By Michel Collon

Hundreds die from heat exhaustion in the U.S. Northwest and British Columbia. Unprecedented heat waves hit northern Norway and Siberia. Now, unheeded flooding in Western Europe has killed hundreds of people in Germany and Belgium. This led even the New York Times to publish a lead news article in the July 18th edition with the headline: “Climate change comes for the wealthy [read imperialist] nations.” The following spot-on article by anti-imperialist publisher Michel Collon exposes the insidious role of 21st-century capitalism in the climate crisis faced by humanity. (see Investigaction.net)

I was in Liege, Belgium, where I spent three days near my daughter. Fortunately, she lives in the hills, but many of her friends and colleagues live near the now-flooded Meuse River. Those three days were filled with intense emotions, as we anxiously followed messages and networks offering comfort and a helping hand.

“Unpredictable fate,” say our officials. Wrong. As early as 1990, the U.N. International Panel on Climate Change announced a quadrupling of heat waves and “extreme precipitation.” What has been done since to prepare for this?

Baby steps are taken to curb corporate pollution. Precious forests continue to be cut down. We continue to expand trucking, instead of promoting rail and river transportation. Nothing is done to create protective flood zones — nothing to reinforce the absorption of rain by the soil.

The north of the country has solemnly proclaimed a “concrete stop,” but never has so much been built, including on agricultural land. It is instead a “concrete flop.” And very few protective measures are taken in the areas we knew were at risk.

“We have plenty of time.” Really? Let our officials dare go and tell the victims. Worse: The Belgian government has dismantled the Civil Protection responsible for disaster relief. Belgium once had six barracks; only two are left, and the staff has been reduced. These heroic rescuers have saved lives, but the lack of human capitalism breeds climate catastrophe

Report from Belgium on the floods

Continued on page 11

U.S. corporate media withheld photos showing popular support for Cuban socialism on the island — or falsely reported them as anti-government demonstrations.

Britney Spears:
Patriarchy & mental health

Transforming the
working-class movement

Labor in action

Editorial:
Who can protect voting rights

U.S. role in Haiti’s misery

PHOTO: GABI SENFT

Anti-imperialists worldwide held demonstrations supporting the Cuban government. Above, Berlin. Sign in German reads ‘Stop the economic war against Cuba.’

Reparations for sterilization
Bryant Arroyo:
Free speech and solitary
Palestinians imprisoned:
Dr. Amal Wahdan
The Jarrar family
Celebrate the Cuban Revolution with Workers World!

Workers World/Mundo Obrero joins the Cuban people in celebrating the 68th anniversary of an event which changed the course of history for their island nation. On July 26, 1953, Cuban revolutionaries boldly attacked the Moncada garrison in Santiago de Cuba and simultaneously conducted a siege of the army barracks in Bayamo. These courageous acts were aimed to strike a blow against the brutal U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Although the military goals were not achieved, and the struggle suffered a temporary setback, the armed struggle had reached a new stage that continued until the dictatorship was overthrown on Jan. 1, 1959. As the guerrilla forces fought in the mountains, an underground movement spread across the country.

Cuba has not only developed in every sphere since the socialist revolution, this island nation has carried out acts of international solidarity to aid oppressed countries in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa, whether with military might or medical personnel and supplies. This assistance has been given generously, despite the horrific blockade implemented against Cuba by Washington for six decades.

Even now during the pandemic, despite having a dearth of medical supplies for inoculations, Cuba plans to share COVID vaccines with countries denied them by the imperialist West.

Cuba has deservedly won the support and respect of peoples around the globe. Workers World has shown our unwavering solidarity with this socialist country on this newspaper’s pages and in countless activities on the streets.

Your donations count!

We know you read WW/MO for class truth, free from corporate lies and geared to working and oppressed people. We need your help! Join the WW Supporter Program, initiated 44 years ago, to aid in funding the newspaper.

Since the early 1990s, these donations have also helped maintain the workers.org website.

New articles are posted daily at workers.org. During the pandemic, the weekly newspaper has been printed and mailed out once a month; and WW weekly editions continue to be posted in PDFs on our website. We plan to print more frequently when it becomes safer, as the pandemic is resolved.

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

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

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

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on immigrants, misogyny, LGBTQ2S+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and this wealth should be socially and individually owned and distributed to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

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

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

Vol. 63, No. 29 • July 22, 2021

Workers World Party
44 W. 24th St.
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 212.627.2994
E-mail: ww@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
The case of Britney Spears
Lessons on the patriarchy, mental health and art as a commodity

By Teresa Gutierrez

It is shocking to me that a 39-year-old woman cannot take care of her own 13U if she so wishes. Or get in a car with her boyfriend. Or even choose the color of her kitchen cabinets!

This — while she makes millions of dollars in the entertainment business.

This is the case of Britney Spears, a well-known and popular performer who has been under a conservatorship as guardianship since 2007.

While migrants are unjustly detained, while Black people continue to be killed by police, and when “essential workers” continue to be exploited in a pandemic, it is hard to be concerned about a wealthy white entertainer.

But that would be wrong.

The case of Britney Spears should be viewed as an opportunity to widen the struggle for cis and trans-women liberation.

Second-generation conservatorships are a patriarchal, unjust institution that repeatably abuse the absolute right to dignity and power for many, including those who are disabled, the elderly and neurodivergent people.

Last, Spears’ case exposes that art under capitalism is a commodity, preventing the masses from enjoying the right to entertainment free or at low cost. It also creates the conditions for abuse of those with a lot of talent.

Art is a human right, not a commodity.

Spears’ conservatorship: sexist AF

In 2008, after Britney Spears had several perceived public meltdowns, her family, particularly her father, imposed on her a conservatorship, a control that has dictated her life for the past 13 years.

What does this mean?

As Ronan Farrow and Jia Tolentino detailed in the July 2 New Yorker magazine, a conservatorship is “a legal structure in which a person’s personal, economic and legal decision-making power is ceded to others. Called a guardianship in most states, the arrangement is intended for people who allegedly cannot take care of themselves.”

The case continues: “Since [her] … conservatorship, she has released four albums, headlined a global tour that grossed $131 million and performed for four years in a hit Las Vegas residency. Yet her conservators, who include her father Jamie Spears, have controlled her spending, communications and personal decisions.”

Why should we care about this woman whose net worth is valued at $60 million? What does it matter to us if she gains or loses money?

Spears comes from the working class. Britney’s family, originally from Louisiana, and particularly her father Jamie saw her potential to entertain, starting when she was around 4 years old. Her entire life since then has been manipulated to make money.

No one else built a poor family for trying to uplift their lives like the Spears family did. But when the child is primarily treated as an ATM, when her rights to independence are taken away, it must be challenged.

As reported in The Hill, this was the outcome:

“Spears’ dad requested the conservatorship after a series of incidents in the wake of her separation from Kevin Federline. … Yet it remains unknown what conditions could possibly be so serious to compel the State of California to keep Britney in a conservatorship 13 years later. As recently as June 23 of this year, a judge rejected her plea … and sealed from public scrutiny the full court records that might shed light on the rationale for her ongoing legal subordination.” (July 8)

Under capitalism, art is a commodity, not a human right

Everyone should ask themselves why does an enter- tainer get paid so much money? Why is that work more valuable than, say, the important work of a teacher?

It is because the financial interests behind the entertain- ers are making even more money than the entertainers.

Goldman Sachs reports that the total value of the recording industry in 2020 was a whopping $21.6 bil- lion! (Market Industry, June 14)

In some ways, Spears — worth $60 million — is poor compared to Andrew Lloyd Webber, composer and musi- cal impresario, whose net worth is $1.28 billion.

When art can be sold to line the coffers of the bankers and money vultures, then it becomes not a talent appre- ciated by the masses, but a commodity to be bought and sold, like cell phones.

In socialist Cuba, art is not a commodity. The country’s world-renowned ballet dancers and singers are enjoyed by the people free of charge or for a few cents.

Jamie Spears turned his daughter into a commodity. But he is only a small cog in a lucrative industry, one that produces absurdities like paparazzi.

According to Celebuzz, a picture of Britney Spears was sold for $350,000. No wonder desperate photographers swarm around her like vultures. Years of this scrutiny led to what were deemed as “unstable” actions, including chopping all her hair off, which became a factor leading to the conservatorship.

If every young adult was put under conservatorship for rebelling, there would be too many to count.

