol in support of Trump.

This riot took place one day after District
Attorney Michael Graveley in Kenosha, Wis.,
announced no criminal charges would be filed
against white police officers responsible for
shooting Jacob Blake seven times in the back
on Aug. 23. Blake, a 29-year-old Black man
and father of six, remains paralyzed from the
waist down.

In protest of the shooting of Blake, members
of the National Basketball Association — both
on the men’s and the women’s teams — went
on strike for three days, refusing to play during
their playoffs. This led to athletes in other sports
to either cancel their games or take a knee
during the playing of the U.S. national anthem.

Not a surprise to many

On Jan. 6, what was obvious to millions of
people in the U.S. and worldwide was the dou-
ble standard of treatment displayed by police

towards the white supremacists in contrast to how
cops treat Black and Brown people in per-
son and any activists defending Black Lives in
the streets. This prejudiced, differential treat-
ment — with Golden Window and Raymond
Green summed up his feelings this way: “To see
the National Guard standing on those same
steps, while a peaceful protest; to now see a
terrorist attack and no National Guard, it
just goes to show you where this country is.
Nothing’s changed.” (usatoday.com, Jan. 7)

Black Lives Matter is movement is ex-
plicable in showing that the more multi-
national the struggle against white suprem-
acism becomes, the more firm the foundation for
a broader, more militant classwide move-
ment — that will not only organize to abolish
the police but also abolish capitalism.

A caustic com-
mentary on a political

Police allow neo-fascist rioters into U.S. Capitol, Jan. 6.

court that circ-

ulated on social

media world-

wide within 24

hours of the
Jan. 6 events at
the U.S. Capitol.

Trump attempted to suppress — with
riot gear, tasers, flaying batons, tear gas, rub-
ber bullets and mass arrests — any protest to
expose their brutality and injustice. Between
May 25 and June 4, an estimated 9,300 peo-
ple were arrested in direct connection to their
protest of Floyd’s murder, according to the
Associated Press.

On June 1, in order for Trump to take a photo
up of himself holding a Bible, police and the
National Guard brutally attacked peaceful Black
Lives Matter protesters in Washington, D.C.

Police had been placed in a holding pattern for hours and pre-
vented from dealing with the rioting mob, until the
Guard finally was called upon to help clear
the Capitol of rioters.

Many people—including NBA athletes
and coaches—commented on the connection
between the Blake decision and the U.S. Capitol
riot. That Black and Brown people are treated dif-
frently from white supremacists, and that this
dichotomy reflects true U.S.”democracy” by
giving repressive state apparatus unfettered capitali-

Some noted that Black Lives Matter protesters
would not have been allowed to come close to
the U.S. Capitol, much less to force their way in.


A case in point is that in 2015, when the
white supremacist Dylann Roof was arrested
in Charleston, S.C., hours after murdering nine
Black church members, the police had the
audacity to stop to get him a hamburger.

In response to these events, all NBA teams
who played on Jan. 6 either kneel during the
playing of the national anthem or took a knee
for seven seconds after the beginning tip-off,
to bring attention to the seven shots that Blake
received.

There were some players, like
Los Angeles Clipper Paul George, who did not
want to play at all on Jan. 6.

Jaylen Brown, an outspoken Boston Celtics
guard, stated, “It reminds me of what Dr.
Martin Luther King has said — that there’s two
split different Americas. In one America, you
get killed by sleeping in your car, selling ciga-
rettes or playing in your backyard. And then,
in another America, you get to storm the Capitol
and no tear gas, no mass arrests, none of
that. So, I think it’s obvious: It’s 2021 — I don’t
think anything has changed. We want to still
push for the change that we’re looking for. But
as of yet, we have not seen it.” (ESPN, Jan. 6)

The police, the FBI, the Department of
Justice, the Department of Homeland Security,
U.S. Secret Service, and the National Guard
“blamed” the Capitol riot on the mob. It
was: “Due to travel restric-
tions this year, the U.S.
had to organize the
coup at home.”

A domestic coup on the U.S. gov-
ernment was indeed attempted
that day. It was a huge failure.

Both the November presidential election
had been “stolen” from Republican President Donald Trump. This
claim was so far-fetched, even in a broken con-
gress system, that judges rejected it as a challenge 60 times, including
twice in the Supreme Court.

Since he could not win legally,
Trump rallied an uprising of extra-

dem and paramilitary, white-suprem-
acist neo-fascist troops tied into a
network of far-right legislators, gov-
ernment officials, police, military vet-

ers and allegedly active military, as well as business owners.

