Support grows for Alabama Amazon union

By Martha Grevatt

A people’s movement against an anti-people corporation has intensified, backing the union drive at Amazon’s Bessemer, Ala., warehouse. The courageous Southern union warriors are finally starting to get the support they need and deserve.

Some three dozen organizations loaned their names to a letter urging President Joe Biden to come out on the side of the Amazon workers fighting for a union. Biden had angered unionists and progressives for publicly taking a “neutral” stance on the representation election taking place now through March 29.

Signers included UNITE HERE and Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA) unions, Maine AFL-CIO, the National Employment Law Project and the Working Families Party. Feeling the pressure, on Feb. 28 Biden came out against Amazon’s union-busting, affirming the right of every worker to choose union representation.

Solidarity has been growing since the Feb. 20 National Day of Solidarity. Renowned actor and activist Danny Glover stood outside the Bessemer facility Feb. 22, holding a sign that read “Remember Mail Your Yes Ballot.” Glover waved, gave “thumbs up” and said, “Stay strong!” to the workers coming into and leaving work. His presence drew widespread media attention.

It’s about justice,” Glover said. “The union is about looking out for the welfare of workers and is willing to stand up and fight for justice ... It’s just one step, among the many steps, that are being taken around the country, in the service of justice.” (tinyurl.com/yd3xdv7h)

Glover, along with Representative Ilhan Omar, Senator Bernie Sanders and Georgia voting rights leader Stacey Abrams, is featured in a support video created by More Perfect Union. A letter to Amazon criticizing its union-busting campaign was signed by 13 U.S. senators. Birmingham, Ala., Mayor Randall Woodfin, Ohio Congressional

Tell Biden

Stop bombing Syria!

It has taken only 36 days in office for the Biden administration to show the world, through a bombing attack on Syria, that it is belligerent, aggressive and hell-bent on war. There was only a short respite from Trump’s vile words and actions. Now we have to face Biden’s vile deeds and resist them.

Even the excuse U.S. imperialism gave for bombing Syria was feeble. A rocket attack some weeks ago killed a mercenary in Iraq. Excuses like that open the door to new U.S. wars and interventions all over countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, where Washington has replaced official U.S. troops with soldiers of fortune.

You might think the Biden administration had enough problems at home to keep it busy. The COVID-19 pandemic still rages despite the vaccines—whose distribution has been a disgrace. The Democratic-led Congress, which has still not passed the pandemic relief bill, has already abandoned the $15 per hour minimum wage.

On top of this, the superfreeze of Texas—and of its millions of workers and poor people—has exposed once again the desperate need to rebuild the U.S. infrastructure. Not to mention the immediate need for emergency aid.

Even those who recognize the rotten Continued on page 7
Buffalo demands mental health help, not death-by-cop

By Nigel Bouvart
Buffalo, N.Y.

Activists demonstrated here Feb. 28 in solidarity with the family of Daniel Prude and the people of Rochester, N.Y., where police killed Prude while answering a mental health crisis call in March 2020.

The police response was to put a “spit bag” over Prude’s head and press his body and face into the pavement for several minutes. He stopped breathing and was sent by ambulance to a hospital. A week later he was declared brain dead and taken off life support. Coroners have ruled his death a homicide.

The Rochester Police Department attempted to cover up its crime, preventing the release of body cam footage of the incident until September 2020. The release generated weeks of protest, and Prude’s family vowed to sue the city over their loved one’s death.

A grand jury declined to indict the cops who were responsible, prompting another round of protests. At the Feb. 28 Buffalo demonstration, representatives of Queen City Worker’s Center, Justice for Migrant Families and Workers World Party spoke, drawing parallels with the cases of Troy Hodge in Niagara Falls and India Cummings in Buffalo. Both died in jail following their arrests during mental health crisis calls. Speakers called for solidarity with political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, in view of his recent COVID-19 illness, and with prisoners at the ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) detention center in nearby Batavia.

Speakers raised demands for the statewide passage of Daniel’s Law — named for Prude — which would form mental health units to respond to mental health crises instead of cops. The legislation would mandate that police stop the use of “bola wraps,” a restraint launched from a firearm which hooks into a person’s skin and lasso them. The Buffalo Police Department acquired this weapon in 2020, despite public outcry, and first used the bola wrap against a person during a mental health call this January.

Buffalo, N.Y., City Hall, Feb. 28.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

Workers World Party fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

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 dismissions, attacks on im/migrants and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

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 — 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.

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

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Mundo Obrero Workers World

Editorial

Daniel’s Law—named for Prude—would form mental health units to respond to mental health crises instead of cops. The legislation would mandate that police stop the use of “bola wraps,” a restraint launched from a firearm which hooks into a person’s skin and lasso them. The Buffalo Police Department acquired this weapon in 2020, despite public outcry, and first used the bola wrap against a person during a mental health call this January.

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...
Fracking banned in Delaware River Basin

By Betsy Piette

In a historic ruling, the Delaware River Basin Commission voted Feb. 25 to perma-
nently ban fracking (hydraulic fractur-
ing) for natural gas in the Delaware River Watershed. This ruling formally affirms a drilling moratorium the DRBC imposed in 2010. Representa-
tives of the four states with waterways the Delaware River drains—Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware—voted in favor of the ban. But the federal government repre-
sentative from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers abstained, claiming more time was needed to coordinate with the Biden administra-
tion.

Executive Director Wrenonah Hauter of Food & Water Watch, one of several organizations that fought for the ban, criticized the federal abstention: “Grassroots activ-
ists stopped a plan to frack the Delaware River and never stopped fighting until today’s victory was assured.” Fracking is a threat to the Delaware River and every-
where else. Communities living with the har- 
ness of fracking have known for years that there is no way to make fracking safe.

“The White House chose political expe-
diency today over protecting the drinking water of communities in the Delaware River basin who listen to communities and science and support a ban on fracking everywhere.” (foodandwaterwatch.org)

The DRBC ban prohibits fracking activ-
ity in areas of northeastern Pennsylvania and southern New York that sit atop natu-
ral gas deposits in the Marcellus Shale for-
amation. Because New York State banned fracking in 2014, the ban only impacts Pennsylvania drilling. The Marcellus Shale does not extend into Delaware or New Jersey.

Water source for 15 million people

More than 15 million people, a popula-
tion including New York City; Philadelphia and Trenton, N.J.; and Wilmington, Del., rely on the 13,500-square-mile Delaware River Basin for their drinking water. The protected area includes the Delaware Water Gap and the Upper Delaware Scenic and Historic River areas—parks that attracted three million visitors and generated $130 million in economic activity in 2019, according to the National Parks Conservation Association.