All the while that Jamie Spears controlled her visits to her children, her work was bankrolling his lavish lifestyle. At one point, in a rage, as reported by a family friend, her father declared “I am Britney Spears!” Every time a house- hold, protective and caring toward Britney, he fired them, according to Farrow and Tolentino.

In fact, Jamie Spears used over $82 million of Britney’s money to defend himself in the conservatorship. (People Magazine, July 9)

What Britney’s father has done to his daughter is thor- oughly patriarchal.

But what the state has done in continuing to approve this conservatorship is far worse. This case, which became public because of activists, especially LGBTQ people who launched #FreeBritney in 2016, has much more at stake than the rights of Britney Spears.

Fight for the rights of neurodivergent people

The U.S. has a long, sordid and sinister history of legal, forced sterilization, especially of people of color.

Women who have Down’s syndrome have often been denied the right to reproduce, which smacks of eugenics and fascism.

The government also abuses the rights of neurodi- vergent people. It does not prioritize the provision of mental health care, but prefers the masses to be men- tally unhealthy, as a form of exercising state control.

Capitalism causes stress, yet offers no help.

The ACLU issued a statement June 25, in which authors Zoe Brennan-Krohn and Rebecca McCray wrote: “Spears’ experience is part of a long history of people with disabilities … Thanks to Spears’ large platform … her demands to be freed … have been heard. But there are untold thousands of people living under this same type of restrictive structure, who have lost their rights to reproductive freedoms, often permanently.”

Britney Spears’ case is an opportunity to open a wider discussion about the lack of rights for the oppressed. Let us hope that other entertainers will arise and come to #FreeBritney to help widen this discussion.

In 2017, Britney Spears called for the passage of the Dream Act (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). In response to the state of civil and gender crisis, her call was somewhat called for the redistribution of wealth and for a strike. (Jacobian, March 25, 2020)

As a result, many memes developed showing pictures of her with Karl Marx. Maybe that was the final straw for her conservators.

Many Britney Spears fans support her court challenge.

‘Stop the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline!’

Members and friends of Philly Water Protectors, an environmen- tal justice group, gathered July 16 outside a TD Bank in Philadelphia’s Center City. TD Bank loaned Enbridge $10.8 billion for a pipeline project that threatens 200 bodies of water, including the Mississippi River’s headwaters, and imperils Indigenous sites, waters and lands.

With their flags, posters, banners and musical instruments, demonstrators expressed their opposition to the bank for funding the Enbridge Line 3 Replacement Project tar sands oil pipeline.

This 340-mile-long con- duct would transport 750,000 bar-rels of tar sands crude oil a day from Alberta, Canada, through untouched wetlands in northern Minnesota to Superior, Wis.

This pipeline directly imperils the lands, heritage, sacred sites and treaty rights of the Anishinaabe peoples in Minnesota. It directly endangers the community, wildlife, traditional wild rice beds; wild rice is a centerpiece of Anishinaabe culture, and Line 3 is slated to cross multiple watersheds where it grows. StopLine3.org/L26 is being constructed through their lands without their consent.

This pipeline directly imperils the Mattawan territory, and the future of the Anishinaabe peoples, their culture and their way of life.

As reported in the July 29 edition of Local News Network, the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline has been designed to cause irreparable harm to the water, soil and wild rice beds of the Mattawan territory.

This pipeline is a threat to the health and well-being of the Anishinaabe peoples and the environment.

The pipeline would transport 750,000 barrels of tar sands crude oil a day through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.

The pipeline would also impact the local economy, as the tar sands crude oil would be transported through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.

The pipeline would also impact the local economy, as the tar sands crude oil would be transported through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.

The pipeline would also impact the local economy, as the tar sands crude oil would be transported through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.

The pipeline would also impact the local economy, as the tar sands crude oil would be transported through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.

The pipeline would also impact the local economy, as the tar sands crude oil would be transported through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.

The pipeline would also impact the local economy, as the tar sands crude oil would be transported through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.

The pipeline would also impact the local economy, as the tar sands crude oil would be transported through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.

The pipeline would also impact the local economy, as the tar sands crude oil would be transported through the Anishinaabe territory, which is home to several Indigenous communities.

The pipeline would not only threaten the water supply of the Anishinaabe peoples, but would also impact the local wildlife, including the wild rice beds, which are a central part of Anishinaabe culture.
Transforming the political, social character of the working class movement

By Larry Holmes

Based on remarks given at a June 28 meeting of the Minnesota Chapter of the World Party's First Secretary. Read the entire article at workers.org

The Teamsters union overwhelmingly voted at its convention June 24 in favor of launching a nationwide campaign to organize the nearly 1 million Amazon workers in the U.S.

It’s a clear indication to the working class, capitalist class and labor movement that the tide is turning. A movement which ended in defeat several months ago, was merely the opening shot of a new epoch of class struggle. Taking on Amazon is a matter of survival for the Teamsters and several other unions because the growth and influence of Amazon is decimating unionized workers in transportation, one of the Teamsters’ main union bases.

Amazon’s expansion is an existential threat to unions, period. This is why everybody was watching the Bessemer vote so closely and waiting to see what would be the next shoe to drop. Well, the shoe dropped a few days ago at the Teamsters convention.

The larger question is whether militants and revolutionaries, along with the most advanced workers, whether they work at Amazon or not, can turn this struggle to organize Amazon into something that transforms the political and social character of the entire working-class movement.

Can the coming struggle—that pushes back against the nonstruggle, business unionism so prevalent in the labor movement, the top-down instead of rank-and-file approach that is so clearly prevalent, class collaboration, narrowness, competitiveness, fragmentation, pettiness, conservatism and idea that it’s okay to have union-busting cops in the labor movement—can the coming struggle transform the political and social character of the Teamsters union?

It’s something that has frustrated the inevitable reawakening of an independent, revolutionary movement.

Most of us have been waiting for such a transformative development that would help open the eyes of the Teamsters and change the dynamics of the entire global class struggle that has favored the class enemy.

How can we prepare ourselves for the fight to make this struggle to organize Amazon one that includes the organized and the unorganized, the students and youth? The oppressed youth! The left, the LGBTQ2S+ movement, the migrant workers, the women’s liberation struggle, the Black Lives Matter movement?

How can we turn the struggle to organize Amazon—this global behemoth that in so many ways epitomizes 21st century technologically advanced capitalism in a profound state of decay—into a truly worldwide struggle that will improve our world and unite us against—unite us against—anything the world has seen before?

This is the natural potential of a struggle to organize a global corporation like Amazon. But that’s not enough.

Open up political struggle

Some of us, then a little later a lot more of us—those who were not Amazon employees but tens of thousands, not just tens but hundreds of thousands of us—are going to have to open up a political struggle to make this happen.

These are some of the challenges fac- ing those who want to participate in the reconstitution of a new working-class movement, something that would factor in all the struggles on the road to socialist revo- lution, and an end of the dangerous and dying capitalist system that threatens all life on the planet.

What I’m saying is consistent with what I wrote in my May Day call for a need for this revolutionary transformation, not just the working-class struggle, but inclusive of the transformation of the working class.

It’s necessary to have a vision of what you want for the entire working class. And that vision has to be based on larger developments in the working class, like the question of Amazon and what the Teamsters voted to do on June 24.

We cannot know how the struggle to organize Amazon will unfold.

There are a number of other struggles such as to stop massive nationwide evictions; the moratorium on evictions and the struggle to keep families in their homes; the struggle to organize and the goals of the Teamsters; and the right to organize and the goals of the Teamsters; the kinds of tactics such as coordinated strikes, mean- ing strikes in several places, walkouts and militant mass protests in the streets is both welcoming and promising, as is stating that they’re not going to rely on a NLRB election, which was the case in Bessemer.

But will the Teamsters form real trust- ing alliances with other labor unions? There’s a lot of unnecessary competition in the labor movement, which is a relic of conservatism and fragmentation and bourgeois politics; it has to be fought.

Will the Teamsters seriously embrace community organizing and community organiza- tions, not just the revivers or the more established NAACP-type organizations, but the new NAACP-type organizations, the militant organizations, the councils or assembies that we form?

Will they work with important regional organizations, like the Southern Workers Assembly, which has working committees inside several Amazon facilities in North Carolina and even other places now? Will the Teamsters, including the union members who are organizing an existing union campaign in the big- gest Amazon warehouse, in Staten Island, Staten Island, Staten Island?

These questions are for every union, every worker—whether they’re in a union or not—or every communist, every socialist, everyone who wants to help transform the working-class movement from its present state into a revolutionary force.

