By Monica Moorehead

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) released “provisional life expectancy estimates” for the U.S. based on provisional mortality data for January through December 2020. The statistics show that overall U.S. life expectancy was reduced by a year and six months during this time period. The disturbing report indicates the steepest decline of life expectancy since World War II. The conclusions from the report are: “U.S. life expectancy at birth for 2020, based on nearly final data, was 77.3 years, the lowest it has been since 2003. Male life expectancy (74.5) also declined to a level not seen since 2003, while female life expectancy (80.2) returned to the lowest level since 2005.”

Two major factors for this statistical drop are the pandemic and the opioid crisis. The pandemic has caused the deaths of over 600,000 people in the U.S. Although the death rate has slowed due to millions getting vaccinations, the current spread of the Delta variant is causing another drastic rise in hospitalizations. At the same time, businesses and public places have eased their restrictions on mask wearing and social distancing.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that the rise in drug overdose deaths, attributed to 14% of the cases in the 18-month decline in life expectancy, was due to isolation and despair caused mainly by the pandemic. There was a 30% increase in these deaths from 72,151 in 2019 to a staggering 93,331 in 2020, according to a separate CDC report released on July 14.

Impact of racism and class

The NCHS reports the impact of this decline in life expectancy upon communities of color, stating, “The Hispanic [Latinx] population experienced the largest decline in life expectancy between 2019 and 2020, from 81.8 to 78.8 years, reaching a level lower than what it was in 2006 (80.3 years), the first year for which life expectancy estimates by Hispanic origin were produced.

“The non-Hispanic Black population experienced the second largest decline in life expectancy (from 74.7 to 71.8) and was the lowest estimate seen since 2000 for the Black population (regardless of [Latinx] origin). Life expectancy for the non-Hispanic white population declined from 78.8 to 77.6 years, a level last observed in 2002 for the white population (regardless of [Latinx] origin).”

The figures show that life expectancy for people of color, especially Black and Latinx, has dropped by three years. Black people already had a lower life expectancy before the pandemic hit, compared to Latinx and white people.

The pandemic has had a devastating impact on essential workers—especially in the areas of health care, mass transit, restaurants and grocery stores and other industries that require people to work outside of home. These workers tend to...
Workers World/Mundo Obrero joins with 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, and has supported a militant military 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.

We know you read WW/MO for class truth, free from capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs. Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGBTQ2+ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and attacks on 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. WW 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 WW branch near you.
People’s verdict on gentrification scheme: Thumbs down

By Dave Welsh

Oakland

Smoke and mirrors,” he said, “a farce, a deception and start to bulldoze into the Port of Oakland (the fifth largest port in the U.S.) a plan by the wealthy Fisher family to buy out against the corporate greed of the gig economy. We need to stop letting them disman-

Ridershare drivers’ strike demands justice and recognition as workers

By Judy Greenspan
San Francisco

We need to stop letting them dismantle labor rights! How is there a gig com-

Dreamers respond as federal judge rules DACA illegal

By Gloria Rubac

In a slap to the face to hundreds of thousands of immi-

RAICES, the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services, responded immediately to the ruling: “Today’s decision by Federal District Court Judge Andrew Hanen to permanently enjoin the DACA program for undocumented youth is regressive, abhor-

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Saintly and then vision,” said Ibrahim Diallo. “We need to continue to struggle to keep the economy and social injustices faced on the job. How can we be happy when we are being treated as private contractors,” rather than workers. RDU, which represents more than 90,000 gig workers nationwide, began in Los Angeles and has been organizing for the right to unionize. RDU organizers, who should have the right to organize unions, (tinyurl.com/yx4rn8m8) under other programs and regulations that had previ-

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The complaint argues that Texas and the other states faced with the economic and social injustices faced on the job. How can we be happy when we are being treated as private contractors,” rather than workers. RDU, which represents more than 90,000 gig workers nationwide, began in Los Angeles and has been organizing for the right to unionize. RDU organizers, who should have the right to organize unions, (tinyurl.com/yx4rn8m8) under other programs and regulations that had previ-

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Derrick Muhammad, second from left, Striking gig drivers and their supporters outside the San Francisco Uber headquarters July 21.

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Who is Ruchell Magee and why has he been in prison 58 years?

By Judy Greenspan

Ruchell Cinque Magee, a U.S. political prisoner who has served over 58 years in California prisons, was again denied parole July 15 by the state’s Board of Parole Hearing. Why won’t the state of California allow Magee to go free? His story begins as a Black man from Louisiana, who since 1955 has had to deal with this racist injustice system. Magee remains in prison today because he participated in a bold, heroic act of resistance against the U.S. penal system that it was first embraced by free political prisoners George Jackson, John Clangala, and Freda Drumgo, known as the Soledad Brothers, over 50 years ago. Magee grew up in Louisiana; and at the age of 16, he faced a racist conviction in 1971 for “attempted aggravated rape” for having a relationship with a white woman in an area dominated by the Ku Klux Klan.

His conviction occurred at the same time that Emmett Till was lynched. Money, Miss., for supposedly whistling at a white woman. Magee was sentenced to eight years in Angola State Prison. He was legally ordered to leave Louisiana in 1962; and when finally released from Angola in 1965, Magee went to Los Angeles County, via extreme malpractice and “injury by the police.”

Magee was arrested that same year after a disagreement with someone about a $10 bag of marijuana. After his arrest, he was beaten so badly he had to be hospitalized for three days. He was then railroaded by the California Superior Court of Los Angeles County, via extreme malpractice by the prosecution and defense attorneys, and sentenced to seven years to life in prison for a bough charge of attempting to kidnap someone to commit murder. California built its vast prison system and exponentially increased its prison population of poor Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples by sentencing them to indeterminate sentences for petty theft and drug-related crimes. Magee was one of the victims of this racist and contraceptive sentencing system. Once convicted, it was almost impossible to get parole during these years.

Becoming politicized

Like George Jackson and many other incarcerated Black people, Magee became politicized while inside, adding the middle name of “Cinque” after the African freedom fighter Cinque, who led a rebellion on the slave ship Amistad. Magee believed and stated, “Slavery 400 years ago—prison today—it’s the same but with a new name.”

He became known throughout the prison as a jailhouse lawyer. Magee fought wrongful death lawsuits and helped win a big settlement for the family of Fred Billingsly, who was tear-gassed and beaten to death by San Quentin guards while in his cell in February 1970.