Environmental and community activ-
ists have pressured the DRBC for over a decade, saying that decades-old, poor air quality in the Delaware River Basin “are not conducive to healthy living.” The long-term health effects are unknown, they noted, but fracking is a threat to the Delaware River Basin.

To offset overproduction, industry pro-
ponents pushed for converting natural gas into the production of plastics, but most of these efforts have been canceled or delayed. Yet in 2020, the Pennsylvania legislature passed the Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Act, which would tax $4.50 per million cubic feet of gas, with an additional 10% of that tax paid to local governments.

Protest demands freedom for Mumia, suffering COVID symptoms

By Betsy Piette

Political prisoner and Black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal began experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, including diffi-
culty breathing on Feb. 26. Hearing this news, his family and supporters called a protest. Less than 24 hours later, about 20 people took to the streets of Philadelphia, in front of the PA DOC’s Graterford facility, noting that PA DOC’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic has caused Mumia’s health to worsen.

The commission voted to create future rules on these issues. Representa-
tives of the energy indus-
try and politicians claiming to represent landowners who seek to lease land for drilling are challenging the commission’s decision. Some claim the action amounts to an illegal confiscation of owners’ min-
eral rights. The American Petroleum Institute Pennsylvania asserts that the DRBC’s decision “ignores a robust regulatory system and strict industry standards that ensure the environment, public health and local communities are pro-
tected.” (Philadelphia Inquirer, Feb. 25)

Historically the energy industry frequently ignored property own-
ers’ mineral rights when fracking was involved. Often energy companies have claimed “mineral rights” to drill for gas and oil, even when property owner-
s object. The companies have ignored well-documented pollution in water-
ways, including the Susquehanna River in Pennsylva-
nia. Their “robust regulatory system and strict industry standards” are an illusion in Pennsylvania. Four years under the Trump administration have weakened federal environmental regulations.

Job creation hype

The commission’s ruling occurred just as the energy industry is experiencing a glut in natural gas production. This glut began in 2012 and worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic.


Angola Prison, La.

Solitary confinement abuse sparks hunger strike

By Gloria Rubac

Incarcerated workers in Louisiana’s notorious Angola Prison began a hunger strike early Feb. 17. The reason: Prison officials refused to release them back into the prison population after they served their sentence in solitary for a rule infraction.

Angola State Prison was the 18,000-acre Angola plantation-now-prison at Angola by an armed white guard on horseback has been enacted daily for more than 100 years.

According to The Lens, an independent nonprofit news outlet for New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, the hunger strikers reported that in segregation, they are kept in their cells for over 23 hours a day and are only let out to shower. But even that, some said, has no guarantee.

“We gotta fight for a shower,” striker Percy Hawthorne told The Lens. Hawthorne had been held in disciplinary segregation since early November for “defiance” and “aggravated disobedience,” although his punishment was only supposed to be 10 days.

Another striker, Frederick Ross, told The Lens that for most of the time he was in disciplinary segregation, he was not allowed to purchase items from the canteen. “I have no property, no books, no television, no nothing.”

Miguel told Workers World that he joined the hunger strike because “I was sentenced to 90 days of isolation confinement which resulted in me staying over four months. This was over 90 days more. I do not know if the inmates are currently on hunger strike but during this time, I was also on hunger strike for about three days.”

A prisoner who needed to remain anonymous told Workers World that in 2020, he was in the same solitary tier where the hunger strike began. “After doing time in solitary, men are totally stressed out. There’s no TV, no radios; showers are seldom, and maybe we get a phone call once a month. Mail is haphazard, with a letter from Baton Rouge sometimes taking a month to be delivered.

“The guards are lazy and hateful, so sometimes fires are set to get their attention. Prisoners get into fights. One guy stomped another’s head, and he died on the tier. The stress is everywhere, but officials try to cover up the killings.”

A 2019 report by the Vera Institute of Justice found that between January 2015 and November 2016, “on average, 17.4% of all inmates in Louisiana’s state-operated prisons were housed in some form of segregated housing, which is approximately 3.9 times the estimated national average of 4.5%.

On June 11, 2010, the New York Times reported that “Angola is the largest maximum-security prison in the United States with 6,300 prisoners and 1,800 staff, including corrections officers, janitors, maintenance and wardens.”

According to the ACLU of Louisiana, Louisiana has the highest rate of prison deaths per capita in the country. The state has more people serving life sentences without parole than Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee and Texas combined.

Solitary Watch

Solitary Watch investigates, documents and disseminates information on the widespread use of solitary confinement in U.S. prisons and jails. In 2019, this nonprofit national watchdog group published a report on solitary confinement in Louisiana, based on the largest survey ever taken by people held in solitary confinement.

The report told “chilling stories of abuse, deprivation and soul-crushing loneliness.”

According to solitarywatch.org, solitary confinement in Louisiana is “deeply rooted in the history of racial subjugation and captivity in the South, which begins with slavery and stretches through convict leasing and Jim Crow to the modern era of mass incarceration.”

Prisoner rights advocates with the Louisiana Stop Solitary Coalition are slamming the department for failing to treat inmates humanely. “Having served 44 plus years in solitary confinement, I am fully aware of the brutality of solitary. Hunger strikes are brutal; so I know from personal experience how desperate these men must be to resort to this,” said Albert Woodfox, a part of the Stop Solitary Coalition.

Woodfox was one of the Angola 3, three men wrongfully accused of murder held for decades in solitary at the prison. He was released from Angola in 2016 and has written a book, appropriately named “Solitary.”

Contact Warden Nettles to demand the strikers be immediately released — phone (225) 655-4411. The strikers want guarantees in writing that they will be released from solitary and moved to appropriate and safe conditions.

While the issue that precipitated the hunger strike was not releasing men when their time was completed for rule violations, there are so many, many other crimes being committed against the incarcerated workers at Angola. Each of these crimes by the Louisiana Department of Corrections would more than justify a strike.

No one should have to go on a hunger strike to be treated justly. We demand: Immediately End Solitary Confinement! Tear Down the Prison Walls! Free Them All!!

This scene of Black incarcerated workers being marched to work in solitary at Angola, La. Leadbelly (Huddie Ledbetter) in the foreground, July 1934.

PHOTO: ALAN LOMAX

Black rage: a new ‘reconstruction’ in the U.S.

By Wesley Massey

The following letter from an incarcerated worker at SCI Pine Grove was received by Workers World Feb. 24.

How do we make a paradigm shift to change how Blacks are viewed with pessimism, and on a good day cautious optimism? How do we change the culture in law enforcement that every Black man or woman is a perp ready to do harm? Ultimately how do we destroy this caste system of white superiority and white privilege?

