

Two faces of imperialism

G7/NATO: Diplomacy among thieves

To grasp the essence of the meetings in Europe, in which Joe Biden has been talking nicely to Washington's predatory imperialist allies, we should examine their historical precedent: the 1884-1885 Berlin Conference to divide and plunder the African continent.

Armed with this historical perspective, it is easy to debunk Washington and the corporate media's whitewash of these mid-June 2021 gatherings — construed to be “summits” of fellow “democracies” that share “common values,” opposed to “autocracies.”

What are those common values? The Berlin Conference — with

a fledgling U.S. power present — aimed to coordinate European colonialism's looting of Africa. France and Britain had already seized the lion's share of the continent, with Portugal, Italy, Germany, Belgium and Spain taking most of the rest.

The conference drew boundaries dividing the colonies to mitigate the interimperialist infighting, which slowed down the continent's conquest and had the potential to unleash a war in Europe. Its other goal was to restrain competition from the emerging empires

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Venezuela, Cabo Verde, the case of Alex Saab

By Sara Flounders and Roger D. Harris

Facing the possible extradition to the U.S. of a Venezuelan diplomat on bogus charges, an emergency human rights delegation organized by the International Campaign to Free Alex Saab on June 3 flew to Cabo Verde, where Saab is imprisoned. This island archipelago nation off the west coast of Africa is one of the smallest, poorest and geographically isolated countries in the world.

The international human rights delegation did not gain Alex Saab's freedom. They were even denied a visit with him. But they made breakthroughs raising the visibility of the case, which involves enormous political, legal and moral issues with long-term political consequences.

Saab's case involves the abduction of a diplomat by the world's sole superpower, which is locked in an unequal struggle to destroy the formerly prosperous, oil-rich country of Venezuela. The U.S. attack on Venezuela is not motivated by imperfections in Venezuelan society, but on Venezuela's past successes in fighting poverty, promoting regional integration and acting like a sovereign nation.

Otherwise, the U.S. would be sending Venezuela aid instead of lavishing aid on the apartheid state of Israel, the narco-state of Colombia and the absolute monarchy of Saudi Arabia.

The kidnapping of Alex Saab is a dramatic and far-reaching effort to enforce the illegal U.S.-decreed policy of economic sanctions. Washington is attempting to impose its will on a country by deliberately attacking the civilian population. These illegal sanctions are a conscious policy of imposing economic havoc to “make the economy scream.”

Saab, a Venezuelan diplomat abducted by the U.S. government a year ago, has been held under torturous conditions. The denial of diplomatic immunity by the U.S. is illegal, a violation of international law.

International campaign to Free Alex Saab

The powerful corporate media, by omission, can render a news item invisible. The Saab case is virtually unknown in the U.S., even among progressive political journalists, left organizations and solidarity activists. Washington's demand for the extradition of Alex Saab is being covered more extensively in African and Latin American publications. In Venezuela, as expected, the case is well known.

Among some who are aware of the case, there

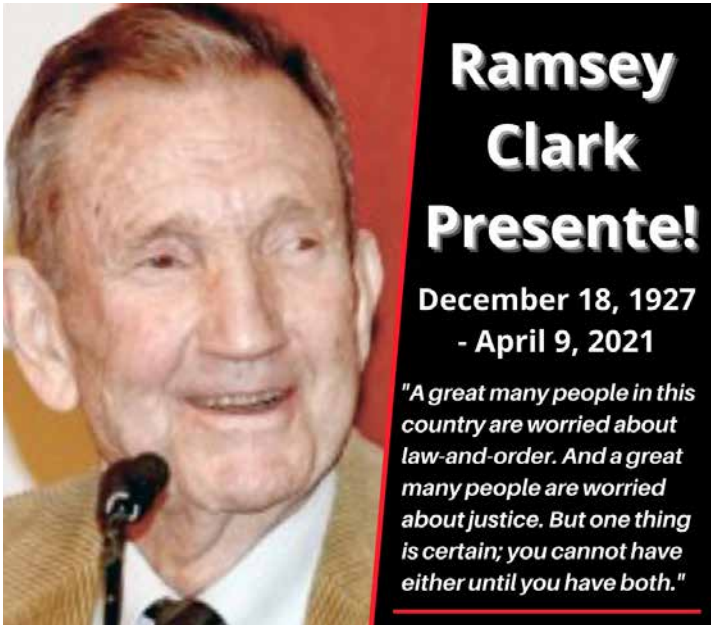
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Second Annual Boston Trans Resistance March, Vigil and Pride Fest, from Roxbury to Dorchester, June 12. Page 2.

WW PHOTO: S. KIRSCHBAUM

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December 12th Movement applauds reparations victory in New York State Assembly

The Dec. 12th Movement International Secretariat issued the following press statement June 10, 2021.

The December 12th Movement congratulates the New York State Assembly for its passage of the historic Reparations Bill authored by Assemblyman Charles Barron. This “Reparations Remedy” bill, different from any others being considered around the U.S., provides for a Commission with majority representation of community members who have a demonstrated expertise in and commitment to the demand for reparations. It also sets a timetable for rapid implementation of a process which is long overdue.

It is now up to the New York State Senate to act TODAY to complete this stage of the campaign. Any further delay is inexcusable.

We, the December 12th Movement, who for over thirty years have been waging the fight for reparations, locally, nationally and internationally, in the streets, in the classrooms and in the courts, are honored to be one of the three community-representative organizations (along with N’COBRA and the Institute of the Black World) designated to the Commission.



The Reparations bill complements our campaign to demand an executive order from President Biden providing for a \$50 billion down payment on reparations to be directed to the reform of health care delivery systems in Black communities.

On this day, in this period between the commemorations of the George Floyd lynching, the Tulsa Race Massacre and Juneteenth, we celebrate this victory. It is not a time for complacency; it must inspire all of us to push forward with greater commitment, passion, resolve and consistency.

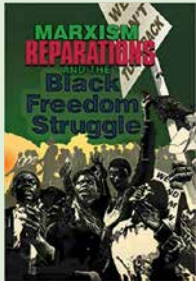
As we said at the 2001 United Nations World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa: They stole us! They sold us! They owe us! Reparations Now! □

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

Edited by Monica Moorehead
 An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper.

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination • Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery • Black Youth: Repression & Resistance • The Struggle for Socialism Is Key • Domestic Workers United Demand Passage of a Bill of Rights • Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice! • Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior • Racism & Poverty in the Delta • Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions • Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation • Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion

Available at major online booksellers. Free PDF at workers.org/books



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, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Harvard dining hall workers resist layoffs

By mYia X and Phebe Eckfeldt
Cambridge, Mass.

June 3 — Members of UNITE HERE Local 26, which represents Harvard dining hall workers, picketed the Harvard Law School cafeteria today to demand no layoffs. The university has threatened to lay off 15 workers when classes resume in the fall.

Harvard wants to take advantage of COVID conditions at the school and summer period — with most students not on campus. The bosses likely think this timing will limit participation in the struggle by union members and student supporters.

Nonetheless, 50 workers and their supporters turned out. These included maintenance workers and guards who are members of 32BJ Service Employees, Local 26 union staff, Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, and members of Workers World Party.

“We feed the students. We feed the faculty. And, with this job, we feed our



Members of Local 26 UNITE HERE, representing Harvard dining hall workers, picket on June 3.

WW PHOTO: PHEBE ECKFELDT

families,” said Local 26 Shop Steward Willie Moore, as he addressed the workers.

Negotiations are currently at a standstill. Local 26 members strongly oppose layoffs and are fighting to prevent Harvard from dividing workers between those at jobs which were subcontracted and those on Harvard’s payroll. All have, word for word, the same contract except for different benefits.

The majority of Local 26 workers who came out today are veterans of the 2016 strike, which won worldwide recognition for backing Harvard down and retaining workers’ health insurance, plus winning a wage increase. They fought for and won more protection from discrimination for trans workers and immigrant workers. They proudly won recognition of Indigenous Peoples Day to replace the

backward Columbus Day.

Local 26 Chief Shop Steward LaQuiesha Rainey told the crowd that during the 2016 strike, all workers, even those working for subcontractors, fought together as one. The Law School workers shut the dining hall down. Rainey assured them that Local 26 would fight alongside them in their struggle against layoffs.

The doors to the Law School were closed and locked, but undeterred Chief Steward Gene Van Buren pulled out his cell phone and called Dean John Manning, telling him in no uncertain terms that layoffs were unacceptable, and Local 26 would fight them all the way. In the background 50 workers chanted, “We’ll be back!”

“Harvard has hired people who have a reputation of union busting as negotiators for the university, including the chief press person and Dean of Law School. The workers are sticking together and organizing for a struggle against the terrible conditions of this period of pandemic,” Ed Childs, retired Local 26 chief steward told Workers World. □

Trans resistance!

The Second Annual Boston Trans Resistance March, Vigil and Pride Fest — uplifting the global Black Trans Lives Matter struggle and radical roots of LGBTQ+ Pride — gathered in Nubian Square, Roxbury, on June 12. The rally was led by Athena Vaughn and Chastity Jamaria Bowick of Trans Resistance and the Transgender Emergency Fund of MA.

With chants and music pumping from the Dorchester Arts Project sound truck, march organizers led a crowd of thousands into the streets for a militant,

unified march through the community. The march ended at Franklin Park, Dorchester, for a festive celebration of LGBTQ+ resistance in the ongoing struggle for full rights and legal protections for trans people, including an end to racism, misogyny, anti-trans violence and discrimination.

Organizers pledged to keep fighting for the right to good-paying jobs and benefits, safe affordable housing and inclusive health care for trans, nonbinary and gender-nonconforming people.

— Report by Maureen Skehan



WW PHOTO: S. KIRSCHBAUM

Venezuela, Cabo Verde, the case of Alex Saab

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is however an inordinate concentration on Saab the individual, obscuring the larger issues of sovereignty and human rights.

Gathering information on what was involved was no easy task. The U.S. charge of “money laundering” by a private businessperson in a country wracked by extreme shortages was meant to negate sympathy for Mr. Saab. It was only as the actual facts emerged that a support plan evolved for an international solidarity campaign.

The fact that Alex Saab has withstood a year-long arrest, torture and months of solitary confinement rather than comply with U.S. demands to cooperate indicates

that he is not just a businessperson willing to sell to the highest bidder.

In Cabo Verde, the four-person human rights delegation knocked on government doors, conducted interviews and spoke with the media. They were supported by an activist movement and a strong legal team. The delegation was led by a Cabo Verde citizen, Bishop Filipe Teixeira, OFSCJ, a religious leader living in the Boston area who has a congregation of Cabo Verdeans and a history of participation in social justice campaigns. Tweets, Facebook links and news reports helped penetrate the wall of silence.

An international petition campaign has collected thousands of signatures, which are being forwarded to the president and

prime minister of Cabo Verde and to the U.S. president. Several webinars have been held, including one with Saab’s lawyers, speaking from Cabo Verde and Nigeria.

