U.S. role exposed

Masses resist Sudan coup

By Sara Flounders

The Oct. 25 military coup in Sudan, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, has been met by a heroic outpouring of coordinated people’s resistance. Sudan is a country rich in oil, natural gas, gold and other resources. It is also located on the Red Sea, on global shipping lanes. Historically it has been targeted by various destabilizing strategies, including attempts to break the unified country into smaller, competing regions. Coup leader Burhan has declared himself head of the Sovereign Council, a power-sharing body of military officers and civilians, which has been ruling Sudan since late 2019. Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok, head of the moderate civilian faction of that transitional government, has been arrested, along with most civilian cabinet members and other leaders.

Widespread resistance to coup

The Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) and its allied trade unions, neighborhood resistance committees and the Sudanese Professional Association (SPA is an organization of teachers, medical workers and civil service workers) have issued a call to take to the streets. The basic unifying demand is for the return to civilian government. The tactics are civil disobedience, a general strike and other coordinated mass actions. All schools, industries (including the national airline) and civil services are part of the strike call.

In an effort to break this coordination the military has shut all internet communication. (tinyurl.com/tkzea8c)

Sudan’s 2018 uprising

The military coup and mass popular resistance is the most recent phase in an unfolding revolutionary process in Sudan, which began with a December 2018 popular uprising. This upheaval protested economic shortages, spiraling food prices and hyperinflation, created by years of U.S. sanctions and competing separatist movements. The 2018 uprising involved millions of Sudanese workers, peasant farmers and herders, youth and oppressed nationalities. The mobilization also pulled in U.S.-funded organizations.
Mother’s five-year struggle wins a victory

Cops indicted in Jamarion Robinson’s death

By Dianne Mathiowetz

Monteria Robinson’s life changed Aug. 5, 2016. That day a 26-person police force from multiple agencies under the direction of the U.S. Marshals Service fired 110 rounds into the apartment of her son’s, Jamarion Robinson’s, partner in an attempt to serve a warrant on the 26-year-old Black man.

At the time, federal agents were not allowed to wear body cameras nor were local police from Atlanta and East Point, Clayton, Fulton, Fayette and Clayton counties, who participated in the assault. However, a neighbor started filming once the gunfire began and recorded almost three minutes of continuous police shooting.

After the cops killed him, Robinson, with 26 bullet wounds on his body, there were massive entry injuries on the palms of his hands, indicating his hands were up when he was shot.

Much of this information only came to light because of the independent investigation Monteria Robinson launched into the murder of her son. At the time the Marshals Service refused to permit their agents to be questioned or allow any documents to be turned over to the Fulton County district attorney.

However, after years of rallies, protests, press conferences, media interviews and civil lawsuits that the case in the public eye, the current Fulton County District Attorney, Fani Willis, convened a grand jury Oct. 27 and 28. At the conclusion of testimony, two officers, Eric A. Heinie, with the Marshals Service and Kristopher L. Hutchens, a Clayton County police officer assigned to the Marshals Service were indicted. The eight counts include felony murder, aggravated assault, burglary, making false statements and violation of oath by a public officer.

Monteria Robinson delivered the news to a group of dedicated supporters who had rallied for hours both days in front of the Fulton County Courthouse, chanting her son’s name, distributing flyers and repeating the details of his death while the grand jury met.

While the indictments brought shouts of joy and tears of relief that some measure of justice had been won, Jamarion Robinson’s mother made clear this was just a first step. Only two members of the “death squad” were charged, and there is a trial and possible conviction yet to take place. Beyond that, she noted, are many other families whose members have died in equally suspicious police killings in metro Atlanta and around the country. As of this writing, the two indicted officers have not turned themselves in. They were granted seven days to get their affairs in order, and their bond has already been determined. Both have retained high-priced lawyers, who have already submitted a motion to move the case to federal court where they will argue that as federal agents, Heine and Hutchins are immune from state prosecution.

For additional info, see JusticeforJamarion.org.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits. Capitalism breeds war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on immigrants, migrants, those living in poverty and other people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and imprisonment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

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

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out the working class defending the workers and oppressed here and worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you.

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

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Supply chain crisis: Driven by deregulation

By Betsy Piette

Corporate media and the Biden administration have focused on major West Coast ports—Long Beach and Long Beach, Calif., as the pivot points in the global supply chain crisis impacting the American economy. But the problem is far more complex. It involves points of production, methods of global transport, points of entry to the U.S. about how goods are transported once they are unloaded at these ports.