How do we break free of a political party that since the time of Ulysses S. Grant has tried to undermine the equity and rights of our kinfolk? The voice of the oppressed, both Black and white, scream for equity and equality! Black and Brown men and women are the only people, [who] after being lynched, shot and killed, tortured and systematically oppressed, are told to peacefully protest, while our enemies promote and use violence in the streets to further their agenda — most of the time behind a badge!

White superiority and racial oppression have taken new forms. No longer do they don white hoods and robes — they wear uniforms with badges; they wear black robes, and they wear business suits; and then they create systems and laws to shield themselves from scrutiny.

They don’t hire us in key positions; they create laws that target our Black communities, use their badges to overpolice our acts: deny us loans and bury us in debt through high-interest loans and predatory lending practices. The most racist thing a Black person can hear is NO — No, you can’t have this loan. No, you can’t have this job. No, your application to live in this apartment wasn’t approved.

We assumed with legislation, things like “redlining” went away, but all they did was change the process! Police in this country have weaponized their color; the color of our skin — Black and Brown — is the institution of fear that drives drastic measures to protect the white institution they’ve created.

The new reconstruction

The new reconstruction in the U.S. needs to change the dynamic of pushing for equality to a driving force for minorities to have an equity state in this country. Blacks spend one- and-a-half trillion dollars on goods, yet we have the smallest market share! Part of this is our lack of financial literacy, but a big part is being systematically pushed out from institutions such as big business and Wall Street, where we lack a serious presence to affect financial change in this country.

Ulysses S. Grant’s Reconstruction Act — that was an attempt to provide Blacks in the South, who were newly freed, a form of equity starting with voting and running for political office. The U.S. failed by not providing support and protection from the Ku Klux Klan for the voters in the South. Yet here we are in 2021, and we are still facing voter intimidation problems. Black and Brown people are tired of the double standard that exists in this country on every accord.

When we peacefully protest or rebel for that matter, we are met with a police force that is unparalleled! People are shot and killed; people have black bags put over their heads and [are] whisked away as if this were Nazi Germany! Yet a predominately white mob can storm an institution of democracy, with the intent to do harm to its occupants, and destroy property with little-to-no opposition — and in all reality when history is written, it may be hailed as a patriotic act!

Are Black and Brown people mad? You are damn right we are! We are tired of waiting around for bureaucratic change that is never going to come; empty promises of justice! Lies about equality, smoke and mirrors about institutions of change! The blood of OUR people calls from the ground [upon] which they have been slain. Rage cries out from these prison walls for change!!

Wesley Massey
Mental health effects of COVID lockdown in prison: Interview from inside SCI Albion

By Joe Piette  Part 1 of a telephone interview with Demetrius Grant, imprisoned at SCI Albion near Erie, Pa., was conducted by Joe Piette for Workers World newspaper on Feb. 16.

Demetrius Grant: We’re going to be covering the issue of COVID-19 today, as to how it impacts prisoners’ mental health. About a week ago, a correctional officer shot and killed a prisoner. I was a prisoner killed himself, and another one tried to kill himself. He said that it was the thirteenth episode in the last month. How many more of these incidents are going to go unreported not only in this institution, but in other institutions — because they’re not giving prisoners access to mental health care and treatment?

Workers World: I was doing research this morning, and the latest statistics I could find are from 2019. There were 23 suicides in Pennsylvania that year, and that was the most ever. That’s a number that’s been increasing in Pennsylvania, before COVID. (Philadelphia Inquirer, Feb. 20)

Police officials hide suicides

DJ: I did research too and found the same thing about suicides rising dramatically under COVID. The Department of Corrections (DOC) is refusing to give the numbers of who committed suicide. I found a case called Bowling vs. Office of Records of Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court, Appellate Jurisdiction. (fdnlaw.com, Feb. 5)

It says under the right-to-know law that it is a remand law — it is designed to promote access to governmental information, in order to prohibit secrets about public officials’ actions and to make them accountable for them. Exceptions from public officials’ actions and to make the public accountable for them — because it’s part of their long-term program. They’re not looking at the danger they’re causing to the prisoners, whom they have a duty to care for and protect.

WW: Are there in-person visits available to prisoners?

DJ: Captain Skinner told us about a month ago, in-person visits are never coming back. He claimed the introduction of drugs coming into the institution dropped by 20%, so that’s their justification for not allowing people to physically touch their kids, mothers, their kin.

Those decisions have a dramatic effect on people. DOC experts know this, but they are turning a blind eye to this, because it’s part of their long-term program. They’re not looking at the danger they’re causing to the prisoners, whom they have a duty to care for and protect.

WW: The thing is that the end of in-person visits only dropped drugs by 20%. That means the drug problem is still in-coming and they must come from the guards.

DJ: They know this, but just as they hide the numbers about the suicide rate, they know about the drugs too. They know the numbers, but it’s not in their plans.

I have an article about when they put together their plans in 2018. It’s about the guards being exposed to these drugs, resulting in the switching of the mail, so it now comes through Florida. All the drugs that people claimed to have bought from this to this, when the DOC refused to say what the hospital reports revealed, didn’t match what the guards were saying. So more and more they know that these fake incidents to justify what they’re doing, which has a profound effect on the health, welfare and safety of the prison population.

WW: It’s not just Pennsylvania. It’s going on in Texas, California and other states. Suicide rates are increasing. I can’t find any state that has released these statistics from 2020 to date during the pandemic.

Lawsuit protests horrific conditions

DJ: No doubt. If you’re like any human being and put in a cage constantly, and if you don’t have any family or friends to lean on, and you’re confined in isolation, you’re in a dire situation. You can’t get more isolated than that. I found a case started by the Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania against the state’s DOC Secretary John Wetzel about prisoners being held in horrific conditions to an unconstitutional process that takes no account of mental illness, but in fact exacerbates it.

When prisoners are locked in extremely small cells for at least 23 hours a day, including holidays, the lights are on in their cells all the time. They are denied adequate mental health care and are prohibited from working, participating in any rehabilitative programs or attending religious services.

The DOC’s mistreatment of every prisoner violates their rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the U.S. Constitution. Prisoners have physical contact with only one other human being — their assigned cellmate — who probably suffers from schizophrenia or violent behavior. They are subjected to brutal actions, which are injurious to their mental health in solitary confinement.

The Pennsylvania American Civil Liberties Union said on March 11, 2013:

"Prolonged isolation exacerbates the symptoms of mental illness. As a result, often prisoners with mental illness refuse to leave their cells for the limited recreation time or for medical treatment.

"Others experience sleeplessness, hallucinations and paranoia. Still others attempt to injure themselves or others, primarily by cutting or attempted hanging and sometimes are successful in suicide attempts. Frequently, these symptoms are not recognized as mental illness, which prison officials punish with still more time in the Restricted Housing Units (RHU). (tinyurl.com/av9d7ym)

"The result is a Dickensian nightmare in which prisoners with mental illness are trapped in an endless cycle of isolation and barriers in which their mental health and deprives them of adequate treatment and the ability to qualify for parole."