On August 7, 1970, Jonathan Jackson, then only 19 years old and brother of George Jackson, burst into a Marin County courtroom armed with guns with the intention of taking over the courtroom to demand the release of the Soledad Brothers, who were charged with killing a white guard at Soledad State Prison, notoriously known for racist murders and brutality against Black people in the area dominated by the Ku Klux Klan.

Three prisoners, William Christmas, James McClain, and Magee, who were in the courtroom that day, joined the escape attempt. Magee and Christmas went in court to testify in support of McClain, who was facing charges for assaulting a guard at Soledad after the Billingsly murder. Jackson and the three prisoners took several hostages, including Judge Harold Haley, Deputy District Attorney Gary Steele, and three others, and attempted to escape in a van. The San Quentin guards fired into the van, killing everyone but Magee and the prosecutor, who were both badly wounded.

This August 7 will mark the 51st anniversary of Jonathan Jackson’s heroic effort to free his brother and two other political prisoners.

Magee wrote, “Once the facts can be clearly established and shown to the people, where there are violations of the practice of slavery under the color of law, then this automatically requires a special investigation by the people to look for themselves. They will find that those charged are criminals.”

 Magee wanted to conduct a very political trial that challenged the validity of the prison system and recognized his right like Cinque’s to fight for his freedom against slavery.

Incarcerated workers today have constituted the New York City-based legal team of Magee’s co-defendant Angela Davis, who was facing charges for supposedly purchasing the weapons used in the courthouse action, had a different legal strategy and separated the cases.

Magee went on alone in his legal defense battle, eventually defending himself pro se. He completely beat the brother of George Jackson, dropped, but he was convicted of “simple kidnap.” The verdict in the more serious kidnapping charge was disputed, and Magee believes he was railroaded by the prosecution for the charge.

Magee was sentenced in 1975 to life in prison and has gone before the parole board many times since then with no success. Each time, he has been denied parole. He is now 82 years old, having served over 58 years in prison, and is now incarcerated at the California Medical Facility.

Free Ruchell Magee! Free them all!

The Coalition to Free Ruchell Magee, the Jericho Movement and other groups organized a groundswell of support for Magee during his last parole effort July 15. A current petition to California Governor Gavin Newsom to grant clemency for Magee states: “As an elder, he faces constant mental and physical health risks every day from nearly six decades of incarceration. With California’s ongoing pandemic raging across California’s prisons throughout 2020 and 2021, Ruchell has been in significant danger of falling ill.”

Incarcerated people in California’s prisons have suffered high COVID infection rates and deaths due to the prison system’s refusal to stop transfers and cell extractions and to provide adequate medical care to people inside.

The Jericho Movement, Campaign to Bring Mumia Home, Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee and International Leonard Peltier Defense and Support Committee have launched a coalition called “The Spirit of Mandela” to organize the international campaign to free all U.S. political prisoners, most of whom are elderly, ill and facing death inside. (spiritofmandela.org)

Magee, Sundiata Acoli, MutuluShakur, Russell Maroon Shoats, Mumia Abu Jamal, David Gilbert and Leonard Peltier are some of the aging political prisoners who have served decades of time for their brave defiance of racist murder and injustice. This year, 2021, has been designated the Year of the Political Prisoner. It’s time to free Ruchell Cinque Magee and free them all!

By Lamont Lilly

The following slightly edited article was first published in August 2019. Lilly ran as Workers World Party’s candidate for vice president in 2016.

George Jackson


“Black August” is a monthlong celebration that marks the remembrance of the lives of freedom fighters who gave their all for Black liberation, freedom, radical resistance and mass consciousness. The official origin of Black August was in honor of the fallen soldiers who valiantly fought to liberate Black Panther leader George Lester Jackson from the modern-day slave trade we now call the U.S. penal system.

Jonathan Jackson and Angela Davis

Black freedom fighters – James McClain, William Christmas, Ruchell Magee, Khatari Gaulden and 17-year-old Jonathan Jackson – the brother of George Jackson, led a courthouse rebellion on Aug. 7, 1970, in a brave display of all-out resistance and armed struggle. Unfortunately, lives were lost as they typically are in any war for liberation. Magee, who is currently still incarcerated, was the only survivor. He lived by the African Heritage that he was an al- comes, George Jackson, was not free, the efforts of Jonathan and others would inspire decades of continued resistance and revolutionary solidarity.

George Jackson had just completed his book “Soledad Brother,” a philosophical revolutionary classic. Jackson, however, was assassinated by San Quentin prison guards one year later on Aug. 21, 1971. His second book, “Blood in My Eye,” was published posthumously by the Black Panther Press. Jackson’s legacy of resistance has inspired millions worldwide, while his literary legacy continues to teach even in his physical absence.

This is the background in which Black August was first formed. It was deep within the belly of the California penal system that it was first embraced and formally established as a month of reverence, as a time of revolutionary celebration.

The heroic Attica prison rebellion which began on Sept. 9, 1971, was and eventually drowned in blood by Gov. Nelson Rockefeller’s stormtroopers (the N.Y. state police), with the deaths of over 93 prisoners and 11 guards, was sparked by Jackson’s assassination.

Incarcerated workers today have continued to protest and press forward all over the United States. Hunger strikes over the past year have roused hundreds of thousands in states such as California, Georgia and North Carolina. Letter writing campaigns have served as vital lines of inspiration and direct communication. Attempr rights activists such as political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal have served as critical catalysts, tirelessly working to empower the voices of those who continue to be oppressed by the public and private prison industry.

Today, in the spirit of continued resistance to honor the ideas of Black Leader Fred Hampton and Geromino Pratt. We honor the sacrifices and life work of political prisoners Eddie Conway, Sundiata Acoli and our freedom fighters in exile like Asanta Shakur. We honor the countless victims of COINTELPRO’s callous attacks upon the people. We deeply recognize the destructive illis of capitalism and its disastrous effects upon the oppressed worldwide. In the age of the prison-industrial complex, school-to-prison pipeline and widespread police brutality, the struggle for justice and liberation is alive and well.

In the 42nd year of Black August, may we all take heed to the spirited words of our brother and mentor, George Lester Jackson: “Settle your quarrels; come together; understand the reality of our situation; understand that fascism is already here, that people are dying who could be saved.” (“Soledad Brother”)
Billionaires in space

By Betsey Piette

Centibillionaire Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and multibillionaire Virgin Group founder Richard Branson used the profits they extracted from their companies' workforce to launch themselves on personal space rides in recent weeks. And centibillionaire SpaceX founder Elon Musk is expected to follow.

One recent claim: None of these billionaires did any of the work that got them into space. All the labor to build their capsules, rocket launchers, launchpads and more was done by workers, whose labor these billionaires exploited.