While increasingly in the news today, the supply chain crisis is not a new phenomenon. Since the early 1970s, developments in high technology have meant that most goods consumed in the U.S. are produced abroad and imported here. The problem, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, is how these products are transported and delivered to consumers, who are increasingly seeing empty shelves at every turn.

Whether goods are made in the U.S. or overseas, they are transported in U.S. ports, every product, on every shelf in every big-box store or in every box left on the dock. Fast-moving goods are warehoused there on some type of truck. Truck drivers are responsible for moving 72% of all the goods we consume.

The shortage of drivers due to low wages and poor working conditions is a key factor in the supply chain crisis. While focusing attention on the ports, corporate media and politicians like President Joe Biden say little about the trucking industry. However, in an interview with KCRW News Oct. 19, Danny Miranda, president of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 94, stated that Biden’s proposal to open the ports 24/7 to get supplies moving won’t solve the problem. “We’ve become a storage facility instead of a throughput facility. … We are inundated with cargo and moving it as fast as we can.”

If there is no one to pick them up, storage containers sit in the ports, Miranda explained. “They’re open and they sit. They sit. It’s cheaper for them to sit [on] that ship out in the middle of the harbor than it is to put it on the dock, because there’s no one to come and get it.”

The roadblock Miranda is referring to is the shortage of port truck drivers to collect cargo from giant shipping containers at the docks. Most of these drivers are non-union and experience some of the lowest pay and worst working conditions in the industry, because government deregulation has allowed them to be classified as “independent contractors”—stripping them of protections under existing government regulations.

Deregulation nightmare

In 1995, the Interstate Commerce Commission’s Motor Carrier Act was created to regulate the interstate trucking industry. It set trucking rates; the number of carriers, areas and routes served; what commodities could be carried; and who could be a carrier.

This act of Congress followed the tumble of railroad and ship lines by thousands of Minneapolis truck drivers led by Teamsters Local 574 from May to August 1934. It was a pivotal moment for the Teamsters union as it helped lead to the 1935 enactment of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which governs labor relations in all industries except railroads and airlines.

Many blame Republican President Ronald Reagan for weakening the U.S. labor movement when he broke the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization strike in 1981. But the damage had already started when Democratic President Jimmy Carter signed the Motor Carrier Act of 1980, which overturned the 1935 MCA, deregulating the trucking industry and opening the door to today’s network of big-box stores and online shopping.

Under the 1980 MCA, anyone could haul any goods to any place for any price they liked, while forcing truckers to compete with one another on the price of transportation. While Carter’s MCA slashed the cost of moving goods by truck, its impact on union truck drivers was devastating.

Drive to the bottom

Deregulation drove down the cost of shipping goods, but neither consumers nor drivers benefited. Any cost savings went directly to the coffers of shipping company owners at the top of this $800 billion industry. The price for trucking got cheaper, but the ability for truck drivers to make a decent living evaporated.

From 1980 to today, median trucking wages sank anywhere from 24% to 50%, depending on the type of truck and where it was driven. Local truck drivers were largely replaced by long-haulers driving 53-foot-long trailers. The majority of non-union truck drivers on these big trucks are headed to a big-box retailer.

It was the large retail chains like Walmart, Home Depot and Amazon that benefited the most from the 1980 MCA. Deregulation fueled the development of the big-box store system, and later e-commerce, by removing restrictions on how products are shipped. Labor costs are low that companies can now send whatever they want by any route. Trucks now carry huge amounts of goods from ports directly to distribution centers or retail stores. Mom-and-pop stores suffered, but Amazon Prime flourished.

Unions bore the brunt of deregulations

Union membership has plummeted, faced with competition from low-wage nonunion carriers. Forty years ago, the Teamsters had over 2 million members, representing the majority of truck drivers. Today they represent around 2% of truck drivers—around 70,000 workers. UPS was the only significant trucking company to unionize since deregulations began.

A provision of Biden’s infrastructure bill awaiting Congressional action would allow the training of 3,000 additional drivers ages 18-20 to drive tractor-trailers across state lines. But this provision would only further increase competition within the trucking industry, where currently drivers must be 21. The problem is not a shortage of drivers; it is the erosion of wages, benefits and job safety resulting from deregulation.

Long-haul truckers have had an annual turnover rate of over 90% for decades [according to the American Trucking Association], and conditions for entry-level jobs are terrible. Long-haul drivers, who often work 60 to 70 hours per week, are paid not by the hour but for the miles they drive.

