

Free, Free Palestine!



Palestinian solidarity protest in Philadelphia, May 15.

‘By any means necessary’ Defend resistance!

On the eve of his 96th birthday May 19, the great Black revolutionary, Malcolm X, will always be remembered for the quote: “By any means necessary.” He used this phrase to justify Black people having the right to defend themselves from all forms of white-supremacist violence, including by use of arms.

Just a week before his assassination in 1965, Malcolm X stated, “We are today seeing a global rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter.”

Both of these powerful statements are applicable to the genocidal terror currently happening in Gaza. Workers World Party defends the the right of the Palestinian people, as an oppressed and exploited people, to rebel against the racist Zionist regime of Israel “by any means necessary.” Our view has not wavered one iota since the Party held its first pro-Palestine demonstration in 1967.

This self-determination includes the Palestinian masses having their choice of political representation — which in Gaza has been Hamas since 2006. For decades, Palestinians have faced

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U.S. backs Israeli terror in Gaza

By Monica Moorehead

The genocidal bombing of Gaza by the U.S.-backed Israeli Defense Forces, which began May 10, has entered its second week. This latest assault was sparked in Sheikh Jarrah, a neighborhood in East Jerusalem where neighbors were trying to stop the illegal evictions of Palestinian families by racist, Zionist settlers. At the same time U.S.-trained Israeli police raided Jerusalem’s Al-Aqsa Mosque, during Eid Al-Fitr prayers signaling the end of Ramadan for millions of Muslims around the world.

According to the Washington Post, 54 Israeli jets carried out 35 airstrikes in Gaza after midnight May 17, claiming to target Hamas military bases and their leaders. These strikes have leveled numerous buildings housing families, as well as a mattress factory and the building containing the offices of the Associated Press and Al Jazeera. The most recent bombing killed 42 Palestinians in just 20 minutes.

In the week before the May 17 bombing, an estimated 200 Gazans were killed including 60 children. There are desperate pleas for blood donations from the already understaffed and besieged health facilities in Gaza from COVID, where many of the over 1,000 injured will suffer and die from unattended

wounds. There is no safe place to hide from this Israeli onslaught; Gazans attempt to flee, but even overcrowded refugee camps have been attacked. Hunger is at an all-time high.

Fifteen Palestinians on the West Bank lost their lives at the hands of Israeli soldiers during a solidarity protest with Gaza. The Palestinian people continue to be dehumanized and treated as collateral damage, as the Israelis hope to turn Gazans against Hamas, their elected representative.

The Biden administration has shamefully defended Israel’s right to “defend itself,” as the U.S. continues to prop up the murderous Israeli regime with \$3.8 billion annually in military aid. Just think of the relief that amount could bring to millions of people in the U.S. suffering from unemployment, hunger and the threat of evictions spurred by the pandemic, instead of repressing and occupying a whole nation.

Resistance builds global solidarity

People from around the world, including across the U.S., are coming out in the streets in solidarity with the heroic people of Palestine. Israel is becoming more and more hated and isolated. Hundreds

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Solidarity protests took place around the world. Here in Scotland, May 15. More on pages 6, 8.



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Malcolm X &
Ho Chi Minh

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‘Crown: Freedom’ Tribute to Black women activists

By Betsey Piette

“Crown,” Philadelphia’s newest series of Black Lives Matter murals, now adorns three sides of the Municipal Services Building, the city’s most prominent government building. Facing City Hall, it is surrounded by Thomas Paine Plaza, a major site for large demonstrations. Currently, it is an oasis where homeless people congregate.

The people depicted in the beautiful murals are fighting a system built and maintained by the white-supremacist businesses and politicians that occupy the surrounding private property storefronts and corporate edifices. The installation of the murals at such a central location reflects the strength of the movement, which opposes the violence of the capitalist state.

Until June 2020, the plaza contained a 10-foot-high bronze likeness of former Mayor Frank Rizzo, who was legendary for brutal policing and openly racist politics. A campaign to remove his statue began during anti-police brutality protests following the police murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., in 2014.

People’s victory: Racist Rizzo comes down

The effort to remove the Rizzo statue came to fruition when activists defaced the statue during a May 30, 2020, demonstration of thousands protesting the police murder of George Floyd. After dragging their heels for years, the city quickly removed the statue in the dark of night June 3, 2020.

Artist Russell Craig designed “Crown” as a response to last summer’s protests against police brutality. It is a tribute to the ongoing fight to end systemic racism and inequality. The first mural in the series was dedicated in August 2020. It is a photomontage of people of all ages, nationalities and genders, with their fists raised and masks on their faces arranged



“Crown: Freedom” adorns wall of Municipal Services Building in Philadelphia. WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

in a ring shape (a corona). Defiance, hope and determination fill the faces, which are surrounded by names of people who were fatally shot by police.

“Crown: Freedom” and “Crown: Medusa,” the two newest murals, were dedicated by the city on May 11. “Crown: Freedom” pays tribute to Black women activists including freedom fighters Ramona Africa and Pam Africa, who are with the MOVE organization.

Going left from Pam Africa on the mural are YahNé Ndgo, who is with Blacks Lives Matter Philadelphia; educator Kezia Ridgeway; Krystal Strong, an organizer with Philadelphia Black Radical Collective; Ajeenah Amir, director of the Mayor’s Office of Public Engagement; underground radio personality Sajda “Purple” Blackwell; and Dr. Ala Stanford, founder of the Black Doctors Consortium to address COVID-19’s deadly impact on Black communities.

“Crown: Medusa” highlights Black, Indigenous and other people of color activists whose work addresses developing collective movements to heal intergenerational trauma. Like the first mural, images on “Crown: Medusa” and “Crown: Freedom” are also set against a background of names of victims of police murders.

During the May 11 dedication, with Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney present, Pam Africa used the opportunity to call for the release of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. □



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

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

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

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



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Vol. 63, No. 20 • May 20, 2021
Closing date: May 19, 2021

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Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published monthly by WW Publishers, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Phone: 212.627.2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$36; institutions: \$50. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc, P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at workers.org.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl. New York, N.Y. 10011.

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MOVE ‘Day of Remembrance’ honors lives lost

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

On the 36th anniversary of the horrific bombing of the MOVE family house in Philadelphia on May 13, 1985, hundreds gathered at Osage Ave. and Cobbs Creek Parkway at a plaque commemorating the event. Speakers focused on naming and remembering the lives of the six adults and five children murdered by the repressive state.

This year’s commemoration was especially poignant because of recent revelations involving the city’s callous mishandling and mistreatment of the remains of children who died there.

Several demonstrators carried placards listing the names of the 11 MOVE family members who perished. The adults were Rhonda Africa, Theresa Africa, Frank Africa, Raymond Africa, Conrad Africa, and John Africa — who founded the MOVE organization in 1972. The children were Katricia (Tree) Africa, 14, Delisha Africa, 12, Netta Africa, 12, Little Phil Africa, 12, and Tomaso Africa, 9. Birdie Africa, 13, survived the fire but died in September 2013. Ramona Africa, the only adult survivor, continues to be a force in the movement.

A visibly emotional Mike Africa Jr, son of MOVE 9 members Debbie and Mike Africa, recalled childhood memories of those who died in 1985. “The people who took the remains of my family and incinerated them have to be held accountable. What the city authorities have been doing over these many years has to come to a screeching halt. They need to stop covering up their behavior and destroying evidence of what they have done.”

In late April, news surfaced that Penn University Museum was in possession of bones thought to be the remains of Tree Africa and Delisha Africa. The bones were given to UPenn forensic anthropologist Alan Mann by the Philadelphia Medical Office for analysis. Mann

subsequently transferred to Princeton University, taking the bones with him.

Earlier today Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney met with the MOVE family and acknowledged that additional remains from victims of the 1985 assault had been kept in the Philadelphia Medical Examiner’s office until 2017, when they were incinerated and dumped by the city without the knowledge or permission of living relatives. During a late afternoon press conference, Kenney announced the firing of the city’s health commissioner Thomas Farley.

Police atrocities against MOVE

Kenney also apologized to the MOVE family, as did the Philadelphia City Council last year on the anniversary of the atrocity carried out by the city. However, MOVE members have insisted that the only remedy they want from the state is the release of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Several signs calling for Abu-Jamal’s freedom were carried by demonstrators.

At the rally speakers recalled the history of Philadelphia’s decades-long attack on the MOVE organization, including the police months-long blockade of the neighborhood around the families’ Powelton Village home. On Aug. 8, 1978, a police attack on the compound resulted in the arrest of nine MOVE members, who served over 40 years in prison.

During the weekend of May 12-13, 1985, police again orchestrated an attack on MOVE,

including making sure that the children who lived in MOVE’s Osage Avenue house were present at the time of the assault. Speakers recounted the involvement of Philadelphia police as well as state and federal police forces, as well as the fire department’s collusion in the assault.

A military helicopter dropped a C4 military-grade bomb on the house, resulting in a fire that reached adjacent houses. Officials then made the decision to “let the fire burn.” In addition to the lives lost, 60 homes in a predominantly Black neighborhood were destroyed.

This year’s gathering was followed by a march through West Philadelphia to Malcolm X Park. Along the way, neighbors expressed support for MOVE. □



Pam Africa (left) and Mike Africa Jr. lead march through West Philadelphia holding signs with names of those killed on the anniversary of May 13, 1985.

Six years after police murder

Tamir Rice family demands justice

By **Martha Grevatt**
Cleveland

Tamir’s Campaign held a virtual event May 12 to demand the federal Department of Justice reopen the case of Tamir Rice, who was only 12 years old when Cleveland police murdered him Nov. 22, 2014. The DOJ under the Trump administration quietly closed its investigation last year with no charges against officer Timothy Loehmann, who shot Tamir instantaneously after coming across him playing with a pellet gun, or Loehman’s partner Frank Garmback. Previously a Cuyahoga County grand jury declined to indict either cop, and both remained on the force until Loehmann was fired — not for killing Tamir but for lying on his job application!