Sooner or later somewhere in the U.S.— the Teamsters have just announced they will be a part of it —there’s going to be a strike. There’s going to be a walkout somewhere, maybe even an occupation of a warehouse.

And the militancy of the Amazon workers who open this up at some location could easily spread to another and another. It could happen in Staten Island. It could happen in Iowa, where the Teamsters have been organizing Amazon workers; in Chicago, one of the places where Amazonians United has a base; in Minneapolis, where the Somali Amazon workers have been organizing for several years.

It could happen in one of the Amazon facilities in North Carolina; it could even happen in the Amazon warehouse in Bessemer where there was the union drive a few months ago.

When it does happen, it will do some- thing that even a union drive can’t do because it will be a militant action. I’m talking about a walkout or an occupa- tion or a strike. It’s going to be a dynamic chemical reaction throughout the entire working class that emboldens workers everywhere, not just Amazon workers, transportation workers and logistics workers, but Uber drivers, gig workers, migrant workers, incarcerated workers, trans workers, sex workers and the unemployed.

However, it’s critical that we under- stand that the full revolutionary transfor- mative potential of what is going to unfold cannot be realized if revolutionary forces stay on the sidelines.

The time has come to put aside all doubts, all cynicism, pessimism — there was a lot of pessimism after the vote in Bessemer. And that’s understandable. And that affected not just us, but everyone. But that can be turned around, why you have to have a long- range view and a deeper understanding of what’s at stake, and what’s at stake is a test to see if the Party and other forces can rise to the occasion.

Educating the working class and political movement

If we meet the challenge, it will change the dynamics of the global class struggle. If we understand the seriousness and scope of this task, one of the first things we must do—and this is on the basis of recent experience, but also long-term experi- ence, consistent with deep organizing and the goals of deep organizing—we have to be part of a campaign to educate the working class, as well as those in the political movement, whether they’re in the labor movement or as distinct from the work- ing class, whose development is shaped by bourgeois and petty bour- geois ideas and politics that sometimes make it difficult if not impossible for some activists and some groups to evolve beyond where they are. Nothing is more critical in the coming period than working-class consciousness and working-class solidarity.

This is probably the most important thing that I’m saying tonight, even though it’s old. The main contradiction that capital- ism imposes on the working class—and this underpinnings all that divides the working class, whether it’s on the basis of race, class collaboration, narrowness, competitiveness, fragmentation, pettiness, conservatism and idea that it’s okay to have union-busting cops in the labor move- ment. This whole thing has nothing to do with the political and social character of the entire working-class movement.

When it does happen, it will do some- thing that even a union drive can’t do because it will be a militant action. I’m talking about a walkout or an occupa- tion or a strike. It’s going to be a dynamic chemical reaction throughout the entire working class that emboldens workers everywhere, not just Amazon workers, transportation workers and logistics workers, but Uber drivers, gig workers, migrant workers, incarcerated workers, trans workers, sex workers and the unemployed.

But that’s the reason why there’s going to be a political struggle to make this happen. Ah!

But there’s another question in this, and I’m not saying that we should be call- ing for general strikes more than we are; I understand the problems. But if you don’t even do this and you have no strategy, that call on workers to care about, know about or be informed about (much less organize on) what’s happening back in another part of the world, then how are we going to rally the working class to global class solidarity, to a higher level of class consciousness?

The notion of classwide coordinated struggle is going to become more important in the coming period. And it’s going to be more important in the coming period. And it’s going to be more important in the coming period. In fact it’s going to be integral to how the working class develops, with global- ization and the far more complex supply chains that are now a distinctive feature of capitalism today.
Topeka, Kan. The Bakery Workers hit the picket line to when something's hitting Americans beneath the belt, during the pandemic. Mark Benaka, business man-picketed the offices of BlackRock Fund "Warrior Met Coal ain't got no soul!" they Chanting "No contract, no coal!" and Wall Street in New York City June 22. steel industry." (Business Wire, Feb. 24) company is "the leading dedicated U.S.-progress toward a fair contract. The coal workers Local 2245 say big hedge central Alabama. By Minnie Bruce Pratt Coal miners carry Alabama strike to Wall Street in what they would have to pay for health By Martha Grevatt Volvo Mack Truck strike ends Members of United Auto Workers Local 2069 are returning to work after striking Volvo Mack Truck on-and-off since April 17. The 2,900 workers in the small town of Dublin, Va., had voted to reject three unequal- ceptable contracts, twice with 90% voting no and the third time with 60% against. After rejecting the most recent tentative agreement July 9, they were given the same contract as "last, best offer" for a second vote July 14, when it passed by only 17 votes.

Volvo's truck division has made record profits, and workers wanted to get back some of what they gave up in previous contracts. They wanted to uphold the basic principle of "equal pay for equal work" and eliminate two-tier pay. This encourages toward a fair contract. In UAW plants, means lower seniority workers make less money and/or receive inferior benefits compared to higher seniority workers doing the same job.

Other issues for workers were increases in what they would have to pay for health care coverage — which would eat away the negotiated pay raises — and language allowing Volvo to whom on an oppressive “alternative work schedule” and eliminate overtime pay for work after an eight-hour shift. Even rally the strikers did not have the solidarity of their union leadership at either the local or international level. Before workers viewed the first tentative agreement, the UAW International called off the two-week strike. After the resound no vote, the International nevertheless kept Local 2069 members on the job. The strike resumed June 7 after the second rejection of a nearly identical contract.

Volvo's strikebreaking

After the third turnaround, Volvo man-agement threatened workers with firing if they did not cross the line and return to work. The company said it would deny workers a $2,000 signing bonus, if the contract failed in the repeat vote. Legally, striking workers can be perma-nently replaced in an economic strike, but not in a strike over unfair labor practices. Union members filed ULP charges against Volvo with the National Labor Relations Board, hitting the lines with new "Fair Labor Practice" strike signs. Only a couple dozen workers crossed the line.

The surrounding commu-nity, along with UAW members around the country, expressed solidarity with the strikers. But without the support of their union leader-ship, rank-and-file workers were not able to push back all the company demands. By the end of the new six-year contract, every worker who now has at least one year seniority will make top pay — but not future workers or workers with Health care costs are going up. Language on work schedules, which the UAW leadership claims "provides protections around shift scheduling and plant opera-tions," is seen as too vague. (uaw.org)

In 2015 Fiat Chrysler workers, including this writer, were promised that the contract they were asked to approve would help eliminate alternative work schedules. Six years later, workers at the plant I retired from are still working 10-hour days and weekends for straight time, or close to it—a bonus for the company. Former UAW Vice President Norwood Jewell, who pitched the contract, was sentenced to prison for taking bribes from FCA.

Now that the Volvo strike has ended, many rank-and-file workers have joined "One Member, One Vote" cam-paign to let the UAW membership elect International officers directly. Local 2069 strikers had won the support and admiration of the Unite All Workers for Democracy caucus of the union, a staunch advocate of direct elections. (1)
A speech by the Cuban president

Cubans defend their revolution

Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and president of the republic, spoke to the Cuban people July 11 on recent events. This report was edited by Estudios Revolución. 

For 60 years the example of the Cuban Revolution has bothered the United States, stated First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and president of the Republic Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, yesterday, during a special message from the Palace of the Revolution explaining to the people the most recent provocation orchestrated by small groups of counterrevolutionaries.

He pointed out that the country “has seen its fuel supply limited, access to spare parts limited, and all this has caused dissatisfaction, has exacerbated accumulated problems, which we have not been able to resolve, which have been around since the Special Period, and to all this has been added a ferocious media campaign to discredit Cuba, to create a perception of a nonconventional war, which attempts, on the one hand, to break the unity of the Party, the government, the state and the people, attempting to portray the government as inept, as military interventions, attempting to portray the U.S. government as very concerned about the welfare of the Cuban people,” whom it does not want to see them develop and progress in a country such as ours.

“These are the usual hypocritical prescriptions and speeches of double standards, which we know very well, throughout the history of United States behavior toward Cuba. We know how they intervened in our country, how they appropriated our island, how they maintained dominance over the country, with the reserves in Cuba. We know that in a difficult conjuncture.

And we used that term, which was later taken up as part of the political strategy, since we have remained in this ‘conjuncture’ for a long time. … Beginning with all the signs that the U.S. government, headed by the Trump administration, was giving in relation to Cuba.”

Díaz-Canel recalled that the adoption of an extensive series of restrictive measures to tighten the blockade began: financial persecution, energy persecution, with the goal of asphyxiating the country’s economy.