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Long-haul drivers are unionized, XPO reneged on its promise to not slash jobs for at least 18 months after purchasing a competitor. Similar struggles with XPO are happening in Britain, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa addressed the problem of “dealing with the current state of logistics is the shortage of port truck drivers. They are not paid a living wage and are largely treated as independent contractors, which means that will continue until this country deals with the issue of misclassifications, which allows them to be subjugated by companies.”

“If people can make an adequate wage with good working conditions, they will come to work. But that means they must be treated as employers, who are allowed to organize with a union so they can negotiate proper compensation, benefits and workplace safety. Nothing will change until that happens.”

In June 2020, long before corporate media appeared to notice supply chain problems, Teamsters locals in 30 cities protested to demand state government and employers provide enhanced safety measures for workers in the country’s food supply chain. Their demands included paid sick and family leave, hazard pay, acesso to personal protective equipment. Over 5,000 food supply chain workers had tested positive for COVID, and more than 20 have died from the virus.

Just imagine the impact if all 3.5 million truck drivers in the U.S. not only followed the Teamsters’ example by protesting but withheld their labor to win their demands. For that to happen nonunion drivers have to organize.

He’s the same DeJoy postal workers say is destroying the U.S. Postal Service while seeking to privatize it. By misclassifying its workers as “independent contractors,” XPO provides services to some of the world’s largest corporations including IKEA, Home Depot, Target, Verizon, Starbucks, Nike and others and has stripped tens of millions of workers of dignity of their rights and benefits. They further deny them the right to unionize under the provisions of the NLRA, which does not recognize contractors as “employees.”

XPO workers in Europe are facing similar problems. In France, where drivers are unionized, XPO reneged on its promise to not slash jobs for at least 18 months after purchasing a competitor. Similar struggles with XPO are happening in Britain, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands.
Food and beverage industries workers

Kellogg’s workers continue their strike at plants in Battle Creek, Mich.; Lancaster, Pa.; Oniona, Neb.; and Memphis, Tenn. They are members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union, and their demands center around the unfair two-tier wage system and cuts to benefits.

The majority of workers at the Battle Creek plant are registered Republicans. Union leaders have brought to light how local Republican lawmakers take major contributions from the Kellogg’s corporation and benefit financially in other business dealings with them. These same lawmakers have been silent on the issues facing their striking constituents. This is indicative of the state’s allegiance to big business and the capitalist courts.

In the struggle between the capitalists and the working class, the union leadership has said they need to have more involvement in decision-making at the five Pitt campuses really pushed the victory this time; this will include 3,000 full-time, tenured, and part-time workers.

This contract offers larger pay increases than the first contract, and there are no changes to health benefits. Workers strongly objected to language that would put higher-paid workers into a tiered pension plan, and that language appears to have been withdrawn. But language already giving “post-1997” workers lower pensions has not been eliminated.

Under the two-tier system, lower seniority workers are paid less and have a different benefit package than “traditional” workers, even when they work side-by-side doing the same job. Union leadership since 2007 trying to get companies to agree to a uniform health and pension plan had wage increases in the contract that would be retroactive to September. Among the gains, the new contract will mean $2 million to an anti-union law firm since 2019.

The Harvard Graduate Student Union, HGSU-UAW, a union of more than 4,000 students who work on campus, has presented to them.

Four unions on campus — Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, AFSCME Local 3659; UNITE-HERE Local 26, SEIU 32BJ, representing custodians and guards; and HGSU-UAW — have joined together to support each other while they all start negotiating their contracts with Harvard management. All the unions came to the rallies of the HGSU-UAW, spoke of their support and supported each other’s job actions.

Strikers’ tactics included picketing classes, stopping trucks from making deliveries, disrupting the presidents’ speeches and leading classroom walkouts. Harvard management clearly knew what they were up against but refused to negotiate Oct. 28, saying that they did not like the tactics of the union — so HGSU-UAW increased their tactics.

Transportation workers

Reno, Nev., Teamsters Local 533 bus drivers ended their strike after finally winning concessions over scheduling and time off from Keolis, a privately owned bus company based in France. The drivers have been fighting for months and were on strike for 25 days in October. The striking workers mobilized the community to support them. According to bus driver and shop steward Michael Lansborough, “Working-class people need to know: It’s time for us to unite. Not only unite individually into unions, but unite as a whole to beat down this corporate attitude that they can just walk all over everybody.” (Payday Radio)

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) and Transit Workers Union Local 234 bus drivers reached a tentative agreement last week, after the union voted to strike on Nov. 1. The two sides new to negotiate Oct. 28, saying that they did not like the tactics of the union — so HGSU-UAW increased their tactics.