Tamir’s family only learned of the decision by Trump’s DOJ when a whistleblower at the department leaked the news to the New York Times. The Cleveland Police Patrolmen’s Association, which appealed Loehmann’s firing, endorsed Donald Trump for president in 2016.

Tamir’s mother Samaria Rice spoke to the virtual audience about her son: “He was so talented” and is “always dearly missed.” He loved the Cleveland Cavaliers, especially LeBron James. He played drums. His teachers had

many good things to say about him.

Samaria Rice explained that her whole family has PTSD from having lost Tamir so violently. She spoke proudly of her three children — who all managed to graduate from high school, but have not been able to pursue a college education due to the trauma — and her four grandchildren. “I want to see a change in Cleveland,” Rice insisted. “My son was a whole little Black boy, and I want to see him get justice.”

The program drew activists from around Cleveland



Clevelanders protest Nov. 25, 2014, three days after police murder of Tamir Rice.

and other areas. Mothers who lost their sons to police violence in Houston and Benton Harbor, Mich., described the unfathomable grief they share with Samaria Rice. Others, including a senior law professor at Case Western Reserve University and a youth whose father is a police officer, described how Tamir’s lynching opened their eyes to the real character of policing in the U.S.

Rice family attorney Subodh Chandra presented a timeline of events from the 2014 shooting to “deliberate attempts to throw the case” by County Prosecutor Timothy McGinty to the quashing of the DOJ investigation begun under the Obama administration. The Trump DOJ violated the law when it did not inform the Rice family — a “family cheated of justice” — that the investigation was being terminated.

Tamir’s Campaign has written to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland asking that the investigation be restarted no later than June 25, Tamir’s birthday. The Campaign has won the support of 40 Congressional Representatives, including four from Ohio, along with the Cleveland City Council and Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown. More actions are planned.

Justice for Tamir Rice! □

Free Imam Jamil Al-Amin

By **Dianne Mathiowetz**
Atlanta

Supporters of Imam Jamil Al-Amin (formerly known as H. Rap Brown) took the campaign to gain freedom for the Black liberation fighter to the Fulton County Courthouse Friday, May 7, in Atlanta. This downtown building houses the office of the district attorney and the staff of the Conviction Integrity Unit, which is able to examine past prosecutions and determine if there were misconduct or errors made in the course of the investigations and trials. Upon review, the CIU can order a new trial or exonerate a falsely convicted person.

Al-Amin was charged with the murder of a Fulton County deputy and the wounding of a second on March 16,

2000. Two years later, at a trial replete with unconstitutional actions of the Fulton County legal team, judicial error, the questionable role of the FBI and the admission of faulty evidence, he was convicted and sentenced to life plus 35 years in prison.

The members of the Imam Jamil Action Network held down the four corners of Central Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive during the busy Friday rush hour with banners and signs, demanding his freedom.



In front of Fulton County Courthouse, May 7.

and ImamJamilActionNetwork.org.

Readers are encouraged to sign the petition and share the information about the campaign. □

Many drivers honked and put their fists up in solidarity.

Thousands of signatures have been submitted on a petition to the Conviction Integrity Unit to provide justice for Al-Amin.

More information on the numerous legal errors and government misconduct in his trial can be found at WhatHappened2Rap.com

Reflections on prisons

Honoring Malcolm X & Ho Chi Minh



By Monica Moorehead

May 19 marks the 96th anniversary of the birthday of Malcolm X and the 131st for Ho Chi Minh. Although one was Black and one was Vietnamese and the two were from different generations and experiences, what they had in common – that continues to inspire many today – was sacrificing their lives for the liberation of oppressed peoples from racism, colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism.

Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh both spent part of their lives imprisoned, in the U.S. (1946-1952) and pre-revolutionary China (1942-1943), respectively. In honor of these two great revolutionaries, we share the following quotes from Malcolm X, reflecting on both his personal and political views on prisons, and Ho Chi Minh’s spoken word from “The Prison Diary of Ho Chi Minh.”

“When I was in prison, I read an article — don't be shocked when I say I was in prison. You're still in prison. That's what America means: prison.”

“It is only after slavery and prison that the sweetest appreciation of freedom can come.”

“If you're born in America with a Black skin, you're born in prison, and the masses of Black people in America today are beginning to regard our plight or predicament in this society as one of a prison inmate.”

“While I was in prison, I was indulging in all types of vice, right within the prison. And I never was ostracized as much by the penal authorities while I was participating in all of the evils of the prison, as they tried to ostracize me after I became a Muslim.”

“The prison systems in this country actually are exploitative, and they are not in any way rehabilitative.”

“They [prisons] are not designed to rehabilitate the inmate — though the public propaganda is that this is their function.”

“[People] earn extra money [in prison] selling contraband, dope and things of that sort to the inmates, and so that really it's an exploiter.”

— Malcolm X (May 19, 1925 – Feb. 21, 1965) (azquotes.com)



Hard Is the Road of Life

Having climbed over steep mountains and high peaks.
How should I expect on the plains to meet greater danger?
In the mountains, I met the tiger and came out unscathed;
On the plains, I encountered men, and was thrown into prison.

The Flute of the Fellow-Prisoner

Suddenly a flute sounds a nostalgic note;
Sadly the music rises, its tune is close to sobbing;
Over a thousand miles, across mountains and rivers,
Journey's an aching grief. We seem to see a woman
Climbing a far off tower to watch for someone's return.

A Comrade's Paper Blanket

New books, old books, the leaves all piled together.
A paper blanket is better than no blanket.
You who sleep like princes, sheltered from the cold,
Do you know how many men in prison cannot sleep all night?

Autumn Night

Before the gate, a guard with a rifle on his shoulder. In the sky, the moon flees through clouds. Swarming

bed bugs, like black army tanks in the night.
Squadrons of mosquitoes, like waves of attacking planes.
I think of my homeland. I dream I can fly far away.
I dream I wander trapped in webs of sorrow.
A year has come to an end here.

Clear Morning

The morning sun shines over the prison wall,
And drives away the shadows
and miasma of hopelessness.
A life-giving breeze blows across the earth.
A hundred imprisoned faces smile once more.

COLD NIGHT

Autumn night. No mattress. No covers.
No sleep. Body and legs huddle up and cramp.
The moon shines on the frost-covered banana leaves.
Beyond my bars the Great Bear swings on the Pole.

On the Way to Nanning

The supple rope has now been replaced with iron fetters.
At every step they jingle as though I wore jade rings.
In spite of being a prisoner, accused of being a spy,
I move with all the dignity of an ancient government official!

After Prison a Walk in the Mountains

The clouds embrace the peaks, the peaks embrace the clouds,
The river below shines like a mirror, spotless and clean.
On the crest of the Western Mountains, my heart stirs
as I wander
Looking towards the Southern sky and dreaming of old friends.

Moonlight

For prisoners, there is no alcohol nor flowers,
But the night is so lovely, how can we celebrate it?
I go to the air-hole and stare up at the moon,
And through the air-hole the moon smiles at the poet

— Ho Chi Minh (May 19, 1890 – Sept. 2, 1969)

Stop the execution of Quintin Jones

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

In a couple of days, the State of Texas plans to execute a man who was 20 years old in 1999 when he committed a terrible crime. He killed his great-aunt Berthena Bryant so he could steal \$30 from her to buy drugs. There is more one should know about Quintin Jones, however.

Quintin Jones is a friend to many, including pen pals around the world and his dear friend in Houston, Angie Agapetus, who has visited him several times a month for 11 years. He is nephew to his great-aunt Mattie Long, the sister of the victim, and twin brother to Benjamin Jones.

Even before his trial and since then, Jones has expressed deep remorse for the killing; for a long time, he believed that he deserved to die for what he had done. He hated who he was as a youth and tried to commit suicide several times.

Jones' life was filled with violence, poverty, neglect, sexual abuse and drug addiction. His mother, struggling with addiction, continuously told him that she hated him. He left home at age 12 and stayed with relatives, including Long.

Long and Bryant were best friends. Long had breakfast and lunch every day with her sister and took her to run errands.

Today Jones' great-aunt and his twin brother have long since forgiven him and both have pleaded for clemency.

Friends appeal for clemency

A pen pal and friend, Suleika Jaouad, wrote in a May 10 opinion piece in the New York Times: “He entered at an unimaginable low, as lost as a soul can be. And through

prayer, sobriety, reconciliation with his family and long-standing correspondence with pen pals, he has found a way to lead a meaningful life and even to enhance the lives of others. The victim's family — who is also Quin's family — has forgiven him ... He has transformed himself into a kind, decent, compassionate man.”



Quintin Jones

In a letter to the editor of the Houston Chronicle, Agapetus wrote, “... in 2018 Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued his only commutation of a death row sentence, for Thomas Whittaker, who is white, to life without parole in a case with some similarities to Jones' case. Jones is Black. Whittaker was wealthy and arranged the killing of his mother, brother and father for inheritance. His father survived and requested clemency.”

Whether Abbott will take into account the Black family of Jones, who is not upper-middle class and university

educated, but who, like Whittaker's family, has forgiven him, remains to be seen.

In a video sent to the Texas governor, Jones' plea is simple: “It took me years to forgive myself. Another thing that helped me out was my great-aunt, Aunt Mattie. It was her sister. So by her loving me enough to forgive me, it gave me the strength to try to do better and to want to do better. All I'm asking you to do, if you find it in your heart, Mr. Abbott, is to give me a second chance at life.”

Long told CBS News reporter Omar Villafranca that she does not believe Jones should die. “I love him very much. I think the governor should spare him, because he has changed, and he's a different person than he used to be,” she said. Long has regularly visited Jones on death row.

Science has proven that young peoples' brains do not fully develop until they are around 25 years of age. Youth are impulsive, prone to peer pressure and can't grasp the long-term consequences of their actions.

Agapetus, an activist with the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement, says she's a nervous wreck waiting for the Texas Board of Pardons to decide if they will recommend clemency to the governor, and if they do, if the governor will follow their decision. “I believe he is a caring, matured and decent man. He is a different person than the person he was years ago. He is also ethical, intelligent and thoughtful.