Role of solidarity activists

Solidarity and people’s movements working together can become a powerful material force, breaking through silence, fear and repression. The focus for international solidarity work in this period is to strongly defend movements and even countries under relentless U.S. imperialist attack and destabilization, without placing unrealistic expectations or creating unrealistic images of how wonderful the internal situation is in the targeted country. Solidarity is not a pass for interference, second guessing, criticism or euphoric idealism.

It is essential to focus full attention on the source of the problem — U.S. imperialism — and not get lost in the weeds of criticizing the victim. U.S. sabotage, imposed shortages, mercenary attacks and fueling national antagonisms are intended to create and intensify internal divisions.

Shortages are intended to increase corruption, side deals, privilege and resentment. The targeted country may, thus, be wrongly blamed for the unfolding crisis created by the U.S. actions.

Simply put, many progressive goals are thwarted under conditions of illegal sanctions — because that is the purpose of the sanctions. Self-defense by the victimized country is an obligation in the face of destabilization and constant sabotage.

At each step, keeping the focus on the criminal U.S. actions provides the groundwork for progressive solidarity. This is true not only in defending attempts at revolutionary change, such as in Cuba or Venezuela. Even in Cabo Verde, the focus on the role of the U.S. was important. It was hardly a decision by the government of Cabo Verde to pull Alex Saab from his plane or to order him held.

Cabo Verde’s isolation and strategic position simply made that country a convenient location for the long arm of U.S. extraterritorial judicial overreach.

This case must become a global challenge to arrogant U.S. lawlessness.

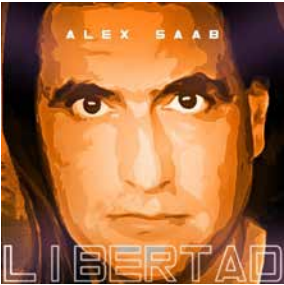
Sara Flounders of the International Action Center and Roger D. Harris of the Task Force on the Americas visited Cabo Verde the week of June 3-10 as part of an emergency human rights delegation organized by the International Campaign to Free Alex Saab.



PHOTO: ROGER D. HARRIS

Solidarity delegation files habeas corpus papers in Cabo Verde Supreme Court.

For more information on the case of Alex Saab:
AFGJ.org/Free-Alex-Saab
Alex Saab petition: bit.ly/FreeAlexSaabVZ
Twitter: @FreedomForAlexSaab



International virtual tribute honors Ramsey Clark's life

By Monica Moorehead

Ramsey Clark, human rights fighter and former U.S. Attorney General, who died April 9 at age 93, was memorialized by hundreds of people, from the U.S. and worldwide, who attended an international webinar June 13.

The program included 36 prerecorded tributes, 14 written messages, at least 100 photos and recordings of Clark speaking at meetings and during humanitarian trips.

Clark, founder of the U.S.-based International Action Center in 1992, was remembered for unapologetically opposing the government that he once represented as the top lawyer from 1967-69, a most powerful imperialist.

Representatives, both prerecorded and in print, spoke about how Clark used his high-ranking position in the

Johnson administration to later vehemently denounce U.S. imperialist policies, both at home and abroad, starting with his opposition to the U.S. bombing Hanoi, North Vietnam, in 1972.

IAC co-director Sara Flounders, co-moderator of the webinar, said in her opening remarks that Ramsey “inspired the political activists who used [the IAC] structure to defend liberation struggles, oppose U.S. wars of aggression and defend political prisoners. Ramsey never made any of the work about himself. He seemed unfazed by personal attacks.

“He was most engaged in focused, collective action and reminded us we were up against the greatest purveyor of violence on earth, the U.S. He had a deep respect for common people and a passionate interest in the cultures, history and accomplishments of other peoples.

“Ramsey reminded the whole movement constantly that every U.S. media demonization campaign, [while] targeting one individual leader, was always the excuse for a devastating war against a whole people.”

Ramsey Clark’s younger sister, Mimi Gronlund, provided personal insights on how her older brother influenced her. Her anecdotes helped explain how he became so principled in his convictions.

Co-moderator Monica Moorehead, a founder of Millions for Mumia of the IAC and a Workers World managing editor, said, “It was the beloved hero of the Cuban Revolution, Ché Guevara, who stated: ‘the true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love.’ Ramsey Clark was a perfect example of what Ché meant.

“The world’s oppressed peoples loved, admired and respected this extraordinary antiwar humanitarian. And the reason for this love by the people is because of Ramsey’s abiding love and admiration for people fighting for their liberation everywhere from the brutal yoke of an inhumane government that he used to believe in and represent.

“There will never be another Ramsey Clark, but we can only hope that future revolutionaries will be as defiant, as unflappable and as principled as he was.”

Clark was beloved worldwide

The prerecorded messages had a common theme, no matter what struggle they represented: Ramsey Clark’s selflessness — even putting himself into life-threatening situations to be an important voice against racism, war and occupation — was an inspiration to millions of people.

Speakers included Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Alice Walker; actor and activist Danny Glover; Palestinian human rights lawyer and activist Lamis Deek; Million Worker March founder Clarence Thomas; William Camacaro, Bolivarian Circle; Veterans for Peace members Gerry Condon and Frank Dorrel; Dianne Mathiowetz, IAC Atlanta chapter; Larry Holmes,



PHOTO: WILLIAM CAMACARO

Ramsey Clark and current Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro, 2006 in New York City.



PHOTO: GLORIA LARIVA

With three mothers of once imprisoned Cuban Five, Ramsey Clark receives the Solidarity medal in Cuba.

Workers World Party; Jose Maria Sison, International League of Peoples Struggles; Gavrielle Gemma, Workers Voice, Socialist Movement, New Orleans; Comrade Khalequzzeman, Socialist Party of Bangladesh; Gloria Rubac, Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement; Steve Kirschbaum, UAW Local 8751 Boston School Bus Drivers; and many more.

Written statements were read from the presidents of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua: Miguel Díaz-Canel, Nicolás Maduro and Daniel Ortega Saavedra, respectively; Dr. Riyad Mansour, Minister, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations; political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal; Rev. John Dear and Martha Hennessy, Plowshares movement; and Peter Woods, Asia Pacific Regional Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea.

Those who viewed the webinar thanked the IAC for organizing the tribute to, as one admirer put in the chat, “a remarkable and very good man.” Video of memorial available at iacenter.org/ramseyclarktribute. To submit a tribute, please email ramseyclarktribute@gmail.com. □



With daughter, Ronda



With Ramsey Clark in 2015 are Sara Flounders, left, and Monica Moorehead, moderators for June 13 memorial tribute webinar.

Support a Marxist voice for LGBTQ2S+ rights

For over half a century, Workers World newspaper has covered the global struggle to end all forms of discrimination, persecution and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and gender-nonconforming communities.

WW has consistently backed up our activist coverage with analysis. In the early 1970s, WW ran a series of articles that led to publication of “The Gay Question: A Marxist Appraisal” in 1976. Then in 1993, WW published “The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View,” with the first book’s original text and a new preface and afterword. (Read it at workers.org/books.)

In 2004 WW managing editor and globally recognized transgender leader Leslie Feinberg began the “Lavender & Red” series, which ran until 2008 in WW. A group of 25 articles from that series was later published as the book, “Rainbow Solidarity in Defense of Cuba.” In 2012

Feinberg performed civil disobedience and wrote articles defending Black trans woman CeCe McDonald, who was charged with manslaughter after defending herself from a racist, bigoted attack.

WW helps to build mass struggles, like what’s been going on in the streets from coast to coast. This righteous outpouring of rage and protest over the racist cop murder of George Floyd came as the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately impacted Black, Latinx and Indigenous peoples and immigrants.

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For a donation of at least \$75 a year — or \$100, or \$300 or more if you can — receive a year’s subscription to WW; a regular letter about timely issues; and one, two or three subscriptions,

respectively, to give to friends. Members can receive a copy of the book: “What Road to Socialism?” upon request. (Or read it at workers.org/books)

New articles are posted daily at workers.org. Currently, one issue a month is being printed and mailed to subscribers. As soon as it’s possible, the newspaper will resume more frequent printing and mailing.

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

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



Pride, New York City, 2019. WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Western, colonizing rulers imposed anti-LGBTQ+ laws

By Leslie Feinberg

This lightly edited article was originally published in 2007 as Part 112 in Workers World Party Comrade Leslie Feinberg's "Lavender & Red" series on LGBTQ+ issues and communism. Feinberg's analysis continues to be timely, explaining how, for instance, in 2019 in former British protectorate Brunei, "homosexual sex" could still be punishable with death by stoning. While in India in 2018, a broad coalition of women, trans people, LGBTQ+ people, Muslims, Dalit people, union members and other workers overturned Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code. This was a British colonial-era law that banned sexual acts, which the colonizers considered "against the order of nature." The entire "Lavender & Red" series is available free at workers.org/books.

Wherever class-divided societies overturned matri-lineal communal groupings, laws began to punish sexualities, gender expressions and bodies that did not fit the new patriarchal family models. The status of women, who had played a pivotal role in pre-class societies where the bloodline was traced through females, not males, was degraded with the ascendancy of patriarchal class rule.

The ruling class mandated adherence to a father-dominated family unit, rather than the ancient mother-right gens, because it assured the transmission of wealth to male heirs.

As ruling classes grew stronger and expanded their territories by overthrowing neighboring communal societies by force of arms, they violently enforced their legal codes and social order on militarily conquered peoples.

European ruling classes also exported and enforced laws against same-sex love all over the world as they established their colonial empires. European colonialism used Inquisition terror to enforce these laws against same-sex love and sex/gender variance everywhere. This violent legal restructuring of Indigenous societies — which affected economic organization, kinship, family/community organization, sexualities, gender and sex roles — served enslavement, exploitation, oppression and profit.

Indigenous societies under siege were diverse. For instance, the Gay American Indians History Project, first published in the germinal 1988 book "Living the Spirit," lists 135 Indigenous peoples on the North American continent who made room for many more sex/gender roles than the European nations did.

Midnight Sun, Anishnabe, provides a historical materialist view of sex/gender systems in these varied Indigenous societies in one of the book's essays. Entitled "Sex/Gender Systems in Native North America," it explains: "Social, and specifically sexual, life is embedded in the economic organization of society — an organization that gives rise to a variety of cultural forms. The cultural construction of gender and sexuality must be seen in terms of the sexual division of labor, subsistence patterns, social relations and male-female relations. Within this context, ideology is not an arbitrary, discrete force — rather, it serves to reproduce and perpetuate social forms, behaviors and individuals suitable to a particular mode of production."

The roots of Abu-Ghraib

European colonialism exported its domestic, counterrevolutionary Inquisition around the world, starting with Portuguese expansionism around 1500 C.E. The early epoch of direct colonial rule reached its zenith more than three centuries later with British domination of India in 1857.