He denounced ongoing efforts to provoke a massive social explosion in Cuba, including all sorts of propaganda and ideological constructions they fabricate to call for misnamed humanitarian interventions, which end up as military interventions, trampling the principle that more than 86% of the population has decided to defend its independence, its sovereignty and build, with self-determination, its society in accordance with the principles that more than 86% of the population has approved, has supported in the broad and democratic exercise we held, to approve the current Constitution of the Republic of Cuba.

The pandemic

“And in the midst of these conditions comes the pandemic, a pandemic that has not only affected Cuba, a pandemic that has affected the whole world, a pandemic that has also affected the United States, that has affected rich countries. It must be said that the United States and other rich countries did not have the capacity to confront the effects of this pandemic at the beginning. … And in many of these countries, with much more wealth, health systems collapsed, intensive care units were overwhelmed. The poor have been disadvantaged, because there are no public policies directed toward saving the people, and these rich countries in many cases have worse results than Cuba in terms of responding to the pandemic, Díaz-Canel said.

“And we were impacted by the pandemic; and in the midst of all these other restrictions, with the reserves that the country has created, with the little we had in the country, with the little we have been able to acquire this difficult year and a half, is that we have been able to meet these challenges, these tests.

Cuba develops vaccines, shares with world

“And we have done it with courage; we have done it without giving in, and, above all, we have done it by defending our sovereignty, our national sovereignty, our sovereignty.

“And that further increased the impact of the restrictions, which above all implied that the country was impacted by the pandemic, that it has to go against the capacity of our currency and put an end to the Revolution, and for that they are than 20% of the total population.”

However, he noted, in the last few months more aggressive strains have appeared, and in the midst of this already serious situation, another group of complications began to appear.

“First of all, new cases are emerging at a speed and accumulation that exceed the capacities we have been able to create to treat these patients in state institutions. On the other hand, we have been obliged to expand capacity in other centers,” he explained.

Priority to treatment centers

“In this sense, by opening more centers, to which energy priority must be given — in the midst of the accumulation of problems in the generation of electricity, the number of circuits that we must protect, to attend to these patients, has increased.”

With more patients, he continued, the stock of medicines is also running low and acquiring them is very difficult; and in the midst of all this, we continue to work for everyone.

“Now we have been obliged to resort to home isolation, due to the lack of capacity in a number of provinces, and call on families to participate more directly, more responsibly. One never tires of admitting the capacity for creativity of the Cuban people.”

With these values, he insisted, with vaccination advance, complying with the necessary sanitary measures, “we will emerge sooner rather than later from this peak in the pandemic, which is not only hitting Cuba. Cuban managed to postpone this high point with everything we did, and we will overcome it.”

Role of hypocritical mercenaries

“But now,” he noted, “in a very cowardly, subtle, opportunistic and perverse manner, exploiting the most difficult situations we have in provinces like Matanzas and Ciego de Ávila, those who have always supported the blockade, those who have served as mercenaries, lackeys of the United States, now begin to appeal to calls for humanitarian intervention, a humanitarian corridor, to strengthen the idea that the Cuban government is not capable of handling this situation, as if they were really interested in the welfare and health of our people.

“If they want to make a gesture toward Cuba, if they really are concerned about the people, if they want to solve Cuba’s problems: Lift the blockade and let’s see how we do, why don’t they do that? Why don’t they have the courage to lift the blockade? What legal and moral basis allows a foreign government to implement such a policy against a small country and in the midst of such adverse conditions? Isn’t this genocide?”

He denounced the assertion that a dictatorship exists in Cuba: “A dictatorship that is concerned about providing health care for its entire population, that seeks welfare for all, that in the midst of this situation is capable of conducting public policies, aspiring to vaccinate with a Cuban vaccine, because we knew that no one was going to sell us any, since we don’t have the money to buy them,” he said.

No murder victims in Cuba

“What a strange dictatorship,” he exclaimed. “Now they are shooting that we are murderers. Where are the murder victims in Cuba? Where are the victims in Cuba? Other countries that have suffered those pandemic peaks were not attacked in the press, and they were not offered humanitarian intervention as a solution to these situations, because there were these slander campaigns as we are,” Díaz-Canel emphasized.

“I believe that history, the facts and the history show what is behind all this, which is the effort to asphyxiate us and put an end to the Revolution, and for that they are

Continued on page 7
Cuba's streets belong to the revolutionaries


“We are here because the streets belong to Fidel, because the streets of Cuba belong to revolutionaries.” This was the phrase we heard the loudest walking along several Havana avenues Sunday afternoon, July 11, when an entire people came out to defend their Revolution.

We heard it, for example, in front of the Capitol, seat of the National Assembly of People’s Power and the seat of the revolutionary government, and the waterfront Malecón. We heard it up to Belascoain, and along Carlos III, where neighbors gathered, waving flags and, above all, ideas.

A woman shouted from her balcony, “Viva la Revolución!” and “Viva Cuba Libre!” Her voice joined those of many younger residents who, on the street below, waved the 26th of July Movement flag and repeated, louder and louder, clearer and clearer: “Fidel, Raúl and Díaz-Canel are here,” “Patria o Muerte, Venceremos” (Homeland or Death, We will win).

We heard it along Infanta, from women and men, Cubans with few and many years of age, all with the same conviction: a country like ours, with so many dreams and more than a few pains, is defended tooth and nail, knowing that, as the poet (Fayad Jamil) said, “For this freedom/ beautiful as life/ we must give our all/ if necessary/ even the shadow/ and it will never be enough.”

We heard it from Julio Alejandro Gómez, a blogger who joined the honest demands of those who love and create and took to the streets, “because I am a revolutionary, and I know that this is a manipulation. They want to take advantage of deficiencies and problems to paint the same formula of social unrest that they have used in other countries, but with Cuba there are no formulas that work. The Revolution belongs to the people and is defended by the people.”

We heard Alberto Bermúdez, who lives on Infanta, and in the midst of the racket, hummed “I die as I lived” with a group of buddies, and, soon thereafter, it was the notes of the national anthem they offered.

“Unity and continuity,” others shouted, while Alberto interrupted his song to affirm: “Fidel, this is your people, and the streets belong to the people. The order has been given, and we are here. We are going to win, in spite of COVID-19, in spite of whatever.”

The same phrases, shouted along the way, led our group of reporters to Alfredo Vázquez, provincial secretary of the Federation of Cuban Workers in Havana, who was injured in one of the confrontations with the “destabilizers.”

“They hit me hard on the head, and I ended up with a seven-stitch gash. But here I am, my flag stained with blood, ready to continue defending this Revolution, because to die for the Homeland is to live,” he insisted without slowing his pace, just like Cuba, the land of revolutionaries who are never intimidated.

And there beside Via Blanca, Faustino Leonard, a resident of Cerro municipality, also spoke to us about the day, while the remains of rocks thrown were still on the street.

“The quarrel was tough here, but there were more revolutionaries. The saboteurs ran away to hide, probably to some cave, and that’s how it is in this country, it belongs to the people and will continue to belong to us.”

Venceremos Brigade defends Cuban Revolution

This slightly edited statement was issued July 12.

The Venceremos Brigade is in solidarity with Cuba and the Cuban people who are enduring the coronavirus pandemic on top of the U.S. blockade. The United States and its blockade literally do not allow Cuba to trade with other countries to receive basic resources like food, medical supplies and equipment. Because of the blockade, Cubans are experiencing devastating shortages of their basic necessities during a period of skyrocketing coronavirus cases.

The Biden administration is instigating a soft-coup in Cuba fueling its continuation of Trump-era, anti-Cuba policies on one hand and on the other hand, releasing “neutral” statements denying responsibility for the current shortages and blackouts. In 2021 alone, Biden dispersed $250 million to fund “subversion” in Cuba.

We are and we continue to be steadfast in our work to back the Cuban Revolution and their ongoing struggle for dignity and liberation in the face of U.S. repression.

Build with us!

Join your local committee! Organize with us nationally! Reach out to vbrigade@tutanota.com; linktr.ee/v4cuba.

Venceremos! ☑️

Cubans defend the revolution

Continued from page 6

trying to discourage our people, to confuse our people. And when the people are facing severe conditions, then events like the ones we experienced in San Antonio de los Balsos took to place.

About the events in this area, he detailed:

“Who was part of the group? It included members of the movement who need these goods, who are experiencing some of these shortages; it included revolutionaries who are confused, do not have all the arguments, or were expressing their dissatisfaction, but they were doing it differently, because they were seeking to understand, seeking explanations.