These insurrectionists attacked the Capitol building at the
time that the U.S. Congress was in session, with the

intent of using the National Guard and other agencies, including
the National Guard standing on those same steps,

to overthrow governments
and further imperialist capitalist schemes.

Every U.S. regime change operation begins with
U.S. officials repeatedly called a country’s election fraudu-

tent, refusing to acknowledge its legitimacy and then
backing or importing far-right and neo-fascist

forces to start violent
disruptions. The U.S. calls all these fascist forces “democratic forces.”

This was Washington’s tactic of
courtesy in Ukraine, Venezuela, Syria,
and just to name a few recent examples.

U.S. coup attempts using
‘election fraud’ charges

In Kiev, Ukraine, in 2014, armed fascis-

forces marched with Confederate

flags and Nazi insignia to seize the parliament, while Biden cheered the
overturning of that country’s
elected government. The U.S. media called this the

“Euromaidan Revolution.”

Washington attempted to do the same
in Venezuela, claiming that the
2018 election of President Nicolás
Maduro was a “fraud.” Hostile to

the continuation of former President

Huacho Chavez’s Bolivarian Revolution,

Trump called for the
corporate right-wing opposi-
tionista Juan Guaidó, nominal head of
the National Assembly, as the “interim
president” in January 2019. The U.S.
showered that farce with billions of
dollars in seized Venezuelan assets.

In 2012, in Syria, despite hun-
dreds of election observers, the U.S.
declared the reelection of President Bashar al-Assad to be a “fraud” and
spent billions of dollars to fund military mercenaries to destabilize
and occupy the country. When a “gov-
ernment in exile” was established,
Washington recognized it at an international conference in Geneva.

Washington’s “full support” is the

term that will not only organize to abolish
the police but to abolish capitalism.

Jan. 6 events at the U.S. Capitol.

In Venezuela, the government was indeed
taken by military and fascist forces.

In Bolivia, the 2019 reelection of Evo
Morales, the country’s first Indigenous
president, was declared by the U.S.
to be “fraudulent.” Fascist forces seized
the government, again with Washington’s full support. Morales
was forced to flee. But united resis-
tance by Indigenous peoples, members
of labor unions and other progressive
forces returned Morales from exile in
2020, after his party, the Movement for Socialism, won the presidential election in a landslide victory.

The U.S. constantly propagandizes
about the lack of “democracy” in
Hong Kong, and tries every tactic —
using Congressional legislation and
derover operate in mass

demonstrations — to destabilize

conditions in what is part of the People’s Republic of China. Geng Shuang, a
Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs
representative, exposed these tactics and denounced “foreign forces”

gory of some in the U.S. on human
rights and democracy, and their malicious intention to undermine Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability
[and] to continue China’s development.” (scmp.com, Oct. 16)

These are only a few of the U.S.-
supported regime-change operations that were based on declaring “election fraud” and attempting to

overturn other governments through extra-

eur military and fascist forces.

For the Jan. 6 coup attempt in
Washington, D.C., Trump simply
consulted a well-established U.S.
playbook for how to destabilize and
dominate a country’s government using

neofascist forces.

Eventually, U.S. wars always come home.
How to fight fascism in 2021
Lessons from Charlottesville

By Nathaniel Chase

The large demonstration of fascist, white-supremacist forces in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6 brought back memories for this writer of the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Va., over three years ago.

Aug. 12, 2017, was filled with the most horrible racism and violence and the murder of a counter-protestor Heather Heyer. And that day this writer saw the fight-back of working-class and oppressed people overcome the fascists and send their movement into flames. As fascist forces are increasingly emboldened and organized in the U.S., it’s worth looking back on Charlottesville for lessons we can apply today.

Lesson one: Cops and Klan go hand-in-hand

The police and the far right have a long history of collaboration, evident on Jan. 6 and in Charlottesville. In both cases the police stood by and even assisted as far-right violence escalated. Why? Because police and fascists serve similar roles for the ruling class: deploying violence and intimidation against the most oppressed — especially Black, Brown and Indigenous people — in order to keep the whole working class down. Once we understand this relationship, it will be clear we can never rely on the police to counter fascist violence.

Police function inside the structure of the state, and fascist groups outside of it. Their similar roles explain why so many cops are members of fascist organizations and vice versa.

Only rarely will police arrest the occasional white supremacist to cover their real role. Revolutionaries must continue to expose the cop-fascist link between the police and the far right, dispelling the liberal notion that we can count on the cops.