Queer Heritage reports that in 1551: "Portuguese

missionary Father Pedro Correia, writing from Brazil, asserts that same-sex eroticism among Indigenous women is quite common, in fact as widespread as in Africa, where he was previously stationed. Native Brazilian women, he observes, carry weapons and even form same-sex marriages."

In 1646, Portuguese colonial overlords expanded their laws against same-sexuality to include females, as well as males. The sentence was being burned alive at the stake.

Max Mejía [a founding member of the Grupo Lambda de Liberación Homosexual in Mexico City in 1978] writes that with the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in the Western Hemisphere, "An absolutist discourse enveloped homosexuality in the concepts of 'infamous sin,' 'sin against nature,' corruption of the soul and alliance with the devil. They punished the practice without distinctions, among both lay people and clerics.

"Furthermore," Mejía concludes, "the conquerors treated 'sodomy' as a special Indian sin and hunted it down and punished it as such on a grand scale. They orchestrated crusades like the Holy Inquisition, which began burning 'sodomites' at the stake as a special occasion, as in the memorable auto-da-fé of San Lázaro in Mexico City."

During Vasco Núñez de Balboa's colonial expedition across Panama, he "saw men dressed like women; Balboa learnt that they were sodomites and threw the king and 40 others to be eaten by his dogs, a fine action of an honorable and Catholic Spaniard." The Spanish colonial authorities in Cuba castrated those they considered "sodomites."

When the Spaniards invaded the Antilles and Louisiana, "[T]hey found men dressed as women who were respected by their societies. Thinking they were hermaphrodites, or homosexuals, they slew them."

Wealthy Dutch merchants imposed pre-Napoleonic Roman-Dutch common law, which criminalized "sodomy" and "unnatural sex offenses" from Indonesia to South Africa. The colonial legislation that the Dutch merchants brought with them to the Cape of Africa in the 17th century still forms the basis of laws in Namibia, Zimbabwe and Lesotho.

Sun never set on British anti-sodomy laws

The British imposed on the people of Ireland a 1634 law that made same-sex relations between males punishable by death. Later, the 1885 British Labouchère Amendment was the law under which feminine homosexual writer Oscar Wilde was sentenced to hard labor.

Laws criminalizing same-sex relations in India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei all have the same name — "Article 377" — because the same colonial power wrote the law: Britain. The colonial-drafted legislation is misleadingly named the "Indian Penal Code." Hindu law had not punished consensual sexual relations.

Historian Douglas Sanders explains: "Article 377 of the Indian Penal Code of 1860 made 'carnal intercourse against the order of nature' an offence."

The British imposed this legislation in the Straits Settlements of Singapore, Penang and Malacca in 1872. By the late 19th century, Britain also enforced the law in Hong Kong, Fiji, the Malay Peninsula and Burma.

Korea Herald journalist Benjamin Jhoty quotes Utopia-asia.com, which offers information about the same-sexuality scene in Asia: "Asia has rich and unique homosexual traditions almost everywhere you look. The true enemy of homosexuality

in places like Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines are antique colonial laws and homophobic non-Asian religions that bully citizens with skewed views of the natural world."

Historian Sanders notes, "This provision, or something very close to it, is presently in force in all former British colonies in Asia with the exception of Hong Kong." He adds: "Sri Lanka, Seychelles and Papua New Guinea have the key wording from 377, but different article numbers. Parallel wording appears in the criminal laws of many of the former colonies in Africa."

Historians Kevin Botha and Edwin Cameron write, "The systems of law the colonial powers (both Dutch and later English) introduced significantly influenced the customary law of the African communities they subjugated."

The British "Queensland Penal Code" of 1899 was "adopted in Northern Nigeria in the 19th century, later becoming the basis for a uniform federal code in Nigeria in 1916. The Indian Penal Code had been used in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, but those laws were later replaced by drafts based on the Nigerian criminal code. Sudan used the Indian Penal Code. In 1960, Northern Nigeria enacted a separate criminal code based on the Sudan code."

Similar laws were forced on "British" Honduras (today Belize), Jamaica, Anguilla, the "British" Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Bahamas, Tobago, Turks and Caicos, and St. Lucia.

The British also imposed anti-"sodomy" legislation on Canada in 1892, New Zealand a year later, and Australia in 1788 and again in 1899.

Capital offense in colonized North America

Civil liberties historian Tom Head explained: "As Spanish, French, Dutch and English colonists began to settle North America during the 17th century, they brought with them a catalog of highly specific laws proscribing various sexual acts. The purpose of all these laws was to enforce monogamous, same-race, heterosexual marriage as a mandatory institution and to punish any and all sexual activity outside of that institution."

The earliest anti-"sodomy" legislation was passed in the Virginia Colony on May 24, 1610, and soon spread to all the colonies and later to all U.S. states.

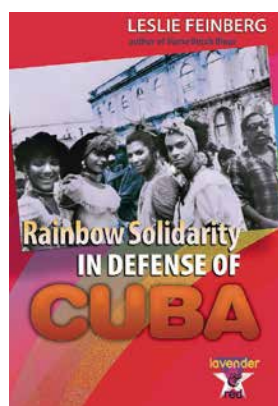
Historian John D'Emilio wrote: "In every colony, sodomy was a capital offense — at least five men were executed during this era — and other homosexual acts, from 'sodomitical practices' to lewdness between women, were punished with whippings and fines.

"After the American Revolution, although the states reformed their criminal codes in the spirit of Enlightenment philosophy, revision of the sodomy statutes and the 'crimes against nature' laws came very slowly; North Carolina did not eliminate capital punishment [for sodomy] until 1869.

"Thomas Jefferson proposed that death be replaced by castration. Moreover, as time went on, legislatures and courts broadened the statutes to include a wider range of acts, such as oral sex between men and sexual activity between women," D'Emilio concluded.

In the U.S., anti-homosexual and anti-miscegenation laws were also a weapon of state repression against African and Indigenous peoples, who became internal colonies. In 1898, U.S. imperialists also brutally enforced these laws in countries they subjugated militarily.

After seizing Puerto Rico as a colony in 1898, the U.S. imposed a law against same-sex love on the island that was a carbon copy of the California state legal language. And in 1938, in a Cuba under U.S. domination, an [anti-gay] "Public Ostentation Law" was enacted. □



Rainbow Solidarity in DEFENSE of CUBA

By Leslie Feinberg,
author of Stone Butch Blues

This book is an edited compilation of chapters 86 to 110 from the Lavender & Red series in Workers World newspaper that began June 3, 2004.

It is available online at: www.workers.org/books/

Life without parole is ‘silent execution’

By Gloria Rubac

Slow death row. A silent execution. These are some of the names given a relatively new sentence option in the U.S. criminal legal system — life without parole.

LWOP sentences a person to spend the rest of their life incarcerated with absolutely no possibility of ever being released. The person will never leave prison alive.

LWOP is now being used in record numbers in the U.S. This type of sentence began in the 1980s, when the “war on drugs” was a popular ploy of racist politicians. The punitive sentence had no relationship to deterring crime or drug use.

As the use of the death penalty dramatically decreased in recent decades, life without parole has been used as the main alternative to sentencing people to death. LWOP is cheaper than a trial with a death sentence as the goal. It is easier for juries — who have become reluctant to send people to death row — to approve a sentence of life without parole.

Unfortunately, many liberal anti-death penalty organizations have fought for LWOP as a way to decrease capital punishment.

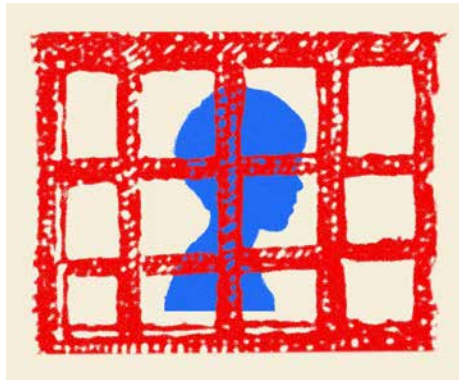
Life sentences without parole are “virtually unheard of elsewhere in the world,” said Ashley Nellis in her February 2021 study for The Sentencing Project, a non-profit advocating for shorter prison terms. (tinyurl.com/5a84xx9s)

Nellis found that “imprisonment beyond 20 years is a predominantly American phenomenon.” LWOP sentences are steadily replacing the death penalty across the U.S. Almost 56,000 people countrywide are now serving sentences that will keep them locked up until they die, an increase of 66% since 2003.

Worldwide, 83% of those serving life

without parole are in U.S. prisons. Alaska is the only U.S. state that bans life without parole. Since 2007, 11 states have abolished the death penalty, but those all issue sentences of life without parole.

According to Witness to Innocence, since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976, 185 men and women from 28 states have been exonerated and freed from death row, through the intense scrutiny which capital cases typically receive. This raises questions about the number of life sentences that may have resulted from wrongful convictions. (witness-to-innocence.org/facts)



ART BY ANNIE OTZEN

Inadequate legal defense

The Death Penalty Information Center reports: “Around 2,500 prisoners currently face execution in the United States. The national death row population has declined for 18 consecutive years, as sentence reversals, executions and deaths by other causes are outpacing new death sentences.” (tinyurl.com/2fntudct)

Though LWOP sentences are displacing capital punishment, the legal defense is weak for those facing such a sentence. Only 11 states have minimum qualifications for lawyers who represent working-class and poor people facing

a lifetime behind bars, according to the nonprofit Sixth Amendment Center. (tinyurl.com/2s9pzvzn)

Most states have no standards for such representation. Someone just out of law school could represent a LWOP case in Illinois or Nebraska. In California, a third of those imprisoned are serving some form of life sentence, but minimum qualifications apply only in death penalty cases.

In 2003, the American Bar Association updated its guidelines to say that lawyers defending people facing the death penalty should have extensive criminal trial experience, have knowledge of death penalty case law and hire investigators and mental health experts. But the new standards do not apply to life without parole cases. (tinyurl.com/2768x9bv)

LWOP heaviest on people of color, women

When it comes to life without parole, “the idea that you would treat these cases like you would treat other felonies is somewhat incomprehensible to me,” said Pamela Metzger, director of the Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center. “The sentencing stakes are so high and often irreversible. People facing life have far fewer chances to appeal than those facing capital punishment, and their cases draw far less scrutiny.” (themarshallproject.org, May 22)

“Prosecutors have gone wild with life-without-parole sentences — but in particular for marginalized people,” said Brandon Garrett, Duke University law professor. Garrett’s study of North Carolina found that more than 60% of the prison population serving life without parole were Black. (tinyurl.com/48a2fm8b)

The Sentencing Project revealed that the number of women serving life sentences without parole increased 43% from



2008 to 2020. The number of men serving such sentences went up 29% during that period.