“Texas has five executions scheduled for 2021, but no one should be executed, whether they are innocent or guilty. The death penalty is dying, and Texas and the whole U.S. should abolish it now!” □

Shackles come in many forms

By Princess Harmony

The shackling of incarcerated workers and other members of our class is a heinous crime against humanity. As committed communists, we have to fight to end the conditions of their incarceration. There is another form of shackling: psychiatric shackling. It is used against the mentally ill or those suspected of mental illness.

It is the use of psychosurgery (lobotomies), electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and medication shackling. Even if these forms of shackling aren't used on the patient, people can be tied to their beds or stretchers until they break or relent. It is important to examine these forms of shackling and understand how destructive they can be to the minds of the victims.

What is the reasoning behind these forms of shackling? In modern times, they are used to restrain “violent” or “difficult” patients, those in need of real treatment and sympathy. I had akathisia and needed to move. Instead, psychiatric “caregivers” decided I should be trapped like that. It is a dehumanizing and humiliating experience.

I’ve seen psychiatric medicinal shackles used on people who simply raised their voices. They were prescribed heavy-duty tranquilizers, including Ativan (lorazepam), Klonopin (clonazepam), Haldol (haloperidol) and Zyprexa (olanzapine).

Chemical ‘shackles’

Sometimes the drugs were given orally, in the cases of Klonopin and Zyprexa, but most times it would be Haldol and Ativan given via injection. Patients’ choices were limited to nonexistent. Sometimes they could reject addictive benzodiazepines.

After this psychiatric injection series, they were locked in a “safe room” and deprived of reading material or human interaction for hours on end. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and Mental Health America (MHA) oppose the usage of physical restraints and seclusion of patients, viewing them as failures

of treatment and the treatment team. (A treatment team consists of a psychiatrist, therapist, social worker and the patient’s family, if possible.)

This is only the beginning of understanding the history of shackling in mental health facilities. In the past, they used electroshock therapies and psychosurgery; lobotomies were first used in the early 20th century. Dr. Antonio Egas Moniz received a Nobel prize for this cruel discovery.

If drilling holes into the skull to destroy part of someone’s brain was bad, a new “development” in psychosurgery allowed doctors to go through an eye socket and

consent. Some facilities still use drug-induced shackling, because it is easier to dope up patients than to help them, if help is possible. In modern psychiatric facilities, the view is that it’s easier to drug patients and dump them after a week, without treating their acute problems.

The use of drug-induced therapy started with the advent of the typical antipsychotic or neuroleptic Thorazine (chlorpromazine). This drug was given to patients in the now-destroyed state hospital system to keep them from acting up and to make them stay compliant. This is a dehumanizing cruelty, but there’s more: Then came Haldol (haloperidol).



stir up the brain. The result would be a completely compliant patient, who often-times was totally disabled and needed to be taken care of permanently.

Drugs given, not help

There is also drug-induced shackling of the mind and sometimes the body. This was permissible because no one believed mentally ill people were capable of giving

Both of these medications had unpleasant or life-threatening side effects. First, the disorders tardive dyskinesia, Parkinsonism and akathisia were found to be caused by neuroleptics. “Neuroleptic” means “to take hold of one’s nerves.” This is an appropriate name for a medicine used when doctors actually wanted to cause side effects. It was believed that typical antipsychotics only worked on D2

(dopamine) receptors, thereby causing tardive dyskinesia or Parkinsonism. It was beyond cruel.

Psychiatrists thought the medications were working only if they caused tardive dyskinesia or Parkinsonism. Since then, it has been found that these medicines don’t need to cause these cruel side effects. But psychiatric facilities still use intramuscular Haldol on patients.

Even on the first use, Haldol can cause tardive dyskinesia and Parkinsonism. A person doesn’t need to be on it for an extended period of time to suffer from these conditions, although tardive dyskinesia is most common after years of

taking antipsychotics. The second and third generation antipsychotics, such as clozapine, aripiprazole and brexpiprazole, are shown to work without impacting D2 receptors as much.

Racism in psychiatry

Unfortunately, there are other negative aspects of psychiatry. Psychiatrists have often mistreated marginalized people. Racist psychiatrists often overdiagnosed disorders of Black and Brown people. In 1851, Samuel A. Cartwright proposed a mental illness called “drapetomania” to explain why enslaved people fled their captors. This so-called “mental illness” did not exist but is an example of how psychiatry has abused and shackled people.

It’s not that mentally ill people shouldn’t take advantage of all the positive help that psychiatry can give. The use of medication is both important and legitimate. However, psychiatrists can cause their skills and medications to shackle those who enter their maw.

Remember this and fight for mentally ill people in prisons, psychiatric hospitals and outside the walls. □

CDC’s maskless mandate puts workers at risk

By Betsey Piette

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recklessly capitulated to pressure from U.S. corporations in issuing their latest guidelines lifting mask requirements. They announced May 13: “Fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal or territorial laws, rules and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.”

While the percentage of adults getting vaccinated continues to rise, only 1 in 3 people in the U.S. are fully inoculated. The CDC guidelines contain no mandate stating individuals must provide proof they are fully vaccinated. This puts the lives of essential workers at serious risk.

Since the start of the pandemic in early 2020, scientific studies have shown that mask wearing and social distancing are the most effective ways to limit the spread of COVID-19. Removing mandatory mask wearing is bound to result in new spikes of viral infections and deaths, particularly among the poorest and most oppressed communities, whose access to vaccines has been more limited.

The CDC’s guideline, which came as a surprise to many people working in public health, conflicts with the views of many scientists. A New York Times informal survey of 723 epidemiologists found that 80% said individuals need to wear masks in indoor public areas for at least another year, and 88% responded that even fully vaccinated people should wear masks at large outdoor gatherings.

Vivian Towe, program officer at the Patient-Centered

Outcomes Research Institute, said to the Times, “Unless the vaccination rates increase to 80% or 90% over the next few months, we should wear masks in large public indoor settings.” (May 13)

States, bosses coerce workers

Some states are beginning to cut off access to unemployment insurance benefits to force workers to return to jobs in dangerous environments lacking adequate

been multiple incidents of workers being harassed and even injured while trying to enforce the protocols. Most at risk are workers in jobs with heavy exposure to the public, in grocery and retail stores and warehouses, and those toiling in the service sector in transit, health care, postal or sanitation jobs or employed in restaurants, hotels and other hospitality businesses. Children under 12, not yet eligible for vaccines, now account for 22% of new cases.

The year-plus history of the coronavirus pandemic is rife with examples of large gatherings where unvaccinated people deliberately flout mask mandates, further fueling the spread of COVID-19. Throughout the pandemic, the right-wing, anti-mask movement has ignored protocols by appearing in public without the vital protection of masks. Many are vocally anti-vaccine.

With mask mandates in place, workers in restaurants and other businesses open to the public could restrict access for these individuals. Now the door is wide open for anti-maskers and anti-vaxxers to fill public spaces without restraint, endangering people’s lives.

People who are immunocompromised, not yet immunized, or who lack access to, or eligibility for, the vaccine will pay the consequences. This affects the many Latinx immigrants, who want to be inoculated as soon as possible but are afraid of risking their jobs, or their immigration status, if they take time off to get vaccinated. □



safety measures to protect them from the virus or where they are paid subsistence wages. Already burdened with enforcing mask mandates, frontline workers are now being put in the impossible position of determining if customers or others whom they encounter are truly vaccinated.

Even with mask mandates implemented, there have

Global protests demand: ‘Stop Israel’s genocide!’



At the Lebanese-Israeli border.



London, England.

By Kathy Durkin

The whole world is watching in horror as Israel bombs Gaza. As of May 17, the Zionist state has killed nearly 200 people, 58 of them children. With military precision, Israel’s bombs are aimed at civilian targets, family homes, refugee camps, hospitals and schools.

Israeli missiles razed to the ground a famous building that provided residential housing, doctors and lawyers’ offices and international media offices, which was the base of support enabling AP and Al-Jazeera journalists and photographers to capture the reality of life in Gaza. Israel has now destroyed the largest three buildings housing media in the Gaza Strip. The message is clear: Israel does not want the truth publicized about their vile crimes against Gaza’s people, nor the carnage seen.

Israel is intensifying its war on the Palestinian people and trying to eliminate all resistance to its expansionism and apartheid state, which legally denies equal rights to the region’s Indigenous inhabitants. Its murderous military campaign exposes the Zionists’ contempt for Palestinian lives and its anti-Arab, anti-Muslim racism. Meanwhile, Zionist settlers are stealing Palestinian families’ lands, and forcing them out of their homes and farms.

However, Palestinians and other Arab and oppressed peoples, Muslims, anti-Zionist, anti-racist and anti-war activists are loudly protesting Israel’s crimes. They are decrying the Zionist attacks on the Al-Aqsa mosque and the genocidal bombings. And they are rallying in solidarity with the Palestinians of Gaza, the occupied West Bank and the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in East Jerusalem, under deadly siege by the Zionist state and settlers.

Hundreds of thousands of people around the world protested Israeli apartheid and war crimes May 14 through 16. And Washington’s financial and political backing of the Zionist state was condemned. Activists were inspired to demonstrate by the heroic Palestinian Resistance. Here are some highlights of these actions.

Nakba Day marked

Many actions took place on May 15, Nakba Day, a yearly commemoration of the forcible removal of 750,000 Palestinians from their homes in 1948. The state of Israel was formally proclaimed May 14, 1948.

Demonstrations were held in the occupied **West Bank** on both days. In Ramallah, a siren sounded for 73 seconds on Nakba Day, symbolizing the years since the “Day of Catastrophe.” Protests were held in Nablus and other towns and cities. The Palestinian Resistance was mobilized; however, Israeli soldiers retaliated and fatally shot 10 Palestinians.

Palestinian flags flew at rallies in Baghdad and cities in **Iraq**’s southern provinces of Babylon, Dhi Qar,

Diwanieh and Basra, in solidarity with Gaza’s people. Thousands turned out in Doha, **Qatar**. Other solidarity activities took place in Karachi, **Pakistan**; Tehran, **Iran**; Amman, **Jordan**; and Beirut, **Lebanon**.



