

Step toward unionization

Student-athletes win historic ruling

By Monica Moorehead

The National Collegiate Athletic Association waived its archaic rules June 30 to allow student-athletes to earn money off their popularity and visibility for the first time in its 115-year history.

College athletes can now negotiate endorsement deals, profit off their social media accounts, sell autographs and otherwise make money from their names, images and likenesses, potentially directing millions of dollars into the pockets of these athletes every year. And they will have the right of legal representation in making these deals.

This is a historic ruling, since college athletes have been shamelessly superexploited for decades by athletic programs, booster clubs and college administrations

for their ability to perform superb athletic feats before packed arenas and fields in a multitude of sporting events. The athletes have had no direct compensation or benefits like other workers.

The NCAA waiver comes just hours before a number of state legislatures were scheduled to potentially pass laws that would institute athletes' compensation in colleges and universities statewide. The NCAA's reversal came a day before a July 1 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court which found the association guilty of violating an antitrust law. The Court ruled in favor of women and men athletes demanding to be paid, and the Court's ruling left the NCAA vulnerable to future lawsuits on behalf of athletes demanding the right to earn money.

But there is no guarantee that every athlete will be

able to take advantage of the new options being granted. Much depends on which sport they participate in and whether they play for Division I, II or III teams — with Division I being the most popular and by far the most profitable.

NCAA functions like a corporation

The NCAA — like every other capitalist entity — is based on making profit. The NCAA receives over \$1 billion in revenue annually from two main sources: The first is the Division I men's basketball annual championship tournament known as "March Madness," which generates over \$867 million in television and marketing. The second is from other championship sales that reap close to \$180 million — not even counting football bowl games.

In the NCAA, 64% of basketball players and 57% of football players are African American — who overwhelmingly come from poor and working-class families. It is not surprising that Black athletes tend to be more pro-union than white players.

A main role of the NCAA is to grant scholarships for indigent players whose families cannot afford the exorbitant tuition of prestigious colleges and universities that are overwhelmingly white.

NCAA coaches make an average annual salary of over \$800,000, with the highest salary going to the University of Alabama football coach Nick Saban, who makes over \$9 million. Mark Emmert, president of the NCAA, makes a base salary of \$2.7 million without perks.

Compare these salaries to student-athletes who on average receive only \$20,000 in aid for a school year. And food stipends are included in those grants. The athlete's package can be so inadequate for overall school costs that — to make their money stretch — they can go without adequate amounts of food on a daily basis.

The NCAA ruling is significant to student-athletes for

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Bishop Filipe Teixeira, Diocese of St. Francis of Assisi and Bobby Traynham, with Boston School Bus Drivers Union — Steelworkers Local 8751 and Workers World Party, sponsors of the July 5 demonstration supporting political prisoner Alex Saab. See page 3.

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TEAR DOWN THE WALLS

Free Mumia! Free them all!

Texas im/migrant dragnet

Oakland, Calif. —

Defund the sheriff

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Koreans tell it like it is

From 1950 to 1953, the U.S. government waged a horrendous war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (the northern half of Korea), in which nearly 5 million people died. Despite this scorched-earth strategy, the U.S. ruling class failed to undo the Korean Revolution, which had triumphed in the north of the Korean peninsula. The DPRK stands today as a monument to the iron determination of its people to build socialism.

This June 23, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK, Ri Son Gwon, released the following concise statement concerning the DPRK's relations with the U.S. government.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK welcomes the clear-cut press statement issued by the vice department director of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, which is to brush off hasty judgment, conjecture and expectation of the U.S.

We are not considering even the possibility of any contact with the U.S., let alone having it, which would get us nowhere, only taking up precious time. □



The capital city of Pyongyang, in 1953 after massive bombing by the U.S.



Pyongyang in 2019 after rebuilding by the DPRK.

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

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

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ2S+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

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

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

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

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

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

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MUNDO OBRERO WORKERS WORLD

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International campaign grows to free Alex Saab

By Sara Flounders

The continuing international Campaign to free Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab, abducted by the U.S. over a year ago and held in Cabo Verde, gained momentum this week.

The visit of Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva of Cabo Verde — a small, isolated island nation off the West coast of Africa — to the Cabo Verdean community in the Boston area brought out members of that community,



WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN

Co-founder and Coordinator of the Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle William Camacaro and International Action Center Co-coordinator Sara Flounders

along with Venezuelan solidarity activists, union members and antiwar activists from many organizations, to press for Saab's release. July 5, the National Independence Day of Cabo Verde, is a highly unusual time for the prime minister to be out of the country.

Prime Minister Correia e Silva also met with U.S. officials in Washington, D.C. Coincidentally — or probably not — the U.S. had just announced plans to invest \$400 million in expanding its Cabo Verde embassy. Washington's motives are suspect, given its push to have Saab extradited to the U.S. The investment amount represents one-fifth of Cabo Verde's entire GDP.

The arrest of a diplomat for any reason is unprecedented and completely illegal under international law. When Saab was abducted, Venezuela immediately pressed for his release to the African Union. The West African Court ECOWAS, of which Cabo Verde is a member; Swiss courts who cleared Alex Saab of any financial wrongdoings; and the United Nations Human Rights Committee have all called for Saab's immediate release. (telesur, June 8)

Alex Saab was on a humanitarian mission to Iran to purchase desperately needed food and medical supplies for Venezuela. Due to the U.S. sanctions, the Venezuelan economy is reeling economically. Freely accessible food and free medical care were big accomplishments of the Bolivarian Revolution. These gains are what U.S. imperialism is determined to destroy.

Delegations and visits

A delegation to Cabo Verde in early June of Cabo Verde citizens Bishop Filipe Teixeira and Pericles Tavares, accompanied by Roger Harris of Task Force on the Americas and Sara Flounders of the International Action Center, met with Saab's attorneys, filed habeas



Free Alex Saab demonstration, July 5.

WW PHOTO: MAUREEN SKEHAN

corpus motions with the Supreme Court of Cabo Verde and saw where Saab is being held.

Delegations in June visited the Cabo Verde Consulate in Boston, the Cabo Verde Mission to the U.N. in New York City and the Embassy of Cabo Verde in Washington, D.C. They delivered the international statement with over 15,000 signatures, along with the rulings from the U.N. Human Rights Committee and other international bodies.

Members of the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, Steelworkers Local 8751, were present at the action July 5. USW Local 8751, which has a large Cabo Verdean membership, unanimously passed a resolution May 26 calling on President Joe Biden to drop the demand for Saab's extradition and for Cabo Verde to release Saab to Venezuela immediately.

The international campaign opposing the illegality of the sanctions and the further criminal conduct of kidnapping a diplomat continues to grow. To sign the international appeal go to bit.ly/FreeAlexSaabVZ. □

Part 1

A Marxist history of HIV/AIDS

By Devin Cole

Forty years ago, on June 5, 1981, the first instance of what came to be known as HIV/AIDS was reported in a weekly news release from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

On July 3, 1981, the first mainstream news acknowledgment of HIV/AIDS was made by the New York Times, which reported in this headline: "Rare Cancer Seen in 41 Homosexuals." By the time of that publication, at least 8 of the 41 people had already died. These cases had been reported in California and New York. (nyti.ms/3vZTInK)

By the end of 1981, 121 people had died from this previously unknown disease. Over the next 14 years, the sickness would kill hundreds of thousands worldwide, affecting largely Black and Brown, disabled and LGBTQ+ people and those at the intersection of these identities. Initially dubbed GRID (Gay-Related Immune Deficiency) in June 1982 — due to the erroneous belief that it only affected gay men — the disease was re-named Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in September 1982.

In 1984, it was announced that a retrovirus known as HTLV-III (Human T-Lymphotropic Virus III) was the virus that caused AIDS, and was identical to Lymphadenopathy-Associated Virus, earlier thought to be the sole infection causing AIDS. In 1985, HTLV-III/LAV was officially renamed Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). HIV is the infection which, if left untreated, leads to the late-stage disease of AIDS.

Between 1981 and 1995, when the first antiretroviral therapy (ART) was approved by the FDA, at least 300,000 people died of AIDS worldwide. (tinyurl.com/c8w8m5x6)

The number is undoubtedly higher. Millions of working-class people did not have access to testing or healthcare, suffered in secrecy or died before the official statistics were counted — as HIV/AIDS has now been revealed to have existed prior to 1981.

Who is to blame? The usual culprits: capitalists, greedy pharmaceuticals, health care CEOs and corporations in the economic sphere. In the social sphere, the villains

continue to be homophobia, misogyny and transmisogyny, racism, ableism and other social oppressions that intensify what can only be described as a plague.



PHOTO: ELVERT BARNES

A 2017 rally by ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), New York City.

In order to properly understand the calamity of the AIDS crisis, we must thoroughly examine the conditions that led to such a disaster. How, in 14 years, did a disease kill more than a quarter of a million people, most of whom were nationally oppressed and/or socially oppressed? How was it that the "most advanced, most developed country" in the world, the U.S., proved utterly useless in the first several years of this plague, and later was hardly more helpful? This series seeks to answer these questions and explain those answers.

The AIDS crisis was no doubt a medical crisis, but it was also a dramatic example of the capitalist economy in crisis. Now, 40 years after the first acknowledgment of AIDS, the capitalist economy has been shaken again by a new epidemic: COVID-19.

As of July 1, over 3,964,766 people worldwide had died from this virus, with the greatest number of victims in the United States — over 604,000. (worldometers.info)

Socialist countries like China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea have mobilized health care systems based

on socialist principles in order to decrease the number of cases and, more importantly, the number of deaths, and have succeeded in containing the virus. But the capitalist structure of the U.S., dedicated to profits and privatization of healthcare, has devastated the wellbeing of people and allowed hundreds of thousands to die.

Many are now looking at COVID-19's parallel with the early years of the AIDS epidemic, and the U.S. government's similar non-response to the suffering of working-class and oppressed persons. The connections are glaringly obvious, boiling down to this: Capitalism-imperialism is a decaying, rotten system inadequate to even keep its workers alive to power the system.

Fully aware of the cracks in this structure, its proponents continue to shovel billions into divide-and-conquer tactics, conspiracy theories and any ploys that can enlarge divisions between working-class and oppressed persons and block solidarity and mass organizing to end the system.

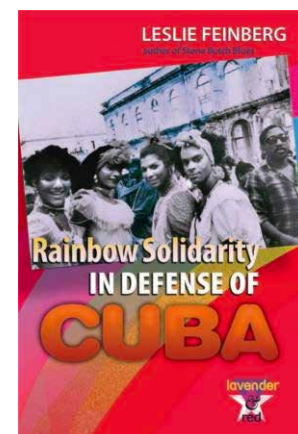
More and more people are becoming aware that we must organize together to deal a death blow to capitalism. Through this, and only through this, can we establish a dictatorship of the proletariat and build a socialist system.