In a 2018 Scalawag Magazine article, Lyle C. May wrote, “Life without parole is silent execution.” May is on death row in North Carolina. He gives examples of crimes that resulted in life without parole: stealing a \$159 jacket, shoplifting two cameras from Walmart, serving as the middleman in a \$10 sale of marijuana. (tinyurl.com/vs9zp2v)

May emphasizes that whether it’s liberals who oppose the death penalty or prosecutors or defense attorneys who favor life without parole: “All would rather wash their hands of and ignore the deeper societal problems rooted in crime — racism, poverty and mental illness — maintaining that there are some prisoners who deserve no mercy.”

“LWOP obscures the more insidious issues of prosecutorial, judicial, jury and police misconduct, as well as ineffective counsel. Beyond a cursory direct appeal, there is no indigent defense attorney assigned to noncapital cases. Without the in-depth case analyses made by appellate defenders, as they are in capital cases, many appealable issues are never discovered or developed, including innocence.”

Life without parole is death. LWOP must be abolished along with the death penalty and prisons. We can and should make progressive changes in the current criminal legal system, while working for the abolition that will take place once capitalism and all its ills have been overthrown. □

Palestinian youth defiant despite retaliation, mass arrests

By Ted Kelly

Hundreds of Palestinians have been arrested in retaliation for the May 2021 uprising across Palestine, including prominent twin activists Muna and Muhammed al-Kurd. Now 23, they have have documented Zionist aggression in Palestine since childhood.

The two activists again showed the world the true face of the occupation with their viral videos of the struggle against Israeli occupation in the Palestinian neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah. The video caught Jacob Fauci — a Long Island, N.Y., resident and Trump supporter — saying of the al-Kurd family house where he’s been squatting since 2009, “If I don’t take it, somebody else will.”

Nabil al-Kurd, the twins’ 77-year-old father, said, “Israel will not be satisfied until it kicks me out of the house I’ve lived in almost my entire life.”

Palestinian mass protest

After the mid-May settler incursions into Sheikh Jarrah and mob attacks on



Muna and Muhammed al-Kurd were 12-year-old Palestinian activists in Sheikh Jarrah, East Jerusalem, in 2010.

Muslim worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Al-Quds (Jerusalem), Palestinians have engaged in mass protests, work stoppages and armed resistance. They are using every method at their disposal to fight the occupation of their homeland.

Israeli military forces bludgeoned Palestinian resistance in Gaza with pulverizing bombardments. But military strikes coordinated by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), as well as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), have exposed weaknesses in the Israeli occupation’s ability to shut down targets that actually return fire.

Palestinian fighters, unlike the Israeli military and armed settler death squads, honored the subsequent May 21 ceasefire. But since the “ceasefire” was announced, white mobs have attacked Muslims at Al-Aqsa, while Israeli police have shot and killed a number of Palestinians.

Mass arrests, mass resistance

Israeli occupation forces have rounded up hundreds of young activists, many seized without any charges. The activists remain defiant.

Across social media, many videos can be seen of young Palestinians rolling their eyes as handcuffs are slammed over their wrists. Children righteously smile in the angrily contorted faces of their oppressors. Activists flash the two-fingered “victory” sign as they are being dragged off into custody.

Al-Jazeera journalist Givara Budeiri was violently arrested by Israeli soldiers during protests marking the 54th anniversary of the 1967 War, referred to as Al-Naksa (the

Setback). Though carrying a pass from the Israeli Press Office and wearing a flak vest clearly marked “Press,” Budeiri was detained for hours without being charged. She later appeared on television with visible injuries, including her arm in a sling.

Long-term struggle

“There are a lot of long-term issues,” said Hamas spokesperson Basem Naim, “the occupation, siege on Gaza, the Al-Aqsa compound, the forceful eviction of our people in Sheikh Jarrah.

“If all these long-term issues are not tackled and fixed by the international community, and if the international community is not able to oblige Israel to

accept and respect its obligations as an occupying power, it is a matter of time to go for the next escalation.”

At a June 2 rally in Gaza City, thousands of PFLP supporters marched alongside fighters of that revolutionary socialist party’s armed wing, the Ali Abu Mustafa Brigades. The PFLP leader, Ahmad Sa’adat, has been in Israeli prison since 2002, and PFLP-elected official Khalida Jarrar is currently in occupation custody. (See Workers World, March 18.)

Jamil Muzer, a PFLP official in Gaza, exhorted the rally, “Our people have fought for over 73 years and resisted in every possible form, including popular and armed resistance.” □

Mumia Abu-Jamal pays tribute to Ramsey Clark

The following June 3 statement was read at the June 13 webinar honoring the life and legacy of the late Ramsey Clark, founder of the International Action Center. Prison Radio transcribed the audio message.

The life of Ramsey Clark took turns and crossings that most people never see, let alone experience. A tall, raw-boned figure, he used his expertise as an attorney on both sides of the fence, working first as the nation’s premier prosecutor only to shift in his private life into an anti-imperialist litigator, who represented figures like Libya’s Moammar Gadhafi to Iraq’s

former head, Saddam Hussein.

Put another way, he served the State as attorney general (which occasioned his father, U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Tom Clark, to step down for fear of a conflict of interest), and [he] then used the balance of his life opposing the legal excesses of the Empire by litigations, exposés and protests through the International Action Center.

He was, in many ways, a man of all seasons, who stood on behalf of the world’s oppressed for most of his days.

From imprisoned nation, Mumia Abu-Jamal □

The U.S. Empire deploys its troops for battle

By Manlio Dinucci

Printed first in Notonato.org, June 15, excerpted here. Dinucci is a renowned Italian anti-militarist, expert on NATO.

The NATO Summit took place yesterday at NATO headquarters in Brussels, at the highest level of state and government leaders. It was officially chaired by Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, de facto by U.S. President Joseph Biden, who came to Europe to call to arms his allies in the global conflict against Russia and China.

The NATO Summit was preceded and prepared by two political initiatives that saw Biden as the protagonist—the signing of the New Atlantic Charter and the G7—and they will be followed by President Biden’s meeting with the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin June 16 in Geneva. The final meeting’s outcome is heralded by Biden’s refusal to hold the usual final press conference with Putin.

The New Atlantic Charter was signed June 10 in London by Biden and British

Prime Minister Boris Johnson. It is a significant political document to which our media have given little importance.

The historic Atlantic Charter—signed by U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in August 1941, two months after Nazi Germany had invaded the Soviet Union—enunciated the values on which the future world order would be based, guaranteed by the “Great democracies”: above all the renunciation of the use of force, the self-determination of peoples and their equal rights in access to resources.

Later history has shown how little these values have been applied. Now the “revitalized” Atlantic Charter reaffirms its commitment to “defend our democratic values against those who try to undermine them.” To this end, the U.S. and Britain assure their Allies that they will always be able to count on “our nuclear deterrents” and that “NATO will remain a nuclear alliance.”

The G7 Summit, held in Cornwall from June 11 to June 13, ordered Russia

to “stop its destabilizing behavior and malign activities, including its interference in other countries’ democratic systems.” And it accused China of “non-market policies and practices which undermine the fair and transparent operation of the global economy.”

With these and other accusations (formulated in Washington’s own words), the European powers of the G7—Britain, Germany, France and Italy, which are at the same time the major European NATO powers—aligned with the United States before the NATO Summit.

A veritable declaration of war

The NATO Summit opened with the statement that “our relationship with Russia is at its lowest point since the end of the Cold War. This is due to Russia’s aggressive actions,” and “China’s military buildup, growing influence and coercive behavior also poses some challenges to our security.” A veritable declaration of war that, by turning reality upside down, leaves no room for negotiations to ease the tension.

The Summit opened a “new chapter” in the history of the Alliance, based on the “NATO 2030” Agenda. The “Transatlantic link” between the United States and Europe is strengthened on all levels—political, military, economic, technological, space and others—with a strategy that spans on a global scale from North and South America to Europe, from Asia to Africa. In this context, the U.S. will soon deploy new nuclear bombs and new medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe against Russia and in Asia against China.

Hence the decision of the Summit to further increase military spending: The United States, whose expenditure amounts to almost 70% of the 30 NATO countries’ total, is pushing the European Allies to increase it.

At the same time, the role of the North Atlantic Council is strengthened. It is the political body of the Alliance, which decides not by the majority, but always “unanimously and by mutual agreement” according to NATO rules, that is, in agreement with what is decided in Washington. □

Solidarity with Palestine at Port of Seattle

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

In response to the U.S.-backed Israeli bombing of Gaza and the ongoing dispossession of people in Jerusalem’s Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood and across Palestine, Palestinian unions have called for global labor solidarity to disrupt apartheid Israel’s trade. Global uproar against the Israeli regime’s war, occupation and acts of terror and exploitation is growing.

A ship belonging to Israeli shipping company ZIM has been anchored in the Port of Seattle for 11 days—June 2 to June 13. Facing community pickets from the pro-Palestine Block the Boat movement, it hasn’t had any cargo loaded or unloaded.

On June 12, 250 Block the Boat activists shut down Pier 18 after the ZIM ship made a move and came into the SSA Marine Terminal. They had the cooperation and solidarity of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union.

Block the Boat held a rally June 13 next to the port to demonstrate its continued vigilance, and still no move was made to load or unload the ship. But ZIM refuses to leave Seattle, even after losing millions of dollars in trade.



TWITTER: @SHAKSPEAK

Block the Boat! International Week of Action called for protests June 2-9, including in Seattle, Oakland, Los Angeles and New York, to prevent Israeli-operated cargo ships owned by shipping giant ZIM from unloading on U.S. soil, as part of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign. ZIM transports Israeli weapons as well as consumer goods.

“We want the Israeli ZIM ship out of Seattle, because we don’t tolerate companies that profit from human rights violations,” said Aisha Mansour of

Falastiniyat, a Palestinian feminist organization coordinating local actions. Other leading organizations include Anakbayan Seattle, International League for Peoples

Struggle and End the Deadly Exchange. The struggle continues, as the Block the Boat solidarity activists have shown resilience.” □

Palestinian Youth Movement rallies

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

June 12—The Atlanta chapter of the Palestinian Youth Movement, along with other members of the Demilitarize Atlanta 2 Palestine Coalition, held a spirited rally on the steps of City Hall to present a series of demands.

The demand to end the city’s participation in the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange program, which sends police to Israel for “counterterrorism training,” was highlighted by all the speakers.

GILEE was founded in 1992 by Georgia State University Professor Robert Friedman in preparation for the 1996 Summer Olympics held in Atlanta. Friedman is a staunch defender of Zionism, who readily shares his Islamophobic and anti-Palestinian views. Housed at Georgia State University, GILEE is largely funded by corporate and private donors.

Hundreds of law officers, particularly high-ranking management, from throughout Georgia’s state, county, city, university and college police forces, have traveled to Israel to learn crowd control, high-tech surveillance and counterinsurgency methods.

The history of U.S. policing certainly reveals no lack of racist, illegal and deadly practices. Nevertheless, the city government’s collusion with the repressive and brutal policies of the militarized Israeli occupation forces has drawn strong opposition from Atlanta social justice groups for many years.

When Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms was campaigning, she promised to look into ending the relationship between Atlanta and GILEE. With that promise broken, this revitalized campaign led by Palestinian youth is pushing to sever ties with GILEE—in the city promoted as the cradle of the Civil Rights Movement. □



Atlanta, June 12

DEMILITARIZE ATLANTA 2 PALESTINE

India

Farmers continue coordinated militant actions

By Tania Siddiqi

June 14 marks 200 days of the Farmers’ Protest at the Delhi border of India. Farmers remain steadfast in their goal to have the state repeal three oppressive farm bills. Since Workers World last reported on the protests in February, there has been important movement work taking place throughout India.

Farmer unions called for a 12-hour nationwide shutdown of India’s railways March 26 to commemorate four months of protest against the farm bills. Demonstrators in Haryana and Punjab successfully blocked railways at 32 locations and caused the cancellation of at least four passenger trains. (Alarabiya News, March 26)

The farmers’ crucial organizing strategies extend beyond direct-action measures and are evident in their capacity to maintain protest camps while tending to their harvests elsewhere. Amreek Singh, an organizer based at the Singhu border, informed Reuters that farmers are keeping rosters to “ensure that every time a group of farmers goes to harvest the wheat crop, a group of similar size joins the protests.” Singh mentioned that similar efforts are taking place in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. (Reuters, Apr. 29)

Protest and COVID-19

While farmers continue to put pressure on the state to repeal the farm bills, the state persists in trying to squash the farmers’ movement. Under the

guise of concern for the people’s health, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar requested that the farmers end their protests to diminish the threat of COVID-19 outbreaks.

The farmers refused and remained determined to continue their campaign until the state gives in to their demands. Additionally, protests have taken COVID-19 precautions by providing masks to demonstrators, disinfecting protest sites and establishing handwashing stations.

In May, after India’s government received severe backlash for how it is handling the COVID-19 crisis, India’s leading political party, the fascist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), issued a misleading statement claiming the farmers’ protests were responsible for the pandemic’s second wave.

BJP stated that the “[l]atest data actually suggest that Punjab, the epicenter of ‘farmer protest’ was the origin of the second wave!” (BJP Twitter, May 13). The state’s governmental apparatus is not the only sector attempting to diminish and weaken the farmers’ movement.

Farmers organized a protest May 16 against Chief Minister Manohar Lal Kattar, a member of BJP, while Kattar was in Hisar to inaugurate a new COVID-19 hospital. As demonstrators made their way to Hisar, police set up barricades and attempted to prevent demonstrators from protesting. Police attacked farmers with batons and tear gas.

The farmers were able to breach the barricades and threw stones at the police in self-defense. (Scroll.in, May 17) During

the incident, the police arrested 350 demonstrators and charged them with attempted murder for allegedly attacking law enforcement officials. Afterwards the farmers blocked all highways in Haryana for two hours and protested outside of the Hisar police station until police released all who were arrested. (Sandeep Singh, Twitter, May 24)

Farmer militancy continues

On June 11, Samyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of over 40 farmer unions, announced they will organize sit-ins at Raj Bhavans, official residences of the

governors of India, across the country on June 26. This day commemorates the farmers’ seven months of continued and committed acts of resistance against the state.

The farmers’ movement in India remains strong and has kept momentum, due to the incredible organizational strategies and tactics led by those who dare to resist state terror. Moreover, the farmers’ movement in India provides a blueprint of possibility, steps by which to work towards revolution on a massive scale.

Solidarity with the farmers in India! Build a workers’ world! □



June 14 marked 200 days of protest by farmers in India. PHOTO: CHITWAN GODARA

Greece

Austerity measures threaten the 8-hour day

By G. Dunkel

The 8-hour day is a bedrock gain of the world’s working class; the 8-hour day was won through intense battles during the later part of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th. Like any advance fought for and achieved by workers’ struggles, it has been under unceasing attack.

In Greece, where austerity programs imposed by the big imperialist banks have devastated the working class, and wages and pensions have been cut and cut again, the New Democracy government of Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis has announced it will “modernize antiquated laws” regulating hours of work. But Mitsotakis actually plans to massively regress working conditions.

The regulations Mitsotakis is proposing would let bosses impose a 50-hour week for 40-hours pay. They would make going on strike more difficult and abolish



Athens, June 10. Workers condemn proposed regulations. PHOTO: PAME

the right of unions to bargain a contract.

In response, the struggle of Greek workers to maintain the 8-hour day is intensifying. On June 10, tens of thousands of workers came out in an enormous demonstration in Athens. Similarly large demonstrations and marches were held in Thessaloníki and Patras, Greece’s

second and third largest cities, along with Piraeus, the port of Athens, Heraklion and other major cities.

About the only part of the Greek economy functioning on June 10 was the hospitals. The ferries, which are essential in Greece’s transportation system, were shut down completely.

The final vote on the labor bill is set for June 16, and the unions intend to shut the country down then.

General Secretary of the Greek Communist Party Dimitris Koutsoubas spoke in Athens June 10. He said: “No matter what the government does, this bill is condemned in the workers’ consciousness. The working men and women, the young people have now the last say. If they understand and realize their power, they can cancel this bill and consign it where it belongs, to the dustbin. They must not be living like slaves in the 21st century.” (tinyurl.com/yel83muq) □

Monthly vigil: Demand human rights at Tacoma immigration prison!

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

Since the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Wash., opened in 2004, detainees and their families, civil rights activists and the community have protested the inhuman conditions from the use of solitary confinement to tainted meals. The monthly demonstration and vigil will be held there at 1623 E. J St., Sunday, June 13, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The Department of Homeland Security manages the largest immigration detention system in the world with 200 immigration detention centers in the U.S. And the privately run NWDC Northwest Detention Center is the third largest detention center of 200 in the U.S.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees there have been unnecessarily exposed to COVID-19. GEO Group operates the detention center, which is slated to be shut down by 2025 under recently

passed state legislation banning for-profit prisons.

Demands include: End the transfer of ICE prisoners released from Washington and Oregon state prisons to the Northwest Detention Center! Stop sending prisoners to the Center from the border and throughout the country! Shut down the NWDC before its contract expires in 2025! No to a failed immigration policy that follows the policies of Trump’s



Protest outside Northwest Detention Center, Tacoma, Wash., March 30, 2020 PHOTO: LA RESISTENCIA

regime! Open up visitation rights to prisoners’ families and supporters!

For more information, contact Seattle International Action Center at (206) 218-4417.

Honduras

Author of Berta Cáceres’ assassination on trial

By Martha Grevatt

Berta Cáceres, beloved leader of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH), was assassinated March 3, 2016. COPINH was engaged in a battle with the DESA company, whose plans to construct a hydro-electric dam threatened the water supply of the Lenca Indigenous community.

While seven participants in the killing were convicted and sentenced in 2018, it is only now, five years later, that a key author of that tragic event is on trial. In 32 days of testimony, overwhelming evidence has come to light implicating Roberto David Castillo Mejía, former General Manager of DESA and a former military intelligence officer. This includes eyewitness accounts, documents and communications among Castillo, his co-conspirators and the hit men who carried out the murder.

Castillo’s attorneys are now presenting their side, and the trial is expected to conclude in June. Despite the preponderance of evidence against him, COPINH and other human rights defenders are concerned that Castillo will be found “not guilty” by the panel of three judges hearing the case. As Cáceres’ daughter Bertha “Bertita” Zúñiga Cáceres explained on

a recent web meeting, there is “a lot of impunity” in Honduras.

Since the U.S.-backed coup June 28, 2009, that overthrew progressive President Mel Zelaya, hundreds of Indigenous, Afro-descendant, labor union, LGBT, environmental and human rights activists have been assassinated in Honduras. Prosecutions of the perpetrators are extremely rare.

Berta Cáceres was one of over 120 environmentalists murdered in Honduras, the most dangerous country in the world for water and land protectors.

Solidarity activists hear from COPINH

On the call with Zúñiga Cáceres, Camilo Bermudez, a member of COPINH who is assisting in preparing evidence against Castillo, explained the existence of a network that “set up the logistics” for the assassination. He called it “a great advance” that Castillo is even on trial, but pointed to many others who colluded with him as still at large. These include members of the Atala Zablah family, Honduran oligarchs who control DESA and the Agua Zarca hydroelectric project.

For those seeking to bring additional culprits to justice, a not guilty verdict “would put us back to zero,” said Bermudez. The Honduran media is “trying to circumvent

the conversation” by smearing Berta Cáceres as a “narco-trafficker.” In an atmosphere of corruption, threats and intimidation and a “sold out” media, the judges may ignore the mountain of evidence against Castillo and acquit him.

There is widespread concern in Honduras about the trial’s outcome. As COPINH states: “Victims and their allies of the deadly Honduran extractive model took to the streets of the country’s capital [May 17] to demand an immediate halt to the energy, mining, tourism and forestry projects that private companies are implementing with the full support of the State

through acts of violence and corruption, and without the free, prior and informed consent of the affected Indigenous and rural communities.” (copinh.org)

A feminist encampment erected May 4 in the capital, Tegucigalpa, under the theme “Berta vive” (Berta lives), will be up until the trial concludes. Solidarity activists outside Honduras plan to have actions and send letters to demand Castillo not be acquitted for the brutal murder of a heroic fighter. Visit Honduras Solidarity Network on Facebook or hondurassolidarity.org. To send a letter go to bit.ly/bertasigue. □



Tegucigalpa, Honduras, May 17. ‘Truth and justice, no more impunity!’

PHOTO: COPINH

Protesters say: ‘LUMA Energy out of Puerto Rico!’

By Lorraine Liriano

Puerto Ricans in the diaspora protested June 11 against the private LUMA Energy company’s June 1 takeover of the operations of the Puerto Rico Energy Network to provide electricity in their homeland. This privatization is backed by the U.S.-created and appointed Financial Control Board. The following is the protesting organizations’ news release.

New York, N.Y., June 11 — Grassroots Puerto Rican organizations and people and their allies demonstrated in New York City, demanding that the government of Puerto Rico withdraw from the contract with the company LUMA Energy.

On June 1, the government of Puerto Rico, with the approval of the Financial Oversight Dictatorial Board, officially handed over Puerto Rico Energy Network to LUMA, a U.S.-Canadian private joint company, formed by the companies ATCO and Quanta Services and created specifically to take advantage of a million-dollar contract to administer the public corporation Authority of Electric Power.

In the months leading up to the contract taking effect, workers and organizations

in Puerto Rico and in the United States took to the streets protesting LUMA and the privatization plan.

Since taking effect, there have been widespread power outages throughout the archipelago. According to one of the spokespeople, Gabriela Malespin from New York Boricua Resistance: “LUMA is the latest in decades of neoliberal



PHOTO: LORRAINE LIRIANO

attempts to privatize our public services. Puerto Rico’s working class recognizes that this contract represents an enormous threat to our island’s electrical grid, our economy and our livelihoods.