The information contained in the settlement agreement compiled by Angelus Love, the ACLU, the Prison Policy Initiative, David Rudovsky and many other attorneys.

The agreement with the DOC settled the lawsuit on Jan. 5, 2015. (tinyurl.com/v0v7h3y)

But they’re not holding to this agreement anymore. Mental health is considered a disability. So this is even more compelling today.

WW: What they’re doing with the seventh and Fourteenth Amendments, because the restrictions are exacerbating problems — not only with dudes who have mental illnesses, but also creating problems for people who haven’t had them under any circumstances. They’re being locked up in those cells long-term is having a profound long-term effect on people, not only while in prison, but it will affect them making parole. Prisoners with mental illnesses are going to have rougher roadblocks for rehabilitation, if officials know they are suffering from mental health problems which will be long-term.

Pandemic lock-downs

DJ: You have no sense of when this is going to end. We’ve been under this situation of being locked in our cell, never thinking about when you make inquiries about when it is going to end, the answer is that it looks like this is going to happen for the foreseeable future. Guys who have preexisting mental health problems are being locked in their cells and only coming out for 45 minutes every other day. I’ve only been out to the yard once since November. I was only just able to go to the law library for the first time since last year.

People feel a greater sense of hopelessness for being locked down in this unbearable situation, in these small cells with another human being they don’t even get along with. And their movements are limited. They can’t contact their families. They can’t fight their legal cases.

They can’t keep up with themselves physically. It has a profound influence on your psyche. I wake up during the night having panic attacks, which I also have during the day, because I feel like I’ll never get out of this cell.

It comes to the point when a person loses hope and feels their situation is never going to get better. They feel they can’t cope with it for long periods of time without DOC intervention to correct it. But it seems to the DOC that the institution is fine and dandy with the way things are going. They have absolute control over people.

Crueity of ban on in-person visits

WW: And there are no in-person visits from their loved ones?

DJ: Captain Skinner told us about a month ago, in-person visits are never coming back. He claimed the introduction of drugs coming into the institution dropped by 20%, so that’s their justification for not allowing people to physically touch their kids, mothers, their kin.

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By John Catalinotto

Some younger Workers World Party members met Rubin Kanowitz for the first time when he was a commu- nist elder, still confronting cops on recent demonstra- tions chanting, “Black Lives Matter.” Their parents knew him from when he first joined the party in 1965. All grieved as they learned he died Jan. 26, at the age of 91.

We had this news was likely once we heard that Rubin and his spouse Joyce Kanowitz, also a party member for 56 years, were hospitalized after testing posi- tive for COVID-19. Joyce survived. Rubin returned to his coffin and died with loved ones present, within restrictions the pan- demic has imposed. The couple was hospitalized COVID-19 patients are horrifically lonely. Rubin’s ever-present optimism and open soli- darity with all the essential caregivers and housekeeping staff won friends and led to one wonderful moment: A Filipina nurse, who is a leader in the BAYAN USA médico branch, recognized him as a WWP militant and made his day by singing “The Internationale” for him. Working-class internationalism was in Rubin.

Like almost any WWP comrade with 50-plus years of party work, Rubin wrote articles, made political talks and took part in hundreds of demonstrations, rallies, political meetings, fundraising socials, headquarters cleanups and child- care sessions! To some of the children, he was a favorite uncle. And birthday parties! Rubin was at all of them, as he treasured the morale of individual com- rades as much as he hated the crimes of the ruling class.

That he managed to stay active in the streets until he was nearly 90 is further proof that revolutionaries never retire from their real profession. If they’re lucky, they can leave the “day job.” Rubin had been an economist.

Work Fairness in the 1990s

In the mid-1990s, Rubin took on a new political task.

For the USDA, in July 2010. Sherrod had been the target of right-wing attacks. Before long, they and Joyce hosted fundrais- ing socials at their apartment near Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn. One such social was for the Deacons for Defense and Justice, which organized armed self-de- fense of Black communities in the Deep South.

Rubin, with Joyce Kanowitz.

Biden pick for Secretary of Agriculture

Vilsack no friend of farmworkers or farmers

By Ted Kelly

President Joe Biden nominated for- mer Secretary of Agriculture Thomas Vilsack to head the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the entire Obama administration from 2009 to 2017. Vilsack testified before the Senate on Feb. 2 — Groundhog Day — and was confirmed a few weeks later.

Vilsack’s eight-year tenure was disas- trous for Black farm- ers. Workers World reported Feb. 12: “Since 2012, over a million Black families have lost their farms (Guardian Aug. 15, 2019), and their share of the U.S. food market is less than 2% of all farm owners. A 2019 Center for American Progress study found that the USDA has a long and well-documented history of discrimination against Black farmers. The unequal administration of government farm support programs, cru- cial to protecting farmers from an inher- ently unstable environment, has had a profound impact on rural communities of color.”

The NAACP and other civil rights organiza- tions strongly opposed the nomination of Vilsack over his treatment of Black farm- ers, as well as his quick and unceremonious firing of Shirley Sherrod, the first Black Director of Rural Development in Georgia for the USDA, in July 2010. Sherrod had been the target of right-wing attacks.

The reform bill placed limits on how long workers could receive welfare and forced millions of poor workers, mostly women, to work for their welfare payments, which was tantamount to being forced to work for subminimum wages. These were workforce workers.

Rubin helped to organize Work Fairness, an organization of workforce workers. The “reform” forced these workers to go to hear- ings before an administrative judge. The hearing aimed to find an excuse to discontinue their benefit payments. Rubin would accompany the work- ers, acting as their lawyer.

“Rubin never lost a case.” Some of Rubin’s day jobs were on Wall Street. As you might imagine, it was an unpleasant environment for a professional revolutionary. He was in the midst of the very people whose class rule he yearned to overthrow. Like all of human history, our lives too are filled with contradictions, including our jobs. Contradictory benefits of a Wall Street job are that: (1) you learn what the working class is; (2) you see their weak points; and (3) you are able to help fund the organization of the working class.

In 2019, Monsanto was “no question” of the product’s safety, despite Canada and the European Union banning the use of amaranth to get sterile food. (Mother Jones, April 2, 2012)

Rather than bolster worker protections and stabilize the volatile agricultural sector through central planning, the capitalist state’s only response to falling commodity prices is international economic aggres- sion. This was one of the primary pur- poses of Trump’s “U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement,” a rebranding of NAFTA, which was praised by big agribusiness.