But this was led by a core group of manipulators who are taking advantage of the chaotic designs of the SOS Matanzas or SOS Cuba campaigns. … Several days ago, they were preparing demonstrations or social disturbances of this type in several Cuban cities. This is criminal, at a time when we are in the home, protecting ourselves.”

Cubans confront counterrevolutionaries

Díaz-Canel reported that revolutionaries in San Antonio de los Balsos, provincial authorities, a group from the country’s leadership showed up there. We confronted the counterrevolutionaries, and we talked to the revolutionaries, and to those asking for explanations, to show that Cuba’s streets belong to revolutionaries.

He pointed out that: “There are other groups of people gathering in streets and plazas, in other cities of the country, also moved by unhealthy purposes. “I am also giving this information, to reaffirm that in Cuba the streets belong to revolutionaries, that the state, the revolutionary government, guided by the Party, are more than willing to discuss, to argue and to participate with the people in the solution of problems, but recognizing the real cause of our problems, without allowing ourselves to be confused.”

Those who are encouraging demonstrations are not interested in good health care for Cuba, he emphasized. Remember that their model is neoliberal, the privatization of health, of medical services, of education; that everyone should save themselves as best they can, that they have the money can access health care, he warned.

“We are not going to surrender sovereignty, the independence, or the freedom of our people or the freedom of this country, he said. There are many of us revolutionaries in this town who are willing to give our lives, and this is not a slogan – it’s a reality. They will have to step over our corpses to want to confront the Revolution, and we are ready for anything, and we will be in the streets fighting. We know that incidents of this type are being orchestrated in the streets of Havana and that there are large groups of revolutionaries confronting counterrevolutionary elements. We are separating the confused revolutionaries, the inhabitants of Cuba who have specific concerns, but we are not going to allow any counterrevolutionary, any mercenary, to provoke destabilization among our people.

“This is why we are calling on all revolutionaries in our country, all communists, to take to the streets in any of the places where these provocations may take place today, from now on, throughout these days,” he insisted. “As I said in my closing speech at the Party Congress, we revolutionaries defend the Revolution above all else, we communists on the front lines; and with that conviction we are now in the streets – we are not going to allow anyone to manipulate our situation or defend a plan that is not Cuban, that is not for the welfare of Cubans and that is not a Cuban assist. This is the task which we call revolutionaries and communists of this country,” he concluded. ☑️

U.S. hands off Cuba, Haiti!

Protesters marched through Portland, Oregon’s Saturday Market July 17 chanting “U.S. Out of Cuba; Hands Off Haiti!” They joined progressives around the world who are protesting U.S. attempts to destabilize Cuba. The Portland activists handed out informational leaflets condemning the U.S. Congress for recently adding $2 million to the more than $20 million Washington spends trying to instigate counterrevolution in Cuba.

The Atlanta branch of Workers World Party issued a call to several progressive organizations, proposing they join together to organize a July 17 in support of revolutionary Cuba and the popular resistance in Haiti. These are of many groups responded and demonstrated under the slogan: “End the U.S. blockade of Cuba Now!” and “No U.S. imperialist war on Haiti.”

Activists within the multinational crowd held banners and signs along Buford Highway, a busy thoroughfare near the main entrance to Plaza Fiesta in Atlanta. Their signs and chants engendered a positive response from riders in passing cars, who honked in solidarity.

Representation of many organizations spoke and urged rally participants to remain vigilant in opposing pro-imperialist propaganda being whipped up by the corporate media against socialist Cuba. They called for solidarity with the people of Haiti and demanded that the U.S. stay out of the Caribbean country.

Speakers represented included the Atlantic Cuba Coalition, Black Alliance for Peace, Friends of the Congolese, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Socialist Workers Party and Workers World Party;

Reports by Lyn Neeley and Dianne Mathiowetz

Venceremos Brigade in Cuba

“The streets belong to the revolutionaries, the inhabitants of Cuba who have specific needs and problems, who have expressed these dissatisfactions, but they were doing it differently, because they were seeking to understand, seeking explanations.”

“This is why we are calling on all revolutionaries in our country, all communists, to take to the streets in any of the places where these provocations may take place today, from now on, throughout these days,” he insisted. “As I said in my closing speech at the Party Congress, we revolutionaries defend the Revolution above all else, we communists on the front lines; and with that conviction we are now in the streets – we are not going to allow anyone to manipulate our situation or defend a plan that is not Cuban, that is not for the welfare of Cubans and that is not a Cuban assist. This is the task which we call revolutionaries and communists of this country,” he concluded. ☑️

PHOTO: GRANMA

PHOTO: RADHAMES MORALES

PHOTO: GRANMA
After the First Intifada

‘Prisoners build their own weapons of defense and strength’

Dr. Amal Wahdan is the founder and editor of the Arab Gazette, as well as an organizer with One Democratic State of Palestine (odsapal.net). She was a member of the International Delegation to the 2011 Syrian Presidential Election, as was Ted Kelly, who interviewed Dr. Wahdan July 14.

Workers World: You yourself were a political prisoner. Could you talk about your experience in Israeli custody?

Amal Wahdan: It all started with the First Intifada in 1987 and our forming the United Front for the Leadership of the Intifada. We were accused of distributing 60,000 leaflets in all of Palestine, and that’s when we started to be tracked. The Israelis found out where the print shop was that printed our statement, traced one lead to another.

We were undercover for about two months until they arrested us. They arrested me, my husband and my sister-in-law on the same day, at different times in different locations. I was in prison twice during the Intifada. The first time was during a women’s demonstration. They arrested about 30 of us and held us in the Moskovitch compound, which is a consent that they turned into a detention center. It’s actually the property of the Russian Orthodox Church.

After we were traced, after my second arrest, I was interrogated for about 30 days, unable to talk to a lawyer or see my kids.

WW: I’m sorry, could you say that again — How long were you interrogated for?

AW: About 30 days.

WW: Oh, my god!

AW: Without changing, without changing my clothes, without seeing a lawyer or the Red Cross even. It was really a hard time for me, being in a small confinement cell, one meter by one meter, and without being allowed to go outside except back and forth for interrogation.

The same day when they arrested us, April 16, 1988, this was the day when they assassinated Abu Jihad [Palestinian Liberation Organization military commander Khalil al-Wazir] in Tunisia. The interrogator came to me; [he] wanted to break us down, to tell us that they can reach as far as Tunis: “So who are you to defy us? Who are you to fight against us?” Of course, they were trying to get information out of me. But, of course, I didn’t confess anything and everything. I turned everything into a discussion, a political discussion. I was talking to them bluntly about our beliefs — that Israel is a Zionist entity, and it should be dismantled, saying: “You can’t be on our land. You are, in this job, just a tool in the hands of those who are sitting down in Washington and in Tel Aviv. You are a terrorist state, a terrorist army, a terrorist organization. And your life expectancy is shorter by the day.”

It was a very tough experience. But the prisoner builds their own weapons of defense and strength. You turn everything into a roxy place. For example, making necklaces and bracelets out of olive seeds. We used to steal stuff from the interrogators’ room, like pens. We used to take threads from the blankets and make beautiful things. You must occupy yourself with positives, always. You have to build mechanisms for defense as well as offense.

That’s how you treat these people. You show them that they are not acting as human beings.

This cell was next door overlooking a torture area, where men and kids were tortured in a shed. And they were just next to me. I could hear them, you know, the little kids screaming. And shouting. I started to sing. Whenever I heard them cry, I started to sing, to try to uplift their morale, talking to them, strengthening them to be able to confront their interrogators.

Later I met one of them. He said he didn’t realize it was a woman’s voice. He was thinking that I am another kid in the cell next to him. I remember — he discovered me and said, “That was you in the cell next to us, praising us and giving us strength and power to confront these criminals.”

Then they transferred me into a prison called Abu Kabir, for criminal prisoners. They didn’t have enough places in their prisons all over the West Bank and ‘48 [the term describes the occupied territories] for political prisoners. So they started using other prisons.

I used to have Jewish friends send me books. Our history with our Jewish friends is based on political ideology; they are against this colonial apartheid state, and they want to live in peace as human beings.

And that’s what we say — that there is a space for such a solution where people can live together. We can have this, but we cannot live with colonialists. We cannot live with Zionists under any pretext. There is no such thing as Zionist Jewishness. You are either Zionist, or you are Jewish. There is nothing in between.