These same billionaires' earthly fortunes came from superexploiting workers in their factories, sweatshops and warehouses. They managed to pay little to no taxes to support public goods. Nothing of benefit to human kind will come from this.

On the contrary, the success of these personal space launches threatens to increase pollution during a time of severe climate crisis. And these launches generate increased pollution during a time of severe climate crisis.

Only the very rich could afford seats on these flights. Bezos raised millions in a lottery where 7,600 people participated to win a seat in his capsule. The winner paid $28 million for her seat, which the lottery gives Bezos a list of prospective customers for future flights. His company, Blue Origin, has already amassed $100 million in private sales for months without a test flight.

Branson, whose Virgin Galactic spacecraft beat Bezos by nine days to be the first civilian space launch, charged less at $200,000 per seat. Yet none of the wealth generated by these projects will benefit their workers through increased wages or benefits.

Bezos' big mouth

In a move that angered millions of people, Bezos bluntly told the truth at a news conference after his multimillion-dollar joyride: “I want to thank every Amazon employee and every Amazon customer, because you guys paid for all this.”

Already aware of how Bezos has enriched himself by exploiting their labor, many of Bezos' employees at Amazon have recently been organizing for a union. They know they are paid much less than the value they produce. And the work is harmful.

A recent investigation by the Strategic Organizing Center found Amazon's serious injury rate was twice the warehouse industry average. (chowsenspace, June 22)

Pregnant workers have miscarried after being refused leave by the company. Many struggle to get workers' compensation when injured. (Reveal News, Sept. 29, 2020)

Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union that tried to unionize Amazon's warehouse in Bessemer, Ala., responded to Bezos' comments: “These are people who put their health and their lives on the line and did not receive adequate support from Jeff Bezos. In the middle of the pandemic, he even cut people's wages, when he didn’t need to. People are being forced to work in conditions where their health and safety is not being adequately protected. There is so much more Jeff Bezos should be doing for his employees.” (Democracy Now!, July 22)

Many question how someone who gained tens of billions of dollars in personal wealth during the pandemic, who lied to prevent his workers from unionizing, could joke about exploiting his workers to pay for private space trips for billionaires. Their advantage arises because by promoting “space tourism,” these billionaires are counting on access to military contracts — public money — to fund their future initiatives.

Money from militarizing space

Corporations pay lobbyists and back politicians who pitch the falsehood that private companies can do public agencies better than the government can. This argument is deeply backed by Bezos gains from the Pentagon to build missile-tracking systems. These private companies rely heavily on public funding. Many have billions in contracts from NASA, the military and telecommunication companies. They’re also shareholding in SpaceX and Bezos' Blue Origin control the infrastructure of space. (Democracy Now!, July 22)

China is the target

U.S. corporations and politicians alike worry that China's technological innovations will give it the competitive edge in space. China's new Tiangong space station received its first three astronauts June 17 — a major milestone in the country’s rapid scientific and technological development.

By contrast, the International Space Station, launched in 1998, will be decommissioned in the coming years, likely making Tiangong humanity's only permanent outpost in space.

Chinese gains by using militarization to win funding and space-related contracts. Space privatization through companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin, heavily reliant on Pentagon contracts, will allow China's technological innovations to give it the competitive edge in space. China's new Tiangong space station will be a permanent outpost in space.

Bill Gates, Big Pharma block vaccines to the Global South

by Jim McManah

The COVID-19 death rate continues to be high worldwide, especially as the virus ravages the developing world. A recent study reveals India's death toll could be 3.4 to 4.7 million people, with the official death toll of 413,000 being a vast undercount. (Center for Global Development)

There is no access to life-saving vaccines, from Latin America to Africa to the Middle East and Asia, is the real reason why the spread of the virus continues to spread. It’s a case of Western pharmaceutical companies — Big Pharma — making fabulous profits because of their monopoly control. The oppressed working masses of the Global South are still being largely denied access to life-saving vaccines.

In New York City, demonstrators marched on Pfizer’s world headquarters and blocked traffic July 14. They demanded that the imperialist company end its patent restrictions on the COVID-19 vaccine and instead export its availability across the globe.

Seattle City Council member Kshama Sawant sponsored a similar demonstration in front of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in May. Sawant and protest and the Seattle People's Union, Big Pharma and the Gates Foundation, who with President-Joe Biden’s support, are blocking intellectual property (IP) waivers for formerly colonized countries. Similar protests are being held around the world.

Big Pharma corporations have raked in huge fortunes from the pandemic. Pfizer is expected to make $26 billion in annual sales for its vaccine, and Moderna $19.2 billion. (Reuters, July 21) Meanwhile 88% of the world’s countries aren’t expected to be fully vaccinated until 2023.

It’s hard to imagine a single event that could make a stronger case for international cooperation than a global vaccination program. Instead, the pandemic has exacerbated the irreconcilable conflict between the needs of the masses and the profits of the few.

How Bill Gates blocked access to vaccines

At the beginning of the pandemic, it was hoped that the world would unite against the virus. Public health leaders thought that the immensity of the pandemic would override a global drug system based on market monopolies. Governments spoke of shared interests. Drug companies pledged nonprofit approaches.

In March 2020, a plan was created inside WHO to set up a Technology Access Pool or C-TAP; C-TAP would create a voluntary intellectual property pool. In opposition, Bill Gates launched a bid to overturn C-TAP. Gates’ initiative was called ACT-Accelerator; Accelerator committed to respecting exclusive IP claims for the drug companies.

Gates was able to outmaneuver the WHO, based on his being a so-called “wise leader” — along with being worth $130 billion. He dismissed many warnings that there would be a crisis of supply and deprivation, and he blocked all challenges to his authority.

Gates’ dedication to IP rights is related to his control of Microsoft. He wants control of the world’s data — an extremely valuable commodity. The Gates Foundation is deeply invested in Big Pharma, including Pfizer. It owns shares of the German company BioNTech, having invested $55 million in 2019, along with $52 million in CureVac, another German company. They're also shareholding in the Chinese company Sinovac. With no shame, stock pickers say these companies could be winners for Gates and company. (The Motley Fool, Sept. 24, 2020)

On May 5, the Biden administration reversed its position and came out in support of an IP waiver after intense pressure from over 100 nations. The next day the Gates Foundation announced a U-turn for a “strong IP waiver.” But Germany remains in opposition inside the World Trade Organization, the decision-making body. Demonstrations have targeted German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Waiving IP rights will increase vaccination rates worldwide. Mandating technology transfer must also happen. It’s crucial that Gates and Big Pharma be unmasked for their role in perpetuating the international pandemic.