(For a deeper look at the connections between the police and the far right, read “The Klan & the Government: Foes or Allies?” by Sam Marcé at workers.org/books.)

Lesson two: The working class is not the base of fascism

The common stereotype of a white supremacist is a dirt-poor white worker, often from a rural area. In Charlottesville, it was immediately clear the fascists were coming from a different social strata: The majority had substantial disposable income, enough to buy expensive uniforms, tactical equipment, firearms and vehicles and to travel from across the country for the rally.

A similar pattern could be seen Jan. 6, with many of the rioters being businesspeople and at least one arriving on a private jet! While fascist movements draw in some white workers, their primary base is the petty bourgeoisie: small business owners and self-employed sectors. These elements are anxious on the one hand about the rising power of workers, especially from oppressed nations, and on the other hand the power of large capitalists, who threaten to grind them down into the working class. The far right does not speak for the working class. The exploited class is not only white — it is Black, Brown and Indigenous. It is undocumented migrants, Muslims, women and gender-nonconforming people, LGBTQ2S+ people, seniors and individuals with disabilities. It is primarily the most oppressed sectors of society, whose labor is most brutally exploited for profit by the capitalist class. The working class is comprised of the very people most targeted by a fascist movement that has historically led the resistance against it.

Lesson three: Workers and oppressed people need to respond independently

No elected politicians or sections of the Democratic Party showed up in Charlottesville to oppose the far right. The opposition consisted of various left political forces (Socialists, Anarchists, Social Democrats, Black activists and unaffiliated workers).

And the common liberal response to fascists is to ignore them, asserting they will disappear if they don’t draw attention. This dangerous notion allows white-supremacist ideas to flourish unchecked.

The ruling class deliberately encourages a passive approach, because they know that a large anti-racist, anti-fascist movement will ultimately condemn capitalism as a whole. The ruling class goes along with the violence of the far right because it aligns with their class interests. On the other hand, they don’t endorse the resistance of workers and the oppressed that endangers their rule.

While the Democratic Party may disagree with the right wing on how to keep working-class and oppressed people in line, the two are united in their goal of countering fascists in the streets.

Lesson four: The fascists are not invincible

The morning of Aug. 12, 2017, began with left and right forces gathering and the balance of forces still unclear. As far-right violence increased, militant, disciplined resistance pushed them back until the police were forced to intervene, preventing the rightists from holding their rally.

The seemingly all-powerful fascists scattered and fell into despair and flighting. Those who arrived in Charlottesville to unite the various factions of their movement left divided and demoralized.

When it seemed that the right might overwhelm the left, revolutionaries played a key role by conveying confidence that we could fight back. Organization, discipline and communication boosted morale, playing a decisive role in turning the tide.

It is the duty of revolutionaries to instill this confidence — in the streets, in meetings and in our propaganda. As Mao Zedong famously put it: “All revolutionaries are paper tigers. In appearance, the revolutionaries are terrifying; but in reality, they are not so powerful. From a long-term point of view, it is not the revolutionaries but the people who are powerful.”

Lesson five: Seize the moment!

Charlottesville provided an opportunity to speak about the prevalence of white supremacy in a country founded on the genocide of Indigenous peoples and the enslavement of Africans. One could show the connections, for example, between open white supremacy and the more veiled white supremacy of a liberal politician rezoning a Black neighborhood for gentrification. Or how little difference is to be found between police Lynchings, rallies and Klan Lynchings.

In periods of crisis, people are open to new ways of thinking. The opportunists want to turn the crisis away from their base and rally the class. But revolutionaries must seize the moment. We must deepen our roots in the working class, encouraging working and oppressed people to defeat the fascist movement and ultimately the capitalist system itself.

The fascists, the FBI — and legislators

By Otis Grotewohl

Following the right-wing fascist coup attempt — Donald Trump’s version of a Nazi “putsch” — one Republican lawmaker was arrested and charged with “entering a restricted area of the U.S. Capitol.” On Jan. 8, the FBI arrested Derrick Evans — recently elected into the West Virginia House of Delegates — at home.

Evans recorded himself breaking into the Capitol with other Trump supporters. He later sold himself saying, “We’re in, we’re in. Derrick Evans is in the building,” while wearing a helmet and military style clothing.

Hypothesis right-wing West Virginia state legislator, John Mandt — once forced to resign over homophobic comments and later to be elected again last November — was quick to defend his violent colleague.