Biden’s connection to WWP began in January 1965, when the women of that Brooklyn neighborhood, including his spouse Joyce, made sandwiches to sup- port a struggle for Black community control of the schools. Then President Lyndon Johnson escalated the Vietnam War, which accelerated everyone’s politi- cal development. Before long, they and others of the Brooklyn neighborhoods had joined the Party.

Perhaps the real influence setting Rubin’s lifetime course was his childhood in Brooklyn’s East New York neighbor- hood in the 1930s and 1940s, which he often talked about. He may have worked some of the time in WWP, but his parents in that community’s immigrant proletar- iat nourished him. And he never strayed. One might say he made full circle.

As a comrade, Shelley Ettinger wrote, Rubin “had the Party’s back, was all in for the Party and for the struggle, at all times. He was an anti-racist, anti-Zionist, work- ing-class, old, communist, Jewish com- rade. He gave it his all.”

Rubin Kanowitz, presente!”

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Page 6 March 4, 2021 workers.org
The Bessemer front in the international class struggle

By Christian Noakes

Bessemer, Ala., is now the site of a historic labor struggle between the Amazon warehouse workers there and the $1.7 trillion international capitalist monopoly corporation. About 80% of the warehouse workers are African American, and almost half are women.

In March 2020, Amazon opened up the BHM:1 fulfillment center in this predominantly Black-working-class city that sits on the west edge of Birmingham, Ala. Within two months, the workers began to push for union organization by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU). The workers dubbed themselves “Bamazon Union.”

If successful, the Alabama workers will have established the first union in the U.S. within a transnational corporation in the world and the face of a transnational corporation in the world (facebook.com/SupportAmazonWorkers).

The Bessemer Amazon workers have won a historic struggle against a behemoth—Amazon, the second-largest transnational corporation in the world and the face of capitalism in the world. Including Amazon-owned Whole Foods, the company currently employs 1.37 million workers in the U.S., not counting delivery drivers.

The Bessemer Amazon workers have won the right to a market capitalism—based on stock value and number of outstanding shares—of Amazon union-busting campaign shows the company's drive to keep its stock prices and profits astronomical, Amazon must keep its workers from organizing, wherever and however it can.

In Bessemer, Amazon is running an aggressive campaign of lies and intimidation. Management posts anti-union mate- rial through to the warehouse and sends texts threatening to close if unionized.

A company website is rife with misinformation, stating: “An authorization card or online form is legally binding and may obligate you to pay monthly dues immediately from your paycheck. There are no free trials.”

That statement is a lie. Neither the cards nor the online forms are legally binding. The Taft-Hartley Act was originally passed to break up union organizing in the South, and workers in “right-to-work” states like Alabama are therefore neither obligated to join a union nor pay dues if they work in a unionized shop.

Support grows for Alabama Amazon union

Continued from page 1 candidate Nina Turner and actor and activist Susan Sarandon tweeted their support. Turner plans to attend a solidarity rally outside a Cleveland Whole Foods March 13.

Labor solidarity expands

The 1.6 million-strong AFSCME issued a solidarity statement March 23 declaring, “It’s time for Amazon workers to have a voice on the job.”

On Feb. 26, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Tina Fey, Shaka King and over 1,750 members of the Writers Guild of America East and WGA West signed a public solidary statement urging Amazon workers to vote union yes.

A number of industries have announced plans to film and programs for Amazon Prime.

Support Alabama Amazon Union has called for a “virtual union-getting those that involve unions or organizing attempts and defended the company against worker lawsuits over inadequate pandemic precautions and racist discrimination. The labor law firm writes that it aims to “identify risks and develop strategies and solutions to help employers avoid litiga- tion. The labor law firm writes that it aims to “identify risks and develop strategies and solutions to help employers avoid litiga- tion.”

But the Bessemer Amazon win has relied on the notoriously anti-union law firm Morgan Lewis to attack worker organizing. Morgan Lewis has fought other Amazon unionization attempts and defended the company against worker lawsuits over inadequate pandemic precautions and racist discrimination. The labor law firm writes that it aims to “identify risks and develop strategies and solutions to help employers avoid litiga- tion.”

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Nadezhda Krupskaya: Bolshevik revolutionary, educator

By Devin G. Abela

February 14 is the birth date of Nadezhda Krupskaya – Bolshevik revolutionary, educator and library advocate. Although born to a formerly aristocratic family, her family had descended into poverty, which led her to study Marxism. She joined the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in 1903.

In 1905, Krupskaya became Secretary of the Central Committee of the RSDLP’s Bolshevik wing, which later became the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, after the split in 1917 with the nonrevolutionary Mensheviks.

In the early days of the Soviet Union, Krupskaya took charge of the Adult Education Division of the new educational system, which revolutionized education in the world’s first socialist republic.

In 1924, as a member of the CPSU Central Committee, Krupskaya used her platform to advocate greater gains for women workers and to promote the Soviet educational system. From 1927 to 1939, she served as the country’s Deputy Minister of Education, and she was the Deputy Education Commissar from 1929 to 1939.

Later in life, Krupskaya turned her attention to the libraries of the Soviet Union. Prior to the revolution, they had been exclusive club-like settings where only the educated and literate were permitted entry. After the revolution, this inequity did not disappear right away.

Krupskaya began a complete overhaul of all libraries in the country, through literacy campaigns and collaboration between libraries to serve the public. This included assessing people’s needs and learning what they wanted to read.

Then it involved obtaining books relevant to what was wanted or needed for either the educated and literate or the uneducated. In that battle she has given her all, and in fact became one of the most knowledgeable in her country about the internet and social networks, a kind of think tank from which we should all drink her knowledge, in order to face the worst of the unconventional wars waged against our country – for which the island is now very well prepared.

We must not fail to mention Elizalde’s loyalty and affection for Fidel Castro, her familiarity, her constant concern for her daughter and her nearest and dearest, and her culinary specialty, a pumpkin cream that I also had the opportunity to try on several occasions when we visited her.

From African lands, I am compelled to write these lines to congratulate the Cuban “Red Rose” for having been awarded the José Martí 2021 National Journalism Prize for Life’s Work. Undoubtedly it is worth saying the phrase of Martí: “Honor for those who deserve honor.”

Rubén G. Abela is a journalist and the Cuban Ambassador to Gambia.

Cuban ‘Red Rose’ wins journalism honor

By Rubén G. Abela

This slightly edited article was published in Rezumen-englisch.org.

Feb. 27 — It was José Martí who said “Honor for those who deserve honor” — but he never knew he had inspired the highest distinction awarded to journalists in Cuba which would bear his name — an award established after the triumph of the revolution on the Caribbean island on Jan. 1, 1959.

In 2021, this prestigious prize of recognition was awarded to our colleague Rosa Miriam Elizalde, whom I had the good fortune to meet in 2003 in Madrid, and with whom it was a privilege to work in various capitals, including Havana, in the years that followed.