Ankara, Turkey.



Toronto, Canada.



Toronto, Canada.

Hundreds demonstrated along the Lebanon-Israeli border, carrying Palestinian, Lebanese and Hezbollah flags. Iranian officials called for international pressure on

Israel to stop its heinous crimes against humanity.

A courageous pro-Palestinian demonstration was held in Srinagar, **Kashmir**, long occupied by India’s soldiers. Police attacked the crowd and arrested 20 people.

In Nairobi, **Kenya**, over 200 people protested Israel’s bombings, waving banners emblazoned with Palestinian flags and the slogan “Kenyans support Palestinians.”

Hundreds of people went to **South Africa**’s Parliament in Capetown to denounce the Israeli bombardments. Zwelivelile “Mandla” Mandela, African National Congress MP and grandson of anti-apartheid hero and former President Nelson Mandela, called for closing the South African Embassy in Tel Aviv and reopening it in Ramallah, Palestine, in solidarity.

London: 150,000 chant ‘Palestine will be free!’

Organizers say 150,000 people denounced Israel’s atrocities at a London, **England** demonstration, holding signs saying “Free Palestine!” and “This is apartheid.” Speakers condemned Britain’s historic betrayal of the Palestinian people. Some 5,000 people attended a Manchester rally. Protests were held in 80 cities in Britain, including Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scotland, and Cardiff, Wales.

In Madrid, Spain, 2,500 demonstrated, and the youth wrapped themselves in Palestinian flags. They all made their way to Puerta del Sol.

Hundreds bravely rallied in the Barbes neighborhood in Paris, **France**, despite a ban on protests. Police fired tear gas and water cannons at them and arrested 44 people.

Thousands rallied in three locations in Berlin and at actions in Frankfurt, Leipzig, Hamburg and Stuttgart, **Germany**. In the Berlin district of Neukölln, protesters burned Israeli flags and pummeled police with bottles, stones and fireworks. Officials tried to ban some protests, falsely charging anti-Semitism.

In **Canada**, 5,000 people participated in an action in Toronto, organized by the Palestinian Youth Movement. Thousands assembled in Montreal, where police attacked pro-Palestinian activists. Other actions were held in Ottawa, Vancouver and Winnipeg.

Brazil’s Landless Workers Movement condemned Israeli attacks and called for support for the Palestinian Resistance.

Free Palestine rallies held in Melbourne and Sydney, **Australia**, attracted thousands of people. And there were 10 rally sites in **New Zealand**.

Sources include: Al Jazeera, Associated Press, Axios, Democracy Now, The Guardian, Middle East Eye, Middle East Monitor, Samidoun: Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network and Toronto CTV News.



Baghdad, Iraq.



Capetown, South Africa.



Sydney, Australia.

A conversation with Susan Abulhawa on Zionism

The following interview with Palestinian activist and author Susan Abulhawa was conducted by Ted Kelly, May 3.

Susan Abulhawa: Recently five or six young Palestinian boys were kidnapped and arrested; you know, just terrorized. They were young; they were babies, and they were targeted because they were picking wild za’atar, wild herbs. This is actually part of our tradition. Palestinians have been foraging for za’atar and meramiyeh for thousands of years.

Nobody has harmed that landscape more than the Zionists. You can see it in the way they build their homes. They literally decapitate the hills. Palestinians never built that way; Palestinian homes are built on the sides of hills and in the valleys to conform to the landscape, not the other way around. Israel makes the land conform to their desire.

If you’ve never seen a hill being decapitated, it is such a violent act. The hills are covered in trees, so all those trees are destroyed. Consider how many animals depended on those trees as their habitats and for their sustenance, all of that’s gone. There’s just zero respect for the land.

From its inception Israel devastated the water. One of the first things they did was to drain the Hula [Valley] wetlands. That was considered “Zionist ingenuity.” They touted it and went on and on about what geniuses they are. They drained the Hula wetlands. They call it the Hula swamps.

It was actually a massive ecological treasure that was home to hundreds of bird species, of frog species, fish, flora — many of which have become extinct, because they were unique to that region, which was a huge migratory station. They drained the wetlands to establish settler colonies, but they didn’t understand the land. So there were all these natural processes that happened, that ended up leading to subterranean internal combustion that basically made it impossible to build their damn houses there. They had to end that project, but the wetlands were destroyed. There’s a tiny bit left that’s a fraction of its former glory.

The Zionists were Europeans. They’re trying to make the land European. And so they brought all these European, non-native trees — a lot of pines and firs that basically destroyed the ground vegetation, because pine needles are acidic and ultimately made the whole thing a tinderbox. That’s why they had those massive forest fires a few years back.

And not to mention the way that they have scarred the land with that hideous wall. But at the same time, they do all this greenwashing and all these Western newspapers and media outlets are complicit in it.

Workers World: Similar ecological destruction happened in North America. The European settlers came here not knowing how to cultivate food on their own. They needed to learn that from the Indigenous people. They tried in many ways to force the natural environment to behave more like a European environment. But there’s still this pervasive myth that Israel is not a European colonial project.

SA: You’re right to point out the parallels with North America, because it really is the same thing; it’s the same concept — it’s just a different time, a different place, a different context.

In order to colonize a place, you can’t come just with brute force, right? You have to have a whole set of mythology to make the people, to make colonizers feel righteous about murder and plunder.

In North America, there was Manifest Destiny. There was a divine aura to it all. It was destined; people were escaping



Susan Abulhawa speaking at rally for Palestine in Philadelphia, May 15. WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

persecution to come here. They were coming here for a better life. And the current inhabitants weren’t even viewed as the current stewards of the land or even worthy of the land. God was not on their side — all of these things, so it makes it palatable to the average colonizer.

Presumably the people coming here weren’t these evil monsters, right? They were people in search of a better life. But they became colonizers. They became monsters. They were adhering to mythologies that made sense to them. And the same thing is happening in Palestine.

The original Zionists were Europeans who very much had that European colonial mentality. They looked at the East as backward, inferior and unworthy. They decided they wanted to have their own Jewish colony somewhere — the Jewish state.

Most of them were atheists, by the way. So this was never a religious thing. This was always about power. It was always about colonialism. Because of European antisemitism, they didn’t have the access that they wanted. They wanted their own special piece of the pie. That’s the origin of Zionism.

They had nothing to do with Judaism. Of course, they looked everywhere. They looked in Uganda, Argentina, Ethiopia and Palestine. It was never about “returning” to Palestine, but Palestine made for a better myth.

All the other places were a little bit too raw and too wild, whereas Palestine was small enough. It was built-up; it had an infrastructure — it had homes. It had a history. It had water. It had, you know, a Biblical aura. It had everything they needed to create the other really potent aspect of colonialism, which is the mythmaking.

Judaism had roots there. Judaism also has roots in Egypt and in Iraq and in Persia. They could have manufactured the same thing in any of these places. But Palestine made for an attractive place for many reasons, particularly the fact that it was under British mandate.

The British enticed Jews, especially following World War II, who were coming for a better life — to come and take up arms and become the same monsters that they escaped from. I don’t care what people say. Israelis have become the modern-day Nazis. I get that people don’t like to hear that comparison. But I don’t know how else to say it.

Their entire society wants to kill us. They want us gone. They look at us as inferior. They have no qualms about murdering us and killing us and beating our children and demolishing our homes or stealing our homes like they have zero moral compunctions about it.

And the only reason is because we’re not Jewish. Because we were there before they came.

Colonialism and cultural appropriation

WW: There are many comparisons made between Palestine and South Africa. Do you think “apartheid” is a helpful term?

SA: Yes and no. It’s a recognizable historic moment. So you say the word apartheid, and people have a context already. They understand it was a really evil system. And so you don’t have to start from scratch.

Palestinians have been describing this system to the world for years. Decades. Nobody’s listened to us. I want to stress that this isn’t something new. The way that apartheid in Israel is being talked about is like it’s something that is new that developed over time because of right-wing governments. But from the very beginning, they wanted to get rid of us. From the very beginning, they hated us.

They wanted to, in the words of Ze’ev Jabotinsky, “sweep away the Orient,” in the same way that white settlers tried to destroy Indigenous cultures. When they couldn’t destroy the cultures, they certainly committed genocide. That was the original intent.

But in new generations and identity politics, there has been this desire to “indigenize” themselves. They don’t want to be seen as colonizers. They want to be “Indigenous.” So suddenly they “created” falafel. They have their own “indigenous cuisine,” which is basically Palestinian cuisine.

They’re stealing our clothing; they’re pretending like it’s Israeli in their fashion shows. They’re even appropriating the keffiyeh, making a blue-and-white keffiyeh. And they’re claiming our archaeological heritage. They have been raiding graves in hundreds and thousands of years-old cemeteries, Muslim cemeteries especially, because they want to erase us. They’re threatened by our presence. And you didn’t see that in South Africa, that didn’t exist.

WW: Your research also found that Israel is the worst exporter of weapons globally, per capita.

SA: Israel was consistently the no. 1 exporter of weapons in the world per

capita, exceeding the U.S. by a huge margin, exceeding Russia, exceeding China, France, Italy. I did the research and examined a 10-year period. I got the information from SIPRI, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, that basically tracks all weapons transactions across the world and especially in conflict situations.

All of Israel’s weapons transactions are only known indirectly because of the disclosure by the recipient countries. However, they have been one of the biggest subversive weapons hustlers, especially in regions or in conflict situations where there are international bans on weapon sales. When there were weapons embargos against South Africa, Israel was arming them. When the military mowed down all those kids in Soweto, those were Israeli-supplied weapons.

They sold nuclear technology to the apartheid government. The extent of Israel’s collusion with South Africa was actually quite shocking. There’s a really good book called “The Unspoken Alliance” by Sasha Polakow-Suransky, which is worth a read for anybody who wants to see the level of Israel’s collusion with them. But it wasn’t just South Africa; Israel supplied weapons to Rwanda.