In contrast to big pharma profit-making, Peoples Community Arts (PCA) and Cuba have built with public health through socialism. Cuba expects to produce over 3 billion vaccine doses this year and is the main supplier to many developing countries. Likewise, Cuba has produced its own vaccines and has sent medical brigades in solidarity to fight the pandemic to many countries worldwide.
Lessons from the life of Donald Rumsfeld, war criminal

By John Catalinotto

When an ordinary official of an imperialist government dies, since there is usually nothing good to write about them, common practice for a working-class newspaper is to write nothing. When someone like Donald Rumsfeld dies, to avoid countering means avoid a struggle. Rumsfeld, who died June 30, was far from ordinary. He was a world-class war criminal, who had major responsibility for the murder of millions of people.

The reputation in the corporate media, praises Rumsfeld and his work — and they did — should in itself be shocking proof of the criminal nature of U.S. imperialism and its agents.

In his first stint, as secretary of defense, in 1975-77 under President Gerald Ford, Rumsfeld was a determined Cold War warrior. In his second stint, in 2001-06 under President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, as Secretary of Defense, Rumsfeld was a prime mover and planner of the U.S. invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Architect of U.S. war on Iraq

Along with Bush, Cheney, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, Rumsfeld promoted two wars to justify U.S. aggression against Iraq. The first was that the Iraqi government led by Saddam Hussein collabo- rated with al-Qaeda to attack the U.S. on Sept. 11, 2001. The second was that Iraq possessed “weapons of mass destruction.”

U.S. intelligence agencies had no support for these lies, so Rumsfeld created his own reports. The government figures repeating them knew they were false. Secretary of State Colin Powell, who recited these charges at the New York Times, July 16, 2020

“The U.S. military and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld promised a quick and relatively bloodless war in Iraq. Their plan was based upon a massive ‘shock and awe’ campaign of initial bombing. … The bombing took place. It produced only resistance. The most overpowering military machine in the history of humanity faced the heroic opposition of the Iraqi people from Day One of the war.”

“Months after that failed ‘shock and awe’ destruction of the Iraqi army and infrastructure, Iraqi guerrillas were inflicting casualties on the 150,000-plus U.S. troops in Iraq in 2003.

Sowing divisions

During 2004 and 2005, a determined Iraqi resistance was killing and wounding U.S. troops. To avoid defeat in an urban guerrilla war, the U.S. occupation regime resorted to sowing and exacerbating ethnic and religious divisions among the Iraqi people.

All this was under the direction of Rumsfeld and the neocons, whose strategies led to the disintegration of the Iraqi regime and splitting its people. While Rumsfeld’s strategy failed to bring victory to U.S. imperialism, it created a nooman’s land for millions of Iraqis — misery that continues.

The occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan cost some- what more than $2 trillion. The U.S. military and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was equally criminal on a smaller scale in his support for torture during interrogations and his defense of the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. His crimes, however, went beyond Afghanistan and Iraq. When it came to illegal aggression, Rumsfeld saw the big picture.

General Wesley Clark, former NATO commander and himself capable of bombing civilians — as his forces did in Yugoslavia in 1999 — claimed in a March 2, 2007, interview on Democracy Now! that he had a memo “that describes how we’re [the U.S.] going to take out seven countries in five years, starting with Iraq, and then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia and finishing off Iran.”

While Rumsfeld had to resign in 2006, Libya and Syria were targeted during the Democratic administration of President Joe Biden. This was so widespread that it has been subjected to strangeland sanctions. Lebanon faces collapse plus sanctions.

Unlike Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, who eventually repudiated his criminally responsible role in the U.S. war against Vietnam, Rumsfeld defended his murderous policies to the end. The question to ask is how does the system of government places someone with Rumsfeld’s characteristics in a position of power? And how do we rid the world of that system?

Life expectancy drop exposes racism, class bias

Continued from page 1

be people of color.

Also Black and Brown people are more susceptible to the virus when living in overcrowded housing with multigen- erational family members or traveling in overcrowded buses and subways for work. Many migrant workers are not eli- gible to receive health care. Due to their understandable fear of being detained or deported, they are denied adequate health care.

Jon Zehner, an epidemiologist at the University of Michigan, stated in a New York Times story, “Many migrant workers are not eligible to receive health care. Due to their understandable fear of being detained or deported, they are denied adequate health care.

Jonestown’s findings showed that while the deaths of people of color and whites are equal when it comes to the virus, 60% to 70% of Black and Latinx people were more likely to be infected than whites. In a Veterans Administration study in New Orleans, “Black patients accounted for 76.9% of those hospitalized with COVID-19, although they made up just 31% of the health system’s population.”

Lack of health care for generations

The U.S. is the richest and largest imperialist country, but according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in the area of public health, compared to its peer nations, it ranked a poor 27th out of 37 in 2018.

Some of Michigan Health’s findings included: Black people have higher rates of obesity, heart disease and hypertension, and Black men have a 2.5 times higher rate of prostate cancer mortality.

The lack of doctors of color means lack of health care for generations. “From inadequate access to fresh food and clean water, to screening in early stages of disease or the inability to rent an apartment because of discriminatory housing practices, these long-standing systemic inequities for some Black Americans can have long-lasting effects on health.”

The National Poll on Healthy Aging, conducted by University of Michigan Medicine researchers on health disparities between Black and white patients tied to white supremacy within class society. “From inadequate access to fresh food and clean water, to screening in early stages of disease or the inability to rent an apartment because of discriminatory housing practices, these long-standing systemic inequities for some Black Americans can have long-lasting effects on health.”

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“Access to nutritious food and health status are closely linked, yet this poll reveals major disparities in that access,” says Preeti Malani, M.D., the poll’s director. “Even as we focus on preventing the spread of coronavirus, we must also ensure that older adults can get food that aligns with all health conditions they have, so we don’t exacerbate existing health disparities through digestive disorders and other conditions further.”

“Access to nutritious food and health status are closely linked, yet this poll reveals major disparities in that access,” says Preeti Malani, M.D., the poll’s director. “Even as we focus on preventing the spread of coronavirus, we must also ensure that older adults can get food that aligns with all health conditions they have, so we don’t exacerbate existing health disparities through digestive disorders and other conditions further.”

These findings smash the racist myth that Black and other people of color are genetically prone to contract the coronavirus, rather than suffering from substan- dard living conditions and health care they receive, which is not isolated but institutionalized. This is why reparations in the area of health care must be pursued by workers in the conscript military to battle racism and their officers.