I will never forget when, in December of that year, on the Spanish island of Lanzarote, she interviewed the famous Portuguese writer, novelist, poet, journalist and playwright Jose Saramago. With her pen, Elizalde put an end to one of the many media campaigns against Cuba that have been repeated to denigrate the Revolution.

Nor can I forget that the “Cuban Red Rose” — as a dear friend from Madrid, a member of the same social communications profession, christened her — worked tirelessly, did not sleep, ate little, and wrote non-stop, rocking in front of her pen, Elizalde put an end to one of her country’s most knowledgable on the internet and social networks, a kind of think tank from which we should all drink her knowledge, in order to face the worst of the unconventional wars waged against our country — for which the island is now very well prepared.

We must not fail to mention Elizalde’s loyalty and affection for Fidel Castro, her familiarity, her constant concern for her daughter and her nearest and dearest, and her culinary specialty, a pumpkin cream that I also had the opportunity to try on several occasions when we visited her.

She is also the one who inspired another journalist of Spanish origin to dedicate part of his time to writing articles in favor of Cuba and the Great Homeland. Admired for her professionalism, her modesty and her kindness, the “Cuban Red Rose” is one of the pioneers, if not the first, to encourage and make many people understand the need to use social networks in defense of our Caribbean nation and the just causes of Our America and the world.

In that battle she has given her all, and in fact became one of the most knowledgeable in her country about the internet and social networks, a kind of think tank from which we should all drink her knowledge, in order to face the worst of the unconventional wars waged against our country – for which the island is now very well prepared.

We must not fail to mention Elizalde’s loyalty and affection for Fidel Castro, her familiarity, her constant concern for her daughter and her nearest and dearest, and her culinary specialty, a pumpkin cream that I also had the opportunity to try on several occasions when we visited her.

As Marxists, we strive not just to honor history, but to make it to promote change that puts workers and oppressed peoples first and to recognize their leadership.

Today, Black women and male co-workers, working in different battles for unionization at Amazon’s warehouse in Bessemer, Ala., if they win, it would be the first union drive to score a victory against this corporate behemoth. Their struggle is inspiring workers everywhere.

Women make up two-thirds of the 20 million workers who are paid $10.10 per hour or less; half are women of color. The gender pay gap exists, with African American, Latinx, Indigenous and immigrant women earning the lowest salaries. It’s no wonder that they are leading the “Fight for $15” hourly wage and a union movement!

During the pandemic, nurses and other health care workers, especially women, have organized — even gone on strike — to demand adequate staffing and safe working conditions and protective equipment. Teachers and other essential workers have pressed their demands, too.

To honor women workers, the 1910 International Socialist Women’s Conference in Copenhagen declared March 8 to be International Working Women’s Day. On that date in 1908, 15,000 women immigrant garment workers and socialists marched for better working conditions. Congress proclaimed March as Women’s History Month in 1987.

People of all genders mark IWWD worldwide. Socialists have long recognized struggle as the only way to improve women’s lives. Like the Black Lives Matter movement, started by women and LGBTQ+ activists, which boldly fights racism, misogyny, bigamy, xenophobia, homophobia and transphobia. We demand the release of immigrants and children from ICE detention and family reunification. We support gender-nonconforming and trans people, who constantly risk physical attack.

If you appreciate WW’s extensive coverage of women’s struggles, join the WW Sponsor Program. For donations of $75, $100, $300 — or more if you can, members receive a year’s subscription to WW, a regular letter about timely issues and one, two or three free subscriptions (respectively), for friends. Supporters can receive the “What Road to Socialism?” book upon request. (Or read it at workers.org/books)

Write checks to Workers World and mail them (monthly or annually), with your name and address, to 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. Or sign up at workers.org/donate/ to make monthly donations.

We appreciate your help in building Workers World!
Biden sends B-1 bombers to Norway, threatens Russia

By Ted Kelly

The U.S. Air Force announced during February that it is sending four B-1 bombers and at least 200 personnel to Orland Air Base on the central coast of Norway. Pentagon officials made no secret of the fact that the deployment is meant as a threat to Russia, which is well within range of U.S. airbases. According to a Feb. article in Forbes, “Missile-armed B-1 could pose a serious threat to Russia’s Northern Fleet. In staging the bombers from Norway, the United States effectively guarantees that both Russia and NATO’s allies can react to the Artic Circle’s threat.”

WASHINGTON WAS BEHIND THE ARCTIC

By Michael Otto

Ibarra, Ecuador

Feb. 19 — Almost 10 million voters, a record 81% of those eligible, went to the polls Feb. 7, despite the pandemic, to choose among 16 candidates in Ecuador’s presidential elections. The two top vote-getters will compete in the April 11 runoff elections. No candidate received enough votes to win in the first round.

Three center-left parties got 70% of the votes.

Andrés Arauz, representing the new movement led by former President Rafael Correa, came in first place with 32.7% of the vote. Arauz is a former minister in the government of Correa running for the progressive Union for Hope-Central Democratic Party (UNES-CD).

Lawyer Dr. Yaku Pérez came in third with an unprecedented 19.4% of the vote for his Patchakutik party (PK), which represents the Indigenous Movement and demonstrates mass support for the goals of the uprising.

Entrepreneur Xavier Hervás, the Titok candidate, was the biggest election surprise, capturing many of the youth. He came in fourth with 15.7% of the vote for the Izquierda Democrática (ID), which identifies as a social-democratic party.

More than 1.2 million null and blank votes reflect mass uncertainty and frustration of people who can’t find a candidate they trust.

Ex-banker Guillermo Lasso, consid-

ered “co-governor” of the country with incumbent and extremely unpopular President Lenín Moreno, got only 19.7%, a distant second place and a virtual tie with Pérez to participate in the runoff.

Lasso’s identification with Moreno resulted in an avalanche against his party CREO (Creating Opportunities) and the Social Christian Party (PSC). These two normally competing right-wing parties united to back Lasso in an attempt to maintain their grip as the power brokers in Ecuador. Moreno himself got only 1.5% of the vote, an electoral disaster. The heavy-handedness that nailed neoliberal right-wing governance was the anger, pain and frustration of millions of people who had participated in or supported the Indigenous-led Great Uprising of October 2019. That social explosion against the International Monetary Fund austerity package shut the country down for 11 days. Washington was behind the Moreno government and backed its vicious and brutal repression of the October 2019 uprising.

During the last 12 months of the pandemic, Moreno used the crisis as both an opportunity and a political shield. Knowing that the people would not go into the streets as they did during October, he satisfied the IMF demands for billions in loan repayment and enacted neoliberal laws, which only magnified the harm caused by the crisis. The traitor goes down in history as Ecuador’s worst president. Unemployment, hunger and death stalk the land.