Only then will epidemics like AIDS and COVID become manageable and, eventually, treatable. □

Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba

By Leslie Feinberg

A compilation of 25 articles about same-sex love and sex/gender variance in Cuba's pre- and post-revolutionary history. Download the free PDF at workers.org/books.



Part of Southern trend

Elizabeth City workers strike for better pay

By Dante Strobino
Durham, N.C.

After three years of receiving zero pay raises and working 16 months through a global pandemic with no recognition or hazard pay, city workers in Elizabeth City, N.C., staged a two-day work stoppage June 29-30. The Black-majority workers in the city’s Public Works and Water and Sewer departments were upset by City Council’s vote to deny their proposed raise this year.

Upon coming to work June 29, workers self-organized, loading up their work trucks and driving to City Hall, where they surrounded the building, honking their horns and clogging up traffic. They refused to work the entire day. They gave the city a deadline of 7:00 p.m. the next day to get it right. The next day, they all caught the “blue flu” at 10:00 a.m., clocked out and began a sit-down occupation of the sidewalk surrounding City Hall. Community and family members swarmed in to cook hamburgers and hot dogs, bringing food to the struggling workers.

“We are on strike because we are underpaid,” employee Cody Parker told WAVY TV 10. “They don’t want to pay us what we need to be paid.” Workers in the Water and Sewer Department start as low as \$12 per hour, even with a CDL-A heavy equipment operator license.

Black Lives Matter protesters, who were on the 60th consecutive day of protesting against the police murder of Andrew Brown, joined the actions to show support



Elizabeth City, N.C., strike, June 30

WW PHOTO: WORKERS WORLD DURHAM BUREAU

and unity. Colonial Avenue, on the south side of the municipal building, was closed down due to activists painting “Black Lives Matter” in big bold yellow letters on the street that same day. Andrew Brown was murdered by Pasquotank County sheriffs the day following the George Floyd verdict.

Strikes a pattern in the South

This important job action comes on the heels of Black worker-led municipal strikes in recent months across the South. New Orleans Public Works city workers walked out June 28 for higher pay. Waste Management workers in Virginia Beach, Va., just north over the border from Elizabeth City, staged a work stoppage Aug. 25, 2020, demanding hazard pay for working during COVID-19.

Virginia Beach city workers have been organizing the

last eight months with the United Electrical Workers to form a union. State law in Virginia changed effective May 1, granting city workers the right to collective bargaining for the first time since the right was taken away in the Jim Crow era. (See locals.ueunion.org/111)

Elizabeth City Council originally voted down the raise by linking it to the local property tax. This helped the city form an alliance with the property owners in town, who are strongly against raising any taxes. However, due to the workers’ powerful action and with strong community support, City Council voted again — this time in favor of a small increase in property taxes to fund a 4% raise for all city workers, and they agreed to study the possibility of raising all city workers up to \$15 per hour minimum.

City workers who belong to UE Local 150, North Carolina Public Service Workers Union, won \$15 per hour minimum base wages in five cities over two years ago and have since built strong wage systems on top of that. (See UE150.org)

Members of the Southern Workers Assembly are supporting worker organizing across the South, including by municipal workers through forming Local Workers Assemblies. New assemblies, besides those already built in Durham, Raleigh and Charlotte, N.C., are forming in Virginia Beach, Va.; Tampa, Fla.; New Orleans; and Kentucky.

These militant worker actions connected to a long-term social movement union strategy are what is necessary to organize labor across the largely nonunion South. □

Alabama coal miners: Solidarity forever!

Members of the United Mine Workers (UMWA) Local 2245, in Brookwood, Ala., entered the fourth month of their strike against global coal company Warrior Met July 1. That day they were joined by local activists from federal workers’ union American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), who came to show solidarity at the weekly community rally at Tannehill State Park.

In June, the union reported incidents of vehicular assault on the picket line on three consecutive days. Picketing continues around the clock seven days a week. On June 22, the coal miners came to New York City to picket Warrior Met’s megacapitalist hedge fund investors on Wall Street, denouncing giants like BlackRock for union-busting tactics.

For more, see *Workers World*, April 2, April 20, June 2 and July 1. (workers.org/tag/alabama/)

— Report by Minnie Bruce Pratt



CREDIT: AFGE NATIONAL



Municipal workers hit the picket lines

Service Employees Union Local 73 announced a strike of 2,000 Cook County, Ill., workers June 25 at Cook County Health Care. Members include clerical workers, civilian workers in the sheriff’s office, maintenance and service workers, medical technicians and physician assistants. (Chicago Sun-Times, June 29) Workers are demanding bonuses or raises for frontline workers in hazardous situations, like the pandemic, and are fighting “skyrocketing” health care premium increases.

Three other unions won contract agreements with Cook County Health — American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, National Nurses United and the Teamsters. AFSCME won an 11 ½ % wage increase over four years for some 4,000 members; 1,250 NNU nurses staged a one-day strike June 24 and won raises. Details of the Teamsters’ agreement have not yet been released.

Municipal workers in Elizabeth City, N.C., walked off their jobs June 30, demanding a long overdue pay increase. One worker described living out of his van, because he could not afford a one bedroom apartment

rental on his current wages. A study commissioned by the City Council showed that Elizabeth City municipal workers are paid below the minimum of their counterparts in other cities.

Elizabeth City Council initially voted down a property tax increase to fund a raise for workers. Council revoted after the strike to give workers a raise paid for with a small property tax hike. Members of AFSCME District Council 33 in Philadelphia authorized a strike vote at a June 28 union meeting in preparation for negotiations with the city. The current contract expired June 30. Municipal workers, including sanitation workers, were critical to the city during the pandemic lockdown, putting their and their families’ welfare in jeopardy by continuing to report for work as COVID ravaged the city.

Supreme Court attacks farmworkers

The U.S. Supreme Court favored capitalist agribusiness over workers in a June 23 ruling on the case of Cedar Point Nursery vs. Hassid. The decision bars union organizers’ access to farmworkers at their place of employment, prioritizing property rights over workers’ rights. This is counter to the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975, which stipulates union organizers are able to talk to workers at job sites during breaks and lunch.

In a statement on the ruling, the UFW said, “the Supreme Court’s ruling in Cedar Point v. ALRB makes a racist and broken farm labor system even more unequal. Farmworkers are the hardest working people in America. This decision denies them the right to use their lunch breaks to freely discuss whether they want to have a union. The Supreme Court has failed to balance a farmer’s

property rights with a farmworker’s human rights.”

Cesar Chavez, champion of seasonal and migrant farmworkers and co-founder, along with Dolores Huerta, of the United Farm Workers (UFW), won organizing victories, including the California ALRA, through actions like the historic Grape Boycott of the 1960s.

The National Agricultural Workers Survey taken from 2015 to 2016 identified 83% of farmworkers as Latinx and 6% Indigenous, statistics which highlight the racist nature of the Supreme Court ruling. Many Spanish-speaking farmworkers live in company housing and are bussed to the job site, isolating them from organizing efforts while landowners mistreat and exploit them.

Agricultural work is historically grueling, and these essential workers are poorly compensated. Besides the COVID threat, unprecedented heat in the fields is taking a toll. A Guatemalan man died from extreme heat exposure while he worked on an Oregon farm irrigation project, where the temperature hit 104 F.

California Agricultural Labor Relations Board Chair Victoria Hassid said, “Despite today’s ruling, California will continue to champion these rights for some of our most essential workers. The COVID-19 pandemic has only reinforced how farmworkers need more information, more resources and more protections. Without basic information and basic labor rights, farmworkers who are the backbone of California’s economy will be left behind.” (alrb.ca.gov)

Agricultural workers in Colorado won broad protections and rights under the Farmworkers Law, signed by Gov. Jared Polis June 25, two days after the Supreme Court ruling. A mandated minimum wage, overtime pay, safety and housing protections are included in the law. The Colorado Farmworkers’ Rights Coalition hailed the law as a continuation of the United Farm Workers movement of the 1960s. □

Abuse continues

Texas repurposes prison for migrant detention

By Mirinda Crissman

On July 16, by order of Texas Governor Greg Abbott, the state Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) began clearing incarcerated people from the Dolph Briscoe Unit in Dilley. But the order did not mandate release of any people or the closing of the prison.

Instead, under “Operation Lone Star,” the facility was cleared to be reused for holding migrants arrested by the Texas Rangers — not for crossing the international border but on the pretext of them committing low-level offenses.

Operation Lone Star was announced in March as a joint plan of Abbott’s office and the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to “stop the trafficking of drugs and humans.” The plan ordered an armed body of men — the Rangers — to round up undocumented people.

Abbott specified the operation was a

response to President Joe Biden’s administration policies “that refuse to secure the [southern] border and invite illegal immigration.” (tinyurl.com/4z76xv37, March 6)

The Biden administration has not been easy on or even remotely kind to migrants. Vice President Kamala Harris traveled to Guatemala in early June and told people there that any migrants traveling to the U.S. would be turned back at the border.

This violation of international law signals that — contrary to Abbott’s anti-migrant panic — Biden is holding onto the same immigration policies that he previously implemented as part of the Obama administration. As vice president then, Biden helped run the state machine that deported 2.5 million migrants between 2009 and 2015. (tinyurl.com/eesackze, Aug. 29, 2016)

Now President Biden’s administration has reopened migrant detention facilities for children, locating these on top of toxic waste facilities in Homestead, Fla., and El Paso, Texas. These locations were closed under the Trump administration. (Workers World, March 19)

With Abbott’s order, factually incorrect accusations of “insecure borders” from Texas officials are used to torment undocumented people. The fabricated panic over “illegal immigration” is being used to pull \$250 million from TDCJ’s budget to fund the Texas border wall. A TDCJ statement announced the money will come from the agency’s 2023 fiscal year budget. (kxan.com, June 17)

Armed bodies of men like the Texas Rangers continue to serve the ruling

class now in a very similar way to how the Texas Rangers and other police forces were used in the era of enslavement of African peoples. Police forces in the U.S. originated in slave patrols that rounded up Black people and other people of color for “low-level offenses” such as vagrancy. (tinyurl.com/3tnx9z8y)

The Texas Rangers were originally created by Texas settler Stephen F. Austin in 1823 to make war on the Comanche and Kiowa nations, who were fighting settler incursions in their lands, and against the Mexican “Comancheros” who held trade fairs with the Comanches. And the Rangers were used against Mexican national forces in the U.S. war against Mexico.

Abbott and Trump met at the Texas-Mexico border June 30 to drum up racist support for finishing the wall that damages the environment and the people on both sides.

The crimes of Texas — and the U.S.

