Mobilizing worker power

AMAZON UNION NOW

By Martha Grevatt

The fight to unionize the second-biggest U.S. employer took a big step forward at the Teamsters’ (IBT) union convention last week. On June 24, the 1,600+ delegates, representing more than 500 locals, voted overwhelmingly in favor of a Special Resolution: “Building Worker Power at Amazon.”

In it the union charges: “Amazon exploits its employees, contractors and employees of contractors via: wage theft, fraudulent classification, intense production quotas, dehumanizing work environments, unsafe workplaces and production standards, low wages, high turnover, no voice on the job, lack of job security and outsourced jobs.” (teamster.org)

High turnover is an understatement. The rate is over 150% annually; after a few weeks many workers quit, even though the job pays double the federal minimum wage. Amazon has been willing to accept not having a steady, long-term workforce — it keeps worker demands in check, and it’s harder for unions to organize a transient labor pool. But now the company is losing employees so fast that Amazon worries about running out of exploitable workers. (Insider, June 15)

All the conditions driving workers to leave are what motivated the union drive in Bessemer, Ala. On April 9 the National Labor Relations Board announced the results of a union representation election there. The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union lost the vote by a 2-1 margin.

Reparations! Bring Indigenous children home!

There is no greater proof of genocide than the systematic theft and killing of the children of a people. The governments of the U.S. and Canada stand criminally indicted of genocide after the renewed revelation in late May of the deaths of thousands of Indigenous children at state-run, state-authorized “boarding” and residential schools.

But organizers had a forward-looking perspective. “I know the outcome is not what a lot of people wanted to hear,” said RWDSU organizer Michael “Big Mike” Foster, at a press conference April 9. “But I believe this is the foundation for something great ... by no means is this the end.” (The Verge, April 10)

The Teamsters’ resolution demonstrates the truth in Foster’s words.

The resolution concludes: “Therefore be it resolved, the IBT Convention recognizes the existential threat of Amazon to our members and commits all levels of the union to unite with core platforms of member engagement, worker and community engagement, antitrust enforcement and policy reform, and global solidarity; “Be it further resolved, the commitment to the Amazon Project requires a unified approach and regional partnerships with Local Unions, Joint Councils and the International to deal with Amazon’s geographic impact on our industries; “Finally be it resolved, that building worker power at Amazon and helping those workers achieve a union contract is a top priority for the Teamsters Union, and the Union commits to fully fund and support the Amazon

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Labor on the move

☆ UAW referendum
☆ CUNY Rising
☆ Sleep-in at Ga. Dept. of Labor
☆ Alabama miners on Wall St.

Pride in action

Tamir remembered
Rhode Island Juneteenth
Seattle blocks the boat
Cuba solidarity

Comments

Building disasters
Real justice for George Floyd
Defending socialism

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Workers Party
workers.org
Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Build a Workers World!

The U.S. has the highest percentage of its population in prisons — more than any other country in the world and disproportionately people of color. That’s not even counting detention centers for immigrants who flee their homelands because of violence, imperialism and impoverishment. Here, they are brutally mistreated, detained and families are separated.

Don’t let Fourth of July fireworks distract you from the streets and from formulating ways to dismantle the deadly, systemic oppression of Black, Brown and Indigenous people. Don’t let the hype mask the inequality, injustice and inadequate health care that are responsible for the disproportionate number of deaths of people of color from COVID-19.

What would really show solidarity with the already vibrant Black Lives Matter Movement? Raising the struggle to “Free Mumia Abu-Jamal” so it becomes a worldwide cry. The very reason why Mumia is in jail is that he used his voice and his pen to expose racism, especially the role of police terror in Philadelphia. Then the system framed him, denied him a fair trial and attempted to kill him.

Those who understand how this racist, classist, capitalist system works are in the streets over the last four decades to save Mumia’s life and promote his message. Workers World was there, demanding his freedom from the get-go. Mumia has been a longtime reader of WW, noting that it is the best coverage he read on the 1985 bombing of MOVE.

Now the Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party is supporting the international call to Free Mumia. Mumia’s case personifies everything wrong with the world’s largest center of incarcerated workers: the U.S.

Your donations count!

We know you read WW for news free from corporate lies and geared to working and oppressed people. We need your help to do our job. Join the WW Supporter Program, founded 44 years ago, to keep the newspaper 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 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

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinationa], multigendered and multigenerational 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 nerverrending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on immigrants, misogyny, LGBTQ+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities.

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Join us in the fight for socialism!
High school valedictorian defies anti-LGBTQ+ censorship

By Betsey Piette

Wearing a graduation cap with rainbow colors and a militant fist, Bryce Dershem, valedictorian at Eastern Regional High School in Voorhees, N.J., began his June 17 commencement speech: "After I came out as queer freshman year, I felt so alone. I didn’t know who to turn to for support." Voorhees is only 20 miles from Philadelphia, where there is a vibrant LGBTQ+ community.

A video by Dershem’s father captured what happened next: Principal Robert Tull cuts off Dershem’s microphone, grabs his speech from the podium and crushes the pages. (tinyurl.com/ync2bvh7)

In the background, people are heard demanding “Let him speak!” According to the June 25 Philadelphia Inquirer, Tull then pointed to Dershem’s preapproved speech, authorized by school administrators, and ordered: “You read this, or nothing else.” That speech had no references to Dershem’s sexuality or mental health issues.

Having an inkling that he might be censored, Dershem had memorized his original seven-minute speech. When the sound was restored, he continued, “As I was saying,” to the cheers of his classmates and their parents in the audience of 2,000.

He continued to speak about his experience coming out, the ensuing mental health challenges and suicidal thoughts, and expressed support for other LGBTQ+ students and those suffering from mental health issues.

“I am a fighter, and today I’m a survivor. Part of our identity, our year, our struggle, is 2021,” Dershem said, referring to the COVID-19 crisis that impacted his graduating class.

“We're still here though. We adapted to something we never thought possible.”

As he left the stage to audience cheers, Dershem wrapped a rainbow flag around his graduation gown, in repeated defiance of school administrators who forbid him to do so.

Dershem told the Inquirer he had attempted to work with administrators to deliver a speech that would address his personal experiences while offering a hopeful and inclusive message. Shortly before graduation he was told to remove all references to “queerness” and mental health issues.

In what seems like reverse discrimination, school administrators told him any reference to LGBTQ+ issues would “exclude other people.” Dershem responded, “I don’t think it is exclusionary to say that one is queer.”

This young courageous valedictorian suggests that school officials can learn something from his stand. “Even though my family, my friends and so many amazing Eastern faculty believed in me. I needed to accept the unapologetic version of myself... for myself,” he said, regarding his fight to come terms with his identity. “We all do.” (tinyurl.com/5uack5ps)

Out in the NFL

Carl Nassib’s impact

By Martha Grevatt

It only took 100 years. The National Football League, founded Sept. 17, 1920, at last has its first openly gay active player. On June 21 Las Vegas Raiders defensive end Carl Nassib announced on Instagram: “Just wanted to take a quick moment to say that I’m gay. I’ve been meaning to do this for a while now, but I finally feel comfortable enough to get it off my chest.” He also stated he was donating $100,000 to the Trevor Project, a suicide prevention organization focused on LGBTQ+ youth.