Strikers vote down second contract at John Deere

By Scott Kim

John Deere strikers in Waterloo, Iowa, with supporters from Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union who brought food and supplies Oct. 29.

There has been an uptick in strike activity in the month of “Strikethrough,” with workers feeling their strength as bosses struggle to find people willing to work under current terms and conditions. Recent strikes pave a threat to both capital and collective labor leaders. How the Deere strikers vote will be an important indicator of how hard workers are willing to fight to retain and win back lost gains and block further contract concessions.

Rally demands CUNY budget increases

By G. Dunkel

The Professional Staff Congress (PSTC Local 2334) represents 25,000 faculty and staff at the City University of New York. CUNY is an unusual educational and civic institution, since it is funded by both the state and city of New York.

A rally called by the PSC at the CUNY Board of Trustees meeting Oct. 25 drew over 100 faculty and staff and students to the physical demonstration on the campus of Baruch College. Hundreds more participated online through live streaming of the event.

The union is demanding the trustees support an increase of $416 million in operating aid and the $1.25 billion in capital investment requested by CUNY’s administration. The demonstrators called on Gov. Kathy Hochul and presumptive NYC Mayor Eric Adams to fully fund the CUNY.

The CUNY student body is predominately Black, Brown and low-income. Some of the speakers supported CUNY having free tuition, as it did when its student body was predominantly white.
Incarcerated migrants win minimum wage victory

By Jim McHahn
Seattle

After years of hunger strikes, immigrants housed at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Wash., have won the right to be paid for their labor at the same minimum wage that is mandated for non-incarcerated workers. Washington's state minimum wage is $13.69 an hour.

The private-for-profit owner, GEO Group, has been paying the prisoner workers only a dollar a day. These workers do all the real work inside the places where they are held: cooking, laundry, cleaning and other maintenance jobs.

On Oct. 27, a federal judge found GEO had been violating Washington state minimum wage laws for over 15 years. The company currently operates 57 prisons and detention facilities inside the U.S.

Washington state

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Miami defenders rally for release of twice-kidnapped Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab

By Lauren Smith

Bulletin: On Nov. 1 U.S. District Judge Robert Scullya dropped all but one money laundering charge against Alex Saab, but the one remaining count of “conspiracy to commit money laundering” carries a maximum sentence of 20 years. Saab continues to be denied access to legal counsel and to cancer medications.

The article below has been edited. The Venezuelan diplomat was kidnapped twice by Washington. First, in Cape Verde used electric shocks to torture Ambassador Saab and extract a false confession that in the end never came: “They wanted to force him into becoming a thief and a drug trafficker against Venezuela, against me and against the Bolivarian revolution – something he never allowed.” Nonetheless, Ambassador Saab released a statement that he “is of sound mind and not suicidal.” He is rightfully feared by Washington state Director Jimmy Smith and prosecutors responsible for the case.

Without question and by admission, Washington’s actions against diplomat Alex Saab are done routinely to “make the economy scream” and “enable regime change” in Venezuela. This strategy hasn’t worked. In the case of longstanding cases of both Cuba and Iran, unilateral coercive economic sanctions that kill the starvation and illness of its people will never be successful.

The migrant detainees have been greatly aided on the outside by the solidarity group La Resistencia. The International Action Center has also brought solidarity.

The struggle continues against slave labor in prison, which is still legal under the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

By Lauren Smith

Miami defenders rally for release of twice-kidnapped Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab

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Miami defenders rally for release of twice-kidnapped Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab

Laurel Smith is an independent journalist and a member of the Green Party and Hands off Cuba Coalition. Her work has been published by Alliance for Global Justice, Black Agenda Report, Common Dreams, Counterpunch, Global Research, Monthly Review and Telesur among others.
Justice again denied for Mumia Abu-Jamal

By Betsye Pette
Philadelphia

The Pennsylvania Superior Court on Oct. 26 denied Pennsylvania political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal’s appeals, filed in 2019 following a December 2018 decision by Pennsylvania Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker that awarded Abu-Jamal the right to reopen his Post-Conviction Relief Action.

His appellate case, first filed in August 2016 and heard in a courtroom April 24, 2017, was based on the 2016 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, Williams v. Pennsylvania. This case found due process was violated when former Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Ronald Castille participated in the consideration of Terrance Williams’ appeal in a capital post-conviction case.