In a June 22 interview with the Texas Standard, Keri Blakinger, a reporter for the Marshall Project, explained there are legal and logistical problems with Operation Lone Star’s use of the state-owned Briscoe Unit for federal migrant prisoners. She noted that TDCJ staff are not legally allowed to guard people accused or convicted of misdemeanors, nor is the TDCJ staff trained to work with migrants. (tinyurl.com/ukaw4uvu)

Conditions in migrant detention facilities in Texas are notoriously abhorrent. The Briscoe Unit prison saw an uprising on July 18, 2020, when more than 50

incarcerated people resisted brutal conditions during the pandemic. Blakinger reported that, after the uprising was put down, participants were tear-gassed before being moved to other units located hours away.

The most recent removal of prisoners from the Briscoe Unit has taken a toll on the families of those once held captive there. With some moved hours away, families will no longer be able to visit those being held in extreme isolation.

What is being done to migrants in Texas is a crime and a continuation of ongoing colonial and imperialist violence on this continent. How can there be “illegal immigration” on lands that the U.S. seized illegally from Indigenous nations, and when migrants now are frequently Indigenous peoples fleeing from imperialist-backed violence in their home countries? Where is the justice for Mexican migrants arrested for “illegally crossing the U.S. border,” when the entire western third of the U.S. was stolen from Mexico through imperialist war?

What is clear — whether an administration is Democratic or Republican — is that the U.S. border is being “secured” at the expense of people forced out of their homelands by U.S. policies, both economic and military. These policies ensure that the United States — with all its violent and criminal looting and death-dealing — keeps its capitalist class in charge for a little while longer.

But the people’s history will not be kind to Abbott and his ilk.

Tear down the walls! Free them all! □



ARTWORK: DYLAN A.T. MINER FOR JUSTSEEDS.ORG

Rally: Free Mumia and all political prisoners

By Philadelphia Workers World Bureau

A 16-foot puppet of Mumia Abu-Jamal greeted participants and passersby July 3 at a rally: “In the spirit of Consuewella Africa! We must all MOVE to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal & All Political Prisoners.” On July 3, 1982, political prisoner Abu-Jamal was given a death sentence by Judge Albert Sabo. Annual demonstrations in Philadelphia have marked this date.

The rally, across from City Hall at the Municipal Services Building plaza, was held beneath a mural honoring Black women leaders in the struggle against police brutality. Faces depicted include Ramona Africa, Pam Africa and YahNé Ndgo, who facilitated the rally.

Ndgo opened stating, “We must

eradicate this entire prison industry and start by liberating our freedom fighters in these prisons, specifically because they have spoken truth to power. If one of us is taken, the rest of us will fight to right this wrong. Free all political prisoners!”

Shortly into the rally, a sudden rainstorm forced attendees to shelter under the overhang below the mural. There Ndgo spoke of Consuewella Africa, a MOVE member who lost two daughters in 1985, when Philadelphia officials bombed the family’s West Philadelphia home and slaughtered family members. She died June 16 from stress brought on after learning how the city mistreated her daughters’ remains.

A message from Mumia remembering Consuewella was played. (tinyurl.com/h84s7vfm) Cindy Miller,

with Food Not Bombs Solidarity, read a tribute to Consuewella from Rowan University professor Dr. Sandra Joy. FNBS provided snacks and water for people at the rally, including unhoused people gathered in the plaza.

Johanna Fernandez, with the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, discussed Mumia’s case and took questions regarding his current legal status. “Nothing is going to deter us from freeing Mumia Abu-Jamal and freeing political prisoners or from the larger fight for freedom — not the rain or the nativists out here celebrating July 4th.

“As Mumia said, social movements change history. Just two years ago, few people were talking about police abolition. When people hit the streets and engage in militant action, they change

the political debate and discussion. They raise up new politics and a new morality, and we start imagining different ways of organizing society.

“We are calling for system change — you can’t negotiate with capitalism, with white supremacy. Their forces are organized. They have the money and the power. We need to build a culture of discipline and consistency. They are the few, but we are many.”

Bring Judge Tucker back to hear Mumia’s case

In response to a question about the recent transfer of Judge Leon Tucker from the Common Pleas Court, Fernandez said, “Tucker was the only judge in

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Oakland, Calif.

Defund sheriff’s budget, fund mental health

Youth from the Decarcerate Alameda County coalition rallied at the Board of Supervisors June 22 to demand that funding be pulled from the county sheriff’s budget and reallocated for mental health services.

Speakers pointed out that 44% of the 4,000 people incarcerated at the Alameda County Santa Rita Jail were dealing with a mental illness, with “shockingly inadequate” money available to help them, while police and sheriffs “seem to have a blank check” when it comes to funding. A recent U.S. Department of Justice investigation found that Santa Rita fails to provide “adequate care to prisoners with serious mental health needs, including those at risk of suicide.” (April 22, 2021 DOJ letter to Sheriff Gregory Ahern.)

Santa Rita is one of the largest county jails in the U.S.

A 2021 report by American Civil Liberties Union and Urban Peace Movement showed that 71% of Alameda County misdemeanors were “low-level.” In addition, over 90% of those incarcerated in Santa Rita Jail have never even been sentenced — in other words “rotting in jail” waiting to be seen by a judge or court officer.

The racial disparity in the jail is scandalous, with 48% of the Santa Rita Jail population being African American. Asked about this, Evelyn Canal of Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice said, “They don’t need a reason in this country to jail Black and Brown folks.” Others spoke from the Anti Police-Terror Project, Hayward Community Coalition and poet Ericson Amaya from 67 Sueños.

— Report and photo by Dave Welsh



‘Say her name: Sandra Bland’

By Betsey Piette

July 10 marks the sixth anniversary of the day when Sandra Bland was pulled over while driving to a new job at Prairie View A&M University, a historically Black university near Houston. Texas State Trooper Brian Encinia stopped her for allegedly failing to signal a lane change. Police dashcam footage showed that he had tailgated Bland until she was forced to change lanes to let him pass.

The traffic stop quickly escalated after Encinia threatened to use his taser on Bland and then forcefully pulled her from the car, threw her to the ground and restrained her. He charged Bland with assaulting an officer. She was booked at Waller County Jail and held there on \$5,000 bond.

Bland was found hanging in her cell three days later, on July 13, 2015. Her family and friends dispute the jailers’ claim that she committed suicide.

Bland, a 28-year-old Black woman, was described by relatives and friends as a dynamic individual who had protested police violence and created an internet



show titled “Sandy Speaks” to address issues of police abuse. She quit a corporate job when she became aware of the company profiting from mass incarceration.

‘A lot to live for’

Bland had relocated from Chicago to Waller County in East Texas to work at PVAMU, her alma mater. She had a lot to live for, and her family, friends and sorority sisters immediately demanded an investigation into her death, charging that it was undoubtedly caused by racist profiling and mistreatment by police.

The #whathappenedtosandrabland hashtag quickly spread throughout social

media, especially at Black colleges, fraternities and sororities. Bland’s became the highest profiled death at the hands of police in the #sayhername struggle, shedding light on state violence against Black women.

HBO premiered the documentary “Say Her Name: The Life and Death of Sandra Bland” in December 2018. At a showing of the film in Atlanta, Monica Moorehead, a managing editor of Workers World newspaper and the party’s 2016 presidential candidate, discussed the significance of Bland’s untimely death to a capacity crowd on Feb. 16, 2019.

Moorehead explained: “The murder of Sandra Bland was the lightning rod for the hashtag #SayHerName as a component within the Black Lives Matter movement. It was a grim but important reminder that her case shined a bright light on how Black women and other women of color are victims of police terror, but many still don’t get the national and international attention that Bland’s case did.” (tinyurl.com/as86vrw)

Bland’s family announced that they

had reached a \$1.9 million settlement in a wrongful death lawsuit against Waller County and the Texas Department of Public Safety in September 2016. The settlement included changes to procedures at the county jail and de-escalation training for state troopers.

In June 2017, a Texas state district judge dropped the perjury charge against Encinia, the ex-trooper who had arrested Bland, on the condition that he never again work in law enforcement. Her relatives opposed this dismissal as they wanted him prosecuted.

Two years later in May 2019, an investigative report on Dallas television station WTAA revealed Bland had recorded a 39-second cellphone video, which clearly showed Encinia was responsible for escalating the confrontation and had, in fact, perjured himself. Although his dashcam video had been made public after Bland’s death, her recording was never shown. The revelation has prompted calls for a renewed investigation.

No one has ever been held responsible for Sandra Bland’s death. □

Rally: Free Mumia and all political prisoners

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Pennsylvania who spoke the truth about this case. His rulings on Mumia’s appeal allowed the case to move to the appeal process.” She proposed Tucker be brought back to hear Mumia’s appeals.

There is precedent. Judge Albert Sabo was brought back from retirement in 1995 to rule over Mumia’s Post Conviction Relief Appeals. The case is currently before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which is filled with white-supremacist judges.

“Our lawyers are demanding that the case be remanded to lower court and that Tucker be allowed to review new evidence which suggests that cops and prosecutors bribed witnesses to convict Mumia,” Fernandez concluded.

Other speakers included Dominique Wallace, widow of Walter Wallace Jr., murdered by Philadelphia police Oct. 26, 2020. Indigenous activist Arika Gold-Bustos reminded the crowd that the July 4 holiday celebrates white supremacists’ theft and occupation of Indigenous land. Palestinian activist Susan Abulhawa spoke of Mumia’s contributions to the understanding of Israel’s illegal occupation of Palestine.

Dominique McQuade, representing unhoused people occupying the plaza, thanked organizers for providing food and much needed water and Gatorade, given the recent heat wave. Spoken word artist Blak Rapp Madusa performed.

Baba Zayid Muhammad, with the Newark Anti-Violence Coalition, gave recognition to the many young activists in the crowd. Betsey Piette, from Workers World, credited the Black Lives Matter movement in the wake of the police murder of George Floyd for moving more corporate media to cover social struggles. Olivia Backal-Balik announced a Turn up Tuesday July 6 call-in to Gov. Tom Wolf’s office demanding Mumia’s release. (Mobilization4Mumia.com)

Intentional bombing

Abdul Aliy Mohammad, who helped uncover what happened to Consuewella’s daughters, described the state’s terror against MOVE. “They were surveilled,



Activists gather July 3 around Mumia puppet at former site of the removed Frank Rizzo statue.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

terrorized, imprisoned and murdered by the state. The May 13, 1985, bombing was deliberate — Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor intended to kill everyone in the house.

“The city had evacuated and barricaded Osage Avenue. On May 12, the state let young MOVE members, including Tree and Netta, pass the barrier and reenter the house.