Nassib’s courageous decision follows the example of Michael Sam, an African American player who told ESPN in 2014 that “I am an openly proud gay man,” before being drafted by the St. Louis (now Los Angeles) Rams. Sam played not one game in the regular season and retired the following season, citing mental health concerns. Sam immediately supported Nassib, saying “LGBTQ+ people are more likely to commit suicide than heterosexuals. I hope and pray people will take note to this. Thank you again Carl and look forward to seeing you play on the field.” (CNN, June 22)

Before Sam, gay NFL players only went public with their sexuality after they retired; the first, in 1975, was former San Francisco 49ers running back David Kopay. Jason Collins, the first NBA player to come out in 2013, said he was “very proud” of Nassib and “incredibly happy for him.” Collins was the first openly gay athlete in any of the four major U.S. professional sports leagues. (CNN, June 22)

Raiders quarterback Derek Carr has expressed solidarity with Nassib, as have Nassib’s other teammates and his coach, Don Gruden. Supporters also include sports legends like quarterback Warren Moon and baseball and football All-Star Bo Jackson. Nassib has the backing of his union, the NFL Players Association. NFLPA Executive Director DeMaurice Smith tweeted: “Our union supports Carl and his work with the Trevor Project is proof that he — like our membership — is about making his community and this world a better place not for themselves, but for others.”

While the media has focused on the experiences of gay male athletes, trailblazers in the U.S. also include lesbians like soccer star Megan Rapinoe and former WNBA player Latasha Byears, as well as trans triathlete Chris Mosier. Around the world hundreds of LGBTQ+ people in a wide range of sports are knocking down the closet doors.

But the fact that Nassib is making history now, after over a century of NFL games, reminds us that the sports-industrial complex is still a bastion of anti-LGBTQ+ hatred, along with racism, sexism and ableism. That Sam and others, most recently tennis great Naomi Osaka, have had to pull back from competing to take care of their mental health speaks volumes.

When athletes speak up, they are contributing to the struggle against bigotry in sports, which mirrors the tools implemented by all capitalist bosses to divide and conquer the working class.
Radical political activist Jaan Laaman of the Ohio 7 was released from McCreary federal prison in 37 years in U.S. custody. He was arrested in 1984 and charged with “seditious conspiracy,” along with other members of the United Freedom Front.

The UFF was originally known as the Sand People, a radical political organization, and began as a counter to the violence faced by trans migrants and played a recorded statement by the usually secret organization. Noyola spoke against the injustices faced by trans, HIV+ and trans migrant organizers read statements about the deaths of three trans women, Roxsana Negron, Anna Guevara and Sarah Benard, and conditions faced by trans, HIV+ and trans migrant rights activists and their supporters. The protesters then entered Lafayette Square for a closing rally.

Jennicet Gutiérrez of End Trans Detention Now told reporters on the steps of the National City Christian Church that trans people were tired of waiting for justice. “We want them to wait! They don’t have time — we don’t want another name added to the long list of people [who] have died in detention,” she said. (Daily News, June 24)

Jenni Gutiérrez is an Organizer with Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement, one of the groups that sponsored the national protest. In 2015, she interrupted President Barack Obama at an LGBTQ+ Pride event at the White House, yelling, “Release all LGBTQ from detention centers! President Obama, stop the torture and abuse of trans women in detention centers! President Obama, I am a trans woman. I’m tired of the abuse.” Gutiérrez was interviewed on Democracy Now! the day after the June 25 protest and described some of the many cases of abuse of trans migrants by ICE. (Democracy Now!, June 24)

#End Trans Detention! A week before the June 23 protest, trans migrant activists are determined to continue fighting for justice until all transgender migrants and people living with HIV/AIDS are dealt as ashamed from ICE custody. There is an ongoing petition and other information available at their website: endtransdetention.org.

The struggle of trans migrant people locked in detention has finally started to receive some national attention. The June 23 protest was the culmination of several actions in cities across the U.S. demanding “No Pride in Detention!” #EndTransDetentionNow. On June 23, eight immigrant rights groups sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and acting ICE Director Tae Dye Johnson demanding the U.S. government release all trans migrants and people living with HIV/AIDS from ICE detention.

Transgender migrant rights activists demand ‘End Trans Detention!’

By Judy Greenspan

Carrying signs and three brightly painted pink coffins, transgender migrant rights activists and their supporters marched on the White House June 23 to demand an end to Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention of transgender and HIV+ people. The coffins symbolized the deaths of three trans women, Roxsana Hernández, Victoria Arellano and Johana “Jo” Medina Leon, who died between 2018 and now while in ICE custody or shortly thereafter. (Washington Blade, June 23)

The protest began with a commemorative service for the three women at the National City Christian Church. Trans migrant organizers read statements about the three women and conditions faced by trans, HIV+ and other at-risk migrants in detention camps. The service was emceed by Ira Noyola, deputy director of Mijente, one of the migrant rights groups that organized this event. Noyola spoke against the injustices faced by trans migrants and played a recorded statement from Roxsana Hernández’s nephew in Honduras. After the service, trans migrant activists took to the streets and marched to the White House to bring their message to President Joe Biden. In the march were over 250 transgender women recently released from ICE detention centers. The marchers blocked traffic for several minutes at 16th and H streets, N.W., near what has been renamed “Black Lives Matter” Plaza. The protesters then entered Lafayette Square for a closing rally.

Protesters left the three coffins propped on a fence in front of the White House.

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Jaan Laaman released after 37 years

By Ted Kelly

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Solidarity activists delay Israeli apartheid ship

By Jim McNahan

The revolutionary Palestinian resistance to Israel’s invasions, war, forced annexation and mass evictions has broadened solidarity for their cause. Port blockages and waterfront unions’ solidarity from Oakland, Calif., to Italy have stopped Israeli ships from carrying out trade for their U.S.-backed warfare state.

A ship from the Israeli-owned company Zim pulled into the Port of Seattle June 2. Due to the actions and vigilance of hundreds of activists led by Palestinian feminist collective Falastiniyat, the ship was delayed from docking until June 17. Falastiniyat works in close coordination with the Arab Resource and Organizing Center in San Francisco.

On the evening of June 17, Seattle cops violently attacked a demonstration blocking the entrance to the terminal. One of their caucuses, Behind the Wall, is made up of formerly incarcerated people who meet regularly to discuss issues that impact them.