Get your copy today at workers.org/books
International Declaration of Solidarity with Socialist Cuba

If they touch Cuba, the world will rise up

The following statement in solidarity with the Cuban Revolution was initiated by Chilean and Argentine communists and signed by scores of organizations, including the Solidarity Work Group (A Thousand for Cuba) and the Campaign to Express our Solidarity with the Cuban people and government, led by President Miguel Díaz-Canel, which are confronting the U.S. blockade and the campaign of aggression against socialist Cuba. The greatest threat is the U.S. blockade, established in February 1960 and maintained until today, with both Democratic and Republican presidents occupying the White House. The neo-Nazi Donald Trump aggravated it with 243 measures between 2017 and 2021, and Joe Biden keeps them in place, refusing to lift those economic and financial measures, not even the infamous decision to place Cuba on the list of “sponsors of terrorism.”

The U.S. court system where Wall Street, the monopoles, the CIA, the Pentagon and their plans for world domination are judges, is a two-party dictatorship of big capital!

The overwhelming majority of countries repudiate that blockade. Votes in the United Nations against Cuba have exceeded 290 since 1992 have shown this. There have been 29 votes in favor of Cuba, the last one on June 23, with a total of 184 countries against two (the U.S. and Israel).

Notwithstanding this repudiation of the blockade, which has been a two-party dictatorship of criminal and an act of genocide, Yankee imperialism maintains it.

The U.S. objective is to use hunger and diseases, including widespread poverty, to weaken and destroy the people who opted for the Cuban road to socialism, with its roots in José Martí and the leadership of Fidel Castro, combined with Raúl Castro and now with new generations of leaders, its Communist Party, its mass organizations and the Revolutionary Armed Forces.

As the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. State Department, Lester Mallory, said in 1960, the purpose of the blockade is to “provoke hunger, desperation and the overthrow of the government.” So far the blockade has failed in its main objective of overthrowing socialism. It has been relatively ineffectual in generating hunger and desperation in some sectors of the population, due to the shortages derived from the blockade.

Cuba is prevented from trading freely, accessing foreign currency, buying medicines and medical supplies, receiving charter flights and tourist cruises from the U.S., etc. Notwithstanding the international repudiation of the blockade, which it is economically an act of genocide, Yankee imperialism maintains it.

They punish shipping companies that transport oil to Cuba in order to cut off fuel, trade, transportation and electricity generation; they sanction banks that operate with the island, they block money transfers from Cuban relatives abroad, etc.

The Cuban Foreign Minister to the U.N. quantified the direct economic damages between April 2019 and March 2020 at $5.32 billion, which increase to $9.16 billion if computed until December 2020.

These are not just numbers. They translate into many thousands of deaths. The Cuban government has made remarkable efforts against the pandemic, but the lack of vaccines is a major problem. Cuba is the only country in Latin America that has not registered a single death due to COVID-19. They took to the streets in seven or eight cities, which the imperialist news agencies multiplied to 30. They were hundreds, in total, but those agencies multiplied them to “multitudes.”

While raising demands against hunger, the gusano leaders and ageists made it clear that their objectives were “free-dom” and the “end of communist tyranny,” as if they could not understand that, in line with those advocated by Biden, his Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Senators Bob Menendez and Marco Rubio, among other counterrevolutionaries from the Miami sewer.

The Cuban president was in the streets leading the defense of the Cuban Revolution and also to dialogue with the confused but honest part of the protest- ing people. He was very coherent and very clear about the direction, the path to win the streets to defend the revolution, and to put himself in the front row in San Antonio del Rosario, where the Yankee imperialists are present.

Díaz-Canel made it clear that he knows of several real reasons for the popular complaints, but 95 percent of the causes of these shortcomings are to be found in the prolonged Yankee blockade and only 5 percent in government errors, delays, bureaucracy or disorganization.

Let us emphasize: the fundamental cause of the shortages is the genocidal blockade maintained for 60 years by Washington! It is in the hands of the Cuban government to analyze its part to correct and improve, even under the crossfire of the empire and its vassals. It is necessary to separate the confused or misguided people from the mercenaries who want to return to the semi-colony, the gambling den and the brothel of Batista’s time.

All data must be put in context. It is true that COVID cases have increased, but Cuba’s results are much better than those of the USA, Brazil and Argentina. The U.S. has 198 times more infections than Cuba and 384 times more deaths. The empire has so far refused to release the use of vaccine patents, as requested by the World Health Organization. And it dares to criticize Cuba in the health field!

For all these reasons, the undersigned parties and organizations ratify our solidarity with Cuba, we defend it from the blockade and the Yankee-Gusano [counterrevolutionary worms] maneuvers, and we demand an end to the criminal and genocidal cause, we demand its embassies and consulates attacked in many countries, etc.

We demand the immediate end of the Yankee blockade and we ask that the Nobel Peace Prize be awarded to the Cuban International Medical Brigades “Henry Reeve.”

We demand that the U.S. return the usurped Guantanamo area and nullify the Platt Amendment, and grant freedom for political prisoner Ana Delia Monte, in a U.S. jail for almost 20 years for helping Cuba.

We demand that the U.S. amend its Charter to make a motion voted by two-thirds of the General Assembly binding on the Security Council and the entire entity.

We demand that the central banks of China, Russia and the European Central Bank give a zero-rate credit to Cuba for the damage caused by the blockade between 2019 and 2020, amounting to $9,157,000. Once the blockade is lifted, José Martí’s homeland would be able to return to that capital, without interest, in annual installments.

Justice for Haiti! Let revolutionary Cuba live!

By Maureen Skhean
Boston

A multinational, multigenerational, pro-socialist crowd, including Indigenous, Black, Latinx, immigrant rights, peace and justice, union, faith-based, youth, veterans, LGBTQ+ and disability rights organizers, converged at Park Street Station, Boston, July 24, for a militant and unified “People’s Speak Out and Rally” to demand “No US Intervention in Cuba” and “Let Revolutionary Cuba Live! End the U.S. Blockade!”

Co-chaired by longtime Puerto Rican independence activist Rosita Manuela and immigrant rights leader and abolitionist Bishop Félix Teixeira—a leader in the struggle to free imprisoned Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab from a U.S.-backed garrison in Cabo Verde—the rally included beautiful Caribbean music and militant chants of “Cuba Sí, Bloqueo No!” and “Justice for Haiti, U.S. Out!”

Passionate speakers condemned U.S. aggression and intervention in the Caribbean and Latin America, including its backing of fascist, mercenary forces repressing the popular movements of Brazil and Colombia and undermining the revolutionary socialist governments of Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Bolivia.