“The big lie is that this was ‘the last resort,’ that they could find no other tactic than to bomb the house with a [military] grade C4

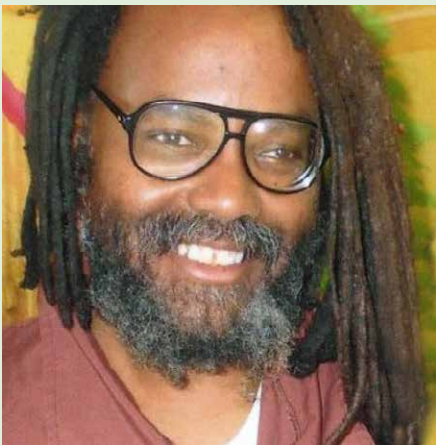
bomb. It was an intentional bombing. Eighteen months before the attack, the bomb disposal unit, under Sambor, City Manager Leo Brooks and the person who dropped the actual bomb satchel were in Fairmount Park practicing how to use a bomb. It was deliberate. It was terrorism — state violence. There is so much to be uncovered here.”

Jacqueline Wade, the puppet maker, described the inspiration for the Mumia puppet project. When the rally ended and the rain stopped, the puppet was moved to the spot once occupied by the statue of Philadelphia’s former racist and fascist police commissioner and mayor, Frank Rizzo. During last summer’s protests over the murder of George Floyd, demonstrators threw red paint on the bronze Rizzo statue and tried to set it on fire. Within 24 hours the city, capitulating to years of activists’ demands, removed the statue.

For event videos: tinyurl.com/26thv5mt and tinyurl.com/2krdy2et. □

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Build 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 im/migrants who flee their homes to escape U.S. imperialist aggression 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 prison 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 were in the streets over the last four decades to save Mumia’s life and promote his message. Workers World has been 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.** WW’s Prisoners Solidarity Committee is supporting the internationalist call to Free Mumia. His 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 you to help us do our job.** Join the WW Supporter Program, initiated 44 years ago, to help fund the newspaper. Since the early

1990s, donations have also aided in maintaining the workers.org website.

WW articles are posted daily at workers.org. During the pandemic, the weekly newspaper has been printed and mailed out once a month. When it’s safer, we plan to do this more frequently.

For a donation of at least \$75 a year — or \$100, \$300 or more, members receive a year’s subscription; letters about timely issues; and one, two or three, respectively, free subscriptions for friends. Members can also receive our book, “What road to socialism?” (Notify us.) Or read it free at workers.org/books.

Write checks, either monthly or once a year, to Workers World, and mail them, with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or sign up to donate online at workers.org.

We’re grateful for your help in building Workers World! □

Pandemic devastated U.S. working class

By Tamarai

This lightly edited article was originally published in the July issue of Workers Resistance, the web magazine of the All India Central Council of Trade Unions. Tamarai is a physician and a longtime friend of Workers World Party. She supports struggles for justice for workers and to end racism in the U.S. and for caste annihilation in India.

The World Health Organization declared a Global Health Emergency from the COVID outbreak on January 21, 2020. It was only declared a U.S. national emergency March 13, and subsequently, billions of dollars in federal funding were promised to fight the disease's spread. As of June, there have been close to 35 million COVID cases and nearly 615,000 deaths in the U.S., the richest country in the world.

COVID-related deaths have fallen since January, as millions of Americans have been vaccinated. This article will give a snapshot of how workers were affected, what measures were taken by the government and who benefitted from the pandemic.

The Guardian newspaper's project "Lost on the Frontline," that was released recently, documented 3,600 health care workers in the U.S. dying from March 2020 through April. A key finding is that Asian American and Pacific Islanders and Black people accounted for nearly 50% of the health care worker deaths while accounting for 20% of the U.S. population.

Nurses and support staff died in large numbers; 70% of the health care workers' deaths occurred outside the big hospitals, largely in nursing homes and elder care facilities. There were widespread shortages of masks and personal protective equipment, lack of COVID testing and grossly inadequate safety regulations in place.

Immigrant workers, who are close to 23 million, represent 1 in 5 essential workers. These workers were on the frontlines during the COVID pandemic in sectors like medical, agriculture, food services, transportation and health care. Five million workers who were undocumented risked their lives for this country.

There are more than 2.5 million workers in the grocery and food industries. United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) represents 1.3 million workers in grocery stores, meat packing, food processing and other industries. More than 90,000 of these workers have been



May Day 2020, outside Staten Island, N.Y., Amazon warehouse.

infected or exposed to the virus, with close to 500 deaths.

Researchers looked at death records from California Department of Public Health and estimated that during the pandemic there was relative excess mortality in certain professions in the working age group. When 2020 is compared with 2018 and 2019, mortality was extremely high in food/agriculture workers (39% increase), transportation workers (28% increase) and manufacturing sector workers (23% increase).

When they stratified the excess mortality based on race, Latinx workers had experienced a 36% increase, and Black workers had experienced a 28% increase in mortality, as compared to an 18% increase among Asian workers and 6% in white workers. In all races, food/agriculture workers experienced the highest increase in mortality.

Union benefits during the pandemic

The U.S. has close to 160 million people in the workforce. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 9.6 million people in the U.S. are self-employed. About 25 million people are in government jobs, which includes the military. More than 120 million workers are in the private sector. The union membership rate in the public sector, excluding the military, is 34.8% vs. 6.3% in the private sector. About 1 in 8 essential workers in food services and agriculture and 1 in 10 in health care were covered by a union contract.

Between April and August 2020, COVID-related safety complaints

increased by 350% in workplaces per the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Workers represented by unions fared significantly better during the pandemic than nonunion workers. In the private sector, health care, social assistance, transport, warehouses, the job loss rate was lower in the year 2020 than in industries such as leisure and hospitality not represented by unions.

International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) represents around 45,000 dockyard workers on the West Coast. ILWU has a glorious history of showing solidarity with oppressed people around the world — its workers showed solidarity with Palestine by refusing to unload an Israeli ship in Oakland earlier this month. The union also takes care of its workers well; it negotiated for protective equipment and procedures with its employer Pacific Maritime Association (PMA). This resulted in significantly less morbidity and mortality to their workers.

Among workers who had a union contract, 94% had access to health benefits from employers compared to 68% of non-union workers, per research published by the Economic Policy Institute, and 90% of union workers were eligible for pay during sick time, compared to 73% of nonunion workers.

Pandemic suffering vs. profits

Just before the pandemic hit in March 2020, 200,000 workers were filing for unemployment benefits in the U.S. The figure skyrocketed to 2.9 million workers filing for unemployment benefits on March 21, 2020. The unemployment rate jumped in April 2020 to 14.8%, a level not seen since the 1930s.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, known as the CARES Act enacted by the U.S. Congress on March 27, 2020, released a \$2.2 trillion coronavirus stimulus package. There was a one-time \$1,200 "stimulus" check for most adults, with \$500 more per child. In addition, \$600 was added to state unemployment benefits. Combined state and federal assistance were instituted with the intent to enable Americans who lost jobs to have food, heat and electricity and pay rent.

However, systemic racism and inequalities continued to plague the system during the pandemic. Only 7% of Latinx workers received unemployment insurance, although they accounted for 25% of the unemployed. The unemployment rate amongst Black workers has been 73% higher than white workers. Half a million

Black women, and 3.5 million women in total, lost employment during the pandemic last year.

Decades of neglect of government unemployment offices has led to inadequate and delayed response to workers' needs. Even though \$9.5 billion was meant for the agriculture sector, still a significant number of farmworkers who were undocumented had no relief.

Due to ongoing hardships, even as COVID cases have fallen across the states, President Joe Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 on March 11. This \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package was passed with the goal of boosting the economy and providing help to U.S. workers. The act includes \$1,400 payments for most individuals as well as other assistance to struggling households.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has been tracking hardships faced by people in the U.S. and reports that 20 million adults have not had enough to eat, and 10.5 million adults are unable to pay rent. Black and Latinx people were more likely than white people to report lack of adequate food to eat — 15% for Black adults and 17% for Latinx people, compared to 7% of white people.

The CARES Act and American Rescue Plan Act have helped people to some extent from going hungry; however, benefits are not enough, and there is inadequate infrastructure and safety net to take care of the poor and undocumented immigrants.

While millions suffer from unemployment, the inability to pay rent and the lack of free and accessible health care, the collective wealth of U.S. billionaires increased from \$2.95 trillion to \$4.56 trillion (between March 18, 2020, and April 12). Amazon founder Jeff Bezos' wealth has increased to \$161 billion, while more than 20,000 Amazon workers were affected by COVID.

The late Richard Levins, scientist and Marxist, wrote an article in Monthly Review more than 20 years ago titled: "Is Capitalism a Disease?" He talked about the poor state of public health care in a technologically advanced country. He also referred to the extremely profitable pharmaceutical industry in that article. The COVID pandemic laid bare everything he wrote from the unpreparedness of the U.S. health care system to the massive profits it generated to the pharmaceutical companies.

The National Institutes of Health, which is publicly funded, developed the technology that helped Pfizer and Moderna pharmaceutical companies to make the COVID vaccines. The U.S. government has bought the vaccines from the companies to vaccinate the population free of charge, resulting in huge profits to the companies. Pfizer reported that the vaccine brought in \$3.5 billion in revenue in the first three months of 2021.

The COVID pandemic in the U.S. is affecting millions of workers and has exposed the contradictions in the capitalist system and intensified the inequalities. The good news is that across the country, support for labor unions at this time is extremely high. There have also been several demonstrations across states to highlight the housing crisis and cancel rent payments. Multinational demonstrations to end systemic racism and police brutality have erupted all over the country during the pandemic. While the U.S. is far from any radical transformation in the "belly of the beast," these struggles must provide the necessary revolutionary optimism. □

Capitalism on a Ventilator

The impact of COVID-19 in China & the U.S.

"What one learns from Capitalism on a Ventilator is that the economic and human cost of the pandemic was far from inevitable. An entire section of the book is devoted to China's solidarity with the rest of the world in the fight against COVID-19. After four months of difficult struggle, China successfully contained the pandemic and immediately diverted masks, testing kits, medical personnel, ventilators and other forms of assistance to countries across Latin America, the Middle East and Africa. The U.S. received generous donations of medical equipment from China during the first wave of the pandemic. China was also the first country to declare that its COVID-19 vaccine would be a public good."

— Danny Haiphong in a review for Black Agenda Report



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U.S. & China

A tale of two social systems controlling malaria

By G. Dunkel

The World Health Organization declared China free of malaria June 30, after China’s decades of work toward eradicating the disease. WHO noted: “Underpinning China’s malaria elimination success was an unwavering political commitment, at all levels of government, to ending the disease over a 70-year period.” (tinyurl.com/umfb82k) For the past four years, no cases of malaria have appeared in China.

Malaria, caused by parasites spread among humans by mosquito bites, is often considered a tropical disease. However, malaria is solidly implanted in temperate climates. About half of the world’s population is at risk of infection.