By Judy Greenspan

Oakland, Calif.

It’s not often that incarcerated people win victories under capitalism. Incarcerated women, and transgender and gender-nonconforming people did just that.

When California’s Governor Gavin Newsom approved the new state budget July 12, it included reparations for people who were forcibly or involuntarily sterilized between 1909 and 1979. A new budget item represents an acknowledgment of identifying former and currently incarcerated people who were sterilized. “That was printed the statement, traced back and forth for interrogation,” said Cynthia Chandler, Dillon’s attorney.

Obstacles to obtaining reparations money

Hafah Al-Amin, Program Coordinator of CCWP, told Workers World, “The hard part is going to be monitoring the state because it is the prison system that is taking responsibility for identifying and finding women and transgender people who were sterilized.” She noted that the new budget item represents an acknowledgment by the state that an injury was inflicted. Al-Amin added, “We hope that it will pave the way for Black, Indigenous and other people of color to seek redress in the form of reparations.”

The application that must be filed by people seeking reparations for involuntary sterilizations will become available Jan. 1, 2022. Chandler noted the difficulty of identifying former and currently incarcerated survivors of forced sterilization: “In order to assure that these reparations have an impact, it will require grassroots support of people inside to ensure that the investigations actually happen.”

Chandler urged all incarcerated people who have had abdominal surgery to file an application for review of their medical records, stating: “There needs to be a movement of survivors. That’s what will have real power.”

Besides the tireless work of incarcerated people inside prison, the budget request for reparations was co-sponsored by Back to the Basics Community Empowerment, California Latinas for Reproductive Justice, CCWP and Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, in collaboration with the Sterilization and Social Justice Lab. ( )
Despite solitary and banning, Bryan Arroyo fights for free speech

By Joe Piette and Bryan Arroyo

Incarcerated people depend on their voices being heard outside the walls for their grievances against prison officials to be effectuated inside. Without public pressure from family, friends and other supporters, the prison guards, supervisors, and administrators can literally get away with murder.

Bryan Arroyo has been a voice from inside Pennsylvania prisons for years. Arroyo is serving a life sentence for a crime he did not commit. He is still contesting this in court. He has dedicated himself to organizing from the inside mobilizing prisoners to fight back against the horrendous conditions authorities impose on incarcerated workers.

Arroyo was placed in isolated custody — thrown in the hole, the Restricted Housing Unit (RHU) — for suggesting one of his roommate’s right to speak to this reporter, his daughter and others that they share recordings of video conference calls with him on social media, so the public can learn how badly the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections treats incarcerated people.

No one shared such a video on social media, but Arroyo was punished just for raising the idea. (tinyurl.com/ymma8stw)

After being banned from video conferencing for days, Arroyo was able to have a recent video conference with WV. The experience he described not only reveals the extent to which the DOC will go to hide their inhumane policies by violating free speech rights, but also how Arroyo, like a good shop steward at any work site, persisted for his rights back.

“I want to give a salute of solidarity to all the comrades in the nation of prisons this morning. I want them to know that despite the retaliation that has been imposed upon me, including being transferred from SCI Frackville to SCI Coal Township, it hasn’t deterred me one bit. If anything, I’ve bounced back with much more resilience,” said Arroyo.

Thought crime punishment violates constitutional rights

Referring to a decision by hearing examiner Dennis Wiederhold at his misconduct hearing April 1, Arroyo told WV:

“It was a quite peculiar determination that he [Wiederhold] made, where he stated as a preponderance of evidence exists to support the charge, ‘any attempt to com- mit the enumerated offense is viewed as completion of the offense.’ The only thing that I could surmise is that he believes the mere thought of this expression shared to my activists, family members and supporters is the equivalent of committing the crime.

“I don’t know how he made that connection, because there’s nothing in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections policy where I violated any of the visit- ing regulations by merely instructing or expressing visitors to record the virtual tree by her grave, so that she can always remember her beautiful character and plant an olive oxygen we breathe. …

With a background in environmental science, Suha Jarrar became a climate change researcher and author of a 2019 report, “Adaptation Under Occupation,” about how the Israeli occupation has impeded Palestinians’ efforts to confront and adapt to climate change.

In a statement, organizers of the 2020 Palestine Writes Literature Festival praised Suha Jarrar as “a powerful voice of Palestinian resistance, social justice and inter- nationalism.” Suha Jarrar had participated in the festival’s keynote panel alongside her sister Yafa Jarrar, Dr. Angela Davis and Workers World Party’s Susan Abuhafla.

Message from prison

Khalida Jarrar released a statement from prison that was read at her daughter’s funeral. “The occupation robbed me of saying goodbye to my little bird Suha, forcing me to say farewell with a flower from our hands instead of a kiss.”

“When Suha came into the world, her father was incarcerated. And she is leaving it now with her mother behind bars. This is a condensed example of how life for Palestinians, who love freedom despite the cruelty of occupation and colonialism which rob us even of the oxygen we breathe. …

Gil, talk about your children. Talk about her, her beautiful character and plant an olive tree by her grave, so that she can always be under its cool shade.”

“Freedom for Suha means freedom for me. For 30 years I have been fighting against this oppression, which I wrote I want to give a salute of solidarity to all the comrades in the nation of prisons this morning. I want them to know that despite the retaliation that has been imposed upon me, including being transferred from SCI Frackville to SCI Coal Township, it hasn’t deterred me one bit. If anything, I’ve bounced back with much more resilience,” Suha Jarrar (left) and her mother Khalida Jarrar.

Israelis prevent political prisoner from attending daughter’s funeral

By Ted Kelly

The latest cruelty the Israeli state inflicted on the Jarrar family followed the tragic and untimely death of Suha Jarrar at 37 years old at her home in Ramallah July 11.

Despite international pleas for Khalida Jarrar, elected representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), to be released from administrative detention, Israel officials callously denied this request. Suha Jarrar was buried July 14 without her mother present.

A fierce advocate for the liberation of Palestinians and all oppressed people, Suha Jarrar represented the human rights advocacy organization al-Haq at the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. “She researched, advocated and fearlessly pushed to mainstream within Palestinian civil society the full range of rights issues related to gender and sexual- ity, even where perilous and proscribed,” said Omar Shakir of Human Rights Watch.

Despite solitary and banning, Bryan Arroyo fights for free speech

By Joe Piette and Bryan Arroyo

Incarcerated people depend on their voices being heard outside the walls for their grievances against prison officials to be effectuated inside. Without public pressure from family, friends and other supporters, the prison guards, supervisors and administrators can literally get away with murder.

Bryan Arroyo has been a voice from inside Pennsylvania prisons for years. Arroyo is serving a life sentence for a crime he did not commit. He is still contesting this in court. He has dedicated himself to organizing from the inside mobilizing prisoners to fight back against the horrendous conditions authorities impose on incarcerated workers.

Arroyo was placed in isolated custody — thrown in the hole, the Restricted Housing Unit (RHU) — for suggesting one of his roommate’s right to speak to this reporter, his daughter and others that they share recordings of video conference calls with him on social media, so the public can learn how badly the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections treats incarcerated people.

No one shared such a video on social media, but Arroyo was punished just for raising the idea. (tinyurl.com/ymma8stw)

After being banned from video conferencing for days, Arroyo was able to have a recent video conference with WV. The experience he described not only reveals the extent to which the DOC will go to hide their inhumane policies by violating free speech rights, but also how Arroyo, like a good shop steward at any work site, persisted for his rights back.

“I want to give a salute of solidarity to all the comrades in the nation of prisons this morning. I want them to know that despite the retaliation that has been imposed upon me, including being transferred from SCI Frackville to SCI Coal Township, it hasn’t deterred me one bit. If anything, I’ve bounced back with much more resilience,” said Arroyo.

Thought crime punishment violates constitutional rights

Referring to a decision by hearing examiner Dennis Wiederhold at his misconduct hearing April 1, Arroyo told WV:

“It was a quite peculiar determination that he [Wiederhold] made, where he stated as a preponderance of evidence exists to support the charge, ‘any attempt to commit the enumerated offense is viewed as completion of the offense.’ The only thing that I could surmise is that he believes the mere thought of this expression shared to my activists, family members and supporters is the equivalent of committing the crime.