And that’s just the weapons. That doesn’t include the surveillance technology, the drone and facial recognition equipment. It doesn’t include their training of police forces around the world, including in the U.S., on suppression methodologies.

WW: Regarding Gaza, what do you think about the term open-air prison? Is that accurate? What does that really mean in practice?

SA: It is a prison. Probably the biggest prison in the world. People aren’t allowed in or out. They are violated in a million different ways, but it’s more than that. It’s not just a place to warehouse people. They have made it into a laboratory, a weapons testing ground.

Whenever they launch a quote unquote “war” — it’s never the word “genocide” — stocks just skyrocket, because that’s where they test all their new stuff. And it allows them to put this “field tested” label on their weapons. Literally, they market their weapons as being field tested, which means: “We use this on Palestinians, and it murdered them effectively.” And that’s what it’s about. It’s economic as well as political and social. And one thing that it’s not about is Israeli security. That’s what it’s not about.

Capitalism is a cancer, and colonialism is just an extension of capitalism. □

U.S. backs Israeli terror in Gaza

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of thousands of people demonstrated on Nakba (Arabic for catastrophe) Day, commemorating May 15, the day that Palestinians were violently displaced in 1948 from their ancestral homeland through the establishment of Israel by British and other Western imperialists — in order to control the oil-rich region known as the Middle East.

Besides street actions, other forms of solidarity have taken place. Italian port workers in Livorno, near Tuscany, have refused to load an arms shipment to Israel. L’Unione Sindacale di Base (The Basic Union of Trade Unions) stated, “The port of Livorno will not be an accomplice in the massacre of the Palestinian people.” (The New Arab, May 15)

The Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network has called for a “Day of Action in Solidarity with the Palestinian

Uprising and General Strike” May 18. The call reads in part: “As Israel is continuing its massacres in Gaza, its attacks in Jerusalem and settler-mob violence throughout occupied Palestine from the river to the sea, Palestinians have called for a general strike!” (tinyurl.com/bzrw4uya)

As Susan Abulhawa, a Palestinian writer and activist, told WW: “What has been happening to Gaza over days is only news because Gaza is defending itself from U.S.-backed Israeli attacks. There is not a day that goes by when some kind of violence is not visited upon the people of Gaza or any other part of Occupied Palestine which does not get reported by mainstream sources. There is not an equal sign between defending oneself with firing rockets from the ground against powerful airstrikes, but not even all of Israel’s powerful weaponry has not and will not stop the people’s resistance.” □

In the U.S.

Thousands support heroic Palestinian fightback

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Palestinian resistance continues against the state of Israel’s destruction of their homes, seizure of their land, assassination of their leaders and slaughter of their people. This genocidal attack was first made possible by the might and sponsorship of European colonialist powers. The onslaught on Palestine has since been protected and propped up by U.S. military funding for the promotion of U.S. economic and political interests.

Recognition of the Palestinian struggle as an Indigenous, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist struggle is growing in the U.S., as seen in recent demonstrations of thousands supporting the current heroic Palestinian fightback. Rallies took place May 15 to coincide with the anniversary of the 1948 Nakba, when Israel expelled over 700,000 Palestinians from their homes and razed as many as 600 Palestinian villages.

Protests stretched from coast to coast and deep into the U.S. heartland. In Memphis, Tenn., a crowd of hundreds chanted: “Occupation is a crime from Memphis to Palestine!” while marching to the National Civil Rights Museum. In Louisville, Ky., a student organizer said, “We have a duty to speak up because our own tax dollars are funding the Israeli military.” In Phoenix, Ariz., a marcher emphasized the protest was to “reaffirm our commitment to the Palestinian people’s struggle, for justice, return and liberation.” (tinyurl.com/yw86wyjs)

Here are on-the-ground reports from just a few of the many marches.

In **Boston**, thousands of Palestinians, Muslims, Jewish supporters and all religious groups joined with prison abolitionists, Black Lives Matter, im/migrant rights, union, LGBTQ2S+, disabled and military veteran activists for a spirited rally and call to action. Beginning in Copley Square, protesters expressed their organized grief, rage and growing determination to bring an end to the U.S.-backed Israeli regime’s war and occupation of Palestine.

Young women leaders from Students for Justice in Palestine welcomed the crowd. Protesters, young and old, waved Palestinian flags and twirled keffiyehs in the air. Banners and signs expressed international solidarity with Palestine from Colombia, Kashmir and the Philippines. Art exhibits commemorated International Nakba Day, and posters linked Palestinian liberation with that of Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples in the U.S.

People moved into the streets to march on the Israeli Consulate while dancing, drumming and chanting: “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!” At the consulate, Palestinian youth scaled light poles and the balcony over the entrance and boldly unfurled Palestinian flags to



WW PHOTO: TONI ARENSTEIN

Brooklyn, N.Y., May 15.

mighty cheers from the chanting crowd. Tens of thousands took to the streets in rallies in **Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, N.Y.**, May 15, organized by Within Our Lifetime, and in **Paterson, N.J.**, May 16, organized by American Muslims for Palestine. Aerial footage showed the militant rallies stretched for many blocks, halting traffic for hours. Crowds in both protests were overwhelmingly young Palestinian people, including children waving the Palestinian flag.



Buffalo, N.Y.

Buffalo for Palestine held an inspiring demonstration of resistance against the recent Israeli attack on Gaza and the apartheid inflicted on the Palestinian people since 1948. The crowd was significantly young and radical, with political messaging that reflected years of struggle against Zionism, white supremacy and imperialist genocide.

A solidarity demonstration kicked off in Rittenhouse Square in Center City **Philadelphia** May 15, as cars and trucks waving Palestinian flags circled the park. Thousands of people occupied the city streets. While a majority of participants were Palestinian, there was significant turnout of Black activists and progressive whites. Chants were in English and Arabic, and signs referred to police brutality in the U.S. and Palestine.

As the march got underway, response from people in the packed outdoor Center City dining areas was generally positive. At the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, marchers took over all lanes and blocked traffic. At the Philadelphia Museum of Art, protesters



PHOTO: MOHAMMED ABDEGANI

Paterson, N.J.

ran up with a block-long Palestinian flag they draped along the famous 72 steps. At the final rally at the steps, speakers denounced U.S. support for Israel and stressed the need for solidarity with Palestine from Black and Brown communities as part of confronting white supremacy. Connections were made between the anniversary of the Nakba and May 13 as the anniversary of the City of Philadelphia dropping a bomb on the MOVE family 36 years ago. Speakers included Palestinian



WW PHOTO: CHRISTIAN NOAKES

Atlanta.

police brutality in the U.S. with the struggle of the Palestinian people against the occupation. They rejected the false equivalency of “violence on both sides” as a lie to cover up Israeli crimes of occupation. They condemned the current renewed brutal repression by Israel and demanded an end to the occupation of Palestine.

Led by Palestinian youth, 1,000 people marched through downtown **Atlanta** to commemorate the Nakba and to call for an end to the ongoing ethnic cleansing of

author/activist Susan Abulhawa, YahNé Ndgo with Black Alliance for Peace, Krystal Strong from Black Lives Matter Philadelphia and Nicki Kattoura, a Palestinian activist with the Black and Brown Coalition. That coalition initiated the rally along with others in the Philadelphia Free Palestine Coalition. Workers World Party-Philadelphia provided sound for the event.

About 1,000 people marched May 15 through downtown **Raleigh, N.C.** They demanded an end to the apartheid Israeli occupation of Palestine and protested Israel’s recent attempt eviction and assault on Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem — a traditional Palestinian area. Speakers connected the struggle against racism and

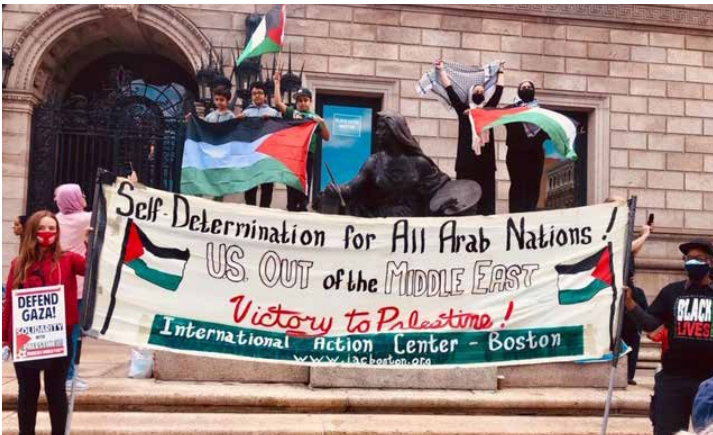


WW PHOTO: WORKERS WORLD DURHAM, N.C. BUREAU

Raleigh, N.C.

Palestine by U.S.-backed Israeli settlers. Over 2,000 people marched in downtown **Cleveland**, to support the fighting people of Palestine. The march was called by Al-Awda: the Palestine Right to Return Coalition. The Palestinian community and supporters filled the streets to demand: no more ethnic cleansing, the end of Israeli

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Boston.

WW PHOTO: STEVE GILLIS



Philadelphia.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE



Cleveland.

WW PHOTO: SUSAN SCHNUR

Syringes for Cuba

Campaign to send vital COVID supplies

By Stephanie Hedgecock

During the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuba's Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade sent 53 contingents of volunteer health workers to over 40 countries — in addition to Cuban medical personnel already working in 58 countries. And more than 45 countries requested Cuba's Interferon Alpha 2B protocol to use for treatment of seriously ill COVID patients. (Granma, Nov. 23, 2020)

Cuba has developed five internationally recognized candidate COVID-19 vaccines, two of them now in Phase III clinical trials: Soberana-02 and Abdala. Cuba plans to produce 100 million doses of low-cost vaccine, safe to store at room temperature for weeks, and has arranged to expand its scale of production with agreements with Venezuela and Iran. The 100 million doses will cover their population of almost 11.5 million and, in contrast to the rich countries' hoarding of life saving vaccines, provide vaccines to poorer countries in Africa and Latin America. (Workers World, April 26)

Cuba regularly exports hundreds of millions of vaccines to other countries. Global distribution of Cuban COVID vaccines will be tracked through COVAX, with the World Health Organization, and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation. (Reuters, Nov. 12, 2020) Dr. Jose Moya Medina, Cuba's representative to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), said, "Cuba's contribution with



Cuba dispatches doctors to coronavirus-ravaged Italy.

its vaccine could be very important for certain vulnerable groups in our region" from rural and remote Indigenous communities to the elderly.

Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Industries (BioCubaFarma) President Eduardo Martínez said Cuba intends to present a diversified portfolio of vaccines, which will help match the needs of different population groups. BioCubaFarma is Cuba's state-owned network of 34 companies and scientific institutions which coordinate a planned, societywide approach to pharmaceuticals and vaccines. Cuban biotech development has been a priority since the 1980s due to the criminal U.S.

blockade, which cut off access to medical supplies and innovations to the island.

Vaccination in Cuba will be voluntary; yet decades of free health care, free education and extensive public health campaigns ensure high levels of coverage. All Havana is set to be vaccinated by the end of May, 60% of the rest of the country by August and the entire island by the end of this year.

In the Special Period after the loss of trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern European socialist countries, Cuba increased resources to the biopharmaceutical industry. However, in 2019 former President Donald Trump invoked Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, further

tightening the illegal blockade's economic war against this small island. And the U.S. blockade impacts Cuba's ability to acquire syringes to distribute the vaccine — there is a shortfall of 20 million syringes to vaccinate the Cuban population against COVID.

Solidarity with Socialist Cuba

In response, the Cuban solidarity network in the U.S. and Canada is in motion to help buy the 20 million syringes needed to cover the shortfall. The initial goal is to raise \$100,000 this month and start rushing syringes to Cuba.

Socialist Cuba has shown the most international solidarity with the peoples of the world of any country, from fighting South African apartheid forces in Angola in the 1980s to sending the first medical personnel volunteers to fight Ebola in West Africa in 2014 to planning to help vaccinate the world. Cuba needs our solidarity in the pandemic now. The Saving Lives Campaign and Global Health Partners are building a broad-based, urgent drive to supply these vital medical tools to Cuba to put life-saving vaccines into Cuban arms.

To show your solidarity with the revolutionary Cuban people, please make a donation to Global Health Partners, which has a U.S. Commerce Department license to send medical supplies to Cuba. You can make an immediate donation online at ghpartners.org/syringes4cuba/. Or send a check payable to Global Health Partners, 39 Broadway, Suite 1540, New York, NY 10006, with the check memo: Syringe Campaign. □

Thousands support heroic Palestinian fightback

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occupation now and a stop to U.S. funding for the Zionest settler state.

On the 73rd anniversary of the Nakba, roughly 1,000 people assembled in downtown **Portland, Ore.**, to call for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. As cars honked in solidarity, over a dozen Palestinian speakers testified to the hardships their families in Palestine are experiencing from the recent violent onslaught by Israeli armed forces. Poems and stories of suffering since 1917 — when Great Britain took colonial control of Palestine — brought tears to the crowd, who chanted: "From Palestine to Mexico, border walls have got to go!" The event

was organized by the Center for Study and Preservation of Palestine, which collected donations for the people of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.

On May 15, 10,000 people took to the streets of **San Francisco** to support the Palestinian struggle against continued occupation and Israeli terrorist attacks. In the morning, hundreds gathered in the Mission District to paint a powerful street mural, "We Will Return," in both Arabic and English. The day ended at Dolores Park, after a dynamic march past the mural, as the streets shook with chants of "Free, free Palestine!" and "Long live the Intifada!"

Palestinian youth, multigenerational Palestinian families with their children, and allies from a broad spectrum of the anti-occupation and anti-imperialist movement overflowed the streets in front of the park. Demonstrators were united in demanding an immediate return of Palestine — from the river to the sea — to the Palestinian people. A coalition of organizations, including the Palestine Action Network, AROC (Arab Resource and Organizing Committee) and the Palestinian Youth Movement, organized the day's actions.

Contributing to this article were Sara Flounders, Judy Greenspan, Monica Moorehead, Christian Noakes, Betsey Piette, Susan Schnur, Maureen Skehan, Carlos Splitstoser, Hadley Willow, Workers World Durham bureau.



Portland, Ore.

WW PHOTO: LYN NEELEY



Thousands gather in Houston in support of Palestinians, May 15.

WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC



San Francisco.

WW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

‘By any means necessary’ Defend resistance!

WORKERS WORLD 
editorial

Continued from page 1

two oppressors — the fascistic Israeli occupiers who violently displaced them from their homeland May 15, 1948, with horrific massacre — and the top backer of Israel, U.S. imperialism.

Yes, it is the duty for anyone who considers themselves to be a revolutionary and socialist inside any super-rich capitalist countries to demand that all aid be severed from propping up Israeli apartheid in Palestine. That is an important step towards building anti-imperialist solidarity.

This garrison state could not exist for one day if it weren't for the \$10 million the U.S. administration provides daily, amounting to almost \$4 billion annually. This support reflects why Israel has been an illegitimate state since its inception.

It uses a false cover of being a “Jewish state,” but in reality it is a Zionist state built on the blood, sweat and tears of the Palestinian people.

Zionism is a white-supremacist ideology used to dehumanize Palestinians and all Arab peoples. This racist, white, settler state was codified with the Balfour Declaration by British colonialist settlers on Nov. 2, 1917. Malcolm X equated Zionism with colonialism in September 1964.

Land theft, Columbus to Zionism

What has happened to the displaced Palestinian people — be they in the Occupied Territories of Gaza and the West Bank or throughout the diaspora — can be compared to what happened to the thousands of original nations in this hemisphere during the wholesale theft of Indigenous lands starting with

Christopher Columbus. The difference is that Britain's genocidal theft of North America led to the establishment of the world's most powerful imperialist country, which today profits from the oil-rich region in the “Middle East.”

To be anti-Zionist is NOT the same as being antisemitic. The U.S. government's support of Israel is not based on genuine support for Jewish people. In fact, antisemitic attacks are everyday occurrences in the U.S. and included the closing of its borders to tens of thousands of Jewish people attempting to escape the Holocaust before and during World War II. This imperialist maneuver was an effort to divert Jewish people to settle Palestine — to turn them into occupiers before 1948.

The Palestinian people have had no other choice but to fight back against their oppressors, using everything at their

disposal — from slingshots to rockets against the Israeli Defense Forces, which are trained and armed with the most sophisticated weaponry supplied by the U.S. Defense Department.

The heroic resistance shown by the Palestinians has helped to further isolate the already ostracized Israeli regime — especially since the first Intifada or uprising that began in 1987, followed by the second Intifada in 2000. This is why it is critical for movements to demand an immediate end to the bombing of Gaza and ending all U.S. aid to Israel — and to defend the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people to win their liberation “by any means necessary” — which will weaken imperialism everywhere.

Workers World Party salutes the heroism of the Palestinian people. Make Israel Palestine again! □

WW Commentary

Not one dollar for Zionist genocide!

By Martha Grevatt

Finally.
For the first time since the creation of Israel in 1948, U.S. bipartisan support for the Zionist settler state has come under fire on the floor of Congress.

“To read the statements from President [Joe] Biden, Secretary [of State Antony] Blinken, General [Lloyd] Austin and leaders of both parties, you would hardly know Palestinians existed at all,” exclaimed a tearful Rep. Rashida Tlaib of Detroit, the first and only Palestinian woman in Congress, May 14. “There has been no recognition of the attack on Palestinian families being ripped from their homes right now. No mention of children being detained or murdered. No recognition of a sustained campaign of harassment and terror by Israeli police against worshippers kneeling down and praying and celebrating the holiest days in one of their holiest places; no mention of Al-Aqsa being surrounded by violence, tear gas, smoke, while people pray.”

Rep. Tlaib, a daughter of Palestinian immigrants whose grandmother still lives in occupied Palestine, was joined by nine other House members. “It is a conflict where one country, funded and supported by the United States government, continues an illegal military occupation over another group of people,” said Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota. Reps. Omar and



A post-it on the map in Rep. Rashida Tlaib's Washington office.

Tlaib are the only two Muslim women in Congress. “We are antiwar; we are anti-occupation; and we are anti-apartheid,” added Cori Bush, first-term representative and Black Lives Matter activist from Ferguson, Mo. (Al-Jazeera, May 14)

Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley of Boston, Betty McCollum of Minnesota, André Carson of Indiana, Chuy Garcia of Illinois, Joaquin Castro of Texas and Mark Pocan of Wisconsin also took the floor against the official U.S. government line. They echoed the views of millions of people in the U.S., but their stand put them at odds with old-guard Democrats. “Israel has a right to defend itself,” said President Biden. “Israel has a right to defend herself,” parroted Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi.

Like a broken record, Biden and Pelosi repeated the words of former Presidents

Donald Trump, Barack Obama, George W. Bush and their predecessors, who likewise painted Israel as the victim of “aggression.” Neither capitalist party wants to end the subsidy, now at \$3.8 billion annually, to the apartheid state. Israel is a tool of U.S. imperialism, aiding it in maintaining hegemony over the oil-rich region of the Middle East.

Context to debate in the Capitol

This historic debate occurs in the context of 73 years of unfaltering Palestinian resistance to occupation. At the same time, there is a mass movement in the U.S. against police here who occupy oppressed communities. There is a growing understanding of and identification with the struggle being waged halfway around the world in Palestine.

The level of sympathy with Palestine

is higher than in 2009 when, for the second time, former Rep. Cynthia McKinney, who lost her seat for opposing the U.S. war in Iraq, was prevented from delivering humanitarian supplies to Gaza.

Led by Congresswomen of color, the representatives who spoke against the ongoing massacres are commendable for challenging the official U.S. line and condemning the genocide being visited upon Sheikh Jarrah and Gaza. We must defend these courageous elected officials against political attacks, whether from moderate Democrats or the Republican Party — as it moves even further to the extreme right.