Abu-Jamal’s attorneys Judith Ritter and Sam Spital argued that Castille was also the district attorney when Abu-Jamal was convicted, and was a state Supreme Court judge when Mumia initially filed his PCRA appeals. As Philadelphia District Attorney, Castille approved decisions to seek the death penalty. The SCOTUS ruling established that a petitioner is entitled to relief when a reasonable observer could conclude that a judge harbored disqualifying bias against the petitioner.

Tucker’s decision was based on finding a letter to then-Governor Robert Casey from Castille that showed improper judicial. Castille wrote: “I urge you to send a clear and dramatic message to all police killers that the death penalty in Pennsylvania actually means something.”

At the time, Abu-Jamal was one of a handful of incarcerated people facing the death penalty on a conviction involving the murder of a police officer.

Tucker’s was a split decision. He did conclude that the U.S. Supreme Court 2016 decision in Williams v. Pennsylvania did not fully apply. While Tucker’s court was in session, no other proof was found in hundreds of file boxes provided by the Commonwealth to show that Castille, as Philadelphia district attorney, had played a significant personal role in Abu-Jamal’s case before later becoming his prosecutor and a judge.

However, within days of Tucker’s decision, Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner announced finding several evidence boxes related to the case, hidden in a remote storeroom, contained evidence of prosecutorial misconduct, which became the basis of a request by Abu-Jamal’s attorneys for a new evidentiary hearing.

Summarizing the Williams ruling, Tucker wrote: “If a judge served as a prosecutor and then the judge, there is a finding of automatic bias and due process violation.

“The slightest appearance of bias or lack of impartiality undermines the entire judiciary. … True justice must be completely just without even a hint of partiality, lack of integrity or impartiality. … Petitioner is entitled to an unbiased tribunal, without even the appearance of impartiality.”

The Superior Court’s latest decision was based on the court’s view that Judge Tucker was wrong when he determined that the newly found evidence demonstrated bias on Castille’s part. The court decided this even though Krasner had withdrawn his initial appeal of Tucker’s ruling.

The clearly erroneous and openly biased ruling by the state’s lower court’s judges, elected with the support and funding of the Fraternal Order of Police, calls into question their ability to acknowledge or even recognize bias when it hits them full frontal. Their ruling comes just weeks before elections that will impact the makeup of the court. Several Superior Court justices are running for seats on the state’s Supreme Court.

Today’s decision does not affect “new evidence” claims which will still be litigated. Krasner has indicated he has no objections to this evidence being heard in the Court of Common Pleas.

Once again the court system, permeated with the rankest racist bias, cannot be relied on for justice in this nearly 40-year-old case. We need to renew and strengthen the movement to bring Mumia home. ☐

David Gilbert to be released from prison after 40 years—Free Dr. Mutulu Shakur!

By Judy Greenspan

Finally, after 40 years of incarceration, the New York State Parole Board did the right thing on Oct. 26 and ordered the release of David Gilbert, who is currently imprisoned at Shawangunk Correctional Facility, near Walkill, N.Y. Gilbert had been part of a group of white anti-imperialist political prisoners who had supported the Black Liberation Army, the Puerto Rican Nationalist and other liberation struggles. However, his co-defendant, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, remains in prison, suffering from life-threatening bone cancer.

Gilbert has been in prison since 1981 after being caught with BLA members and others trying to rob a Brinks truck in upscale New York. During this action, a guard and two policemen were killed. His trial resulted in Gilbert being sentenced to 75 years to life in prison in 1983.

Gilbert has a long history in the anti-racist, anti-colonial struggle, dating back to his involvement in Students for a Democratic Society and then later as a member of the Weather Underground.

While in prison, Gilbert started a model peer education program for incarcerated people with HIV/AIDS; it spread from prison to prison. He worked tirelessly to get the word out to activists outside the walls who were involved in similar advocacy. For his efforts, Gilbert was punched, clocked down and frequently transferred from prison to prison. His work eventually paid off when the NYS prison system was forced to adopt a similar program in women’s prisons last year.

Not surprisingly, Gilbert’s co-defendants, Kathy Boudin and Judy Clarke, were busy at Bedford Hills Women’s Prison in New York, running another HIV/AIDS peer education program. Named ACE — AIDS, Counseling and Education — this program has been internationally acclaimed and is still in existence today.