According to a Facebook post made by a leader of Black Lives Matter West Virginia, at least three other West Virginia Republican legislators participated in the pro-Trump riot. The Independent of England reported six Republican state legislators from around the U.S. took part in events related to the storming.

Several other West Virginia state legislators spoke out against Evans, including African American Delegate Danielle Walker of Monongalia County, quoted in the Jan. 7 Charleston Gazette-Mail: “You showed up, and you showed out yesterday. You do not represent me. You do not speak for me; where is any voice in all of this? Where are the consequences? Where are the arrests? Why did this person have the ability to post on social media that it was safe to be elected back on the bus, heading back to our state?” Many people throughout the state are circulating an online petition calling for Evans’ removal from the House.

Prior to being elected into the House of Delegates, Evans had a history of wreaking right-wing terror.

In 2019, Evans had a restraining order filed against him — which he violated — for harassing and threatening the lives of women at the Women’s Health Center, an abortion provider in Charleston, W.Va. (jezbel.com, Jan. 7).

After receiving scathing media attention, Evans resigned as a legislator Jan. 9. In his “resignation letter” Evans made no apologies. The fact that a violent racist was elected into the West Virginia House of Delegates shows the reactionary character of pro-Trump voters and is an example of the illegitimacy of the capitalist system.

FBI and fascists are friends, not foes

The FBI has released a memo urging people to turn in the names and information of anyone who participated in the pro-Trump riot. It is understandable that people who are disillusioned by the actions of the right-wing terrorists would want some

Continued on page 9

Philly denounces coup attempt

Chants of “Cops and Klan work hand-in-hand” and “No Trump, no KKK, no fascist USA” filled the air out-side Philadelphia City Hall Jan. 9. Dozens of anti-fascists, pro-socialist demonstrators gathered there for a demonstration denouncing white supremacy and the failed Jan. 6 fascist insurrection in Washington, D.C.

Several people passing by, including a houseless trans couple, stopped to join the protest and express interest in further actions.

Speakers from Workers World Party, Black Alliance for Peace, Philadelphia-Camden Boricua Committee, Philly REEL Justice and the Alliance for Labor enderecoed the need for workers’ power and solidarity to fight the emboldened fascist movement. Many speakers raised the open col-lusion between various state policing entities and the Jan. 6 mob that stormed Congress to keep Trump in office.

— Report by Betsy Piette

San Francisco, Jan. 9.

WWW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

Philippine government: Foes or Allies? Sam Marcé at workers.org/books

Philippine workers denounce coup attempt

The Philippines is one of the world’s most repressive authoritarian regimes. It has no political opposition parties and a government imposed by the United States since 1935. The Marcos dictatorship was overthrown in 1986, but the regime is still run by the same ruling class that holds power today.

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The Marcos dictatorship was overthrown in 1986, but the regime is still run by the same ruling class that holds power today.
The fascists, the FBI—and legislators

Continued from page 8

kind of justice. And many progressive-minded people were thrilled to hear the news of Evans’ arrest.

Unfortunately, the FBI is not a friend of the oppressed or of the working class, but a tool of the capitalist state, along with their police and military forces. The FBI was created in 1908 as an outfit to disrupt and destroy movements for liberation of oppressed people and for socialism. While the FBI has a history of putting all kinds of people behind bars, including anti-racist organizations, its criminal history of lynchings, murders, and intimidation. Published in 1983. Read it free at workers.org/marcy/klan/
Capitalism is an inherently unstable economic system, subject to cyclical crises of overproduction. The term “overproduction” is itself a misnomer. It is misleading to do with more goods being produced than people need. People may have many, many unmet needs, from food and clothing to shelter and means of transportation. Overproduction refers only to more being produced than can be sold—at a profit. But capitalist economic activity is dependent on making profits rather than meeting human needs, it is a well-known fact that production and employment will occur only if there is a market, which is to say, a demand for the goods in question. When markets and profits fall, it’s called a recession. If they stay down for a long time, it’s a depression. Since February of 2020, the U.S. has been in what economists are calling the COVID-19 recession, with official unemployment hitting a peak of 14.8% in April 2020. This was the highest level of unemployment in this country since 1938 and the Great Depression.

Not even covered in these unemployment figures are exploited workers in what is called the “gig economy.” They have little if any job protections and are not usually counted as unemployed when their jobs dry up. This recession has affected many in the so-called “middle class”—the petty bourgeoisie—the self-employed or owners of small businesses doomed to be replaced by big biz, the big biz owners being the most productive and the most profitable. They have been hit by the virus.