The progressive movement must, however, avoid the trap of condemning “both sides in the conflict” or denouncing Hamas for firing rockets into Israel. Palestine has a right to defend itself.

Nor is it enough to merely employ the power of Congressional purse strings, pressuring the Zionist state to behave differently while maintaining the flow of funds if they are earmarked for “defense.” Rep. McCollum, chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, reiterated support for Israel's Iron Dome “missile defense system.” This is unacceptable.

We demand, unconditionally, not one dollar for occupation, apartheid and genocide — or for its “defense.”

Free, free Palestine! □

Celebrate May Day every day. Support Workers World!

The month of May started off with International Workers' Day, commemorated as an official holiday in over 80 countries, but not in the U.S. where it originated during the 19th century struggle for the eight-hour workday. But May Day should not be the only day to honor the laborers of the world!

Workers World newspaper calls for May Day to be commemorated every day, for workers in the U.S. and worldwide to be recognized, applauded and thanked for their essential labor. Each day should be marked by solidarity with workers everywhere, especially those superexploited by greedy bosses and global corporations.

Our newspaper is partisan. Our coverage lauds struggles by the global working class against capitalist exploiters. WW sides with the multinational,



May Day, Philadelphia, 2021.

WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

multigender, multigenerational working class, organized and unorganized, documented and undocumented, in their struggles for livable wages, unionization and respect.

WW honors and thanks all essential workers who risked their own health to keep society running during the pandemic and those who are doing this now

in countries hit hard by COVID-19.

Our pages express solidarity with the millions of workers impacted by the pandemic downturn, especially Black, Latinx, Indigenous, immigrants, women and other gender-oppressed people, the disabled, and those still jobless, those lacking health care, childcare, sufficient food and housing. Our Tear Down the Walls section shows our support of incarcerated workers.

WW calls for jobs and government programs to provide life's necessities to all workers and their families and demands an end to all bigotry, inequality and oppression. End capitalism! Fight for socialism!

The 44-year-long WW Supporter Program was created so readers could support publication of working-class truth needed for revolutionary change. Members receive a year's subscription to

WW, a regular letter about timely issues and one, two or three free subscriptions, respectively, for friends, for a donation of \$75, \$100, \$300 — or more. Members can receive the book “What Road to Socialism?” upon request. (Or read it at workers.org/books/.)

WW articles are posted daily at workers.org. During the pandemic, printed copies of one of the weekly issues each month are being mailed to subscribers. Issues will be printed and sent out more frequently when the crisis lifts.

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

We are grateful for your help in building Workers World! □

FARC-EP: The courageous struggle of the Colombian people

Reports from Colombia May 17 state the national strike that began April 28 continues and a national mobilization has been called for May 19. The strike has growing mass support from diverse sectors of Colombian society, despite vicious state and private death-squad repression that has killed at least 50 people, wounded more than 500, imprisoned over 1,500 and disappeared over 500. This statement of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People’s Army (FARC-EP) represents a revolutionary view concerning the national strike and explains why they believe—five years after a peace treaty was signed—it is necessary to pick up arms again.

The Western Coordinating Command on behalf of the structures that make it up salutes the Colombian people, the social organizations, but also groups of friends, clubs, etc. This shows that the level of mass consciousness exceeds the organized social structures and that the people are enraged by the cynical economic and political measures that the illegitimate “President” Iván Duque has tried to implement. Duque is simply carrying out the orders of his bosses: the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and U.S. imperialism.

We stand in solidarity with all those who have lost their families, who have been beaten and injured at the hands of those who proclaim themselves the guarantors of human rights and international humanitarian law (these are the same people who believe that all dissidents are criminals and should be treated as such). We cannot remain silent or tolerant when we see a pack of members of the Esmad [U.S.-trained anti-riot squad] or the police killing protesters with clubs and bullets, merely because protesters demand education for their children and raise complaints against the injustices of the state.

We are people in arms because we are faithful witnesses that democracy in Colombia only exists on paper; we are people in arms because we know that the only way to make ourselves heard is by this means, and there is no other because they have closed the doors to an agreed solution — because every time we went out to express our disagreements, we were massacred, humiliated, imprisoned, disappeared, outraged by the Esmad squads and the police. We are the people in arms because we are aware that the people

are sovereign and that the popular power trumps their rulers, but this stateless and criminal oligarchy does not look beyond their interests; they do not care how many innocent people they have to kill in order to satisfy their thirst for wealth and power.

We are that part of the people that has revealed itself against this murderous, plutocratic regime, made up of leeches that feed on the blood of the poor; we are that part of the people who understood that it is better to die on our feet than to live on our knees. We are that part of the people who have understood that there are no more possibilities of making demands than through armed struggle.

Role of FARC-EP

Today more than ever, the struggle of the FARC-EP is just and necessary, and we will not give up until we see the structure of this Santanderist state which sells out the homeland destroyed — and to be able to establish together with the people a sovereign, inclusive, fully democratic, just and truly patriotic government, a government where the people make the strategic decisions of the nation, where the police become an entity preventing crime and not an anti-popular force of repression, where there are no mercenaries but patriotic soldiers committed to the defense of the people.

In other words, we want that dignified Colombia, of the people and for the people, and not the Colombia of today, which is that of the minorities who apply death and blackmail to defend the interests of the rich without considering the suffering of the poor, who are the families of all those soldiers and policemen who, regardless of the justice of the struggle, do not mind killing to defend a miserable salary. That scaffolding of corruption that steals the wealth and forces us to pay tribute sacrificing the food of our children must fall. We are glad that the mobilizations these days are going in that direction.

Demands to the soldiers

We call on all the military and police forces to stop massacring their people — do not let yourselves be used



Demonstrators in Bogotá, Colombia participate in the national strike that began April 28.

by their oppressors. Arms should be used against the armed, not against the defenseless dissidents.

Do they [soldiers and police] believe that by killing their Colombian brothers they are excluded from the tax, pension, labor and health reforms? Do they believe that by defending the institutionality and the interests of the transnationals and the oligarchy, their standard of living will improve?

Is it that by beating demonstrators and mistreating defenseless civilians, your children will have the right to higher education and an optimal health care system? Is it that by disappearing demonstrators or imprisoning or raping women, you will get a dozen eggs for 1,800 pesos?

Do not delude yourselves; do not play the game of the oligarchy anymore. Your commitment is with the people, and those you are killing are fighting for your well-being and that of your family.

The time has come for all of us to put a grain of sand, to take a small step in the streets for this just cause and to make this corrupt government fall, to demand that the congress members lower their salaries and to reform the legislature and establish a unicameral system or one representative per department, to put an end to tax havens and to demand that whoever has more capital should pay more taxes. In this way, the fiscal deficit will be corrected, and Colombia’s economic stability will be reestablished.

The Attorney General’s Office, in its eagerness to stigmatize the mobilization and justify the great massacre that the military and police forces have carried out, follows the repetitive script, linking

us with the mobilization, creating false profiles on social networks from which they disseminate information in our name alluding to the strike, taking out false pamphlets forcing people to go on strike and very possibly try to make military presence in sites where masses are concentrated wearing our insignias.

They have done this with the undeniable presence of armed civilian personnel in demonstrations, agents previously trained by the police; this is how the cowards act in the face of the fury of the people. They cannot expect the people to remain immobile in the face of barbarism. It is the people raised up against injustice who are the protagonists of the coming change; the people have begun the march of no return for a new homeland, and this just march will not be stopped by anyone.

People and dignity, Manuel Marulanda lives, the struggle continues!!!!

Coordinating Command of the West
FARC-EP

Jaime Martinez Mobile Column
Dagoberto Ramos Mobile Column
Franco Benavides Mobile Column
Urias Rondon Mobile Column
Carlos Patiño Front
Rafael Aguilera Front
Ismael Ruiz Front
Western Coordinating Command
Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de
Colombia Ejercito del Pueblo

Source, *rebellion.org*, translation: John
Catalinotto

Colombia: El terror de Estado no detendrá la lucha

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el seminario web de la UNAC, Jordan explicó que la odiada policía antidisturbios ESMAD (Escuadrón Móvil Antidisturbios) fue creada en 1999 en el marco del acuerdo conjunto entre Estados Unidos y Colombia conocido como “Plan Colombia”. Desde que comenzó la huelga -y de hecho desde la creación del escuadrón- el ESMAD ha cometido masacres, desapariciones y detenciones en lo que los colombianos llaman un “golpe de Duque” contra el movimiento popular.

Colombia es el octavo mayor receptor de ayuda financiera de Estados Unidos y el mayor de América Latina; el año

pasado se aprobó en el Congreso un paquete de ayuda de 448 millones de dólares con apoyo bipartidista. El papel del gobierno en la defensa de los intereses imperialistas en América Latina y otros países ha suscitado comparaciones con la forma en que el Estado del apartheid israelí funciona extendiendo los intereses imperialistas. Colombia es el único país latinoamericano que fue aceptado por la OTAN en 2017 como “socio global.”

Donald Trump, cuando era presidente, presionó a Duque para que desmantelara los Acuerdos de Paz de 2016. El presidente Joe Biden no ha hecho ningún esfuerzo para animar al gobierno colombiano a cumplir con los acuerdos, que

fueron redactados con el aporte de las masas colombianas y contienen capítulos sobre una amplia gama de temas como la reforma rural, la salud, la educación, la erradicación de la pobreza, el agua potable, la participación política, el fin del conflicto militar, la justicia de género, las drogas ilícitas y las garantías de los derechos humanos.

Al desechar los acuerdos, Duque se asegura de que Colombia siga siendo el lugar más peligroso del mundo para los líderes sindicales y uno de los peores violadores de los derechos humanos de los movimientos indígenas y afrodescendientes por el medio ambiente y el derecho a la tierra.

A pesar del peligro, la gente sigue

protestando y haciendo huelga en masa. Es imperativo que los activistas de Estados Unidos y otros países imperialistas se solidaricen con el valiente pueblo colombiano. Hasta ahora ha habido grandes protestas en Nueva York, Los Ángeles, Portland, San Francisco, Miami, París, Londres y en todo el Estado español.