In 2019, there were approximately 229 million cases of malaria and 409,000 deaths from malaria worldwide. People do not develop immunity to malaria — they can get it repeatedly, as it is caused by a parasite. Sub-Saharan Africa is the world’s hardest hit region. (tinyurl.com/ffvtdv2x)

As late as the 1950s, 30 million cases of malaria occurred in China. While just 1% of these cases led to death, mainly among children, adults suffered from debilitating fevers, fatigue, chills and flu-like illness and anemia. When malaria parasites clogged arteries liver, kidney and brain



YANG WUMIN/XINHUA
Innovative Chinese pharmacologist Dr. Tu Youyou in the 1980s. Dr. Tu, won a Nobel Prize in the sciences for discovering malaria drug artemisinin.

damage followed. China adopted creative steps beyond applying the standard measures of draining swamps and spraying for the mosquito vectors that transmit the disease. In the 1960s, at the instigation of Mao Zedong in the midst of the Cultural Revolution, the People’s Liberation Army set up a secret unit, Project 523, to examine remedies for malaria. This disease was also a major problem for the Vietnamese in their war for national liberation against the United States. Tu Youyou, who led Project 523, was a medical student in the 1950s when the

Chinese medical system was working to harmonize traditional Chinese medicine with Western norms. She received the Nobel Prize in medicine in 2015 for her work developing the very effective antimalarial drug artemisinin in the 1960s, which the Chinese used domestically and supplied to the Vietnamese. (tinyurl.com/4r2stj4v) In the 1980s, China began to widely use insecticide-treated nets, which substantially reduced the spread of malaria, especially in the provinces of Sichuan, Guangdong, Henan and Jiangsu. Also in the 1980s, China developed its highly effective and national surveillance policy known as “1-3-7.” It allows only one day for a confirmed case of malaria to be reported, three days for contacts to be traced and evaluated and seven days to stop malaria in its tracks and prevent onward transmission of the disease. By the end of 1990, the number of malaria cases in China had plummeted to 117,000, and deaths were reduced by 95%. **U.S. capitalism’s approach to malaria** According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website, malaria is a “reportable disease” in the United States. A medical provider must report any confirmed cases to their local public health service. The 2,000 cases of malaria a year in the U.S. are a real threat, since

there are a lot of “competent” vectors flying around; that is, there are multiple mosquito species in the U.S. which can spread malaria. Of the 2,000 yearly cases, 300 are considered “severe,” which means they must be treated with the drug artesunate, which just received FDA approval this year. Until 2017 the pharmaceutical firm Eli Lilly produced quinidine, which cost about \$200 and was the standard treatment for severe malaria. Even after Lilly stopped producing quinidine, there were still supplies available. If supplies weren’t available, the CDC had a very complicated procedure to get patients artesunate, which also worked. After the FDA approved the artesunate made by a different pharmaceutical company, Amivas LLC, travel medicine specialists considered this adequate, because most of the rest of the world relied on artesunate. Then the sticker shock hit; Amivas was charging \$30,000 for the treatment, even though outside the U.S. the cost for artesunate treatment can be as little as \$5. (tinyurl.com/5c6zucwh) While China’s pro-people system and government aim at a consistent drive to eradicate malaria, U.S. government policies above all aim at guaranteeing high profits for the drug monopolies which make effective malaria treatments. □

WW COMMENTARY
China and Africa

Mutual cooperation, not neocolonialism

By Ernie Hamer

Based on a talk given at a Workers World Party meeting in Buffalo, N.Y., Workers World Party on April 27, 2021. With the People’s Republic of China on the rise, the forces of U.S. imperialism are beginning to panic as the global tides gradually shift against them. The Communist Party of China has reached its hundredth year, celebrating the immense progress made by their socialist system. At the same time, the U.S. media has seen a major uptick in anti-China rhetoric aimed at downplaying the achievements of Peoples’ China and painting a picture of China that simply isn’t congruent with reality. One of the false narratives being spun about China is that it is itself an “imperialist” power, regularly citing the relationships that China has built within Africa. Africa is a continent extremely rich in resources but lacking needed infrastructure to extract and utilize them. As such, African governments often look outward to find funding for their countries’ infrastructural projects.

In total, Africa has outstanding debts of over \$350 billion dollars and of that, at least 21% is held by China, making them the largest creditor. (aiddata.org, March 31) Between the years of 2000 and 2019, China provided \$153 billion in loan commitments to Africa, with top loan commitments Angola, Ethiopia, Zambia, and Kenya. (chinaafricaloandebt.bu.edu) These Chinese loans are being used primarily to finance Africa’s infrastructure gap. On a continent where over 600 million Africans have no access to electricity, 40% of the Chinese loans paid for power generation and transmission. Another 30% went to modernizing Africa’s transportation infrastructure. At a 2018 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation held in Beijing with African leaders, Chinese President Xi Jinping stated, “We follow a ‘five-no’ approach in our relations

with Africa: No interference in African countries’ pursuit of development paths that fit their national conditions; no interference in African countries’ internal affairs; no imposition of our will on African countries; no attachment of political strings to assistance to Africa; and no seeking of selfish political gains in investment and financing cooperation with Africa.” (focac.org, Sept. 3, 2018) What is laid out in that approach differs vastly from that of the U.S. and of the West. Still, despite this, China is constantly painted as an imperialist nation taking advantage of Africa and its people.

We need to understand and recognize that the relationship between China and Africa is starkly different than those between other Western nations and Africa. Failure to do so only serves to stoke dangerous anti-communist rhetoric when defending China against these attacks is most paramount.

False narratives on China

China’s loan practices are often under scrutiny, being called exploitative of the nations of Africa. Regarding China’s expanding presence in Africa, the former South African minister of trade and industry, Rob Davies, said, it “can only be a good thing ... because it means that we don’t have to sign on the dotted line whatever is shoved under our noses any longer. ... We now have alternatives and that’s to our benefit.” (Financial Times, Aug. 24, 2010) Over and over again, the lending practices of China with Africa have been shown to be not only nonexploitative, but beneficial. Researchers have shown “No evidence of asset seizures in lieu of loan payments in Africa, or indeed, anywhere among Chinese borrowers in debt difficulties,” according to Deborah Bräutigam article [in The Diplomat]: “Chinese Debt Relief: Fact and Fiction.” (tinyurl.com/jmv6n7k) Between 2000 and 2018, China had written off \$9.8 billion in debt to other countries including Cuba and over 20 African nations on the receiving end of Chinese government loans. (forbes.com, May 29, 2019) Another prevalent false narrative states that Chinese companies in Africa will solely employ and benefit Chinese workers. In reality, “Surveys of employment on Chinese projects in Africa repeatedly find that

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Webinar salutes centenary of Chinese Communist Party



Workers World Party held a special webinar July 1 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, which led that country’s earth-shattering socialist revolution in 1949. The webinar paid tribute to the CPC’s accomplishments of

eliminating absolute poverty for 800 million people, leading the world in pandemic response and vaccine distribution, and supporting the construction of 21st century infrastructure through its Belt and Road Initiative and more. The webinar’s participants, WWP members Sara Flounders, Joshua Hanks, Ted Kelly and Makasi Motema, discussed how the CPC was able to achieve these extraordinary achievements in the once peasant-dominated society of over 1 billion people and why the U.S. empire remains so threatened by the success of the Chinese socialist revolution. To view the webinar, go to youtu.be/jK5X2uz_YWA. Read “Salute on the Communist Party of China’s 100th Anniversary” at workers.org/2021/06/57124/.

— Monica Moorehead

A necessary step

U.S. out of Afghanistan

By John Catalinotto

The Pentagon withdrew its forces from Bagram Air Field in Kabul July 2. Corporate media presented this event as an irreversible step in Washington's departure from the nearly 20-year-old occupation of Afghanistan. Some 650 U.S. troops still guard the U.S. Embassy, and there are many thousands of "contractors" — mercenaries — but many Afghans will see the U.S. departure as guaranteeing a victory for the Taliban-led resistance.

According to articles in the July 3 New York Times, and other newspapers that reflect opinions in the Pentagon and other government agencies, change may come quickly to Afghanistan. Many strategists expect that recent takeovers of territory by the Taliban-led forces will soon put them in a position to overthrow the Kabul regime and replace it.

The narrative in the media about Washington's dilemma has been deceptive. It goes like this: U.S. troops staying in Afghanistan means endless war that the U.S. Armed Forces are unable to win; U.S. troops leaving Afghanistan means abandoning Afghans — and especially Afghan women — to a misogynist fundamentalist regime.

What is most deceptive about that "dilemma" is that it assumes U.S. imperialism was or is oriented to making Afghanistan — or any other country it invades or subverts — a better place for its people. On the contrary, the imperialist U.S. ruling class aims to exploit the labor, natural resources and strategic value of all these countries and peoples. Even when it is unable to conquer the country, its military intervention leaves misery and/or chaos — as in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria.

U.S. and Afghanistan

The corporate media emphasize that the U.S. intervention came after the bombing of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon Sept. 11, 2001. What they leave out is that Washington began its subversion in 1978. That year, a progressive revolution in Kabul, the capital city, deposed the Afghan king and put a young and

small communist party — the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan — in power.

This new progressive government had strength in the army, as well as in Kabul and a few other cities. It was much weaker in the Afghan countryside, which was controlled by warlords and big landowners. The PDPA immediately called for reforms, a major one being to educate Afghan girls and women and involve them in the party as teachers — and as soldiers in the revolutionary army.

The U.S., working through the CIA and the Pakistani intelligence agency ISI and collecting funds from reactionary regimes like Saudi Arabia, immediately armed and funded Afghan warlords and reactionary fundamentalist groups and sects like Al Qaeda. The groups whom the U.S. supplied arms to killed many women students and teachers, with no complaints from the CIA or U.S. strategists.

The U.S. provided or organized billions of dollars in arms to these murderers, especially after the Soviet Union intervened to aid the Afghan government. U.S. strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski considered this aid key in forcing a counterrevolution in the USSR that would lead to its downfall. Brzezinski himself admitted that the U.S. intervention predated Soviet aid for the Afghan communists.

When the various warlords were unable to establish a stable regime in Afghanistan, the Pakistani ISI backed



Afghan protesters in Kabul rally against the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, 2001.



Pakistani protesters rally against the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in Karachi, September 2001.

the youthful Taliban — a fundamentalist group whose initial founders in the early 1990s had been trained and armed by the U.S. CIA to fight the Soviet troops — which took over in 1996. At that time, the U.S. remained friendly to the Taliban. (tinyurl.com/7h36h2w8)

The Sept. 11, 2001, attacks provided the U.S. government with nearly unanimous ruling-class support for new wars and aggression. The George W. Bush administration took advantage of this, quickly invaded Afghanistan, the home base for Al Qaeda (who took credit for 9/11), and prepared the invasion of Iraq — whose government had nothing to do with the 9/11 attacks.