The day was marked with music, speakers and various tables including arts and crafts for the children. A table staffed by Workers World Party and Solidarity with the Incarcerated, RI/MA, was a big attraction with a display of revolutionary literature and newspapers.

mYia X, who helped staff the table, spoke at the rally: “Let us not be distracted by the performative actions of Biden yesterday. [Biden had signed Juneteenth as a federal holiday.] The system has always known about John Brown and the significance of the raid at Harpers Ferry. It was probably one of the impetuses that forced [President Abraham] Lincoln to sign the Emancipation Proclamation. Because Lincoln did not believe that the enslaved were equal to the white race. He said, ‘I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the black and white races …’

“There is this illusion that there was freedom in the North. But Rhode Island made more trips than all the 13 colonies combined on the TransAtlantic slave trade route,” mYia X stressed.

According to SmallStateBigHistory.com, during the colonial period from 1751 to 1775, Rhode Island sent 514 slave ships to the coast of West Africa (the rest of the colonies sent 180). Its slave traders sent 1,883 slave ships transporting more than 40,000 enslaved Africans to the Americas. All other colonies combined sent 189. Its slave traders sent 383 slave ships transporting more than 40,000 enslaved Africans to the Americas. All other colonies combined sent 189. Its slave traders sent 383 slave ships transporting more than 40,000 enslaved Africans to the Americas.

In the last week of the port actions, a number of local elected officials came forward with a statement to support Block the Boat and demand the Zim ship leave Seattle. They expressed solidarity with the ILWU members’ right not to cross a community picket line. Signers included Seattle City Council members Teresa Mosqueda, Kshama Sawant and Lisa Herbold.

—— S. Hedgecoke

Emancipation Day Rhode Island

By Workers World Boston bureau

Activists from the Black community gathered in Providence, R.I., June 19, with allies to commemorate Emancipation Day, also known as Juneteenth. The diverse event was organized by Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE) which has long-standing roots in the community grounded in political action.

DARE has been commemorating Emancipation Day for over a decade. They are actively engaged in housing rights, prison abolitionist work and work against gentrification. One of their caucuses, Behind the Wall, is made up of formerly incarcerated people who meet regularly to discuss issues that impact them.

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Solidarity with Socialist Cuba

Leading up to the annual vote in the U.N. General Assembly June 23 on Cuba’s resolution to end the illegal 60-year U.S. blockaded against the Island, solidarity activists across the U.S. and Canada held a week of actions to pressure President Joe Biden and Congress. In New York City, a car caravan rolled through Harlem June 20, along with caravans in 18 other U.S. cities. On the day of the vote, activists gathered in solidarity across from the Cuban Mission including those from Cuba Sí, FICO Pastors for Peace, Workers World Party, Venceremos Brigade, December 12th Movement and Socialist Workers Party. For 28 consecutive sessions, the General Assembly has voted overwhelmingly in favor of ending the blockade. This year the U.N. voted 184 to 2, with 3 abstentions. The U.S. and Israel voted no, Brazil, Colombia and Ukraine abstained.

—— S. Hedgecoke

One wish for Tamir’s birthday: Justice!

Cleveland police gunned down 12-year-old Tamir Rice while he was playing with a pellet gun Nov. 22, 2014. The killer cop, Timothy Loehmann, was never charged, and he was only fired in 2017 on an unrelated disciplinary issue. Loehmann’s partner, Frank Garmback, was given a 10-day suspension, which was cut in half through the grievance procedure.

On June 25, which would have been Tamir’s 19th birthday, Tamir’s Campaign for Justice held a demonstration to demand the U.S. Department of Justice reopen its investigation into the killing. The DOJ closed the case in 2020 without even notifying Tamir’s mother Samaria Rice or the family attorney Subodh Chandra.

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An opportunity for rank-and-file activism

By Martha Grevatt

Gary Jones, former International President of the United Auto Workers, was sentenced to 28 months imprisonment June 10 for his role in an embezzlement scheme that cost rank-and-file members millions of dollars in dues money. Jones and his cohorts—including his predecessor ex-President Dennis Williams, also sentenced—treated themselves to cash, lavish accommodations, expensive food and booze and golf outings, clubs and paraphernalia. Other top officials and staff took kickbacks from vendors and even bribes from Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA, now Stellantis) in exchange for agreeing to substantive contracts.

These corruption scandals, uncovered by a federal investigation, have shaken the union leadership in the eyes of its membership and the broader labor movement. The repugnant behavior by members of the union’s International Executive Board hurt organizing drives for the rank and file. Moreover, the board failed to take advantage of a clause in the union-busting Taft-Hartley Act, requiring union officials to sign an oath swearing they were not members of the CPUSA.

That clause was later ruled unconstitutional by federal courts, but Reuther was able to achieve total political control of the UAW IEB. This was when the Detroit Three auto companies and the union reached an agreement—designed to ensure class peace—known as the “Treaty of Detroit.” Autoworkers received a four-day week at the same hourly rate, which would keep autoworkers from striking again. This kept class collaborationist and corporate practices in check. But if the Board does not vote to go to a “one member, one vote” system—or continue with the system in place wherein the International Executive Board is made up of union stewards—there would be unanimous support for direct elections. Moreover, the IEB would dissolve the irreparably dysfunctional Administration Caucus altogether.

Instead it is up to the rank and file to turn the UAW around. A grassroots union caucus, Unite All Workers for Democracy, emerged in response to the corruption scandals. Now UAWD has launched a massive organizing campaign to convince the 400,000 UAW members and 560,000 retirees to be sure to cast a ballot in the referendum for one member, one vote.

While UAWD’s energy is currently focused on winning the referendum, the date of which has not yet been set, the caucus has a broad progressive program. Plans include strengthening the strike fund, an end to tiered wages and “temporary” worker classifications, global solidarity, no plant closings, a shorter work week with no cut in pay, and opposition to “racism, sexism and all forms of bigotry.” (uawd.org)

In organizing for direct elections, union militants can be holding conversations on all these issues, along with the need to abandon business unionism and return to the anti-capitalist orientation of the union’s left-wing founders.

This will impact the whole labor movement for the better.

Martha Grevatt retired after working 31 years for FCA and served on the Executive Boards of UAW Locals 122 and 869.

‘Sleep-in’ challenges Georgia benefit cuts

By Dianne Mathiowetz

Unemployed workers pitched tents in front of the Georgia Department of Labor June 24 in downtown Atlanta in preparation for spending the night. The action was intended to symbolize the loss of housing and other necessities of life experienced by untold numbers of workers in the state, where unemployment benefits have been delayed for months. All Georgia DOL offices have been closed and barricaded since the pandemic began in March of 2020.

To make matters even more dire, tens of thousands of Georgians will be deprived of $300 of weekly federal unemployment benefits as of June 26. The decision by Governor Brian Kemp and DOL Secretary Mark Butler is widely understood to be their way to force workers to take low-wage jobs in the hotel, restaurant and other service fields. The Chamber of Commerce and other business leaders have loudly complained that the additional money made it too easy for workers to stay home. Georgia’s unemployment benefit rate ranges from $147 to $365 a week, and Georgia’s vaccine rate is among the country’s lowest.

The sleep-in generated a lot of media coverage. The organizations that sponsored it—Georgia Unemployment Issues, the Atlanta-N. Georgia Labor Council, New Georgia Project and others—vow to continue the fight.