“I don’t know how he made that connection, because there’s nothing in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections policy where I violated any of the visiting regulations by merely instructing or expressing visitors to record the virtual tree by her grave, so that she can always remember her beautiful character and plant an olive oxygen we breathe. …

With a background in environmental science, Suha Jarrar became a climate change researcher and author of a 2019 report, “Adaptation Under Occupation,” about how the Israeli occupation has impeded Palestinians’ efforts to confront and adapt to climate change.

In a statement, organizers of the 2020 Palestine Writes Literature Festival praised Suha Jarrar as “a powerful voice of Palestinian resistance, social justice and internationalism.” Suha Jarrar had participated in the festival’s keynote panel alongside her sister Yafa Jarrar, Dr. Angela Davis and Workers World Party’s Susan Abuhafla.

Message from prison

Khalida Jarrar released a statement from prison that was read at her daughter’s funeral. “The occupation robbed me of saying goodbye to my little bird Suha, forcing me to say farewell with a flower from our hands instead of a kiss.”

“When Suha came into the world, her father was incarcerated. And she is leaving it now with her mother behind bars. This is a condensed example of how life for Palestinians, who love freedom despite the cruelty of occupation and colonialism which rob us even of the oxygen we breathe. …

Gil, talk about your children. Talk about her, her beautiful character and plant an olive tree by her grave, so that she can always be under its cool shade.”

“Freedom for Suha means freedom for me. For 30 years I have been fighting against this oppression, which I wrote I want to give a salute of solidarity to all the comrades in the nation of prisons this morning. I want them to know that despite the retaliation that has been imposed upon me, including being transferred from SCI Frackville to SCI Coal Township, it hasn’t deterred me one bit. If anything, I’ve bounced back with much more resilience,” Suha Jarrar (left) and her mother Khalida Jarrar.

Israelis prevent political prisoner from attending daughter’s funeral

By Ted Kelly

The latest cruelty the Israeli state inflicted on the Jarrar family followed the tragic and untimely death of Suha Jarrar at 37 years old at her home in Ramallah July 11.

Despite international pleas for Khalida Jarrar, elected representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), to be released from administrative detention, Israel officials callously denied this request. Suha Jarrar was buried July 14 without her mother present.

A fierce advocate for the liberation of Palestinians and all oppressed people, Suha Jarrar represented the human rights advocacy organization al-Haq at the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. “She researched, advocated and fearlessly pushed to mainstream within Palestinian civil society the full range of rights issues related to gender and sexuality, even where perilous and proscribed,” said Omar Shakir of Human Rights Watch.
The struggle for the bourgeois democratic right to one person, one vote still continues in the U.S., the most powerful imperialist country. That struggle began once the last enslaved person was freed in Galveston, Texas, June 19, 1865, known as Juneteenth. During the next 10 years that defined Black Reconstruction, thousands of Black men gained the right to vote, resulting in their political representation for the first time in Southern state legislatures, especially in Louisiana, South Carolina and Mississippi, under the guardianship of the armed federal troops. This right and other important gains during this radical period were tragically short-lived when federal troops were withdrawn under the Rutherford B. Hayes presidency. This allowed the former Confederacy to regroup in the form of the Ku Klux Klan and White Citizens Councils, accompanied by the passage of oppressive semislavery laws used to terrorize the Black population.

Women, excluding many women of color, won the official right to vote in 1920, due to the efforts of the suffragist movement. From the late 1880s until the mid-1900s, apartheid-like Jim Crow ruled the Deep South, until the massive Civil Rights Movement, through blood, sweat and tears, forced the Lyndon B. Johnson administration to pass the Voting Rights Act in 1965—150 years after the struggle to vote was first launched.

Today, in 2021, this Act is being weakened in 43 states with more than 250 bills introduced by Republicans in statehouses to limit mail-in, early-in-person and Election Day voting. Other constraints include stricter ID requirements, limited hours and narrower eligibility to vote absentees. Generally, state legislatures already passed a bill prohibiting mail voting altogether. These bills take vengeance, racist aim at mainly Black people whose votes were decisive in the defeat of Trump during the 2020 election.

Massive assault on gains of Civil Rights Movement

There has been an internal struggle within the Texas Legislature between right-wing Republicans and mainly African American and Latinx Democrats over these repressive measures. In fact, a delegation of these delegations left Texas in anposing the vote. They plan to hold a weeklong virtual press conference beginning July 19 with support from the Service Employees International Union and Mi Familia Vota, which promotes Latinx voting rights.

Republicans have threatened to have their Democratic counterparts arrested upon their return to the state. These repressive bills are now being debated in 43 out of 50 states in the U.S. That begs this question: Why haven’t the Democrats called for a national demonstration to defend the right to vote, since their main social base is Black, Latinx and other disenfranchised sectors of society?

Even with the pandemic still a factor, the unisons—upon which the Democrats rely for votes—could still mobilize thousands of workers to come to Washington, D.C., to occupy the capital if need be. This could push back against these repressive bills, which are a real threat to the 1965 federal act being overturned.

What organized worker and even many of those unorganized would not want to take action to either defend or fight for this right? The Rochester Labor Council passed a resolution Oct. 8, 2020, supporting a general strike if Trump had refused to leave office; other labor councils followed suit. Why not revisit the need for labor to organize a national demonstration from the workers, especially the most oppressed, haven’t been called yet exposes once again the anti-progressive character of the Democratic party in an effort to keep the masses under its thumb and rendered powerless.

This example is another way of why workers assemblies can be an important organizing tool—to help empower working people and to help pave the way for complete liberation from the profit-driven capitalist system and their parties.

How local politics shows Democrats serve imperialism

By Arjaae Red
Buffalo, N.Y.

Faced with a likely victory of his self-proclaimed socialist opponent, Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown has issued a statement supporting the reactionary “SOS Cuba” movement. His statement attempts to justify the U.S. push for regime change against the socialist government. Many people in Buffalo have already pointed out the hypocrisy in Brown’s statement. Just last year, the Buffalo Police Department made national news for its violent mistreatment of people protesting the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. This included Buffalo cops shoving 75-year-old Martin Gugino, inflicting serious head injuries. The Buffalo force behaves like an occupying army on the city’s East Side. Last year, instead of siding with Buffalo’s people against the local totalitarian police, Mayor Brown kept quiet.

Now Brown is speaking up, saying: “The Cuban people are fighting and protesting for basic freedoms that can only exist in a true democratic society. We are seeing a passionate movement against the socialist ideas that led to totalitarian regimes which endorse and exploit economic suffering and inequality and deny access to basic human rights of citizens by their own governments.”

The irony in this statement is plainly visible. For working-class Buffalonians, economic suffering and inequality is the daily norm. The 2020 poverty rate in Buffalo was 30.6%, more than double the New York State average. Black Buffalo experience a poverty rate of 37.4%, while for white people it is 19%. Buffalo has long had a reputation as one of the most segregated cities in the country.

Buffalo’s literacy rate is a mere 70%, a pitiful figure compared to Cuba’s 99.8%. Cuba managed to nearly eliminate illiteracy by 1962, only three years after the Revolution. Brown has been Mayor of Buffalo for more than fifteen years yet illiteracy persists.

The infant mortality rate in Erie County was nearly 8.2 per thousand from 2008-2018, while Cuba’s rate for 2018 was 4.4 per thousand and has decreased each year since. These are just a few categories in which Cuba outstrips Buffalo, refuting Mayor Brown’s claims against the Cuban government. In spite of the crushing effects of the genocidal blockade imposed by the two ruling parties are mere mouthpieces.

Is it because Byron Brown is corrupt or doesn’t know how to run the city? Yes, he is hopelessly corrupt, but the real difference lies in the two economic systems. Socialist countries on average provide a much higher standard of living for their people than capitalist countries at a similar level of development.

Behind the mayor’s pandering to the right

So when Byron Brown rails against socialism, it’s not because socialism doesn’t work—it quite the opposite. He rails because socialism does work, and Cuban socialism is a living, breathing, fighting example that thrives in the face of global capitalism and U.S. imperialist aggression. Cuban socialism poses a very real threat to the capitalist class, for which Byron Brown and the political elites of both ruling parties are mere mouthpieces.

If Mayor Brown truly cared about the Cuban people, he would demand an end to the blockade, which is designed to make the people of Cuba suffer—yet he failed to mention it at all.

Mayor Brown’s statement is nothing more than red-baiting against his political opponent India Walton, who beat incumbent Brown in the recent Democratic primary; for him this is an attack against his political opponents, for he is an opponent of workers independent from the Democratic Party and to help pave the way for complete liberation from the profit-driven capitalist system and their parties.