On Oct. 19, Gilbert was eligible for a parole hearing, and seven days later the 77-year-old was granted parole. This followed the commutation of his sentence in August by then-Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Gilbert is set to be released by Nov. 20. His son, Chesa Boudin, who was one of the fiercest campaigners for his father’s release, is currently the district attorney of San Francisco.

Free all political prisoners!

Dr. Shakur was given a 60-year sentence for his involvement in the Brinks robbery in 1986. Despite being seriously ill, he was denied parole for the ninth time in January. His next parole hearing is in 2022. This renowned political prisoner is not scheduled for release until December 2024. Currently, he is incarcerated at FMC Lexington in Kentucky.

As a teenager, Dr. Shakur was a member of the Revolutionary Action Movement and the Republic of New Africa. He worked with the Lincoln Hospital’s Detox Community Program in the South Bronx, which used acupuncture and holistic health methods, rather than methadone, to counter addiction. Shakur became a certified doctor of acupuncture and founded the Black Acupuncture Advisory Association of North America and the Harlem Institute of Acupuncture.

David Gilbert

Dr. Mutulu Shakur is the stepfather of Dr. Shakur, who was the stepfather of slain activist rap artist Tupac Shakur, started Dare to Struggle while incarcerated, and put together a 10th anniversary tribute to his son.

A campaign is underway to get President Joe Biden to grant clemency to Dr. Shakur. To find out more information about it and to sign the petition, check out the Family and Friends of Dr. Mutulu Shakur website. (mutulushakur.com).

2021 was designated the Year of the Political Prisoner. As this year comes to an end, it is clear that Dr. Shakur is only one of the many political prisoners still languishing in U.S. federal and state prisons. It is time to ensure that he and all political prisoners are set free, including Sundiata Acoli, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier and all the others. Free them all!
By Monica Moorehead

The International Tribunal on Human Rights Abuses Against Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples was held Oct. 23-25 at The Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center in Washington Heights, New York City, aka Turtle Island Lenape land. The main theme of the Tribunal was “We Still Charge Genocide” in recognition of the “We Charge Genocide: The International Tribunal Against the Negro People” — a 1951 petition to the United Nations signed by dozens of notables including Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, Claudia Jones, Harry Haywood and Paul Robeson.

The 2021 indictment is against the United States of America, represented by its President, Department of State, federal and state police agencies and other governmental institutions. The following is an edited version of the findings presented at a press conference at the United Nations on Oct. 25. Go to the Spirit of Mandela Facebook page at tinyurl.com/75syh4px for video testimony, findings and verdict. WW will be writing on the testimonies of witnesses in future issues.

Background

The Panel of Jurists heard testimony emphasizing the millions upon millions of Indigenous and African peoples murdered, disappeared and nearly exterminated over a period from 1492 until the present. Further, the witnesses and prosecution argued that the harms have been historic and deliberate, with colonization, racism, militarism, imperialism, materialism, criminalization, patriarchy, neocolonialism and internal colonialism as part of the larger process that now manifests itself in medical and digital apartheid, chemical warfare, environmental violence, forced sterilization, displacement and a pandemic of accessible guns and drugs — with the majority of gun violence perpetrated by police and security forces in the false claim of upholding law and order.

Statements were made testifying to new forms of colonialism which include the Prison Industrial Complex, the Military Industrial Complex and the commercialization of our health and privatization/ commodification of our lives.

The testimonies include substantial evidence of the erasure of histories; distortion and cultural misappropriation contributes to and exacerbates the attempted invisibilization and denial of People’s basic humanity. The profound impacts of this legacy extend beyond the era and attempt to exterminate Black, Brown and Indigenous lives. Hence, as one witness stated, “the colonization of the spirit and mind continues to this day.”

The testimonies of this Tribunal reaffirm the traditional wisdom and knowledge of Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples. Strong evidence was presented regarding indifference to the suffering of groups of people considered expendable due to the profit model of U.S. health care, leaving behind those most vulnerable. The Prosecution argued that, from forced sterilization to “food deserts” and chemical contamination, from toxic stress based on the environment in which one lives to the criminalization of mental illness, Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples are neglected and left out of any definition of the human right to health.

Public Health inequities

The testimonies highlighted deep public health inequities including both physical and mental health manifestations. Further assertions were made that the COVID-19 pandemic and an “inadequate and incompetent federal response to this crisis” magnified the disparate impact of structural racism affecting access to health care.