Increase funding for CUNY

By G. Dunkel

The CUNY Rising Alliance, the City University of New York Student Senate and the Professional Staff Congress held a militant, spirited rally in front of New York’s City Hall June 24. The de Blasio administration wants to cut $67 million from the city’s contribution to CUNY.

But as speakers Andrea Vásquez, executive vice president of the PSC; James Davis, president of the PSC; and Public Advocate Jamaal Williams, a CUNY alum, pointed out, the city is flush right now with federal COVID-19 relief funds. CUNY has urgent needs that must be addressed.

As a result of the pandemic disruptions, many students are desperate for mental health counseling and academic advising, which this city funding would provide.

Many students need remediation services and childcare, tutoring and CUNY Service Corps benefits. Some face food insecurity. It is hard to learn when you’re hungry.

There was general agreement among the speakers and people attending that public higher education should be free.
By Minnie Bruce Pratt

A delegation of striking Alabama coal miners marched on Wall Street June 22 to protest the crushing grip of big business on their lives. The miners are demanding “No contract, no coal!” and “Warrior Met Coal ain’t got no soul!”—picked the offices of BlackRock Fund Advisors, State Street Global Advisors and Renaissance Technologies, investment firms that back the coal company.

The miners, members of United Mine Workers, Local 2425 in Brookwood, Ala., have been on strike against Warrior Met Coal, Inc. since April 1. The company proposes reducing the production from one of its major device-making centers affecting the industry, providing a capitalist structure that pays corporate executives millions, while miners struggle to survive black lung and murderous dangerous equipment.

The miners are striking in an attempt to gain safe working conditions, adequate health insurance and a wage increase promised five years ago when they took drastic cuts to save the company from bankruptcy. The UMWA says the direct negotiations are stalled because of pressure from the big investment firms.

This is the first coal strike to hit Alabama in about 30 minutes from now. It’s been a UMWA stronghold since 1890, independent labor reporter Kim Kelly told Democracy Now! “Throughout the UMWA office there, it has been historically one of the most interracial, racially integrated locals in the country. ... In Brookwood, in the Warrior Met mines, I think the workforce might be about 20% Black. And obviously there are women; there are multiple genders involved. It’s not just a bunch of white guys in hard hats, which is typical in a natural resource of coal miners. But that’s not who they are. That’s not what they look like. And these folks are standing together.” (Democracy Now!, June 22)

The Brookwood mines are in central Alabama, about 30 minutes from Birmingham, Ala., Birmingham, Alabama. Thousands of Amazon warehouse work- ers were in a fierce but ultimately losing battle to unionize earlier this year. Kelly added: “That part of Alabama, the labor movement has very deep roots, and it intersects very closely with the Civil Rights Movement. But Amazon is a very different ballgame for Black liberation. This is a much bigger story than just a few people [who] are upset about a contract. There’s a lot of history here.”

Back at home, strikers are on the picket line in 12-hour shifts, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There have been three separate incidents when cars were driven into workers who were picketing.

In New York City, the miners were joined by Sara Nelson, international president of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA and a member of the national AFL-CIO Executive Council, and John Hope, President of Retail, Wholesale and Departmental Store Union. Brookwood miners supported the RWDSU in its attempt to organize Bessemer Amazon warehouse workers.

For more coverage on the Alabama coal miners strike, see: Workers World, April 2, April 16 and June 2.

(All three articles accessible from workers.org/tag/alabama) Hometown newspapers in Alabama are mobilizing material support for the strikers at tinyurl.com/djrvajnk.

Alabama coal miners take on Wall Street

By Lyn Neeley

Two of Portland’s delivery companies announced June 23 they will stop working for Amazon because of unsafe working conditions. The companies, Last Mile Delivery and Triton Transportation, are suing Amazon for increasing the pressure on drivers by making arbitrary and unreasonable demands and firing drivers who work for the contractors without notice.

Last Mile Delivery co-owner Tracy Bloomer told workers, “Amazon has been nothing but slimy and dimming us bad, that if we don’t make change we can no longer offer the support and incentives that thus far we have been able to provide.” She said workers are in a position of being expected to deliver more. Drivers average 200 deliveries a day. Some make more than 250 stops, which is two minutes per package, based on an eight-hour shift. (tinyurl.com/yyg2xnpn)

Together Triton and Last Mile employ about 155 drivers with a network of 22,000 deliveries in the Portland area.

Abhorrent conditions are causing large numbers of drivers to quit Amazon for Amazon contract companies. Drivers complain that to save time they are often forced to skip meadows and back room stops, urinating in bottles to save time. They are forced to deliver packages by their promised delivery date and can’t go home until all packages are delivered.

The actions of the contract companies mean drivers are working without inde- finitely while they go through the litigation process with Amazon. Bloomer offered workers no promises for the future.

Over the last six years Amazon has developed a gigantic national delivery network, with thousands of vans running seven days a week delivering nearly 5 million packages weekly. Amazon has promised “at least 200” independent delivery com- pany leaders with the goal of managing deliveries to speed up the process and squeeze costs down.

Buzzfeed published a national survey of safety violations by Amazon’s delivery companies titled “Amazon’s Next-Day Delivery Has Brought Chaos and Carnage to America’s Streets — but the World’s Biggest Retailer Has a System to Escape the Blame.” Buzzfeed found public doc- uments showing hundreds of accidents involving Amazon drivers in the past five years. There have been at least six fatal- and non-fatal serious injuries per week just in states with public records. Many more go unreported or cannot be linked to the company. (tinyurl.com/75k9v7sa)

Amazon lies about safety

Amazon says it spends tens of millions of dollars on safety; yet drivers are given no new safety training, and Amazon was even run down with baling tides, cracked or missing side-view mirrors or doors that don’t shut properly, no seatbelts or no rearview window or backup camera.

Drivers, given too many packages to fit in cargo, often pile parcels so high in the cab that they can’t see out the windows. Amazon claims they are helping new entrepreneurs build small delivery businesses without controlling their companies or labor force. However, many without start-up funds take advantage of Amazon’s preferred program to lease vans from Amazon, purchase insurance and pay drivers.

Amazon can deny any responsibility for working conditions, such as labor law violations, failing to pay overtime, denying workers a bathroom break, sexual harassment and other forms of mistreatment.

In the last six years, Amazon’s profits have skyrocketed. At the end of April, Amazon announced first-quarter earn- ings that its capital expenditures grew 80% over the preceding 12 months. Last summer they bought 20,000 vans from Mercedes-Benz to be leased to their delivery companies around the country.

In March 2017, Detroit Amazon deliver- ers driven by Silverstar voted to join the Teamsters. They were fighting for overtime, paid working conditions and elimination of the punishing work hours.

Two months later, one of the labor leaders was fired by the company. The manager said on record, “I was told to write you up for anything because you joined the union.” Silverstar settled out of court for a $15,056 settlement. Silverstar shut down a few months after the firing and relocated, putting dozens of drivers out of work. Amazon has since developed workshops and also held on at many locations on how companies can prevent unionization.