A million workers lost their jobs during the pandemic, more than 2 million people died above the annual average due to COVID-19. Education and health care cuts and unemployment mean untold misery for the poorest Ecuadorians. The youth of Ecuador, and especially Indigenous and Black youth, are facing a very bleak future indeed.

ROLE OF U.S., VENEZUELA

Moreno met recently in Washington, D.C., with Luis Almagro, secretary of the Organization of American States (OAS). Almagro was a key player in the 2019 coup against Bolivian President Evo Morales. Moreno invited U.S. police and military to advise the forces of state repression, and he upgraded the airport in the Galapagos Islands for the imperialists to use at their discretion against Venezuela. Now Lasso has diagrammed the election process by hailing Venezuela.

Pérez’s supporters see him as a military leader wearing a camouflage uniform. Arauz has the goods on the army, and he has a direct line to the military, as a former minister in the Correa administration.

The deployment to Norway of B-1 bombers also means a threat to Russia’s hegemony over its imperialist rivals.

WASHINGTON WAS BEHIND THE ARCTIC

The deployment to Norway of B-1 bombers also means a threat to Russia’s hegemony over its imperialist rivals.

The deployment to Norway of B-1 bombers also prevents Russia from competing for the rich natural resources beneath the Arctic and from freely using the Arctic Sea for trade.

The Biden administration thereby continues the policies of the prior administration, but more effectively. Donald Trump maneuvered to control the Arctic’s riches by offering to purchase Greenland from its former colonial overlord, Denmark. Though also a NATO member, Denmark’s government refused Trump’s farcical offer. The Norwegian government, however, accepted Biden’s deployment.

Apart from uranium, rare earth metals, and gold, the northern part of the Arctic contains about 25 percent of the world’s untapped fossil fuel supply. Due to climate change, Arctic sea ice is receding rapidly, making these previously uncultivated terrains ripe for exploitation and creating new waterways in previously unnavigable parts of the Arctic Sea.

While Norwegian government — Norway is part of the NATO military alliance — accepted the U.S. representation of the International Maritime Organization, the Red Party, a revolutionary socialist organization founded in Norway in 2007, “objected in a televised debate between its spokesperson, Member of Parliament Bjørnar Moxnes, and Norway’s defense minister.”

“arctic region and destabilizes peace in our area. We have also criticized the former government’s decision to place arma-

ments and U.S. soldiers for longer periods on the soil of Norway.”

Washington was behind the Moreno government and backed its vicious and brutal repression of the October 2019 uprising.
WORKERS WORLD ✤ editorial

‘No war drills on Korean Peninsula!’

By Viviana Weinstein

Students for a Democratic Society, Jewish Voice for Peace and the Denver Peace Council held a demonstration Feb. 20 at the state Capitol, in cooperation with the national call to prevent Washington from instigating a war against Iran. Threats the U.S. warships would move into the Gulf near Iran have increased fears of a new war. Last year, U.S. operatives assassinated Iranian scientists and a U.S. rocket killed Iranian General Qassim Soleimani, a leader respected for heading the fight against ISIS. The new U.S. administration has ordered more troops to Iraq and Syria, which threatens Iran.

Washington’s history of intervening in Iran includes overthrowing its elected government in 1953 and placing Shah Reza Pahlavi in power. After the 1979 Iranian revolution, the Tehran government retook control of its oil. In the hope of returning Iran to colonial domination, the U.S. government has instituted harsh sanctions during the pandemic, causing death and suffering among Iranian people. U.S. sanctions prevent Iran’s government from trading oil for food and medicine that its people need. After the Trump administration pulled the U.S. out of the accord that dropped sanctions in return for allowing inspections, Tehran has no confidence in agreements with the U.S. They ask that sanctions be lifted as a show of good faith.

The antiwar movement must continue pressure on the Biden administration to end the sanctions. It should expose and loudly oppose U.S. military threats.

Colorado protest

‘No war on Iran!’

Tell Biden: Stop bombing Syria!

Continued from page 1

role of the Republican Party, with and without Trump – in carrying out an aggressive assault on the working class in the United States – surely must be that the Biden administration is also their enemy.

Biden has employed less hateful rhetoric of a more inclusive administration, but he serves the same superrich role of the Republican Party, with and without Trump. This is a more inclusive administration, but he serves the same superrich role of the Republican Party, with and without Trump. This is a more inclusive administration, but he serves the same superrich role of the Republican Party, with and without Trump.
COVID vaccines = big business, political clout

By Manuel Raposo

Manuel Raposo is editor of jornalmundardevida.net in Portugal, where this article was published Feb. 14. Translation by John Catalinotto.

It has often been said that so-called "natural" disasters, including unforeseeable catastrophes, lay bare the weaknesses of the societies they strike. The health, social and economic damage inflicted by the novel coronavirus triggered the need for increased preparedness in many areas of society. As economists, we have come to realize that the coronavirus is an example of this. An aggravating factor is that it has long been predicted that the spread of a virus similar in character was likely to occur. But this crisis has exposed another aspect of today's societies—the cutthroat competition among the world's major capitalist powers in the race for vaccines, both for the colossal profits flowing to pharmaceutical companies and for geopolitical advantages.

Under present circumstances, all the abuses of imperialist capitalism take on dimensions of inhumanity and violence that normally are only found during open warfare.

Since the outbreak of the health crisis, even in the countries considered to be the most developed, what has become clear is the inadequacy of public health systems (due to undervaluing and underfunding), as well as the inability of private health services to respond to the emergency. While the political power's neglect of public health was evident in its disregard for the predictions that an epidemic outbreak was likely to occur.

The last few months have added another novelty: unbridled competition over vaccines. Earlier, a consideration of the number of countries agreed on a partnership called COVAX, under the aegis of the World Health Organization. Bronx President in a recent interview, COVAX was supposed to support research and production of vaccines and then their distribution on an equal footing around the world. Despite these plans, competition took over as soon as the first vaccines were discovered.

Early cooperation aided Big Pharma

The COVAX agreement was useful to the big pharmaceutical companies, as it provided for the exchange of scientific data that in turn accelerated the design of vaccines. Gigantic government funding, made with people's tax money, helped the pharmaceuticals.

But any agreement or promise of equal treatment became a dead letter once the vaccines became a reality: the usual criterion—business as usual—prevailed. If anyone thought that public funding would defend the public interest, they were quickly disillusioned.

At the same time, the most powerful states are vying for vaccines for a different reason: to ensure economic supremacy. What worries these states is the speed with which vaccines can be deployed, and when the products are in short supply.

This is what leads, for example, the U.S., to a veritable hoarding of vaccines to the detriment of the rest of the world — ultimately diluting poorer countries in particular. Britain has done the same under Boris Johnson, Donald Trump and now Joe Biden.