“Our demands are not to simply oust LUMA in order for another corporation to take over. Rather, we want public control of our utilities and the proper resources needed to restore our grid and transition towards renewable energy. This issue represents an intersection between environmental racism, neoliberal privatization and working-class oppression.

“Boricuas in both the archipelago and the diaspora must stand united against this threat and continue to fight until LUMA and other vulture companies are out of Puerto Rico.”

The LUMA contract is exorbitant, costing over \$1.5 billion, at a time when the dictatorial fiscal control board is imposing austerity measures on the people of Puerto Rico. With the sole objective of obtaining federal funds, LUMA may withdraw, leaving the archipelago at the mercy of any disaster if such transfers do not materialize at the level or on the schedule provided. LUMA promotes the continuous use of fossil fuel consumption and natural gas as the main source of energy.

LUMA also possesses 68% of Puerto Rico’s water reservoirs, not only privatizing energy but also water, two things that should be basic human rights. In addition, the company has eliminated many of the jobs of a highly trained and unionized workforce to hire replacements with lower wages or unqualified people from the United States.

The diaspora joins with the people in the archipelago in denouncing and demanding that the LUMA contract be canceled. “This is the advancement of the plan for the displacement of the people of Puerto Rico, in favor of the yankees who have already begun to turn it into their paradise island at the expense of our people. We cannot continue to allow our people to suffer. This contract must be canceled, and there must be public renewable energy for the people now!” says spokesperson Eric Ramos, from the Puerto Rican Independence Party in New York City.

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Protests against racism sweep France

By G. Dunkel

Marches and rallies against racism, the far right and police violence took place in over 140 communities in France June 12. These “Marches for Liberty” were scheduled to be held a few weeks before regional elections, where the far-right National Rally (RN/Rassemblement National, Marine Le Pen’s party) will try to position itself as an electoral force for next year’s presidential election.

What was most impressive was the diversity of organizations that mobilized for these protests. As expected, all of the largest

left-leaning parties came out, including France Unbowed (France Insoumise), French Communist Party, Green Party, Génération.s (a left-split from the Socialist Party), New Anti-capitalist Party (NPA), Socialist Party and the Party of the Left.

The coalition included a number of collectives and groups of activists who are concerned with issues facing immigrants and asylum seekers. Housing activists were there. So were those involved with climate change, including France Nature Environnement.

Building these protests were French labor unions, like the FSU (Fédération

Syndicale Unitaire), the main education union, and the largest student union, UNEF (National Union of Students of France/Union Nationale des Étudiants de France).

The General Confederation of Workers (CGT), the largest union of public sector workers and the second largest union in the private sector, played a major role in building the protests. In Marseille, the CGT marched behind a banner which read: “We must remain united in order to dissolve capitalism that leads to fascism.” Their national call emphasized that racial discrimination is sharply felt in the workplace.

The U.S. press, including the New York Times, Washington Post and Associated Press, gave short shrift to these important demonstrations. They only covered an incident in Paris where a neofascist threw flour on Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the leftist leader of France Unbowed, and they ignored the national character of this anti-racist protest.

Prior to June 12, Mélenchon, who came in fourth in the 2017 presidential election, had warned of the increasing boldness of the ultraright and the possibility of violence during the elections. □

Continued from page 1

of Czarist Russia, Japan and the United States.

In 1885, Washington’s ongoing genocide of Indigenous peoples concentrated on its expansion in North America; the year predated U.S. seizures of Hawai’i, Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines. At the Berlin meeting, Washington still played a role, being the first country to recognize Belgian King Leopold’s seizure of the Congo. Leopold oversaw the genocide of the Congolese peoples.

Fast forward 136 years to the current G7 summit in Cornwall, Britain and the NATO summit in Brussels. From 1885 to 1945, the U.S. became the world’s leading imperialist power and remains so. During 1921-1991, when the Soviet Union countered imperialist domination, many African and Asian nations won political independence, which is now under attack.

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, Washington and its imperialist junior partners have destroyed other existing socialist states such as Yugoslavia and re-subjugated or destroyed nations that had gained some sovereignty including Sudan, Libya and Iraq. The U.S. did this using supranational organizations such as NATO, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the G7. Washington designed the structure of

G7/NATO: Diplomacy among thieves

these organizations during the Cold War period to maintain its leadership.

Break with Trump no break with imperialist goals

During Trump’s xenophobic, racist and thoroughly reactionary administration, he pushed the “America first” button so hard that Washington’s allies feared they would be denied their “share” of the spoils. Trump publicly insulted Europe’s government leaders.

Ruling-class strategists here feared Trump’s tactics would break up Cold War structures and harm U.S. imperialist interests. When Biden said, “America is back,” he meant that the U.S. is ready to again lead the imperialist alliance. Biden implied that Washington would respect the demands of the European ruling class — and of the Japanese, Australian and Canadian imperialists.

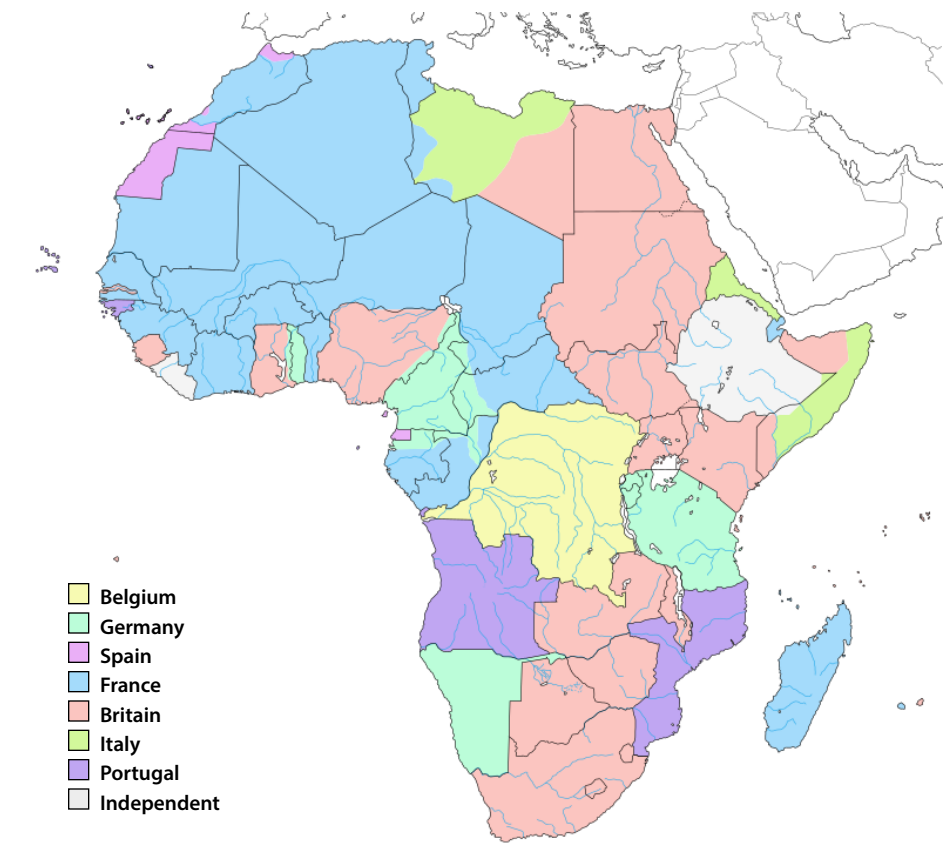
Biden is attempting to mobilize those allies against China and Russia. The “values” the billionaires and bankers Biden represents hold in “common” are the market values of coltan, uranium, petroleum and other essential natural resources that this plutocracy plans to monopolize.

To underline the connection between the 1885 and 2021 meetings, right now two joint U.S.-led military exercises are underway: Defender Europe in Eastern Europe and African Lion in Africa. They

involve the same big powers.

The G7 and NATO summits won’t defend human rights. They may do little to soften rivalry among the imperialist states. The Berlin Conference results

exploded soon enough into World War I. Biden’s trip to Europe is a venture by a seasoned imperialist diplomat to resume Washington’s role as head of a plutocracy, nothing more. □



European claims in Africa, 1913. Today's boundaries, which are largely a legacy of the colonial era, are shown.
MAP: ERIC GABA – WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Ye who shall not work (for low wages) shall not eat

In 2017, to justify changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Rep. Jodey Arrington leaned on the scriptures — specifically 2 Thessalonians 3-10: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” (Washington Post, March 31, 2017)

The Republican Congressperson was arguing for making recipients work for their benefits — or face cutoff.

Some Biblical scholars argued that this was a misinterpretation of St. Paul’s intent.

But the intentions of Arrington and other right-wing officials could not be more clear. Their appeal is really not to devout Christians, but to racist stereotypes that people of color “don’t want to work.” This attack hits millions of white workers too; about half of SNAP recipients are white.

The attacks have resurfaced, accompanied by regurgitated arguments, with announcements by 25 Republican governors that unemployed workers in their states will lose the \$300 weekly boost to

their regular benefits. These payments were part of Biden’s American Rescue Plan, passed by Congress earlier this year.

Set to run out in September anyway, the supplements will be terminated in June or July in all but two Republican-led states. Gig workers — who are generally misclassified as self-employed but were granted unemployment compensation in the recent COVID relief bills — are losing their benefits altogether.

Why?

“In Arizona, we’re going to use federal money to encourage people to work ... instead of paying people not to work,” said Gov. Doug Ducey, whose state is giving returning workers a one-time bonus. “The Texas economy is booming, and employers are hiring in communities throughout the state,” Gov. Greg Abbott proclaimed. Their sentiments were echoed by other governors opting to decline federal funds rather than pay unemployed workers extra benefits. (CBS News, June 2)

Democratic governors are not exactly clamoring to have the benefits extended past September — meaning in a few more months, unemployed people in their states will also have to choose between a low-paying job and even lower jobless benefits.

Cuts to benefits based on myth

Facts do not support the position that “paying people not to work” — i.e., giving jobless workers enough money to survive — discourages people from seeking employment. A February study by JP Morgan Chase Institute disproved that claim, finding that even after seeing their weekly unemployment checks increase by \$600 at the pandemic’s onset last year, many workers returned to work before the benefits expired. (CBS News, June 2)

These politicians are really trying to force people to work for low wages. If \$300 combined with their regular unemployment check — at most 50% of their average weekly pay — adds up to more

than what they made working 40 hours, that means they earned no more than \$15 an hour before the pandemic. Many made a lot less.

And if they worked for a fast food chain, their boss made a whole lot more. McDonald’s CEO Chris Kempczinski made almost \$11 million last year. The poor CEO of Wendy’s made a mere \$6.7 million. But Jose Cil, CEO of RBI—the parent company of Popeye’s, Burger King and Tim Horton’s—has a salary of \$20 million!