In 2018, Samuel Cabelas was killed by an Amazon delivery driver. A year later his mother Willie Cabeas posted an article on Facebook called Amazon Deliveries. “I love him I love my son. I love my son. She said, “But this is about low-paid, inex- perienced and untrained drivers operating gigantic vans they don’t know how to drive, under enormous pressure to deliver quickly. This is profit-driven, cor- porate greed behavior without consider- ation for anyone else’s humanity.”

Lawsuit exposes unsafe conditions at Amazon

By Lyn Neeley

Project, to supply all resources necessa- rily and to ultimately create a special Amazon Division to aid Amazon workers and defend and protect the standards in our industries from the existential threat that is Amazon.

In August, 2020, the Teamsters appointed Randy Korgan, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 1932 in San Bernardino, Calif., as National Amazon Director. Rather than rely strictly on the NLRB elec- tion process, the IBF aims to bring the company to the bargaining table by orchest- rating strikes, boycotts, protests and other actions that influence the company. If so a majority of workers at a facility sign union authorization cards, the Teamsters might bypass the NLRB and call a strike to demand recognition.

This is all tremendous news. In this classic “labor vs. capital” scenario, every member of the global working class has “skinned in the game.”

Organizing on many fronts

In addition to the Teamsters’ initiative, serious efforts are underway by the inde- pendent Amazon Labor Union to organize the Staten Island, N.Y., facility. Workers among others have also organized Amazon Process Assistant Chris Smalls last fall for organizing a walkout over lack of COVID safety. Large numbers of workers have signed cards authorizing the ALU to represent them.

In the aftermath of Bessemer, the Southern Workers Assembly has added four Southern Workers Schools and is organizing workers assemblies through- out the South to support worker self-organization in the workplace.

The RWDSU has filed a number of unfair labor practice charges with the NLRB; workers have testified to Amazon’s extreme union-busting tactics. If the NLRB nullifies the representation election—which it should—Bessemer workers may again have an opportunity to vote in the union.

Even before COVID, Amazon work- ers waged job actions to voice a range of concerns from working conditions to di- minate change to the right of Muslims to have time and space to pray. Amazonians United, Amazon Employees for Climate Justice and Whole Workers have engaged in workplace struggles.

Amazon unions in Italy, Germany, France and Spain are a fact of life, Amazon is a fact of the company, and a union drive is underway in Poland where Amazon shifted work from unionized facilities in Germany. As a membership grows, so does the number of unions—such as the four U.S. Postal Service unions who face the same threat to their jobs as UPS Teamsters—may attempt to organize Amazon workers.

What is absolutely paramount is that all of these unions conduct them- selves in solidarity with one another. Competition between unions to repre- sent the same groups of workers must end here and now. Otherwise labor is playing into Amazon’s agenda: keeping workers divided and defeated.

The situation is much bigger than any “existential threat” to union jobs or a union standard of living—as real and ominous as that threat is. Organizing Amazon must be part of a worldwide revival of the class struggle against capitalist exploitation linked to social justice movements of the most oppressed workers.

Building solidarity across oppression across borders and oceans is the way to win.
Colombia's national strike in perspective

By Juan Diego García

The author is a Colombian political analyst living in Spain. The article was first published in lapluma.net. Translation by Michael Otto.

June 17 – Iván Duque, the Colombian president, has confronted the current protest movement with the same methods used by previous rulers of this Andean country, albeit with less intelligence, bringing him more defeats than victories. It is traditional in Colombia that when confronted with repression and protest movements, the authorities typically engage in dragged out and useless negotiations (and what they agree to, they never fulfill). At the same time, the police and military, backed up by paramilitary groups, employ brutal and murderous repression in obedience to a systematic extermination plan.

Apparently, the government has no plan but to follow the traditional one, resulting in an impulsive plunge in support, according to various polls that measure public opinion. The government has to deal with the resignation of several high-ranking officials (including two ministers) and has been unable to cover up dramatic scenes experienced in recent days, leaving harvests exposed before national and international opinion.

Of so-called Colombian democracy, only a memory remains. In spite of the official version that insists on presenting this country as "the oldest democracy on the continent," the harsh repression shows Colombia looking more like a dictatorial regime and, for many, like a colonial force of far less importance.

Duque and his government are apparently betting on wearing down the protests and on the normal public reaction. They criminalize barricades, roadblocks and other forms of protest, even if they are peaceful. It criminalizes protest in the normal public, those who are repressed without restraint. The government systematically delegitimizes mass demonstrations, even if they are peaceful. It criminalizes protest in the normal public, those who are repressed without restraint. The government systematically delegitimizes mass demonstrations, even if they are peaceful.

In reality, this double aspect of social violence is only viable in the medium and long term, distinguishing what can be seen in decades. The political violence is a function of a phenomenon without perspective and violence out of all proportion, leaving a dramatic toll of dead, disappeared, wounded and detained that is reaching an unprecedented degree not seen in decades. After more than seven weeks of resistance, the Strike Committee announced changes in its tactics of struggle and proposed greater action, more forceful actions in the immediate future. But some collectives distinguish the Committee say they will maintain their actions in spite of the enormous risk they live amid a scenario of a partial military occupation of the country, which the government threatens to extend to the entire national territory. In fact, it’s a military coup "Colombian style," since the legal formalities are maintained without abandoning extensive repression and without respecting the systematic extermination of those who persist in protest. The worst military dictatorships of the So-called Colombian democracy.

Mechanisms of joint action

To begin with, there is an obvious need to effectively coordinate the different citizen voices that are part of the protest. It is a matter of creating mechanisms of joint action and organization and to transform and reframe the immediate tasks to take stock of what has been won, to correct the failures, to maintain the mobilization and to anticipate the struggles of the future?

The Chilean example is a good reference to consider because of its similarities with Colombia. The peoples of the two Andean countries are historically linked. Traditional forms of organization (unions and parties) coincide in the socio-political mobilization with a fresh and vigorous force of spontaneous forms committed to the common struggle.

The common program

In addition to the construction of mechanisms to coordinate the struggles, it is fundamental that the Colombian movement make advances in formulating a program of reforms that gather the diverse demands and give them mechanisms to coordinate the struggles, gather the diverse demands and give them

To recognize the profound crisis of the current neoliberal culture, that social Darwinism that promotes above all a fierce and uncaring individualism. This is another of the tasks that a real transformation of the political system requires several generations, not only a memory remains. In spite of the official version that insists on presenting this country as "the oldest democracy on the continent," the harsh repression shows Colombia looking more like a dictatorial regime and, for many, like a colonial force of far less importance.

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**Capitalism behind fatal building disasters**

By Kathy Dunkin

June 26 – Two preventable catastrophes caused by capitalist greed in housing construction occurred four years and thousands of miles apart, and in both cases the tragic loss of human life was horrendous. While Florida’s building collapse is affecting a more affluent group in the U.S., the earlier disaster at Grenfell Tower in England impacted a lower-income community, with a majority of people of color, many of them immigrants.