Para ver el seminario web de la UNAC sobre Colombia visite tinyurl.com/c9ewykdh.

Martha Grevatt formó parte de la delegación de solidaridad con el proceso de paz colombiano que se reunió con los negociadores de las FARC en 2015 en La Habana.



Primer día de huelga general en Colombia, Bogotá, 28 de abril

Colombia

El terror de Estado no detendrá la lucha

Por Martha Grevatt

Desde el 28 de abril, los trabajadores de Colombia están llevando a cabo una huelga general. La huelga fue provocada por la tercera de las tres recientes “reformas” fiscales impuestas por el gobierno derechista del presidente Iván Duque. Los nuevos impuestos presionan a los trabajadores por ambos lados, aumentando los impuestos sobre la renta personal y cobrando impuestos sobre las ventas de los alimentos básicos.

Esto crea tremendas dificultades para los trabajadores colombianos, cuyo salario medio mensual equivale a unos 310 dólares, muy por debajo de la media mundial y menos que el alquiler mensual típico de un apartamento de tres habitaciones en la capital, Bogotá. (quora.com)

Mientras los trabajadores verán aumentar sus impuestos hasta en un 500%, Duque ha recortado los impuestos a las empresas transnacionales y planea gastar miles de millones del dinero de los impuestos de los trabajadores en nuevos aviones de combate.

Mientras que la fruta y otros productos de primera necesidad están gravados, los productos de Coca-Cola están exentos de impuestos. Coca-Cola es conocida por contratar escuadrones de la muerte de derechas para asesinar a los líderes sindicales en sus plantas embotelladoras de Colombia. (killercoke.org)

La organización de derechos humanos Temblores ha documentado al menos 1.173 incidentes de violencia policial destinados a reprimir la huelga general entre el 28 de abril y el 7 de mayo. “La organización señala que los datos son el resultado de un riguroso trabajo de verificación y

triangulación de las denuncias registradas desde el 28 de abril por los ciudadanos a través de los diferentes canales de comunicación establecidos para tal fin”, informó Telesur el 7 de mayo.

Dijo Temblores: “Durante nueve días consecutivos, y a pesar de la violencia con la que el Estado ha reprimido las protestas sociales, los ciudadanos han salido masivamente a manifestar y reclamar sus derechos en las calles.” (Telesur, 7 de mayo)

La policía ha cometido agresiones sexuales, ha matado a cerca de 40 personas en las manifestaciones y en los barrios pobres, y ha detenido arbitrariamente a casi 1.000 personas. Un gran número de los asesinados han sido jóvenes de entre 14 y 30 años.

Sin embargo, la gente sigue en las calles, celebrando 35 marchas distintas en la capital, Bogotá, el 5 de mayo. En Cali, la segunda ciudad del país, se están produciendo las mayores protestas de su historia. Los huelguistas exigen la dimisión de Duque.

Comunidades indígenas y afrodescendientes en el punto de mira

El 8 de mayo, en un seminario web organizado por la Coalición Nacional Unida contra la Guerra, la defensora de los derechos humanos afrocolombiana

Charo Mina-Rojas habló desde Colombia de la grave situación a la que se enfrentan los colombianos negros, que constituyen aproximadamente el 20% de la población del país. Asentados en la costa pacífica colombiana desde el año 1500, han resistido la opresión y la explotación desde su llegada durante la esclavitud. Los afrodescendientes colombianos fueron reconocidos y dotados de tierras en una enmienda constitucional de 1991.

Sin embargo, las comunidades negras tradicionales están situadas en tierras ricas en recursos y biodiversidad. Se han enfrentado a la violencia y al robo de tierras por parte de ricas empresas internacionales. Muchos han sido desplazados, y sus barrios urbanos son ahora un objetivo desproporcionado de las fuerzas estatales y los paramilitares de derecha, especialmente en Cali.

La Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (ONIC) denunció las “acciones desproporcionadas de la Policía Nacional y en particular del ESMAD (escuadrones antidisturbios). ... Tampoco podemos aceptar la falta de empatía de este gobierno y su incapacidad para entender que la desigualdad, el hambre y la pobreza también llevan a la desesperanza y a la desesperación y mucho menos naturalizar que la respuesta a estos hechos sea la violencia estatal”. (Telesur, 7 de mayo)

El papel del gobierno colombiano en la defensa de los intereses imperialistas en América Latina y otros países ha suscitado comparaciones con la forma en que el Estado del apartheid israelí funciona extendiendo los intereses imperialistas.

Alrededor del 3,5% de los 50 millones de colombianos son indígenas y hablan 65 lenguas diferentes. Se enfrentan al robo de tierras por parte de las empresas de la industria extractiva, al desplazamiento forzoso y al terror continuo de la policía y los paramilitares. Muchos líderes indígenas han sido asesinados; el Grupo Internacional de Trabajo sobre Asuntos Indígenas afirma que, desde la elección de Duque en 2018, existe “una situación humanitaria en claro deterioro que, solo en 2020, dejó 112 indígenas muertos en diferentes regiones” (iwgia.org)

La ONIC participa en el paro general. El 7 de mayo, activistas indígenas derribaron una estatua del colonizador español Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada, fundador de Bogotá.

El Capítulo Étnico del Acuerdo de Paz, firmado en 2016 por las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) y el gobierno colombiano del entonces presidente Juan Manuel Santos, prometía derechos a las comunidades indígenas y afrodescendientes. Pero desde su elección, el presidente Duque, protegido del ex presidente ultraderechista Álvaro Uribe, ha echado por tierra el Acuerdo de Paz. Algunos combatientes retirados de las FARC abogan por la reanudación de la lucha armada de liberación.

Papel criminal de Estados Unidos

Estados Unidos es “total y completamente cómplice” de la oleada de terror que está sufriendo el pueblo colombiano, según James Jordan, responsable para Colombia de la Alianza para la Justicia Global. En su intervención en

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Detener los asesinatos del monopolio de las vacunas

Una vez más, la codicia capitalista predomina sobre las necesidades humanas, con consecuencias muy graves.

En la peor oleada de casos de coronavirus del mundo, que comenzó a finales de marzo, la India registró su mayor cifra de muertes diarias: 4.187 personas hasta el 8 de mayo. En la tercera cifra más alta de muertes a nivel mundial, más de 242.000 personas han muerto en la India a causa del COVID. El 9 de mayo, India notificó 403.738 casos positivos adicionales, lo que eleva las infecciones notificadas a más de 22 millones.

Estas muertes se producen a pesar de la existencia de miles de millones de dosis sobrantes de vacunas contra el coronavirus en todo el mundo. Desde que se autorizó su uso de emergencia a finales de 2020, el 87% de las vacunas contra el COVID-19 han ido a parar a los países más ricos. Los países de bajos ingresos han recibido sólo el 0,2%.

Este apartheid de las vacunas está causando millones de casos evitables y cientos de miles de muertes.

Deben tomarse medidas urgentes ahora para renunciar a los derechos de patente de “propiedad intelectual” que

dan a las grandes empresas farmacéuticas un control absoluto sobre la producción y la distribución.

Los países más ricos del mundo han comprado más dosis de las que necesitan. Irónicamente, la India — uno de los principales productores farmacéuticos del mundo — no puede producir lo que necesita para vacunar a sus 1.3 mil millones de habitantes sin la importación de Estados Unidos.

Serum Institute of India es una empresa biotecnológica y farmacéutica responsable del 60% del suministro de vacunas del mundo. Sin embargo, los límites impuestos por Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea a la exportación de materiales clave para la producción de la vacuna COVID-19 han creado una grave escasez de vacunas en toda la India.

Para permitir al gigante farmacéutico Merck aumentar la producción de la vacuna de Johnson & Johnson en febrero, el presidente Joe Biden invocó la Ley de Producción de Defensa de Estados Unidos que limitaba la exportación de los suministros de fabricación necesarios para la producción de la vacuna COVID-19. Esto incluye bolsas,

filtros y otros suministros críticos fabricados en EE.UU. La Unión Europea impuso límites de exportación similares a finales de marzo.

Esto no es sólo una crisis para la India. Miles de millones de personas en los países más pobres —en África, América Latina y Asia— también se ven afectadas.

¡Las personas antes que el lucro!

India era uno de los principales proveedores de vacunas de COVAX, un acuerdo internacional de fabricación y distribución de COVID-19 creado en abril de 2020 con el objetivo de entregar más de 2.000 millones de dosis a los 92 países más pobres del mundo para finales de 2021. Pero las prohibiciones de exportación, el acaparamiento y la escasez de suministros amenazan con ser una catástrofe para África, que ha esperado obtener sus suministros de vacunas a través de COVAX.

Debido a las enormes disparidades mundiales en el acceso a las vacunas, en octubre de 2020 India y Sudáfrica buscaron una exención de emergencia en la Organización Mundial del Comercio. Pero las negociaciones fueron bloqueadas por Estados Unidos y otros países ricos.

Cediendo a la intensa presión internacional, el gobierno de Biden anunció

recientemente su apoyo a la exención temporal de las protecciones de patentes y propiedad intelectual para las vacunas COVID y la tecnología de fabricación.

Sin embargo, incluso el tímido apoyo de Biden a la supresión de las restricciones se encontró con la reacción de la Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, un poderoso grupo comercial de la industria farmacéutica al que le preocupa que la medida pueda amenazar los beneficios de las grandes empresas farmacéuticas que controlan las patentes de las vacunas. Para presionar a Biden para que diera marcha atrás, la PhRMA gastó cantidades récord de dinero en grupos de presión en el primer trimestre de 2021.

Pfizer, cuyas ventas de vacunas han generado 3.5 mil millones de dólares en receitas, gastó 3,7 millones de dólares en hacer lobby contra cualquier exención de patentes.

Si no se comparten las vacunas y el acceso a la tecnología para producirlas, los países más pobres podrían no obtener suficientes dosis para su población hasta 2024, lo que daría lugar a millones más de muertes evitables y a la propagación mundial de nuevas variantes del virus.

Hay que anteponer las necesidades humanas a las ganancias empresariales. □