The current recession, bordering on a depression, must be kept in mind when analyzing the violent right-wing movement that has mushroomed in support of Donald Trump. Such movements have historically doomed to magnitudes in periods of economic crisis. In class terms, their base lies in the petty bourgeoisie, but they look to big-business figures like Trump as their saviors. In the U.S., they are especially prone to racist demagoguism that blames their growing insecurity on the gains made by struggling people of color. Racism provides them with a scapegoat, in the same way that anti-Semitism provided the Nazis.

The Krupps and other big-business figures like Trump as their scapegoats and, in the same way that anti-Semitism provided the Nazis.

...
Haiti

Imperialist manipulation meets popular resistance

By G. Dunkel

Haiti is by far the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Yet it has a glorious history as the first independent Black republic and the first nation in the Western Hemisphere to abolish slavery. Also, the Haitian people militantly resisted U.S. occupation from 1915 to 1934 and carried out a mass uprising which led to Jean-Bertrand Aristide’s election as president in 1990.

These are some of the historical factors taken into account by U.S. imperialists—whose goal is to continue to dominate Haiti—in order to repress the people’s strong resistance to exploitation and oppression.

In 2019, there were huge, militant demonstrations against President Jovenel Moïse and his Tête Kale Party (PIHTK). It was widely expected that he and his party’s members would be forced out of power. So it was strange to find out that what they should have done was obvious, when the national police battled the newly reconstituted Haitian army in several firearms.

But Moïse managed to hang on until December 2019, a month filled with holidays and parties, when people return home to the provinces. Then Washington began maneuvering, probably passing along money or promises of support. The Haitian Parliament’s term ended in January 2020. Moïse had not organized elections so he could rule by executive decree.

In mid-March, COVID-19 entered the picture. The government imposed restrictions to deal with the pandemic, which made it harder to hold massive weekly demonstrations. The official political opposition split into competing factions, which made it look as if the year was over for U.S. imperialism.

‘One-man rule’

From January 2020 when Moïse began his “one-man rule” until January 2021, he has issued 38 presidential decrees, 44 executive orders and 110 arrêts, which set rules for how certain procedures are carried out.

One recent decree established the domestic National Intelligence Agency (ANI), which is accountable only to the president. The agency is allowed to interrogate, search, confine and arrest any Haitian citizen, subject to presidential decree. (Haiti Liberté, Dec. 30.)

Another decree, pretending to reinforce public safety, reddefines “crimes” like theft, throwing garbage, burning barricades on roadways and destroying public and private property by a hurry-up, pre-torture—electrocuting, shooting and 30 to 50 years imprisonment. Most big protests in Haiti will be confronted with this law as defined by presidential decree.

Some Haitian intellectuals have compared how Moïse is using decrees to how former dictator François Duvalier used decrees in the six months before he proclaimed himself “president for life” in 1964. In the Dec. 21 Miami Herald, Samuel Madistin—a respected, civil rights activist and former senator in Haiti’s National Assembly—is quoted as questioning if the current president is paving the way for a dictatorship. (tinyurl.com/yy90bj6w)

Moïse used one reading of Haiti’s constitution to say that his term ends in February, but now claims the document permits him to rule until 2022.

Both the U.S. and European Union have pressured Moïse to hold elections this year, but their motives are not altruistic. They keep up the pretext of promoting “democracy,” but the imperialists’ real concern is to keep best to maintain their grip on the Caribbean country and exploit the people and their resources.

Taking to the streets

While the number of demonstrations in 2020 fell below the frequency and intensity of those held in 2019, some major protests still took place. On Nov. 8, two demonstrations occurred in the capital of Port-au-Prince commemorating the anniversary of the Battle of Vertières, in which the Haitian army decisively defeated the French army in 1803.

One demonstration, led by Moïse Jean-Charles’ Dessalines’ Children, a progressive political party, marched on the U.S. Embassy. The other, led by the Popular and Democratic Sector (SDF), proceeded through the city towards the National Palace, Haiti’s equivalent of the White House. But police roughly dispersed and shot at protesters. SDF members asked President-elect Joseph Biden for help, since President Donald Trump supported Moïse. (Journal de Montréal, Nov. 18, 2020)

Haiti’s anti-imperialist left continued protesting through the year. On May Day, International Workers Day, the Coalition of Political, Union and Popular Organizations moved through Port-au-Prince, calling for a $15.30 daily minimum wage and other progressive demands.

The struggle for justice and an end to poverty continues in Haiti.