Moreover, testimony was heard regarding the failure to address the suffering of groups of people considered expendable due to the profit model of U.S. health care, leaving behind those most vulnerable. The Prosecution argued that, from forced sterilization to “food deserts” and chemical contamination, from toxic stress based on the environment in which one lives to the criminalization of mental illness, Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples are neglected and left out of any definition of the human right to health. While these crimes are well-documented; they have more rarely been acknowledged, recognized and confronted with some very distant from public knowledge.

Judgment

Despite the need for further deliberation on the extensive submissions and documents from varied expert witnesses, a deep analysis from the Jurists found that the process did sufficiently cover the scope and elements of all five counts in the indictment as having legal standing and hence legitimacy.

The Jurists further establish that the grounds for each of the five counts in the indictment presented the basis for successful intervention due to the extensive testimonies of both witnesses and expert witnesses.

A full and detailed judgment will follow regarding our findings on these counts. Any minority position of the Jurists will be developed with extensive consensus on each count asserted to further advance our recommendations for remediation, reparations and justice actions.

After having heard the testimony of numerous victims of Police Racism, Mass Incarceration, Environmental Racism, Public Health Inequities and of Political Prisoners/Prisoners of War, together with the expert testimonies and graphic presentations, as well as the copious documentation submitted and admitted in the record, the Panel of Jurists find the U.S. and its subdivisions GUILTY of all five counts. We find grounds that Acts of Genocide have been committed.

Signed, October 25, 2021, Panel of Jurists.
Church Center of the United Nations

Chief: Her Honorable Madgalene Moonnamy (South Africa), former Member of Parliament (ANC)
Deputy Chief: Wifla E. Revillon Collazo (Puerto Rico), long-standing member and leader, Colegio de Abogados de Puerto Rico (Puerto Rican Bar Association)
Deputy Chief: Wilma E. Reverón (U.S.), former Chair of the Conference of Black Lawyers (NCBL); founding member of Black People Against Police Torture

Sherly Fabre (Haiti/U.S.), International Federation of Rights of Indigenous Peoples; National Representative; member, Muslim Peace Fellowship/Community of Living Traditions
Professor Mireille Fanon Mendès-France (France), former Chair of the United Nations Working Group on People of African Descent; former Chair of the 2015 International Commission on Inquiry (Systemic Racism Police Violence against U.S. People of African Descent); Co-Chair of the Friends of the Family Foundation
Professor Alexander Hinton (USA), Director of the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights, Rutgers University; U.S. Commissioner of the United Nations
Chairman Brian Moskwetah Weeden of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe; former Commissioner, Office of Indigenous Affairs (USA); Co-President/Trustee of the United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY)
Binalakhmi Bina Nepram (Meitei/India), Director, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network; Founder-Director, Global Alliance of Indigenous Peoples, Gender Justice and Peace (GAGIP)
middle-class business councils and moderate political parties. The upheaval led to a group within the military aligning with the movement and arresting President Omar al-Bashir, a general who had held power since 1989. Though millions of people were swept into motion in the transitional upheaval, developments were cut short by a 2019 agreement between more moderate business forces, political parties and the Sudanese military to form the Sudanese Sovereign Council. The agreement was that this transitional government would move toward an elected democratic government by 2022.

The more business-oriented elements made this compromise after a June 3, 2019, massacre of people in a peaceful sit-in at army headquarters. Over 100 demonstrators were killed, and thousands were injured. The attack came from the Rapid Support Forces, whose commander backs General Burhan. Burhan is Sudan's new ruler in the coalition government, and the SCP and the SPA — along with neighborhood resistance committees and most the union organizations — refused to take part in the transitional government. Their focus has been to continue to organize at the grassroots level.

In order to lift the U.S. designation that Sudan was a "state sponsor of terrorism," in 2019 Prime Minister Hamdok — prior to his visit to Washington — signed a law to dismantle and confiscate organizations or businesses that supported Palestinian charities. Sudanese assets of Hamas connected to business people in besieged Gaza were seized. Hezbollah supporters were expelled. Palestinian students from Gaza could no longer gain university education in Sudan.

For decades, people and resistance organizations from countries under U.S. control throughout the Arab world had sought refuge in Sudan. Suddenly they were at risk. The transitional government signed an agreement to pay $335 million to U.S. families who were "victims of terrorist attacks" in several African countries. These attacks had not taken place in Sudan. A future $700 million loan to the battered Sudanese economy was contingent on this payment. Almost half the money dangled as "economic relief" had to be first paid to the U.S.

In exchange for these and other concessions, the U.S. Department of Commerce declared Jan. 19 that Sudan was "open for business." But while some sanctions on Sudan were lifted, other sanctions were left in place, subject to meeting further U.S. demands.