They have faced racism, anti-immigrant bigotry, and reactionary people’s resistance in their quest for safety measures in housing and justice for those who died and survived.

Both were avoided human tragedies.

**Florida: 2021**

It took 11 seconds for a catastrophe to occur in Surfside, Fla., near Miami. Half of the 12-story Champlain Tower South suddenly collapsed in the early hours of June 25, leaving 10 people dead and 131 missing under the rubble. Emergency rescue teams are working hard using heavy equipment, trying to find survivors.

But their intensive labor has not resulted in good news for the loved ones of the unaccounted for residents. Their losses are incalculable, as hope wanes for the missing.

Building residents include many people who emigrated from Latin America and the Caribbean, seeking a better life. Many young children, adults and seniors are missing. A Jewish community has also been impacted.

The day after the cave-in, Surfside city officials released documents written by engineers hired by the condominium association in 2018. They found “major structural damage” to the concrete slab below the pool deck and “abundant cracking and crumbling of the building’s column, beams and walls of the parking garage under the building.” (New York Times, June 27)

Written recommendations for repairs were sent to condominium association officials Oct. 8, 2018. The engineers warned: “Failure to replace the [deteriorating] waterproofing in the near future will cause the extent of the concrete damage to expand exponentially.” (USA Today, June 27)

Yet, the consultants’ alarming report was not acted on before the disaster occurred. The estimated cost of repairs was $12 million.

A class action lawsuit has already been filed against the condominium association called the After-M (l’après M). They wanted a very fragmented race by about this percentage, losing in both second and second-generation immigrants. Those who died represented 19 nationalities, many from the Middle East and Africa. They lived near the wealthiest area of Miami Beach.

By G. Dunkel

Marseille is the second largest city in France. It is a very old city, founded around 500 BCE because it was a great port with an immense hinterland. It is still economically significant; after World War II, it and the surrounding area were the economic heartland of France. Marseille is in a region of France where the right, especially and the far right whose party is the National Rally, has a significant political strength but not total sway. The RN came in first in the first round of regional voting June 20.

The 14th Arrondissement of Marseille had a poverty rate of 35%, even before the pandemic, and an unemployment rate higher than the rest of the city; its population is predominantly North African migrants and second-generation immigrants. Those who lived near the wealthiest area of the city, founded around 500 BCE because it was a great port with an immense hinterland, are predominantly North African migrants and second-generation immigrants. Those who lived there are second-generation immigrants. Those who died represented 19 nationalities, many from the Middle East and Africa.

By John Catalinotto

Organizers say some three-quarters of a million people demonstrated in over 400 cities in Brazil and around the world on June 19 to demand “Vaccine in the arm, food on the plate and President [Jair] Bolsonaro out!”

Those responsible for calling the actions included the Brazil Union of Poor People Without Fear, along with workers’ organizations, Indigenous people, religious groups and others. The protests continued anti-Bolsonaro actions of May 29 that drew out people in more than 200 towns and cities in all of Brazil’s 26 states.

June 19 was also the day the official death toll from COVID-19 in Brazil climbed above the half-million mark. Bolsonaro has outdone even Donald Trump in denying the danger of the pandemic. On June 18, he publicly minimized the importance of getting vaccinated. Despite Brazil’s previously efficient public health system, only 40 percent of the population has received even one dose.

Former president and former political prisoner Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva accused Bolsonaro of genocide over his mishandling of the COVID-19 crisis. Lula is expected to run again in the 2022 presidential election. He was forbidden to participate in the 2018 election, which Bolsonaro won, but is now way ahead of Bolsonaro in opinion polls.

Despite the ever decreasing lack of popular support for Bolsonaro, who is a near-fascist, he maintains the loyal support of Brazil’s police forces. They have been carrying out massacres in the favelas, the poor neighborhoods near or in the large cities where many of the poorest Brazilians live and where the majority are people of African descent. **WW Commentary**

France

Laid-off workers take over McDonald’s, feed the hungry

By G. Dunkel

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Reparations! Bring Indigenous children home!

Continued from page 2

was the official aim all along. On May 28, when Chief Rosanne Casimir of the T'Kemlúps te Secwépemc First Nation confirmed at least 215 graves of Indigenous children were at the Kamloops Residential School in British Columbia, she said what the nation called "the knowledge" about using children generated the search. Her mother and grandmother had shared stories of abuses at the schools. She told the Toronto Star: "It's our history, and it's something we've always had to fight to prove." (May 28)

In the U.S. and Canada for over a hundred years, Indigenous and First Nations children were kidnapped from their families and communities into state-funded, sometimes military-run, Christian schools. They were forcibly converted to Christianity, physically beaten, sexually abused, traumatized by having their hair cut short and tortured for speaking their own languages. Thousands died from malnutrition, illness and broken hearts. Children who were still with their people lived in perpetual fear that "they will come and take you away." The war on the children was part of overall all-out war by colonizers on Native peoples throughout the North American continent — using strategies of subjugation, segregation and assimilation that included physical genocide, land theft, exile and cultural genocide.

By Monica Moorehead

For the following paragraphs, see the “WWW COMMENTARY” section.

Final paragraph: This war on children was unmistakably, undeniably a policy of the colonizing state. The most infamous “school” for Indigenous children in the U.S. — the Carlisle Industrial School in Pennsylvania — was established by Capt. Richard Henry Pratt, who served for 30 years as both a U.S. Army officer and the school’s superintendent.

The colonizing states of North America came into existence through the genocide of Indigenous peoples. The “apologies” offered by the states now are meaningless. Note the bitter fact that the U.S. apology was a general resolution stuck into the 2010 Defense Act by Congress. It described genocide mildly as “instances of violence, maltreatment, and neglect.” It was brutally clear: Nothing in the resolution “authorizes or supports any legal claims against the U.S., and the resolution does not settle any claims.” (indianlaw.org/node/529)

Ongoing crimes against Indigenous peoples continue — from polluting pipelines across traditional lands to seizure of Indigenous children from mothers at birth through the ploy of declaring the mother not fit for care, along with an epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirits.

The practices of settler-colonialist genocide by the state have never ceased; they are simply carried out differently. And the resistance of Indigenous and First Nations people to genocide has never ceased. Romalee Lavallee, a student at one of the Canadian schools in the 1960s and 1970s, recalls that many students who spoke Cree would spend their nights secretly teaching the language after school. (Washington Post, June 24)

Indigenous peoples are calling for reparations. They demand all the unmarked graves of the children be found and identified, that elders and grandchildren be informed to their families and nations, and reparations be paid to their families.

Above all they are demanding land reparations: Land Back! This includes regaining First Peoples’ homelands; stopping environmental devastation; assuring all communities have clean water, adequate housing and health care; protecting sacred places to steward the environment on this continent; and the power to say no to projects, plans and policies that affect the people and their lands.