While the Pentagon was able to quickly depose the Taliban government and force them out of Kabul and other major cities, for the next 20 years the U.S. has been unable to establish a stable client regime in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, the war has cost hundreds of thousands of Afghan lives, mainly civilians, the lives of some 3,000 U.S. troops and about \$2 trillion of U.S. workers' tax monies.

The conditions for most Afghan women have deteriorated during the course of the U.S. occupation, and it would be foolish to expect the U.S. Armed Forces to liberate Afghan women. Maternal mortality has increased. (See Leslie Feinberg's 2007 article in Workers World, reprinted this April 6 to see this argument developed — workers.org/2021/04/55649/)

The withdrawal of U.S. forces, while far from liberating all Afghans, is a necessary step in a struggle that will continue. □

Student-athletes win historic ruling

Continued from page 1

another reason — because the NCAA is in essence their boss. The ruling will help pave the way for the athletes to be organized like other workers.

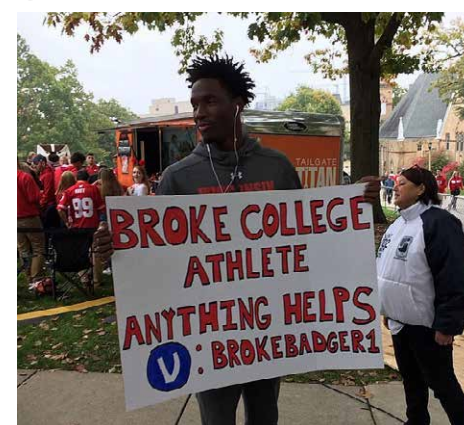
In 2014, some Northwestern University football players formed the College Athletes Players Association to fight for their team's right to organize a union. The athletes questioned why shirts with their likeness could be sold for \$50 but when groceries are donated to them if they are hungry, they are the ones punished by being suspended from games

or even being expelled from school. The NCAA prohibits student-athletes from having independent health insurance. But when athletes get injured while playing, they can end up with permanent knee or brain damage, two of the most prominent injuries.

The National Labor Relations Board sided with the Northwestern administration in not recognizing the athletes as "university employees." The Northwestern football team eventually voted down the idea of a union in 2015, but the struggle is far from over at that school and others.

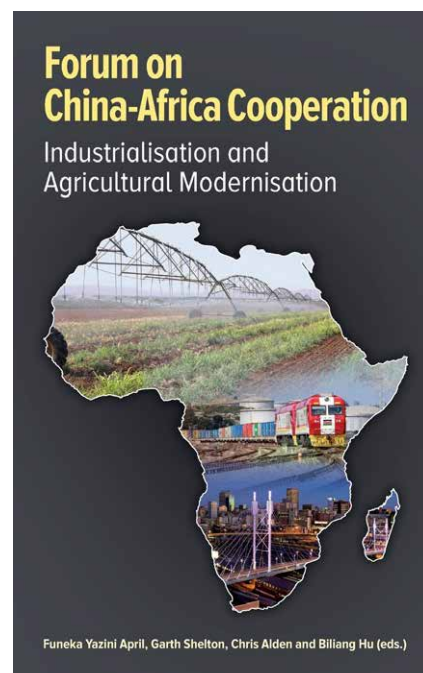
The Black Lives Matter struggle — which intensified in summer 2020 over the police murder of George Floyd — has helped to empower student-athletes to take to the streets to fight for social justice, which also encompasses economic justice.

Workers are demanding a living wage, better working conditions and benefits from corporate behemoths like Amazon, Whole Foods, Walmart and others. As other workers move forward to get their rights at the bargaining table, the student-athlete workers will not be far behind. □



University of Wisconsin basketball player, Nigel Hayes, Madison, October 2016.

China & Africa: Mutual cooperation, not neocolonialism



Continued from page 8

three-quarters or more of the workers are, in fact, local." (Washington Post, April 12, 2018)

Even beyond employment practices, China has spearheaded academic research to help improve the overall well-being of the African people. The Chinese Academy of Sciences is heavily involved in supporting research projects in Africa, including agronomic research aimed at ending food shortages. (Nature.com, May 14, 2019)

According to the annual Global Education Monitoring Report as of June 2020, China was set to offer 12,000 scholarships to African students in the coming academic year, largely to support study at Chinese universities — representing more university scholarships than from all the leading Western governments combined.

Another falsehood is that China is regularly accused of land grabbing, the act of large-scale land acquisitions for their own financial benefit. Researchers at the International Food Policy Research Institute "collected a database of 57 cases where Chinese firms (or the government) were alleged to have acquired or negotiated large (over 500 hectares) amounts of African farmland," which was published by Johns Hopkins University Press.

"If all of these media reports had been real news, this would have amounted to a very alarming 6 million hectares — 1% of all the farmland in Africa. We spent three years tracking down every single case. ... We confirmed that nearly a third of these stories ... were literally false. In the remaining cases, we found real Chinese investments. But the total amount of land actually acquired by Chinese firms was only about 240,000

hectares: 4% of the reported amount." (ifpri.org, March 2021)

Overall Chinese investments which are linked to their noninterventionist policy serve their goal of long-term economic development. Though in no way perfect, Chinese investments in African countries provide them with alternative and more mutually beneficial funding, which aids in improvement in living conditions for the people of these countries and also cuts the West off from the exploitation they have historically relied upon.

We need to understand and recognize that the relationship between China and Africa is starkly different than those between other Western nations and Africa. Failure to do so only serves to stoke dangerous anti-communist rhetoric when defending China against these attacks is most paramount. □

Voter suppression — class war against workers

A July 1 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court issued a death blow to the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which protected historically disenfranchised voters of color. In a 6-3 ruling in *Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee*, the right-wing majority court nullified Section 2 of the Act, which barred voting procedures that “result in a denial or abridgment of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color.” The section was the last effective portion of the Act, already seriously damaged by the Court’s 2013 ruling in *Shelby County v. Holder*. The Brennan Law Center announced that 28 state legislatures have already enacted laws in 2021 to limit access to voting, and 61 bills with restrictive provisions are moving through 18 state legislatures still in session. Hundreds more could be proposed, limiting access to millions of voters. (tinyurl.com/3xajyy88) The Republican rush to voter suppression accelerated during the 2020 election that white-supremacist President Donald Trump lost. Although Republicans deny they are attacking voting rights, during the SCOTUS hearings Arizona’s attorney argued such rights should be struck down — to prevent Democrats from winning. (tinyurl.com/4awad4wc) But denying people the right to vote is “the American way” — as old as the country and a strategy of every U.S. bourgeois political party. Voter suppression has targeted the most oppressed peoples — those of color, Indigenous, poor, female, immigrant and incarcerated. Voter denial has always been a class-war tactic designed to keep state power



Election night, Lowndes County, Ala., Nov. 8, 1966.

in the hands of the owning class — which defined voters from the beginning as free, white, adult male landowners in the 1787 U.S. Constitution. Not only were enslaved African peoples denied the right to vote from their first kidnapping to these shores in 1619, they were disgracefully and cynically used as pawns in ruling-class power struggles when enslavers were allowed by the Constitution to count people they owned as “three-fifths of a free individual” for purposes of congressional representation for whites. Indigenous peoples did not become legal “citizens” of the U.S. until 1924, and because the states determined voting rights, some were not allowed to vote until 1957. To dominate, an owning class requires control of the land — so genocide, land seizures and denial of basic rights were leveled on Indigenous peoples who have inhabited the continent for eons before European settlers “discovered” the misnamed “New World.”

Unchecked owning-class exploitation of workers has fueled suppression of both voting rights and citizenship in the U.S. In 1882 U.S.-born people of Chinese descent — a growing force of immigrant workers in the Western states — had their citizenship and right to vote taken away from them in the Chinese Exclusion Act. And Japanese Americans incarcerated in internment camps during World War II had their right to vote challenged by the Native Sons of the Golden West, white supremacists who campaigned to strip all “nonwhites” of citizenship. Incarcerated people in U.S. jails, prisons and ICE internment — disproportionately Black, Latinx, migrant and Indigenous people, with a majority poor white people — are still bound by the Constitution’s 13th Amendment clause legalizing “involuntary servitude” in prison. That serves as justification for their losing the right to vote, either on a temporary or permanent basis, if convicted of a felony.

Black struggle won voting rights

African American men and women did not even get the right to vote until the 15th Amendment in 1870 and the 19th Amendment in 1920, respectively. These changes to the Constitution came only after a bloody Civil War and centuries of struggle. But the Southern states of the old

Confederacy still prevented Black people from voting — through massacres, beatings, lynchings, rape, and legislative ploys like bigoted qualification examinations and the anti-poor poll tax. Only the epic battles of the Black Civil Rights Movement — the martyrdom and sacrifice of countless African American people — expanded the right to vote for all disenfranchised people in the U.S. That movement stretched from Black Reconstruction into the 1960s and won the 24th Amendment to the Constitution in 1964, repealing the poll tax, as well as the groundbreaking 1965 Voting Rights Act. The struggle continues in this century. Witness the on-the-ground organizing led by Black women in Georgia that defeated white supremacists in the 2020 elections. Witness the Black Lives Matter demonstrations of millions against the police murder of George Floyd, asserting the right to live in the face of murderous racism — a mass movement still challenging state power at its base. The right to vote is a basic bourgeois democratic right. As communists, we are in deep solidarity with all oppressed peoples fighting racism, poverty and bigotry — and we support their right to wield their vote in these struggles. As communists, we fight for justice wherever the battle rages. We know that militant organizing for basic rights now can be a path to demands and visions for real freedom in the future. And most of all, we know that to build anti-racist solidarity with and among oppressed and working-class people is to build the foundation for socialism. □

WW COMMENTARY

By Nigel Bouvart
Buffalo, N.Y.

India Walton made national headlines when she won last month’s Democratic primary against incumbent Mayor Byron Brown, who has held the office since 2006. This is no small feat, given Brown’s strong ties to the real estate and financial interests that run Buffalo behind the scenes — but that alone isn’t what’s creating all the buzz. She owes that to being a self-described socialist. Walton, a 39-year-old former 1199 Service Employees Union nurse and a union representative, has spent recent

A look at India Walton

years in the employment of progressive nonprofit organizations. These include the Fruit Belt Community Land Trust (of which she was the founding executive director), established to bring about community ownership in a historic Black neighborhood in Buffalo, and Slow Roll, a bike-transit advocacy organization. The latter organization provided volunteers to help manage traffic and take up other roles during the Black Lives Matter demonstrations last summer following the murder of George Floyd. Karen Huffman, a legal observer, was injured when deliberately struck by a truck during a protest in September 2020. Walton took a prominent position at last year’s protests, where she demonstrated her prowess as an orator. She has been an activist since the age of 12, when she protested alongside her mother at demonstrations against the punitive Rockefeller Drug Laws organized by Families Against Mandatory Minimums. She has used her soap box to demand reforms like the passage of Cariol’s Law, which was signed into law last October, requiring cops to intervene in the instance of another cop using excessive force — as the law’s namesake, former cop Cariol Horne, was fired for doing. Walton has decried larger systemic evils like colonialism and exploitation. Even before she began her campaign in earnest, she attracted a following of progressives.