Many speakers expressed their heartfelt thanks and revolutionary love for Haiti and Cuba, expressing many countries’ historic contributions in the struggle against slavery, racism and colonialism. Haiti’s victorious revolution against slavery in 1804 led to the first independent Black Republic in the Western Hemisphere.

Cuba’s world-renowned internationalism, in solidarity with workers and oppressed nations globally, expresses confidence that socialism will ultimately prevail in this hemisphere here in the U.S. — the belly of the beast.

Many left the rally committed to build greater unity and solidarity for socialism in Boston and beyond.

Initiated by Workers World Party and the July 26th Coalition, the rally’s co-endorsers included the Alliance for Secular and Democratic South Asia, Answer, Boricuas for Liberation, Boston May Day Coalition, Colectivo de Boston-Foru BolXemán, Committee for Peace and Human Rights, Fanmi Lavalas, International Action Center, Massachusetts Peace Action, Palestinian House of New England, Party for Socialism and Liberation, Team Solidarity, USW Local 8751 Boston School Bus Drivers Union, United American Indians of New England and the Young Black Panther Party.

Workers.org
July 29, 2021
Page 7


Justice for Haiti! Let revolutionary Cuba live!

July 15, 2021
Libertação Party (Partido de la Liberación) of Argentina
Chilean Communist Party (Proletarian Alliance and Solidarity Work Group (A Thousand for Cuba) — Argentina

Chantal Casimir, member, USW Local 8751, spoke at the Boston rally July 24.
Haiti

Conflict grows as President Moïse is buried

By G. Dunkel

Wearing a Kevar bulletproof vest, Martine Moïse praised her late spouse, assassinated President Jovenel Moïse, at his July 23 funeral in Cap-Haitien, for “defending the poorest against the cupid- ity of the elites” and striving to reform “a rotten and unjust political system.” Using the constitutions that might be in force— among some Haitian politicians and occupation— there are still questions about whether one is currently operational — suggest that they followed correct procedure. But after Lambert made a few phone calls, he sus- pended his campaign. He had no apparent support in Washington. According to the Times, a group chat among some Haitian politicians and officials and their U.S. advisors “showed them strategizing about countering American critics and potential rivals for the presidency and looking for ways to cast blame for the killing,” The Haitian government paid an outfit called Mercury Public Affairs at least $285,000 for six months work and continues to pay $67,000 a month to a consortium of pub- lic relations firms.

Beyond all this maneuvering, there are Haitian businesses and individual investors that want the U.S. inter- est for their projects, even if they have to shell out for this interest from their own pockets.

When the NY Times tries to explain Haitian history, because this history has a direct bearing on what the U.S. can do now, it often leaves out some inconnec- tion. The article then concludes with the U.S. occupying Haiti in 1915 “after the assass-ination of President Vilbrun Guillaume Sam.” It doesn’t mention that a Marine raid- ing party, shortly before the 1915 occupa- tion began, slipped into Port-au-Prince and seized Haiti’s gold reserves — worth at that time around $500,000 — and turned them over to First National City Bank in New York — now Citibank. This is indeed a debt that the U.S. could indeed repay — with interest. ☐

Haiti: A Slave Revolution

200 years ago

Published in 2004, "Haiti: A Slave Revolution," uses art, poetry, photos and essays to document the victory of an enslaved people fighting for their freedom, and their centuries of continued resistance to embarrasses, occupation, dictatorship, U.S. intervention and global capital. Available as a FREE download at tinyurl.com/3ACBooks

Haiti declares Pedro Castillo winner, July 19.

Perú Libre cites Marx, Lenin and Mariátegui as the intellectual basis for its political vision. (Tina Greenfield) Unlike Marx and Lenin, Mariátegui’s contributions to the struggle for national liberation and socialism are far less known in much of the English-speaking world. Since Perú Libre pays such respect to Mariátegui, the study of his role can help in understand- ing events in that country.

For more than a month, Keiko Fujimori and others in Peru’s right-wing opposi- tion attempted to overturn the results of the June 6 pres- idential election that gave Perú Libre’s candidate Pedro Castillo a narrow lead over Fujimori. On July 19, the National Jury of Elections upheld the results, officially declaring Castillo the winner. Castillo is set to take office July 28 for a five-year term.

The Castillo campaign against the popular teacher and peasant leader included the utilization of the bour- geois-dominated media to smear Castillo. There was attempted bribery, largely orchestrated by Vladimiro Montesinos, former intelligence chief, under the dicta- tor Alberto Fujimori from his prison cell. (midwestwakeup.com, July 9)

Like the former president and father of Keiko Fujimori, Montesinos is serving time for corruption charges. Perú Libre cites Marx, Lenin and Perú’s own José Carlos Mariátegui as the intellectual basis for its political vision. Unlike Marx and Lenin, Mariátegui’s contributions to the struggle for national liberation and socialism are far less known in much of the English-speaking world. Since Perú Libre pays such respect to Mariátegui, the study of his role can help in understand- ing events in that country.

Considered by many to be the founder of Latin American communism, he is cel- ebrated for being the first person to utilize Marxist methods of analysis in order to better understand concrete reality in Peru and for carving a path to revolution based on these particular historical conditions.

Attention to Indigenous, peasantry

As such, Mariátegui was one of the first Latin American socialists to acknowledge the revolutionary potential of the peas- antry and Indigenous peoples. Rather than take a paternalistic or humanitarian position, he believed that these overlap- ping groups needed to be the architects of their own liberation and to do so using their own cultural knowledge, experience and language.

The attention Mariátegui paid to these marginalized populations, in both his thought and organizing efforts, set him apart from many of his contemporaries. He provided an ideological foundation for the melding of revolutionary social- ism and struggles for Indigenous social, political and cultural inclusion through- out the region.

The practical or material grounding of his theories was, by itself, a monumental contribution to the struggle of oppressed and exploited Peruvians. His revolution activities, however, went well beyond the written page. In 1928, he founded the Peruvian Socialist Party, a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party that sought to unite the country’s urban and rural working class, under the direction of a core group of commu- nists, and connect the national struggle to the internationalist communist move- ment via the Third International. As the party’s first secretary-general, Mariátegui trained and developed party leaders or cadres from working-class and Indigenous populations, who then organized their communities. Among the party’s activities was the creation of the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers (CUTP), a Marxist trade union federation that worked in tandem with the party to organize and unite the urban and rural masses.

Mariátegui’s emphasis on the revol- utional role of peasant and Indigenous masses, the subjective factor of class consciousness and the dialectical relation- ship between nationalism and inter- nationalism have had a lasting impact on both Peruvian Marxism and Latin American Marxism as a whole.