Buffalo & Cuba

How local politics shows Democrats serve imperialism

Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba
by Leslie Feinberg

This ground-breaking book is a compilation of 25 articles about same-sex love and sex/gender variance in Cuba’s pre- and post-revolutionary history.

Available, along with complete Lavender & Red series, as free downloads at workers.org/books.

How to defend the right to vote

Rally at World Of Coca-Cola Museum, Atlanta, March 15.
Under imperialism

Multiple crises deepen in Haiti

By G. Dunkel

Haitian authorities have arrested Colombian mercenary camps and Haitian-Americans and charged them with participating in the July 7 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse. But murky questions still remain: Who organized the attempted coup? Who paid the mercenaries? Who will benefit?

Moïse was the only person killed in the attack, although his spouse was shot and left for dead. None of the president’s guards were injured, yet leaders in the guard corps were left unquestioned for days after the assassination.

Previously, the United States had put Moïse’s mentor, Michel Martelly, and his Haiti Têt Kale Party into the presidency. Then Trump and later Biden made it clear they firmly supported Moïse. But Washington may still take advantage of his disappearance.

Washington twice deposed the popular President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, while relying on despots and autocrats to keep refugees from fleeing to the U.S. and keep a lid on mass protest and organizing.

Political maneuvering will continue. The lines are being drawn more sharply.

Haiti’s other crises: the economy and COVID-19

Fully one-third of Haiti’s economy is based on remittances from Haitians living and working in the United States. A large majority of Haitians survive on less than $2.50 a day, and 42% are food insecure. The latter frequently face acute hunger, even if not actually dying from lack of food — yet.

Over the past three decades, U.S. imperialism has fostered and imposed political instability in Haiti. Washington twice deposed the popular President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, while relying on despots and autocrats to keep refugees from fleeing to the U.S. and keep a lid on mass protest and organizing. None of these measures have resolved the country’s grave economic problems.

Health conditions and medical care in Haiti have been in dire straits during the pandemic. Haitians received COVID-19 vaccinations for the first time July 16 — given to 36 health workers and elderly people at a Port-au-Prince hospital. As of July 19, Haiti has had 20,000 cases and over 500 deaths from COVID. Since a test for the virus in Haiti costs $80 to $90, most people cannot afford even less than $2.50 a day, these numbers must be vast undercounts.

Currently Cuban doctors and medical workers provide most medical care in Haiti. Cuba’s aid to Haiti over many decades has been monumental, as CounterPunch documents in 2010, (tinyurl.com/majeuxue) From 1998 to 2010, Cuba performed over 207,000 surgeries, restored eyesight to 45,000, made 14.6 million patient-doctor consultations, taught over 100,000 how to read and helped in the birth of 100,000 children.

In the aftermath of the 2010 Haiti earthquake, Cuba was among the first responders, sending medical teams and hundreds of thousands of patients and performed tens of thousands of surgeries.

The COVID-19 vaccines sent to Haiti come from the U.S. and were developed by U.S. pharmaceutical giants bent on profit. Within Haiti’s context of imperialist and capitalist domination, it is unlikely the U.S. will let its vaccine be distributed by Cuban medical personnel.

Revolutionary Cuba’s history of solidarity with Haiti offers the possibility of another kind of future, a different choice for a country at the crossroads and in crisis.

‘Ban killer drones!’

Anttiar activist support whistleblower Daniel Hale

Daniel Hale, a former Air Force intelligence analyst, faces up to 10 years in prison for releasing documents relating to the Pentagon’s drone program. The documents expose atrocities and the existence of “kill lists” that name people targeted for assassination. Hale is being tried guilty to one count of violating the 1917 Espionage Act. However, he is scheduled to be sentenced in federal court July 27 for providing classified documents on the drone program to The Intercept. The magazine’s actual anonymous source confirms it was Hale.

Anttiar activist held a press conference in New York City July 17 to support Hale and raise the demand to “Ban killer drones!” Scheduled speakers included Susan Schnall, member of the National Board of Veterans For Peace (VFP) and President of the New York City VFP Chapter 34; Sally Jones, chair of the Peace Action Fund of New York State; Sara Flounders, co-director, International Action Center; Margaret Kimberley, Black Alliance for Peace; and Debra Sweet, Director, World Can’t Wait. And the Raging Grannies sang.

“The press conference took place near the new installation by artist Sam Durant, “Untitled (drone).”’

“Joe Biden apparently wants to see Daniel Hale buried in prison to set an example for potential whistleblowers, because the documents that Daniel so courageously released reveal the atrocities, illegality and moral impossibility of drone warfare and drone surveillance,” said Nick Mottern, co-coordinator of BanKillerDrones.org, in the press release announcing the event. “We’re demanding that President Biden pardon Daniel Hale.”

— Report by Martha Grevatt

Capitalism breeds climate catastrophe

Continued from page 1 resources, and sometimes of equipment, the offers of housing, the great ray of hope appeared: The admir-

This is not the time for controversy,” wrote the daily Le Soir on July 18. But of course it’s time to ask the essential question: “Could we have greatly reduced the number of victims?” It is indeed the moment to reiterate that, faced with COVID, some countries have done a hundred times better than us in terms of victims, thanks to a set of radical and energetic measures placing the protection of lives at the center of their agendas from the first day of the alert.

Among these measures, social teams went from house to house to train in protective measures, to detect cases, to assist the most fragile and thus limit the spread. During the recent floods, such teams could have saved many lives by going from house to house as soon as the alert was given July 14, to identify the most vulnerable people and protect or evacuate them! Is one of the richest countries in the world incapable of providing a real social protection service to its elderly and disabled?

It is also a time to reflect on the remarkable French book, “Quand le dernier arbre aura été abattu, nous mourrons de notre argent.” (“When the last tree has been felled, we will eat our money.”) Ludo Hale and raise the demand to “Ban killer drones!”

However, in this flood of suffering, a great ray of hope appeared: The admirable solidarity among the stricken inhabi-

From house to house and public services cost the lives of many patients. Their COVID could not be treated because our various hospitals had cut tens of thousands of hospital beds. (France and Belgium lost 110,000 beds under former presidents Charles Michel, Nicolas Sarkozy, Francois Hollande and current president Emmanuel Macron.)
Sobre la defensa del socialismo

Por Ouljimi Alade

El 7 de junio de 2021 fue una reunión que esperaba con ansias. Fue la primera vez que estaba en persona, pero no en un escenario, sino en el Hemiciclo a la República. Aquí está la Palabra de las naciones. Aquí está el Hemiciclo de la República. Aquí está el Hemiciclo de la República.

Estamos discutiendo las formas de construir una asamblea de trabajadores, y la retórica sobre los países socialistas en el mundo. Quiero expresar mi deseo de que nos unamos en este esfuerzo para construir una asamblea de trabajadores. Y aquí está la palabra de los pueblos en el mundo.

Tenemos que desmitificar, humanizar los, como hemos hecho con Palestina. Cuan'más me educaba, más cambiaban mis opiniones

¿Cómo nos relacionamos con gente que no entiende esto? Hablando desde mi perspectiva como un hombre, hay muchas opiniones reaccionarias, nacidas de la ignorancia. Cuando más me formé, más cambiaban mis opiniones. Esto es válido para la mayoría de los trabajadores.

No hace mucho tiempo que creía que el capitalismo era lo único. Pero hace mucho tiempo que pense que Mao Zedong era un maniaco sanguinario que asesinó a miles de personas. No hace mucho tiempo que creía que el capitalismo era lo único. Pero hace mucho tiempo que pense que Mao Zedong era un maniaco sanguinario que asesinó a miles de personas. No hace mucho tiempo que creía que el capitalismo era lo único. Pero hace mucho tiempo que pense que Mao Zedong era un maniaco sanguinario que asesinó a miles de personas. No hace mucho tiempo que creía que el capitalismo era lo único. Pero hace mucho tiempo que pense que Mao Zedong era un maniaco sanguinario que asesinó a miles de personas. No hace mucho tiempo que creía que el capitalismo era lo único. Pero hace mucho tiempo que pense que Mao Zedong era un maniaco sanguinario que asesinó a miles de personas. No hace mucho tiempo que creía que el capitalismo era lo único. Pero hace mucho tiempo que pense que Mao Zedong era un maniaco sanguinario que asesinó a miles de personas. No hace mucho tiempo que creía que el capitalismo era lo único. Pero hace mucho tiempo que pense que Mao Zedong era un maniaco sanguinario que asesinó a miles de personas.