But is she a socialist? She replied to that question herself promptly enough in the interview that got her coverage in virtually every national corporate media outlet, and she accepted the endorsements from the local Democratic Socialists of America chapter, Senator Bernie Sanders and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Her platform — consisting of well-considered, progressive reforms as it is — doesn’t emphasize building working-class power. Socialism isn’t mentioned at all on her campaign website, and it did not figure very heavily in her campaign until after the primary.

Opponents stoop to red-baiting

Walton will run in the general election this November unopposed — except for a write-in campaign by sitting Mayor Brown. He only announced he would be pursuing reelection well after Walton began her run. Brown ran sterile public relations events with corporate sponsors as opposed to Walton’s direct community engagement. He ducked Walton’s repeated challenges to debate, and he was portrayed by a prominent local political cartoonist as being chicken. Carl Paladino — billionaire developer, Trump booster, one-time New York State gubernatorial candidate and disgraced former school board member — announced that he would be conducting a write-in campaign if Brown conceded, shortly after Walton’s win and weeks before Brown officially announced that he would be pursuing a write-in campaign himself. Paladino vowed to “destroy [Walton’s] campaign” and said “Buffalo needs real leadership. Socialism doesn’t work.”



India Walton

Brown issued a statement clarifying that he “is not seeking and will not seek” Paladino’s support for the write-in campaign, though in effect Brown has merely let Paladino do the red-baiting for him. (Spectrumlocalnews.com, June 25) The deed of rankling reactionary voters in Buffalo is already done, and Brown has doubled down by running as a “law-and-order” candidate. It seems unlikely that a write-in campaign would succeed, but Walton’s supporters are sleeping with one eye open. While perhaps not a socialist in the true sense of the word, Walton is certainly very progressive relative to Brown and has yet to be touched by the normalized political corruption so common in Buffalo and other U.S. cities. Her platform consists of modest but positive reforms, and her activist and community ties suggest she could be pushed to do more. All this to say that her election victory would not be an unwelcome development. □

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How U.S. destroyed progressive secular forces in Afghanistan

By Deirdre Griswold

First published in 1996 and then republished on Sept. 27, 2001 just before the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan — with the following introduction:

The media are suddenly full of opinions about Afghanistan, now that the George W. Bush administration is accusing Osama bin Laden and other Islamic fundamentalists of being behind the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

In the 1980s, the reactionary political elements now ruling Afghanistan were working with the CIA to overthrow a progressive Afghan government supported by the Soviet Union. After the spending of an ocean of blood and billions of U.S. dollars, the reactionaries won.

Washington was happy and unconcerned, as its protégés went on to butcher Afghan progressives, restore landlordism and repress women while fighting among themselves.

The eventual triumph of the Taliban faction represented a catastrophe for the Afghan people. Just in the last year, thousands of Afghan refugees have died of starvation and exposure, and Kabul, the capital, is such a wasteland that the U.S., demanding vengeance, can't even find anything to bomb.

On Oct. 10, 1996, Workers World printed the following article about how the U.S. strangled a popular revolution led by the Progressive Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) against feudalism and imperialism.

Not that long ago, the bourgeoisie could still feel pride in their revolutionary history. They continued to celebrate the 1789 French Revolution and many other great victories in the struggle against feudal oppression.

They even spoke approvingly of the 1917 overthrow of the czarist autocracy in Russia. The problem, they said, was that the Bolsheviks had spoiled that struggle for democracy by going too far.

But capitalism in this rotten age of U.S. imperialist conquest of the globe has degenerated so far from its revolutionary roots that it is now, to borrow a phrase from Henry Kissinger, to the right of the czar. And it is celebrating the return of absolute feudal rule in Afghanistan.

The powerful media engines, their reach multiplied by the most modern technologies, are presenting the world with instant photographic images of a lynching — that's all it was — of the few progressives left in Kabul.

To make the deed more palatable, the media use adjectives like butcher to describe former President [Mohammad] Najibullah and his aides. Dragged out of the United Nations compound where they had sought asylum for the last four years, they were beaten to death and then left hanging for all to see.

But among themselves, foreign-policy experts for the U.S. establishment know that the Afghan progressives' real crime was that they tried to carry out a social transformation in their country in the direction of socialism.

What authority bears witness to this? None other than the U.S. Department of the Army itself.

The Pentagon puts out what it calls country study books on almost every country in the world. They are updated every few years. These books contain basic information for the use of U.S. personnel traveling or working abroad.

There's nothing classified in them. They're available in most libraries.

Afghanistan — a Country Study for 1986 has of course the anti-communist line expected of a Pentagon publication. But it also contains much useful information about the changes instituted by the Afghan Revolution of 1978.

Freeing women and peasants

Before the revolution, 5% of Afghanistan's rural landowners owned more than 45% of the arable land. A third of the rural people were landless laborers, sharecroppers or tenants.

Debts to the landlords and to money lenders were a regular feature of rural life, says the U.S. Army report. An indebted farmer turned over half his crop each year to the money lender.

When the PDPA took power, it quickly moved to remove both landownership inequalities and usury, says the Pentagon report.

Decree number six of the revolution canceled mortgage debts of agricultural laborers, tenants and small landowners.



Women in the pro-communist Afghan militia in the early 1980s.

The revolutionary regime set up extensive literacy programs, especially for women. It printed textbooks in many languages — Dari, Pashto, Uzbek, Turkic and Baluchi. The government trained many more teachers, built additional schools and kindergartens and instituted nurseries for orphans, says the country study.

Before the revolution, female illiteracy had been 96.3% in Afghanistan. Rural illiteracy of both sexes was 90.5%.

By 1985, despite a counterrevolutionary war financed by the CIA, there had been an 80% increase in hospital beds. The government initiated mobile medical units and brigades of women and young people to go to the undeveloped countryside and provide medical services to the peasants for the first time.

Among the very first decrees of the revolutionary regime were to prohibit bride-price and give women freedom of choice in marriage.

Historically, said the U.S. manual, gender roles and women's status have been tied to property relations. Women and children tend to be assimilated into the concept of property and to belong to a male.

Also, a bride who did not exhibit signs of virginity on the wedding night could be murdered by her father and/or brothers.

The revolution was challenging all this.

Young women in the cities, where the new government's authority was strong, could tear off the veil, freely go out in public, attend school and get a job. They were organized in the Democratic Women's Organization of Afghanistan, founded in 1965 by Dr. Anahita Ratebzad.

Ratebzad's companion, Babrak Karmal, was one of the young revolutionaries who had formed the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in that same year and would later become president of the country.

Repression and revolution

A revolution was literally thrust upon this young party in 1978.

The reactionary government of Mohammad Daoud, which was close to both the Shah of Iran and the United States, arrested almost the entire leadership of the PDPA on April 26, 1978. There had been a huge funeral procession just a week earlier for a murdered member of the

party, and the progressive masses in Kabul saw the new arrests as an attempt to annihilate the party just as the military junta had done to the workers' parties in Chile in 1973.

An uprising by the lower ranks of the military freed the popular party leader, Nur Mohammad Taraki — the soldiers actually broke down his prison walls with a tank. Within a day, Daoud was overthrown and a revolutionary government proclaimed, headed by Taraki.

This uprising of the soldiers and the city masses, many of them low-paid civil servants in a country with very little industry, was every bit as glorious as earlier revolutions against feudal tyranny in Europe. It held the promise of breaking down the old traditions based on oppression and fear.

The leaders of the PDPA were educated; although some, like Taraki, came from very poor families. But they had been to Kabul University; some had studied abroad, and they yearned to bring enlightenment and material progress to Afghanistan.

Had all this happened 150 years ago, the feudalists would have been overthrown and Afghanistan welcomed into the fold of progressive bourgeois nations. But that was before the age of imperialism and especially before the era of proletarian revolutions and the Cold War.

The U.S. CIA began building a mercenary army, recruiting feudal warlords and their servants for a holy war against the communists, who had liberated their women and their peasants. Washington spent billions of dollars every year on the war.

The only country in the area ready to help the Afghan Revolution was the Soviet Union. The USSR intervened militarily. But it could not defeat this well-armed counterrevolutionary force.

Every battle was a test, not only of Soviet military might but of the political resolve of its leaders. They finally withdrew the troops in 1989 as the shift to the right within the USSR became critical.

The war in Afghanistan began some 18 years ago. It continued long after the last progressive government in Kabul fell in 1992. The recent stage has been an orgy of destruction, as rival reactionary groups fought for control of the capital, now mostly destroyed.

More than 2 million Afghans have been killed in this struggle, and millions more made refugees. Now half the remaining population — the women — have been returned to the status of property without a single human right. A poor man unable to pay his debts can have his hand cut off for theft.

The schools and clinics built by the revolution are in ruins. The Taliban — a fundamentalist group supported by Pakistan that was trained and armed by the U.S. CIA — has taken the capital and is pursuing the war northward, toward the border with what were the Central Asian Soviet republics.

This is the hideous face of counterrevolution. Afghanistan has been dragged back more than 100 years. But it was the most modern weapons and communications systems, made in the USA, that killed the progressive dream of a generation of Afghan social revolutionaries. □

G7/OTAN: Diplomacia entre ladrones

Continúa de la página 12

estructura de estas organizaciones durante el periodo de la Guerra Fría para mantener su liderazgo.

Romper con Trump no es romper con los objetivos imperialistas

Durante la administración xenófoba, racista y completamente reaccionaria de Trump, presionó el botón “América primero” con tanta fuerza que los aliados de Washington temieron que se les negara su “parte” del botín. Trump insultó públicamente a los líderes gubernamentales de Europa.

Los estrategas de la clase dominante de este país temían que las tácticas de Trump rompieran las

estructuras de la Guerra Fría y perjudicaran los intereses imperialistas de Estados Unidos. Cuando Biden dijo que “Estados Unidos ha vuelto”, quiso decir que Estados Unidos está listo para volver a liderar la alianza imperialista. Biden dio a entender que Washington respetaría las exigencias de la clase dominante europea, y de los imperialistas japoneses, australianos y canadienses.

Biden está intentando movilizar a esos aliados contra China y Rusia. Los “valores” que los multimillonarios y banqueros que Biden representa tienen en “común” son los valores de mercado del coltán, el uranio, el petróleo y otros recursos naturales esenciales que esta plutocracia planea monopolizar.

Para subrayar la conexión entre las reuniones de 1885 y 2021, ahora mismo se están llevando a cabo dos ejercicios militares conjuntos dirigidos por Estados Unidos: Defender Europe en Europa del Este y African Lion en África. En ellos participan las mismas grandes potencias.