This is pocket change compared to Amazon boss Jeff Bezos, a centibillionaire (worth \$100 billion) twice over.

Now these filthy rich bosses and their political stooges have a message to workers: If you shall not submit to our ruthless exploitation and work for low wages, you shall not eat. Or have health care. Or keep a roof over your head.

Enough is enough! Triple the minimum wage! No cuts in unemployment benefits — now or in September! □

U.S.-led ‘African Lion 21’ hunts for new prey

By Manlio Dinucci

Published June 8 in *Il Manifesto*; translation by John Catalinotto.

The African Lion, the largest military exercise on the African Continent planned and led by the U.S. Army, began June 7. The exercise includes land, air and naval maneuvers in Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal and adjacent seas — from North Africa to West Africa, from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic.

With half of the 8,000 soldiers deployed coming from the United States, the exercise will deploy about 200 armored cars, self-propelled cannons, planes and warships. African Lion 21 is expected to cost \$24 million and has particularly important implications.

This political move was fundamentally decided in Washington: The African exercise is taking place for the first time this year in Western Sahara. That means it’s in the territory of the Sahrawi Republic, recognized by over

80 U.N. states, and whose existence Morocco has denied and fought against by every means possible.

The Moroccan regime declared that by holding the exercise there, Washington recognizes Moroccan sovereignty



Imperialist military interventions in Africa force migration, leading to the deaths of thousands of people in shipwrecks.

over Western Sahara and invites Algeria and Spain to abandon their hostility toward the territorial integrity of Morocco. Morocco accuses the Spanish government of supporting Polisario (Western Sahara Liberation Front), and the Spanish army is not participating in African Lion this year.

Washington reaffirmed its full support to Morocco, which it has on its list of countries that are major non-NATO allies and partners of the U.S. (state.gov)

U.S consolidates forces to dominate Africa

The African exercise takes place this year for the first time within the framework of a new U.S. command structure. Last November, the U.S. Army Europe and the U.S. Army Africa were consolidated into a single command: the U.S. Army Europe and Africa.

General Christopher Cavoli, who heads the command, explained the reason for this decision: “European and African issues are inextricably linked. The close geography

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Peru presidential election

Castillo’s victory unleashes political earthquake

By Jorge Martín

Excerpts from an article published in rebellion.org, June 10. Translation by Michael Otto.

The victory of Pedro Castillo in the Peruvian presidential elections unleashed a political earthquake, reflecting the enormous social and political polarization in the Andean country. The masses have inflicted a resounding defeat upon the ruling class, thanks to the militant teachers’ union leader at the head of Peru Libre, a party that describes itself as Marxist, Leninist and Mariateguist.

[José Carlos Mariátegui (1894-1930) was the founder of the Peruvian labor and communist movements and among the most renowned Latin American Marxists of the first half of the last century.]

The recount was a slow and painful process, and the decisive result was not clear until the very end, three days after the polls closed June 6. By June 9, with 99.8% of the votes counted, Pedro Castillo has 8,735,448 votes (50.2%), giving him a small but irreversible lead over his rival, right-wing populist Keiko Fujimori, who got 8,663,684 votes (49.8%) [almost 75% voter turnout].

Official results have not yet been proclaimed. Fujimori’s team alleges fraud and is preparing dozens of appeals. The masses are ready to defend the vote in the streets. There are reports that 20,000 ronderos (members, as is Castillo, of the peasant self-defense militias created during the civil war in the 1990s) are traveling to the capital to defend the will of the people. Today, June 9, a massive demonstration has been called in Lima, where people have gathered for three nights in a row in front of Castillo’s electoral headquarters.

Castillo advanced to the final election with only 19% of the vote in the first round, due to the extreme fragmentation of [parties]. However, his electoral

success is no accident. It is an expression of the deep crisis of the Peruvian regime. Decades of anti-working class privatization and liberalization policies in a country extremely rich in mineral resources have left a legacy of extreme wealth disparity and widespread corruption rotting its bourgeois democracy.

Five former presidents are in jail or accused of corruption. All the institutions of bourgeois democracy are extremely discredited. The mass demonstrations of November 2020 were an expression of the deep anger accumulated in Peruvian society.

To this must be added the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the crisis of capitalism. The country suffered one of the worst economic contractions in Latin America with an 11% drop in Gross Domestic Product. Peru has recorded the worst percentage of excess deaths and the worst mortality rate worldwide, while the wealthy and government politicians were vaccinated before anyone else.

A vote for radical change

The masses of workers and peasants want radical change, and that is precisely what Pedro Castillo represents in their eyes. His campaign had two main political pillars: the renegotiation of the terms of the contracts with the mining multinationals (and if they refuse, they would be nationalized); and the convening of a Constituent Assembly to do away with the 1993 constitution drafted during the dictatorship of Alberto Fujimori (the father of candidate Keiko Fujimori).

His main electoral slogans: “no more poor people in a rich country” and “word of the teacher” resonated with the oppressed, the workers, the poor, the peasants, the downtrodden, the Quechua and Aymara Indians, particularly in the working-class and poor areas far from Lima’s light-skinned high-class circles.

Castillo’s authority comes from having defied the union bureaucracy to lead the

2017 teachers’ strike. To the workers and peasants, he is one of their own — a humble rural teacher with peasant roots, who has vowed to live off his teacher’s salary when he assumes the presidency. His appeal is precisely that of being a leftist against the system.

The entire Peruvian ruling class closed ranks behind Keiko Fujimori in the second round, even though she was not their favorite candidate. Her campaign was vicious. Billboards in Lima proclaimed “Communism is poverty.” The seven plagues were threatened if Castillo won the election.

He was accused of being “the candidate of the violent Shining Path” — a label that failed to stick. Nobel laureate in literature Mario Vargas Llosa, who in the past opposed Alberto Fujimori’s government from a bourgeois liberal point of view, wrote furious opinion pieces claiming that a victory for Castillo would mean the end of democracy.

Despite all that, or perhaps precisely because of the hatred he provoked among the ruling class, Castillo started the runoff campaign with a 20-point lead over his rival. That lead narrowed as election day approached.

Class contradictions

However, the narrow victory masks the country’s acute class polarization. Fujimori won in Lima (65 to 34), and even here, her best results are in the richest districts. Castillo has won in 17 of the country’s 25 provinces, with massive victories in the poorer Andean and southern regions.

In the final days of the campaign, Keiko Fujimori, in classic populist style, promised direct transfers of money from mining company profits to the people of the towns where the mines are located. This was an attempt to turn voters away from Castillo’s proposal to change the contracts to benefit all the people. Voters elected Castillo massively in all mining towns.

The masses of workers and peasants supporting Castillo were ready to take to the streets to defend his victory, while Fujimori shouted fraud and then appealed the results. In the days leading up to the elections and immediately after, there have been rumors of a military coup. Prominent Fujimori supporters called on the army to intervene to prevent Castillo from taking power.

There is no doubt that a sector of the ruling class in Peru is in a panic and used every means at their disposal to prevent Castillo from winning the elections. They see him as a threat to their power and privileges and the way they have governed the country since its independence 200 years ago.

So far, it appears that the more cautious elements of the ruling class have prevailed. An editorial in the leading bourgeois newspaper La República described Fujimori as irresponsible for crying fraud.

All this gives an idea of what Castillo will face once he takes office. The ruling class and imperialism will resort to any means necessary to prevent him from actually governing. We have seen the same script in the past against Chávez in Venezuela.

Prominent members of the Venezuelan



Castillo nears official victory in Peru's presidential elections.

opposition coup were in Lima to support Fujimori before the elections, and that is no accident. They will use Congress and the other bourgeois institutions, the media, the state apparatus (up to and including the army) and economic sabotage, to limit Castillo’s ability to implement his policies.

Defend victory: Prepare for battle

Castillo’s program, despite references to Marx, Lenin and Mariátegui in Peru Libre documents, is one of capitalist national development. He proposes to use the country’s mineral wealth for social programs (mainly education) and to work with “productive national entrepreneurs” to “develop the economy.” His models are Rafael Correa of Ecuador and Evo Morales of Bolivia.

The problem is that these so-called responsible “national productive” capitalists do not exist. The Peruvian ruling class, the bankers, landowners and capitalists are closely linked to the interests of the transnational corporations and imperialism. They are not interested in any “national development,” but only in their own enrichment.

Castillo will now face a dilemma. On the one hand, he can govern in favor of the masses of workers and peasants who have elected him, which would mean a radical break with the capitalists and the transnational corporations. That can only be accomplished through carrying out a mass mobilization outside the electoral arena.

Or Castillo can give in, soften his program and adapt to the interests of the ruling class, which means he will be discredited among those who voted for him, paving the way for his own downfall. If he tries to serve two masters (the workers and the capitalists) at the same time, he will please neither.

Castillo himself declared: “I have just had conversations with the national businessmen, who are showing their support to the people. We will create a government respectful of democracy, of the current Constitution. We will have a government with financial and economic stability.” All experience shows that what the ruling class describes as “financial and economic stability,” in reality means making the workers and the poor pay for the crisis of their system by guaranteeing the best possible conditions for the realization of capitalist profits.

The payment of the debt is in direct contradiction with implementing a policy of social spending. Castillo should oppose this concession and act in support of the general interests of the workers and peasants. There is no middle road.

For now, the Peruvian masses celebrate and remain on guard to defend their victory. The struggle has just begun. □

U.S.-led ‘African Lion 21’

Continued from page 10

and economic ties between the two continents means that regional security issues, left unchecked, quickly spread from one area to another.” (state.gov, Feb. 23)

Hence the decision of the U.S. Army to consolidate the European Command and the African Command, so as to “shift forces dynamically and move forces from one theater to another, from one continent to another, which really improves significantly our regional contingency response times.”

In this context, African Lion 21 was consolidated with Defender-Europe 21, which employs 28,000 soldiers and over 2,000 heavy vehicles. Basically, a single series of coordinated military maneuvers is taking place from Northern Europe to West Africa, planned and commanded by the U.S. Army Europe and Africa.

The official purpose of these maneuvers is to counter an unspecified “malign activity in North Africa and Southern Europe and increase interoperability between U.S., African and international partners to defend the theater from adversary military aggression.” (Africom.mil) There is a clear reference to Russia and China.

Italy participates in African Lion 21, as well as in Defender-Europe 21, not only with its own forces but with its territory

as a strategic base. The exercise in Africa is directed by the U.S. Army’s Southern Europe Task Force from Vicenza in Italy, and the participating forces are supplied through the Port of Livorno, with war materials coming from Camp Darby, the nearby U.S. Army logistics base. The participation in African Lion 21 is part of the growing Italian military commitment in Africa.

The mission in Niger is a typical example. Formally, Italy participates as part of a joint European and U.S. effort to stabilize the area and to combat illegal trafficking and threats to security. In reality, it’s for control of one of the richest areas in strategic raw materials (oil, uranium, coltan and others) exploited by U.S. and European transnational corporations, whose oligopoly is endangered by Chinese economic presence and other factors.