Mariátegui’s influence in the region is wide-reaching and can be seen in the likes of Ché Guevara, the Sandinistas and the liberation theologians. His thought is undeniable foundational to Perú Libre’s political orientation and aspirations.

The victory of Pedro Castillo and Perú Libre belongs to the country’s oppressed and exploited masses. However, the struggle is far from over. Now, accord- ing to the writing of the party, begins the “search for a new, more equitable and just society which will rescue its children from modern slavery in its various forms. Building that society is not an easy task; it implies fighting against reesse of power, embedded not only in its institutions but in our minds.

“To achieve the Party’s aspirations, we must bear in mind that the Party needs in its leadership, like the government in its public officials, highly technical poli- ticians and highly political technicians, neither of these two qualities must be divorced from the other. They must be concatenated, so that the revolutionary machinery can march.”

Viva Perú Libre! Viva Mariáteguismo!

Parts of this article have been adapted from the author’s introduction to Iskra Books’ “Selected Works of José Carlos Mariátegui.” A free PDF is available at tinyurl.com/jewuqcks and print copies are available for purchase at tinyurl.com/4gbp8igt.
Alex Saab

Arrest warrant in someone else’s name

By Victor Grossman

This lightly edited article first appeared in Berlin Bulletin No. 193, July 20, 2021.

She was all of 96 years, yet Esther Bejarano’s death hit hard, leaving a painful gap in the Palestinian anti-fascist scene. Until the final weeks of her long life, she was a fighter, speaking, singing and passing the word along—especially to young people.

Her life almost ended horribly when she was 19, after being crammed into a cattle car with other Jewish Germans on a final route to Auschwitz. Unlike most of her family she survived, thanks to her ability to play the piano and please some Kultur-lover among the killers.

“Can you play the accordion too?” Yes, she lied, and picked up the basics quickly enough to be included in the “girl orchestra” used to calm and deceive incoming trains of human beings, thus avoiding incineration in the “death marches” at the end.

It was a nasty job but enabled her to survive, until, after escaping the guards on a forced “death march” at the war’s end, she was rescued by Red Army and U.S. Army units.

Esther went to what was still Palestine. She founded a German branch of the Jewish Agency. She was a chic, uniformed Zionist dance-and-song group organized by the Jewish Agency. And the Ron Workers Chorus, a leftist group of uniformed singing groups, both Jewish and Arab like the singers.

The Festival asked both to perform on the same evening in one place. But after the Jewish Agency group finished and the Ron Chorus was ready to begin, all lights in the huge opera house went out. A minute later the huge chandeliers, a cloud of leaflets with a Zionist message floated down from the top gallery. Only then was the chorus with Esther able to sing. So I saw and heard her 74 years ago!

She got married, had children, but was not happy. As she wrote: “My husband and the State of Israel. It was a catastrophe....Life was difficult because we did not agree with the terrible things that were done to the Palestinians.”

In 1966 she and her family made the dramatic move back to Germany, to Hamburg. But she had not forgotten her earlier suffering. She never ceased combating fascism and former Nazis wherever they showed their heads. In West Germany in the 1960s, that still meant in virtually every walk of life, right up to Chancellor Kurt Kiesinger (1966-1966) and President Heinrich Lübke (1968-1974).

She founded a German branch of the Auschwitz Committee in her living room and became honorary president of the Association of Victims of the Nazis, on occasion braving water cannon to stop neo-Nazi parades. She was active in peace demonstrations and supported Cuba against the blockade.

After 1988 she joined her son, her daughter and young Turkish-German musicians in groups playing modernized international songs, Jewish songs and new political songs for all the good causes, including the rights of Palestinians to conduct their boycott campaign. In countless schools she used her story to oppose the many irebodies of the fascists, and her last action was to join in urging that May 8th, the day of victory over the Nazis, be made a national holiday.

Most media and many politicians voiced their praise and mourning—after almost a decade of life and attacking and trying to squash organizations she was active in, as an avowed Communist. They stressed how she had always fought anti-Semitism. She had indeed, ceaselessly, but not in the way they used the term, labeling everyone an anti-Semite who criticized Israeli government policies, its settlements, occupation, repression, its missile and drone attacks. Her opposition to this and her clearly leftist views and actions have gone almost unmentioned by officialdom and its media. But not by the thousands who attended her memorial ceremony, who had loved her, fought at her side, enjoyed her music—and would greatly miss her.

A top-up warrior

Esther Bejarano ¡Presente!

Cleveland baseball team

Racist name, mascot finally leaving

By Martha Grevatt

The big front page news July 24 was the new name of the city’s Major League Baseball team: the Cleveland Guardians. The Cleveland Indians, and its current name-calling mascots and despicable logo, would no longer appear on player uniforms—but merchandise bearing the image was still sold.

Only last year it was announced that the process of choosing a new name would begin, and the mascot would be retired. The new name gives a nod to Cleveland’s iconic landmark, the “Guardians of Traffic,” that adorns the Hope Memorial Bridge. The bridge, named for an English immigrant by the same name who carved the art deco statues, spans the Cuyahoga River connecting the East and West Sides.

However, the new team name represents an appeasement of backward-thinking fans who strongly opposed the change. It was chosen in part because it contains the same last five letters of the old racist name. The new logo retains the original script font and color scheme. The fans—who came to games wearing face paint and headaddresses, referred to their team as “the Tribe” and let out “war whoops” when a hit was scored—represent a major source of profit for the owners.

Cynthia Connolly, a member of the Lake Erie Native American Council, welcomed the new name but explained that many Indigenous Clevelanders won’t become overnight fans due to “over 60 years of trauma and torment that we’ve been living with.” (cleveland.com, July 25)

The Council, the American Indian Movement, the Committee of 500 Years of Dignity and the Lake Erie Chapter of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society comprise the Cleveland Indigenous Coalition, which pressed the team owners to drop the offensive name and mascot.

Now is the time for each and every professional, college and high school sports team—starting with Atlanta’s baseball and Kansas City’s football teams—to end their racist traditions of degrading Indigenous people with hateful names, mascots and fan rituals.

In consequence, Saab’s arrest was illegal, and that is why so many legal experts agree in calling it a plain and simple kidnaping,” an international affairs expert said to Orinoco Tribune.

Alex Saab was arrested in prison, held without any grounds, until June 29, 2020, when the United States’ request for extradition arrived. However, the extradition request did not contain an arrest warrant in the name of Ambassador Saab. Rather, it was in another person’s name: The arrest warrant was issued in the name of Mr. Álvaro Pulido-Vargas.