Canadian autoworkers blockade minivan plant

By Martha Grevatt

Since Jan. 5, Unifor Local 444 has blockaded the FCA minivan plant in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Plant workers normally build 830 Chrysler Pacifica vans per day. The blockade of entry and exit gates will prevent minivans from being produced. The protest will normally build 830 Chrysler Pacifica vans per day. The blockade of entry and exit gates will prevent minivans from being produced.

Unifor was founded in 2013, when the Canadian Auto Workers joined forces with the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers unions. Local 444 represents FCA workers at the Windsor assembly plant, as well as third-party workers who perform “auxiliary” work, such as cleaning or driving vans off the line and onto trucks. Unfortunately, the struggle to keep Unifor jobs pits Local 444 against the FCA, which currently represents Motipark workers.

Local 444 is in a difficult position. It has been formed by then-Chrysler workers. Motipark is refusing to honor the successor clause—meaning any new company that takes over the work has to abide by the collective bargaining agreement in place—the Unifor contract. This means that about 60 Local 444 members will lose their jobs. Wages at Motipark are as much as $8, an hour (Canadian) less than at Auto Warehouse Company. Motipark is rejecting to negotiate with Local 444. This is a just fight for job security and decent union wages.

By Betsy Piette

Prison abolitionists in several U.S. cities are organizing “Justice Is Dead” car caravans on Martin Luther King Jr. Day to demand an end of “Death by COVID” in prisons. The Jan. 18 actions target governors in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, who have allowed genocidal prison neglect to flourish during the pandemic.

The abolitionist actions urge immediate release of veteran Black Panther Russell Shoatz, who suffered COVID-19 while undergoing stage 4 cancer treatments. Like Shoatz, many U.S. political prisoners are elders increasingly exposed, infected, suffering and dying during the pandemic.

The Free Maroon Now Committee coordinating the actions has called for 2021 to be the year to free all U.S.-held political prisoners. Many, including Shoatz, have spent over 30 years in prison. Many global movements outside the U.S. consider these political prisoners, like Mumia Abu-Jamal, to be heroes of liberation struggles. For more information, see the Free Russell Maroon Shoatz website: tinyurl.com/yy95y8zt.

2021 marks the 50th anniversary of the historic Attica prison uprising, as well as the murder of imprisoned revolutionary George Jackson. With the recent upsurge by social justice movements against racism and police brutality, many similarities can be seen between revolutionary conditions in 1971 and those today. Now is the time to free all political prisoners and to free Maroon! (Page 11)
**Las vacunas mundiales de China, un cambio revolucionario**

Por Sara Flounders

En Estados Unidos, con menos del 3% de la población vacunada, se está dando lugar a una ocupación por el destino del 95% del mundo que se enfrenta a la pandemia. Cuando se habla de vacunas se distribuirá una vacuna en los EE.UU., es la mayor preocupación de los EE.UU. Las tasas de muertes por COVID-19 en el país han alcanzado niveles asombrosos e inimaginables. Se prevé un saldo de 600,000 muertos para febrero.

El presidente Xi Jinping, en la apertura de la Asamblea Mundial de la Salud en Washington, admitió que China ha eliminado en gran medida la polio y la gripe. Estas vacunas son más eficaces en la prevención de personal nacionales y tanto las empresas privadas de rentabilidad más altas de cualquier grupo industrial. (tinyurl.com/yd8uheb3)

La estatal Sinopharm anunció el 19 de noviembre que su vacuna contra el coronavirus ha entrado en la fase 3 de ensayos clínicos y que está lista para distribuir las vacunas a los países que lo soliciten. Sinovac ha firmado acuerdos con PT Bio Farma, una empresa biofarmacéutica de Indonesia, para el suministro, producción y licencia de tecnología para producir al menos 40 millones de dosis de Brasil y 50 millones de dosis de Turquía. (tinyurl.com/yqqy9q2k)

China desafía a las grandes farmacéuticas

Las vacunas COVID-19 fabricadas por compañías farmacéuticas chinas son similares a las de las grandes multinacionales, pero a diferencia de estas, las vacunas chinas tienen una distribución local y licencia de tecnología para producir al menos 40 millones de dosis de CoronaVac allí antes de marzo de 2021. Sinovac ha firmado acuerdos con PT Bio Farma, una empresa biofarmacéutica de Indonesia, para el suministro, producción y licencia de tecnología para producir al menos 40 millones de dosis de Brasil y 50 millones de dosis de Turquía. (tinyurl.com/yqqy9q2k)

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