Hence the recourse to the traditional colonialist strategy: Use military means to guarantee the colonialist interests, including support for local elites who base their power on their armed forces behind the pretext of fighting “jihadist” militias. These military interventions reinforce exploitation and subjugation of the local populations, destroying their living conditions, which in turn force migrations and increase the consequent human tragedies. □



Naomi Osaka, ¿explotada?

MUNDO OBRERO editoriales

¿Son los deportistas profesionales trabajadores explotados?

En el Manifiesto Comunista, Karl Marx y Friedrich Engels describen el carácter degradante del trabajo en el capitalismo, según el cual los trabajadores “son una mercancía” y el trabajador “se convierte en un apéndice de la máquina”.

Esto se escribió en 1848, pero la deshumanización sigue existiendo. Un trabajador se convierte en un apéndice de su trabajo, ya sea un hotel, un restaurante de comida rápida o un almacén de Amazon. Los capitalistas sólo ven valor en lo que un trabajador puede producir, no su valor como persona humana completa.

En consecuencia, los jefes del complejo deportivo-industrial tratan a un atleta profesional como un mero apéndice del juego.

Esto fue subrayado recientemente por el trato de la superestrella del tenis Naomi Osaka. Desde su victoria en el Abierto de Estados Unidos de 2018, un aluvión insensible —y peor— de comentarios de los periodistas ha agravado sus luchas contra la depresión y la ansiedad. Osaka —cuya madre es japonesa y su padre es haitiano— ha sido cuestionada sobre todo, desde su raza, nacionalidad, edad y desafíos de salud mental hasta su desempeño en la cancha contra Serena Williams y su solidaridad de principios con Black Lives Matter.

Osaka fue multada con \$15.000 dólares tras negarse a participar en las entrevistas con los medios de comunicación después del partido durante el Abierto de Francia. Esto pone de manifiesto, por enésima vez, la mercantilización de los atletas profesionales, incluso los mejor pagados y los más capacitados. Se les reprende y

castiga cuando priorizan su bienestar personal sobre el negocio de la competencia deportiva.

Este es el caso más notable de los atletas negros y otros atletas de color.

Osaka se retiró de la competencia por completo “para proteger mi salud mental”.

Más de un siglo de indignidades racistas

El trato racista a Osaka forma parte de un hilo conductor que recorre toda la historia del deporte profesional en Estados Unidos.

En los primeros años del deporte profesional, jugadores indígenas como Jim Thorpe (fútbol americano) y Louis Sockalexis (béisbol) fueron objeto de abusos racistas. Los equipos adoptaron nombres y crearon mascotas denigrantes para los pueblos y la cultura indígenas. Estos nombres sólo están empezando a abandonarse, mientras que algunos equipos, especialmente el de béisbol de Atlanta y el de fútbol americano de Kansas City, se aferran firmemente a sus nombres ofensivos.

Los valientes atletas que “rompieron la línea del color” — como Wataru Misaka (1947, NBA), Earl Lloyd (1950, NBA), Jackie Robinson (1947, MLB) y Marion Motley y Bill Willis (All-America Football Conference, más tarde NFL) — soportaron burlas, insultos e incluso amenazas de muerte a lo largo de sus carreras.

Una postura audaz en cuestiones políticas rara vez queda impune. A Muhammad Ali se le prohibió boxear y se le declaró culpable de evasión del servicio militar por negarse a luchar en la guerra de Vietnam. Tommie Smith y John Carlos

fueron condenados al ostracismo por su valiente protesta con puño negro en los Juegos Olímpicos de Verano de 1968 en Ciudad de México. Colin Kaepernick y LeBron James han sido vilipendiados por su activismo por la justicia social.

Recientemente, aficionados blancos agredieron físicamente a los jugadores de baloncesto negros Kyrie Irving, Trae Young y Russell Westbrook durante las eliminatorias de la NBA.

Pero la solidaridad siempre está presente. Destacados atletas negros se unieron a Ali, y jugadores de todas las razas han emulado el “tomar la rodilla” de Kaepernick. Las estrellas del baloncesto Stephen Curry y Kyrie Irving, la gimnasta olímpica Laurie Hernández, el corredor olímpico Usain Bolt, la gran tenista Serena Williams y varios atletas japoneses han apoyado a Osaka.

El patriarcado impera

La golfista Michelle Wie West ha dado marcha atrás en sus planes de jubilarse de la competencia, impulsada por los comentarios descaradamente sexistas y racistas del abogado de Trump Rudy Giuliani, que trivializan su capacidad deportiva.

Las mujeres y los atletas con problemas de género son tratados como jugadores de segunda clase. No solo se les insulta, se les disminuye, se les margina y se les sexualiza, sino que se les paga muy poco. Megan Rapinoe, capitana de la selección femenina de fútbol de Estados Unidos, encabeza una demanda colectiva por discriminación sexual en relación con las

discrepancias salariales entre hombres y mujeres en el fútbol profesional.

La diferencia salarial es más evidente en el baloncesto profesional. El salario mínimo base en la Asociación Nacional de Baloncesto Femenino es de \$58.710 dólares, frente a los \$925.000 dólares de la NBA.

Las jugadoras de la WNBA se han destacado por su activismo. Sus protestas en la cancha a favor de Black Lives Matter han inspirado a atletas de todos los géneros —y generaciones— a adoptar posiciones más firmes contra la supremacía blanca.

La cultura patriarcal generalizada en los deportes profesionales hace que sea difícil, incluso en 2021, que los jugadores LGBTQ+ se revelen. Un estudio de marzo de 2020 muestra que la mitad sufren burlas o insultos. (salon.com, 8 de abril)

Las mujeres, las personas con problemas de género y los jugadores LGBTQ+ de color son doble y triplemente maltratados en la cloaca de la intolerancia que es el deporte profesional.

A fin de cuentas, incluso con salarios elevados, los deportistas siguen siendo trabajadores y se espera que generen beneficios — lo que los marxistas llaman plusvalía — para los propietarios de los equipos.

Aplaudimos la valentía de Naomi Osaka y de todas las personas que se han enfrentado a la supremacía blanca, a la misoginia, al fanatismo anti-LGBTQ2S+, al capacitismo y a la mentalidad de que los beneficios están por encima de las personas, dentro y fuera del campo de juego. □



Solidaridad con Palestina, Filadelfia, 15 de mayo. MO FOTO: JOE PIETTE

En la víspera de su 96º cumpleaños, el 19 de mayo, el gran revolucionario negro, Malcolm X, será siempre recordado por la cita: “Por cualquier medio necesario”. Utilizó esta frase para justificar que los negros tienen derecho a defenderse de todas las formas de violencia de los supremacistas blancos, incluso mediante el uso de las armas.

Justo una semana antes de su asesinato en 1965, Malcolm X declaró: “Hoy estamos asistiendo a una rebelión global de los oprimidos contra los opresores, de los explotados contra los explotadores”.

Estas dos poderosas declaraciones son aplicables al terror genocida que se está produciendo actualmente en Gaza. El partido Workers World Party/Partido Mundo Obrero defiende el derecho del pueblo palestino, como pueblo oprimido y explotado, a rebelarse contra el régimen sionista racista de Israel “por cualquier medio necesario”. Nuestro punto de vista no ha variado ni un ápice desde que el

Por todos los medios necesarios

¡Defender la resistencia palestina!

Partido celebró su primera manifestación a favor de Palestina en 1967.

Esta autodeterminación incluye que las masas palestinas puedan elegir su representación política, que en Gaza ha sido Hamás desde 2006. Durante décadas, los palestinos se han enfrentado a dos opresores -los fascistas ocupantes israelíes que los desplazaron violentamente de su tierra natal el 15 de mayo de 1948, con horribles masacres- y el principal patrocinador de Israel, el imperialismo estadounidense.

Sí, es el deber de cualquier persona que se considere revolucionaria y socialista dentro de cualquier país capitalista super-rico, exigir que se corte toda ayuda que apuntale el apartheid israelí en Palestina. Ese es un paso importante para construir la solidaridad antiimperialista.

Este estado guarnición no podría existir ni un día si no fuera por los 10 millones de dólares que la administración estadounidense proporciona diariamente, lo que supone casi \$4.000 millones de dólares anuales. Este apoyo refleja por que Israel ha sido un estado ilegítimo desde su creación. Utiliza una falsa tapadera de ser un “Estado judío”, pero en realidad es un Estado sionista construido sobre la sangre, el sudor y las lágrimas del pueblo palestino.

El sionismo es una ideología de

supremacía blanca utilizada para deshumanizar a los palestinos y a todos los pueblos árabes. Este estado racista y blanco de colonos fue codificado con la Declaración Balfour por los colonos colonialistas británicos el 2 de noviembre de 1917. Malcolm X equiparó el sionismo con el colonialismo en septiembre de 1964.

Robo de tierras, de Colón al sionismo

Lo que le ha ocurrido al pueblo palestino desplazado -ya sea en los Territorios Ocupados de Gaza y Cisjordania o en toda la diáspora- puede compararse con lo que le ocurrió a las miles de naciones originarias de este hemisferio durante el robo al por mayor de las tierras indígenas a partir de Cristóbal Colón. La diferencia es que el robo genocida de América del Norte por parte de Gran Bretaña condujo al establecimiento del país imperialista más poderoso del mundo, que hoy se beneficia de la región rica en petróleo de Asia Oriental o “Oriente Medio”.

Ser antisionista NO es lo mismo que ser antisemita. El apoyo del gobierno estadounidense a Israel no se basa en un apoyo genuino al pueblo judío. De hecho, los ataques antisemitas son cotidianos en Estados Unidos e incluyeron el cierre de sus fronteras a un cierto número de personas judías que intentaban escapar del Holocausto

durante, y antes, de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Esta maniobra imperialista fue un esfuerzo por desviar a los judíos para que se establecieran en Palestina, para convertirlos en ocupantes antes de 1948.

El pueblo palestino no ha tenido más remedio que luchar contra sus opresores, utilizando todo lo que tiene a su disposición, desde hondas hasta cohetes, contra las Fuerzas de Defensa israelíes, que están entrenadas y armadas con el armamento más sofisticado suministrado por el Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos.

La heroica resistencia demostrada por los palestinos ha contribuido a aislar aún más al ostracismo del régimen israelí, especialmente desde la primera Intifada o levantamiento que comenzó en 1987, seguida de la segunda Intifada en 2000. Por eso es fundamental que los movimientos exijan el fin inmediato de los bombardeos sobre Gaza y el fin de toda la ayuda estadounidense a Israel —y que defiendan el derecho a la autodeterminación del pueblo palestino para ganar su liberación “por cualquier medio necesario” — lo que debilitará al imperialismo en todas partes.

Workers World Party/Partido Mundo Obrero saluda el heroísmo del pueblo palestino. ¡Haz que Israel vuelva a ser Palestina! □