Las cumbres del G7 y de la OTAN no defenderán los derechos humanos. Puede que hagan poco por suavizar la rivalidad entre los estados imperialistas. Los resultados de la Conferencia de Berlín estallaron muy pronto en la Primera Guerra Mundial.

El viaje de Biden a Europa es una aventura de un experimentado diplomático imperialista para retomar el papel de Washington como jefe de una plutocracia, nada más. □

Texas

‘¡Alto a ataques a los derechos reproductivos! No, a la Ley 8 del Senado’

Por Gloria Rubac y Kathy Durkin

El gobernador Gregg Abbott dijo a los medios de comunicación el 19 de mayo: “Nuestro creador nos dotó del derecho a la vida”, mientras firmaba el proyecto de ley antiaborto más restrictivo del país en Austin, Texas. En ocho horas, aprobó el linchamiento legal racista de Quintin Jones en la cámara de la muerte de Huntsville, demostrando que el “derecho a la vida” no se aplica a todos los vivos.

Casi una docena de otros estados han aprobado proyectos de ley draconianos como el de Texas, que limitan los abortos después de seis a ocho semanas de embarazo, sin excepciones para las víctimas de violación o incesto. La ley de Texas añade restricciones aún más brutales. El gobierno estatal no hará cumplir esta ley, pero cualquier persona en cualquier estado de Estados Unidos puede demandar a quien no sólo practique un aborto en Texas después de las seis semanas de embarazo, sino a cualquiera que esté involucrado. ¡Y ni siquiera tienen que conocerlos!

Se pueden presentar cargos penales contra cualquier persona que trabaje en una clínica, desde los médicos hasta las recepcionistas: las personas que lleven a sus amigas a una clínica; un consejero de crisis por violación que explique las opciones a las víctimas de violación que quieran interrumpir un embarazo; cualquiera que done o sea voluntario en una organización que financie abortos, o incluso aquellos que digan a una amiga el nombre de un proveedor de abortos.

Los expertos jurídicos comentan que se trata de una ley inteligente, porque los proveedores de abortos no pueden demandar al fiscal general del estado ni a



Manifestación a favor del aborto en Austin, Texas, el 29 de mayo. 'No somos tu propiedad.'

otros funcionarios porque no tienen ninguna función en la aplicación de la ley. Los operadores de las clínicas, en cambio, sí pueden ser demandados.

Rápida oposición a la Ley 8 del Senado

En una manifestación celebrada en Austin el 29 de mayo, 500 personas condenaron la nueva ley y al gobernador por haberla firmado. Una pancarta decía: “Estás a favor de la vida hasta que el bebé es pobre, transgénero, negro, gay, mexicano, indígena, discapacitado, enfermo, etc.”. En otro se leía: “Protege a los fetos: ‘Prohíbe el fracking’ y ‘Evita la contaminación’”.

Entre los aplausos de sus compañeros de clase y del personal, Paxton Smith, la mejor estudiante del instituto Lake Highlands, cerca de Dallas, rompió desafiantemente su discurso de despedida aprobado de antemano en su ceremonia de graduación el 3 de junio. Denunció con valentía esta ley draconiana y subrayó: “¡No podemos quedarnos callados!”.

Amy Hagstrom Miller, directora general de Whole Woman’s Health, operadora de

clínicas en Texas, dijo: “Están decididos a legislar el aborto para que deje de existir. Vemos de primera mano que las comunidades negras y morenas son las más afectadas por estas leyes opresivas, y sabemos que estas leyes no reflejan los valores que tienen los tejanos.” (reproductiverights.org, 19 de mayo)

Frontera Health, con sede en el Valle del Río Grande, fronterizo con México, respondió: “Este proyecto de ley es perjudicial para todo Texas y especialmente para nuestra comunidad fronteriza. Atendemos a un número de individuos con barreras de documentación. Este proyecto de ley destruye cualquier vía para que reciban la atención que merecen. Nuestro papel como fondo para el aborto es ayudar a la gente a navegar y superar las extensas e innecesarias restricciones que Texas ya tiene en vigor.” (abortionfunds.org, 5 de mayo)

Además, “pensar que nosotros y cualquiera que ayude a alguien a abortar en Texas puede ser demandado por cualquier persona en los Estados Unidos es incomprensible. Esto es un ataque directo a nosotros y a la comunidad a la que servimos”.

Elisabeth Smith, asesora principal del Centro de Derechos Reproductivos, dice que los defensores de la salud reproductiva están elaborando una estrategia legal para oponerse a esta medida extrema, cuya promulgación está prevista para el 1 de septiembre. Según ella, “la ley será impugnada con el objetivo de impedir que entre en vigor”. (The Guardian, 19 de mayo)

Diana Gómez, de Progress Texas, dijo: “Permítanme ser clara: el aborto es una

atención sanitaria, y sigue siendo legal en Texas. Esta prohibición del aborto de seis semanas es inconstitucional, y otras como ésta han sido anuladas por los tribunales federales de todo el país”.

“Roe v. Wade sigue siendo la ley del país; e independientemente de cualquier proyecto de ley que firme el gobernador [Greg] Abbott, ninguna ley impedirá que se produzcan abortos. Es lamentable que los políticos antiabortistas estuvieran más centrados en restringir el acceso a la atención médica esencial en esta sesión que en proporcionar alivio al COVID y en abordar nuestra fallida red eléctrica.” (kxan.com, 19 de mayo)

Mientras que la nueva ley de Texas será combatida en los tribunales, los activistas de la justicia reproductiva deben estar atentos a la audiencia del Tribunal Supremo de Estados Unidos sobre un caso de Mississippi en otoño. Este será el primer caso de aborto que el máximo tribunal verá con su mayoría conservadora de 6-3. El tribunal sopesará la constitucionalidad de una ley de Misisipi de 2018 que prohíbe el aborto después de la 15ª semana de embarazo. Podría socavar la sentencia Roe v. Wade de 1973 que legalizó el derecho a elegir el aborto.

Al igual que las mujeres, las personas de otros géneros y sus aliados lucharon para que el aborto fuera legal, seguirán luchando contra las restricciones a este derecho básico. Ningún gobierno debe interferir nunca en la atención sanitaria. Abortar es una decisión personal sobre el cuidado de la salud. Todas las personas que puedan quedarse embarazadas deben exigir el derecho a controlar su propio cuerpo. Y punto. □



Los sindicatos y las organizaciones sociales de Colombia están en huelga desde finales de abril. El 17 de junio, la Organización Internacional del Trabajo se ocupó de las violaciones del derecho laboral internacional en Colombia, donde cerca de 120 sindicalistas han sido asesinados desde 2016.

MUNDO OBRERO

editorial

Para comprender la esencia de las reuniones en Europa, en las que Joe Biden ha estado hablando amablemente con los aliados imperialistas depredadores de Washington, debemos examinar su precedente histórico: la Conferencia de Berlín de 1884-1885 para dividir y saquear el continente africano.

Armado con esta perspectiva histórica, es fácil desacreditar el encubrimiento de Washington y de los medios corporativos de estas reuniones de mediados de junio de 2021, interpretadas como “cumbres” de colegas “democráticos” que comparten “valores comunes”, opuestos a las “autocracias”.

¿Cuáles son esos valores comunes? La Conferencia de Berlín — con la presencia de una incipiente potencia estadounidense — pretendía coordinar el saqueo de África por parte del colonialismo europeo. Francia y Gran Bretaña ya se habían apoderado de la mayor parte del continente, y Portugal, Italia, Alemania, Bélgica y España de la mayor parte del resto.

La conferencia trazó las fronteras que dividían las colonias para mitigar las luchas intestinas de los imperialistas, que ralentizaban la conquista del continente y podían desencadenar una guerra en Europa. Su otro objetivo era frenar la competencia de los imperios emergentes de la Rusia zarista, Japón y Estados Unidos.

En 1885, el genocidio continuado de los pueblos indígenas por parte de Washington se concentró en su expansión en América del Norte; el año fue anterior a la toma por parte de Estados Unidos de Hawai, Puerto Rico, Cuba y Filipinas. En la reunión de Berlín, Washington todavía desempeñó un papel, siendo el primer país en reconocer la toma del Congo por parte del rey belga Leopoldo. Leopoldo supervisó el genocidio de los pueblos congoleños.

G7/OTAN: Diplomacia entre ladrones

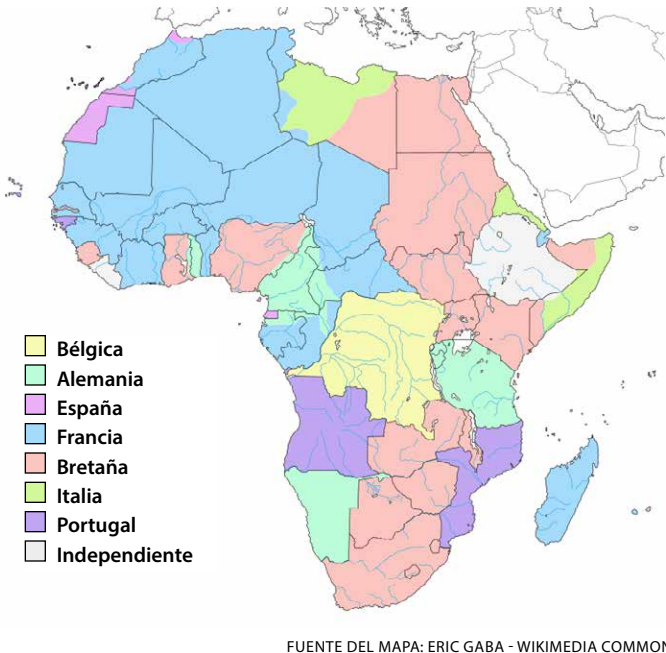
Avancemos 136 años hasta la actual cumbre del G7 en Cornualles (Gran Bretaña) y la cumbre de la OTAN en

Bruselas. De 1885 a 1945, Estados Unidos se convirtió en la principal potencia imperialista del mundo y sigue siéndolo.

Durante 1921-1991, cuando la Unión Soviética contrarrestó la dominación imperialista, muchas naciones africanas y asiáticas consiguieron la independencia política, que ahora se ve atacada.

Desde la desintegración de la Unión Soviética, Washington y sus socios imperialistas menores han destruido otros estados socialistas existentes, como Yugoslavia, y han vuelto a subyugar o destruir naciones que habían ganado algo de soberanía, como Sudán, Libia e Irak. Estados Unidos hizo esto utilizando organizaciones supranacionales como la OTAN, el Banco Mundial, el Fondo Monetario Internacional y el G7. Washington diseñó la

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Reclamaciones europeas en África, 1913. Se muestran las fronteras actuales, que son en gran parte un legado de la época colonial.