In its arguments, Saab’s defense pointed out the absence of the arrest warrant, both in its refutation of the extradition request presented on January 14, and in its appeal before the Constitutional Court.

Likewise, the Attorney General, in his statement before the Constitutional Court on June 28, admitted that there was an error in the arrest warrant attached to the Extradition Request, and [he] attached the corrected version of the arrest warrant of the other person.

The following subtly edited article first appeared in the Orinoco Tribune July 22, as “Cape Verde Admits Alex Saab’s Arrest Warrant was in Someone Else’s Name (Kidnapping).”

A year after the arrest of the Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab, Cape Verdean authorities (PGR), Luis José Landim, admitted that the warrant used to arrest him, June 12, 2020, was actually issued in somebody else’s name.

In the counter-allegations presented before the Constitutional Court, the PGR requested the correction in these terms: “It was mentioned that there was an international arrest warrant issued by Interpol against the appellant, issued by the Islamic Republic of Iran. At the time of his arrest, there was no Interpol Red Notice, and when the red notice against Ambassador Saab came, there was no arrest warrant. The Interpol Red Notice was issued in violation of the Interpol Rules and was therefore canceled on June 25.

Cleveland baseball team

Racist name, mascot finally leaving

By Martha Grevatt

Cleveland

The big front page news July 24 was the new name of the city’s Major League Baseball team: the Cleveland Guardians. The Cleveland Indians, and its current name-calling mascot and despicable logo—a racist caricature known as “Chief Wahoo”—had finally found their rightful place in the dustbin of history.

For decades Indigenous activists and allies protested outside home games, demanding the team scrap its mascot and change its name. For decades team owners were intransigent, citing “tradition.” In 2018 they announced that the offensive logo would no longer appear on player uniforms—but merchandise bearing the image was still sold.

Only last year it was announced that
Fidel on the ‘battle of ideas’

These slightly edited excerpts are from a speech given by Fidel Castro Ruz, speaking as president of the Republic of Cuba, Feb. 3, 1999, at the Central University of Venezuela. The complete remarks are available at tinyurl.com/7y66wuy2.

“...We have had to wage, and will have to continue waging, a more difficult battle against that extremely powerful empire: a ceaseless ideological battle that they step up and intensify every time we make a single step towards the collapse of the socialist camp, when fully confident in our ideas we decided to continue forward ... without ever forgetting the efforts of the Cuban people in the battle of ideas.”

Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba by Leslie Feinberg

This groundbreaking book-a-breakdown is a collection 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.
China y África: Cooperación mutua, no neocolonialismo

Por Ernie Hamer (Autor invitado)

Basado en una charla dada en una reunión de Workers World/Partido Mundo Obrero en Buffalo, N.Y., el 27 de abril de 2021.

Con la República Popular de China en asenso, las fuerzas del imperialismo estadounidense están comenzando a entusiasmarse con el inmensurado potencial que las marcas globales cambian gradualmente en su contra. El Partido Comunista de China ha servido como un ejemplo del inmenso progreso realizado por su sistema socialista. Al mismo tiempo, los medios de comunicación estadounidenses han experimentado un importante aumento de la retórica antiguo destinada a restar importancia a los logros de la China Popular. En particular, se está pidiendo a la imagen de China que sencillamente no es congruente con la realidad. Una de las falsas narrativas que se han expuesto sobre China es que es una potencia “imperialista”, citando regularmente las relaciones que China ha desarrollado con África.

África es un continente extremadamente rico en recursos, pero que carece de la infraestructura necesaria para extraerlo y utilizarlo. Por ello, los gobiernos africanos suelen mirar hacia el exterior para encontrar financiación para los proyectos de infraestructura de su país. En total, África tiene una deuda pendiente de más de $350.000 millones de dólares y, de esa cantidad, al menos el 20% corresponde a China, lo que la convierte en la más importante acreedora. (aiddata.org, 31 de marzo)

Entre los años 2000 y 2019, China proporcionó $133.000 millones de dólares en compromisos de préstamos a África en los principales compromisos de préstamos de Angola, Etiopía, Zambia y Kenia. (China Daily, 16 de febrero de 2021)

Estos préstamos chinos se están utilizando principalmente para financiar el déficit de infraestructuras de África. En un continente donde más de 600 millones de africanos no tienen acceso a la electricidad, el 40% de los préstamos chinos se destinan a la generación y transmisión de energía. Otro 30% se destinó a la modificación de la infraestructura de transporte de África.

En un Foro de Cooperación China-Afrika celebrado en 2018 en Pekín con líderes africanos, el presidente chino Xi Jinping declaró: “Seguiríamos un enfoque de ‘véase al otro y hablemos’. Desde el punto de vista de África: Ninguna interferencia en la búsqueda de los países africanos de vías diferentes; ninguna interferencia en las relaciones internas de los países africanos; ninguna imposición de nuestra voluntad a los países africanos; y, por último, las condiciones políticas de la asistencia a África; y ninguna búsqueda de beneficios políticos egoístas en la inversión y la cooperación financiera con África.” (facac.org, 3 de septiembre de 2018)

Lo que se expone en ese enfoque difiere enormemente del de Estados Unidos y de Occidente. Sin embargo, a pesar de ello, China es constantemente pintada como una nación imperialista que se aprovecha de África y de su gente.

Falsas narrativas sobre China

Las prácticas de préstamo de China son a menudo objeto de escrutinio, al ser calificadas de explotadoras de las naciones de África. En cuanto a la creciente presencia de China en África, el ex ministro sudafricano de Comercio e Industria, Rob Davies, dijo que “sólo puede ser algo bueno… porque significa que ya no tenemos que firmar en la línea lo que nos piden para sacar el pan del país”. (Washington Post, 12 de abril de 2018)

En general, las inversiones chinas vinculadas a su política no intervencionista sirven a su objetivo de desarrollar la economía en África, pero no son perfectas, las inversiones chinas en los países africanos les proporcionan una financiación alternativa más eficiente para ambas partes, lo que ayuda a mejorar las condiciones de vida de la población de estos países y también aleja a Occidente de la explotación en la que históricamente ha estado.

Tenemos que entender y reconocer que la relación entre China y África es muy diferente a la que existe entre otras naciones occidentales y África. No hacerlo sólo serviría para avivar una peligrosa retórica anticomunista cuando lo más importante es defender a China de estos ataques.
Una manifestación de 2017 de ACT UP (Coalición contra el sida para liberar el poder) en la ciudad de Nueva York. "Criminalización del VIH es acrítica y homofóbica."