The proven inability of the major pharmaceutical companies to produce the necessary quantity of vaccine should logically lead them to decen-tralize production to different countries. But working against this goal is nonetheless the narrow interest of these companies to make as much profit as possible — which happens when they sell finished products and when the products are in short supply.

The health emergency ought to justify the abolition of patents and to encourage large-scale production, free of all fees, by all qualified laboratories in the world. But this does not happen because it clashes, once again, with the private interests of the pharmaceutical giants, centered so far in two countries: the United States and Britain.

Monstrous global inequities

The monstrous nature of all this gains even more relevance in the face of data released by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

In 2021 in the poorest countries, an additional 100 million people were relegated to a situation of extreme poverty. During 2021, the same will happen to another 150 million. Some 270 million people have been pushed to the brink of starvation. (OECD, "Global Crisis, Unequal Problems")

While in the higher-income countries, social protection measures to cope with the pandemic amounted to $965 per person, in the poorest countries only $4 per capita were allocated.

The rich countries have raised $14 trillion to support their economies and relaunch business. But this has not been enough to forgive the debts of African countries, which amount to $140 billion, or 1/40th of the former amount.

Inequities with long-term effects are also accentuated. In poor countries an average of 16 weeks of school was lost, while in rich countries 6 weeks were lost. Discrimination in vaccine distribution is another aspect of this war. So, 45% of the vaccines have been delivered to the wealthiest countries (with about 20% of the world's population), and 10% of those countries returned.

The nearly 100 poorest countries, with 80% of the world's population, should (according to the COVAX plan for 2021) receive two billion doses of vac-cines, via $5 billion in funding — but only $2 billion has been raised for this purpose. Even if the plan were followed, at most only 20% of the popula-tion in these countries could expect to be vaccinated; while in self-funded countries, 90% of the population can be vaccinated in the near future. At the current rate, in the best case it won't be until 2024 that the popula-tions of the poorest countries can all expect to be vacci-nated. (Diario de Noticias, Feb. 11)

‘Vaccine diplomacy’

The Economist magazine, for its part, confirms these facts and adds some interesting statements. “Vaccine diplomacy” will determine which countries will have access to vaccines in the coming months.

Production represents the biggest obstacle, “as many developed countries have pre-ordered more doses than they need.” The orders under the COVAX agreement will take time to reach poor countries, “especially if delays in the production for and delivery to richer countries push back delivery dates for poorer nations.” (Economist, Jan. 27)

It is impossible to hide these facts: The private interests of the pharmaceutical companies, chasing maximum profit, converges with the interests of the major capitalist powers in managing the course of the pandemic in the interest of achieving hegemony. The imperialist countries are using the vaccine shortage as a weapon to obtain advantages for themselves and in disputes between them. Under no circumstances would world capitalism soften its stance and grant poor countries what it has so far never granted them: debt forgiveness, bailout money or equal treatment — because that is the case for keeping them dependent.

All the capital that the imperialist world decides to apply in the fight against the pandemic goes through a rigorous profit-and-loss calculation, like any business investment. Whoever dies, dies.

Economist

If anyone thought that public funding would defend the public interest, they were quickly disillusioned.
Congelación de Texas

Los ricos, más ricos mientras obreros sufren

Por Mirinda Crissman
Houston

Una tormenta invernal sin precedentes azotó a Texas el 14 de febrero y trajo temperaturas bajo cero. Una semana después, grandes seres de la población siguen sin electricidad, calefacción y/o agua. En las principales ciudades, como Houston, Austin y San Antonio, los rancios sistemas corporativos vacíos permanecieron iluminados, mientras que millones estaban en la oscuridad sin electricidad ni agua.

Fue necesaria la protesta pública para hacer que los funcionarios apagaran los edificios que no estaban en uso y desviaran energía a hospitales y bomberos. Las personas en Texas no solo están luchando por recuperarse de esta congelación, sino también de hura
canatos económicos causados por la pandemia y el desregulato
tamiento global que produce precipitaciones extremas a todas las temperaturas. Esto se ve agravado por la crisis de COVID-19 y un mercadillo de los más desregulados: prisiones, cárcel y centros de detención; Texas ocupa el segundo lugar después de California.

Muchas personas se han congelado hasta morir, y es probable que algunos no descubran una de las muertes más silenciosas e insólitas de la pandemia. Según la redacción de la revista El Horizonte de Houston (18 de febrero), Chris Tomlinson informó para el Houston Chronicle que el 18 de febrero (17 de febrero) Chris Tomlinson informó para el Houston Chronicle que el 18 de febrero (17 de febrero) Chris Tomlinson informó para el Houston Chronicle que el 18 de febrero (17 de febrero) Chris Tomlinson informó para el Houston Chronicle que el 18 de febrero (17 de febrero) Chris Tomlinson informó para el Houston Chronicle que el 18 de febrero (17 de febrero) Chris Tomlinson informó para el Houston Chronicle que el 18 de febrero (17 de febrero) Chris Tomlinson informó para el Houston Chronicle que el 18 de febrero (17 de febrero). Las generadoras de electricidad de Texas no querrán perder el tiempo para construir equipos resistentes porque contan sus ganancias. Si no hay electricidad, las empresas no podrán producir nada, causando una caída en las ventas. Las empresas, por su parte, no querrán invertir en tecnología si no hay una demanda constante de energía. Las empresas no querrán invertir en tecnología si no hay una demanda constante de energía. Las empresas no querrán invertir en tecnología si no hay una demanda constante de energía.

El huracán Maria golpeó a Puerto Rico en 2017 y dejó a la isla devastada. Muchos evacuados de Katrina terminaron en Nueva Orleans tras el paso del huracán Katrina. El ex director general de ERCOT, Dan Woodfin, citó “instrumentos congelados en instalaciones de gas natural, carbón e incluso nucleares, así como suministros limitados de gas natural. La presión del gas natural en par
tes es un problema para muchas familias en Texas, donde la energía es una de las fuentes de energía no renovables y no desreguladas que cobra mucho más en comparación con la electricidad en los Estados Unidos. Así que, cuando muchas familias no pudieron acceder a la calefacción, las personas en Texas no solo están luchando por recuperarse de esta congelación, sino también de hura
canatos económicos causados por la pandemia y el desregulato
tamiento global que produce precipitaciones extremas a todas las temperaturas. Esto se ve agravado por la crisis de COVID-19

Para más información: LowWageCapitalism.com

El capitalismo en un callejón sin salida

Fred Goldstein utiliza las leyes de la acumulación capitalista de Marx, y la tasa decreciente de ganancia, para demostrar por qué el capitalismo global ha llegado prácticamente a un punto de inflexión.