In a June 3 article in Indigenous Climate Action, Eriel Delange sums up why these demands are needed: “So we can heal on the land, and begin to repair the deep wounds of disconnection from our human and non-human kin. It needs to be affirmed that we are people of the land, and that our language, our culture and our identities are connected to these places our parents and grandparents were ripped from. We need Land Back.” (tinyurl.com/zguw7vrj)

Bring them home! Land back! Reparations!

What real justice will look like

Derek Chauvin, the white police officer convicted of lynching 46-year-old George Floyd May 25, 2020, was sentenced June 25 in Minneapolis, Minn., to 22 1/2 years in prison. Chauvin faced upwards of 30 years when a jury unanimously convicted him in April of second-degree unintentional murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. Chauvin still faces two federal charges — one for violating the civil rights of Floyd and the second indictment for hitting a 14-year-old Black youth in the head with a flashlight and kneeling on him in 2017. The three other officers involved in Floyd’s murder — J. Alexander Kueng, Thomas K. Lane and Tou Thao — face similar federal charges and are scheduled to go to trial March 2022 on state charges for complicity in Floyd’s killing.

Floyd’s family, along with many activists, felt that the sentence handed down by Hennepin County District Judge Peter A. Cahill was too lenient, considering the fact that Chauvin will be eligible for parole in less than 15 years. The time he spent in jail between his arrest last June 25 is counted towards his sentence.

Rev. Al Sharpton stated: “This is the longest sentence they’ve ever given, but this is not justice. Justice is George Floyd would be alive. Justice is if they had done sentences like this before, maybe Chauvin would have thought he would not have gotten away with it.” (Washington Post, June 25)

Nothing has changed

It bears remembering that the reason why Chauvin and the other three officers implicated in Floyd’s murder were indicted at all was because of Darnella Frazier, a then 17-year-old Black woman who bravely videotaped the 9 minutes and 29 seconds of Chauvin’s knee on Floyd’s neck as he pleaded for his mom until he stopped breathing.

After the video of the lynching was made public, mass rebellions and protests erupted not only in Minneapolis but throughout the country and around the world, especially since it took days for Chauvin to be charged and arrested. These multinational, multigender, multigenational protests, led by the Black Lives Matter movement, impacted every aspect of society including sports and entertainment throughout the summer.

The naked brutality of the police with tear gas, rubber bullets and night sticks was put on full public display during peaceful and militant protests. Confederate statues and other symbols of white supremacy from the North to the South and worldwide were brought down by protesters.

It is very rare that police officers like Chauvin are arrested, much less convicted and sentenced for killing any person, be they white or a person of color, unless sustained mass pressure from below becomes a decisive factor. Policing as a force in a society based on classes, like the U.S., is above the law. Police are mandated with the unprece- dented authority to become judge, jury and executioner by a still-majority, white ruling clique of corporate billionaires.

Nothing has changed before or after the Chauvin conviction and sentencing, in terms of Black and Brown people being racially tarred and marked by the police. Nothing has changed for the families of Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, Rekia Boyd, Sandra Bland, Breonna Taylor, Shaiqona Evans, Elijah McClain, Walter Wallace Jr. and countless others calling for any kind of justice, whether these deaths were videotaped or not.

As an act of solidarity, it is imperative to demand the right of the victims’ families and oppressed communities under constant police occupation to demand that accountability be arrests, convictions and jail time for killer cops. However, it is just as important for revolutionaries and socialists to call for the abolition not only of the police and other oppressive arms like ICE, but for the abolition of capitalism, a system that puts the profits of the superrich before the needs of the people.

One cannot exist without the other. 

Why Colin Kaepernick is Right

A 2017 pamphlet of articles from Workers World newspaper. With articles from Monica Moorehead, Minnie Bruce Pratt and guest author Michael Bennett.

Includes:

- Kaepernick: “This generation’s Muhammad Ali”
- “Editorial: Why Colin Kaepernick is unemployable”
- The political rebellion of Colin Kaepernick
- Kaepernickriefly grows with every police atrocity
- Sparked by Kaepernick — Sports supports protests
- The intersection between sports and fighting police violence
- “Anti-Semites, Israel & Christians”
- Desadada por Kaepernick – protestas depor

Free PDF download at workers.org/books
Corporate and state terror drives forced displacement

By Tania Siddiki

Karachi – On June 6, the Sindh Action Committee organized a protest and sit-in to draw attention to the systematic and continuous violence that Bahria Town Karachi (BTK) inflicted on Indigenous peoples. Dawn reports that up to 10,000 protesters demonstrated outside of BTK’s main entrance gate, condemning the real estate corporation for robbing Indigenous peoples of their ancestral land and forcing them out of their homes. (Dawn, Jun. 21)

As the action progressed, chaos ensued within Bahria Town’s master-planned community. BTK’s entrance gate was set on fire, prompting police to unleash terror against the protesters.

Along with dispersing tear gas and shooting rubber bullets at demonstrators, law enforcement kidnapped and caged 150 protesters, including children who were present at the protest. In response to state-sanctioned terror, Karachi Bachao Tehreek (Save Karachi Movement) released a statement to shed light on the events that occurred June 6.

KBT explained that the damage that took place “is nothing compared to the loss to Indigenous population of goths [villages], whose land has been illegally destroyed.”

Protesters denounce Bahria Town Karachi destruction of Indigenous peoples’ villages.

KBT urged those in solidarity with Indigenous people to focus on the acts of violence carried out by institutions that uphold and maintain oppressive structures — a very common type is罢了。”

Reform, not understanding the essence of socialist countries and those with socialist leaders are inspiring the work-ers. Say NO to Bahria Town! Housing for ALL! Build a workers’ world!”

When I finally listened to a podcast featuring the words of Comrade Makasi Motema, my understanding of the more I was educated, the more my views changed. However, we engage with people who may not understand this? Speaking from my own perspective, I had a lot of reaction from people who were from liberal centrist teachers, pro-fessors, classmates, etc. Even during my earliest days as a communist, I still had reservations about socialism working due to lingering beliefs about communist revolutions.

Sometimes this subtler version is effective, and rather than pursuing purely radical and revolutionary praxis, potential cadres, intimidated by conservative nonsense about socialist countries, pursue more moderate and reformist ideologies like social democracy.

When I finally listened to a podcast featuring Marxists-Leninists who thoroughly debunked many of the half-truths and fabrications about Stalin and the USSR, this played a pivotal role in turning me into a revolutionary, and it pushed me to read more about the history of the USSR.

Going forward, when sharing how we can dispel common myths about current socialist movements, I should be cognizant about highlighting my views and experiences before I arrived at Marxism-Leninism. With the Biden administration cracking down on anti-capitalists, the corporate media machine fanning the flames for war with China and with U.S. imperialist hegemony threatening the DPRK, Cuba, Bolivia, Venezuela and Peru, it is important for leftists to educate ourselves and potential cadre about the triumphs of those countries against insurmountable odds.

Socialist countries and countries with socialist leaders are inspiring the working-class all over the world. We need to be their best advocates and argue on their behalf. We owe it to our comrades here and around the world to do so.

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• Socialism or death: socialist countries lead the way to the future

We need an opportunity for education, not just on what socialism is, but how it is put into practice. On how existing socialist countries and those working to build socialism challenge U.S. imperialism. We need to demystify them — humanize them, much like we have been doing about Palestine.

The more I was educated, the more my views changed. However, we engage with people who may not understand this? Speaking from my own perspective, I had a lot of reactions from people who were from liberal centrist teachers, professors, classmates, etc. Even during my earliest days as a communist, I still had reservations about socialism working due to lingering beliefs about communist revolutions.

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La resistencia palestina fuerza cambios en el régimen sionista

Por Michael Kramer

El Estado colono israelí resgaldado por Estados Unidos y la OTAN se ha visto obligado a un cambio de liderazgo por la firme unididad y resistencia del pueblo palestino a su ocupación y opresión. Otro factor ha sido la expresión de la solidaridad internacional en todo el mundo alineada con su lucha anticolonial y antipartheid.

Benjamín Netanyahu, que ocupó el cargo de 1996 a 1999 y de nuevo de 2009 a 2021, está fuera como primer ministro de larga duración. Naftali Bennett está dentro. Como todos los movimientos políticos burgueses, el sionismo tiene múltiples tendencias y facciones. Tan Netanyahú como Bennett han vivido durante largos períodos de tiempo en Estados Unidos como adultos y son aliados. Provienen de la misma tendencia sionista de derecha, abiertamente racista y pro-apartheid, pero son líderes de sus propias facciones o partidos políticos. Estas tendencias sólo diferencian en cómo tratan la resistencia palestina a la ocupación israelí. Algunos sionistas piden expulsiones masivas de palestinos y una nueva “Nakba”, en referencia a la “catástrofe” de 1948, cuando los palestinos fueron expulsados por la fuerza de sus hogares y granjas. Otros enlazan la hambre de electricidad de Palestina.

Los partidos políticos de estas facciones suelen tener su base en diferentes comunidades de la población de colonos de Israel, como las religiosas, las laicas, las de habla rusa o las mirachí, es decir, las de herencia norteafricana e iraquí.

Sin embargo, a pesar de las diferencias y facciones coinciden en cuestiones fundamentales. No se concederán derechos democráticos al pueblo palestino; las leyes del apartheid permanecerán intactas, y no habrá “derecho de retorno” a su patria ancestral para los millones de refugiados palestinos que se ven obligados a vivir en otros países. “Divide y vencérás” ha sido una herramienta del imperialismo occidental contra los pueblos indígenas durante siglos, desde América del Norte hasta África Oriental y Occidental, Oriente Medio y otros lugares. Puede funcionar durante un tiempo. Esta estrategia ha fracasado en Palestina.

18 de mayo: La huelga unificada provoca una gran conmoción

La prueba está en la histórica huelga general de los trabajadores palestinos del 18 de mayo. Fue una gran derrota para la ocupación israelí y un golpe psicológico para su población de colonos israelíes. El mensaje de esta tremenda acción fue visto y comprendido por la administración Biden, el Congreso de Estados Unidos y varias facciones del movimiento sionista.

Los cientos de miles de palestinos que se manifestaron en las calles de Haifa, Lod, Jerusalén, Ramallah, Nablus y Gaza, echaron por tierra el plan israelí, respaldado por Estados Unidos, de dividir a esta población en función de su lugar de residencia, según el momento en que comenzaron las ocupaciones militares de sus tierras, ya sea en 1948 o en 1967.

Además, la gran y creciente ola de solidaridad internacional con el pueblo pales- tino se ha sumado a la crisis cada vez más profunda en la que se encuentra el Estado colono israelí.

Reformar la dirección sionista o reinariciar la Knesset (Parlamento) israelí no supone ninguna diferencia para quienes viven bajo la ocupación o para quienes se solidarizan con ellos. Todo el proyecto sionista está en una trayectoria de decadencia.

Los partidarios y aliados de Palestina sólo pueden esperar el día en que el pueblo palestino ponga en marcha un sistema operativo completamente nuevo en su patria.


Guerra de guerrillas y COVID-19 estallan en Haití

Por G. Dunkel

Desde principios de junio, se produjeron enfrentamientos en los barrios de Puerto Príncipe, la capital de Haití, en los que a veces participaba la policía cuando se atacaban sus comisarías. Cuando se hizo evidente que algunas de estas milicias tenían más poder de fuego que los cuerpos de seguridad de los barrios ricoterro de la finca general. (Haití Libre, 2 de junio)

En ese período, nuevas comisarías fueron atacadas, con robo de armas y la muerte de un inspector de policía haitiano. Según un informe reciente de la Red Nacional de Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, más de 30 policías han muerto en enfrentamientos durante los últimos dos años. (Miami Herald, 15 de junio)

Hay alianzas cambiantes entre estos grupos. Algunos de ellos parecen tener vínculos con la policía, ya que tienen uniformes, chalecos antibalas, dispositivos de comunicación y armas utilizadas por las fuerzas de seguridad haitianas. Otros combattants se dedican al robo y a otras formas de extorsión; otros están destinados principalmente a la defensa del barrio. Gran parte de los combattants se produjo en la zona sur de Puerto Príncipe, lo que llevó a miles de familias a refugiarse en el estado deportivo de Carrefour, al sur de la capital, por invitación del alcalde Jude Edouard Pierre. Según UNICEF, cerca de 8.500 mujeres y niños han tenido que buscar sus hogares en las últimas dos semanas, mientras que unas 600.000 personas en todo el país se han visto afectadas por los combates.

Hay otra situación que afecta a la economía haitiana. Electricidad de Haití (EDH) es el proveedor nacional de energía eléctrica con una importante instalación hidroeléctrica en Péligen, en el centro de Haití, cerca de la frontera con la República Dominicana. EDH no ha podido satisfacer las necesidades de energía eléctrica.

Desde el 15 de junio, algunos guardias de seguridad de EDH ocupan la planta e impiden que se realicen las reparaciones necesarias. Están molestos, ya que se descubrió una estafa de corrupción desarrollada por estos guardias, que implica a empleados “fantasmas”. (Alter Press, 18 de junio)

El COVID-19 abruma a los hospitales

Hasta el 10 de junio, las autoridades de salud han informado que Haití ha registrado 16.662 infecciones y 358 muertes por COVID-19, en este país de 11,5 millones de habitantes. Estas cifras no revelan toda la magnitud de la crisis. Casi todos los días, los representantes de los hospitales de Puerto Príncipe afirman en la radio que sus instalaciones están llenas, que se han quedado sin oxígeno y que no tienen sitio para más pacientes, a pesar de que la mayoría tiene medios económicos.

Hasta el 19 de junio, parece que el sistema de salud no ha sido capaz de dar un sistema de salud que sea capaz de distribuir las vacunas. Sin embargo, la Cuba socialista ha propuesto que todas las vacunas COVID-19 producidas en EE.UU. sean proporcionadas a Cuba. (Miami Herald, 19 de junio).

G. Dunkel trabaja con trabajadores y trabajadoras de salud en Cuba.