Sudanese demand civilian rule, Khartoum, Oct. 21.

U.S. military recognizing threats

In March the coalition government was forced to "welcome" to Port Sudan the USS Winston Churchill, a guided-missile destroyer. U.S. war ships have not had access to Sudan for more than 30 years. The destroyer is an ominous threat. And Winston Churchill is reviled in Sudan as an arrogant, racist colonialist, who launched his political career as a cavalry officer in the Sudan during the British colonial army's defeat of the Mahdi Army at Omdurman on Sept. 2, 1898. The Mahdi movement had assembled a unified, disciplined force of more than 100,000 Sudanese soldiers and succeeded in halting British domination for almost two decades. The anti-colonial movement was founded by religious leader Muhammad Ahmad bin Abd Allah, or Mahdi.

Churchill's war correspondent accounts of frontier ethnically distinct defeated the Mahdi Army, moved down by British machine guns and cross-fire from British gunboats. The battle at Omdurman — a city located strategically across from Khartoum where the Blue and White Nile Rivers converge — was a turning point in securing British colonial domination in Africa.

Now, in an echo of old colonial rule, the USS Winston Churchill glides into a Sudanese harbor — and an opening for AFRICOM, the U.S. Africa Command, to "partner" with Sudan's military is under "friendly discussion." U.S. backs capitalist 'reform'

The U.S. has backed the return of the looting looters of the International Monetary Fund on Sudan's battered economy. The IMF demanded Sudan end fuel and food subsidies to the population in hard suppressing inflation and diesel overnight, raising the cost of food and essential supplies and sending inflation soaring. The IMF has ensured basic subsistence. But the weak government, trying to meet U.S. demands, complied with IMF "reforms." Now the most desperate part of the population is increasingly dependent on the "charity" of U.S. and U.S. aid organizations for handouts.

What Sudan needs is equipment and technology for development. For this, they need access to banking and financial credit, which the IMF demands.

So far, international assistance with development has only come from China, which is backing in aid in infrastructure and transport technology.

Mass demonstrations rise up

Mass demonstrations met the transition government's decision to end food and fuel subsidies. Sudan had already, at IMF demand, devalued its currency in February. The end of subsidies was another devastating blow to all workers.

In June the demonstrations were organized by the SPA and the SCP. These are the forces opposing the military coup now. U.S. machinations to disrupt Sudan are part of its plan to dominate Africa, extending far beyond Sudan. The U.S. works to undermine the security and stability of every country it targets, regardless of size. Redivision and weakening of Sudanese demand civilian rule, Khartoum, Oct. 21.

U.S. machinations to disrupt Sudan

We call on our readers and supporters to support these movements and join in the commemoration of the National Day of Mourning. Your help is needed!

The WW Supporter Program was founded 44 years ago to help build this socialist newspaper. Since the early 1990s, it has supported workers.org, the website where new WW articles are posted daily, and each week's full issue is displayed in a PDF document. The newspaper is printed and mailed out monthly.

For annual donations of $60, $120 or $300, members receive a year's subscription, letters about timely issues and gift subscriptions. Support an operating expense book, "What road to socialism? (Notify us) Or read it at workers.org/books.

Write and mail monthly or annual checks to Workers World, P.O. Box 333, W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. (Include your name and address.) Or donate at workers.org.

* For more history and information, read "National Day of Mourning: The truth about the Pilgrims’ invasion and 400+ years of genocide that followed" in the Nov. 28, 2019 issue of WW newspaper at workers.org/2019/11/44570

Barricade at coup protest, Khartoum, Oct. 25.
## Haiti totters on the abyss

### U.S. big-business press calls for intervention

By G. Dunkel

Oct. 31 – The Haitian economy lacks the fuel it needs to function. Because Haiti’s electric grid is unreliable, hospitals, factories, banks, cell phone towers, schools, taxis and the “tap taps” that provide public transport — are cutting back or shutting down.

Digire, the company that runs the largest digital phone service in Haiti, announced at the end of October that they have around 24% of their cell sites off air due to the lack of fuel, which puts a couple thousand customers without service.

Hospitals rely on generators to run their equipment, and they have to shut down when their generators run out of fuel. Staff — doctors, nurses and support staff — have trouble getting to work, because taxis and the privately owned small buses called “tap taps” are scarce.

Transportation difficulties have driven up the price of food. Of Haiti’s 12 million people, 4.4 million need food assistance, according to the United Nations.

The Washington Post, the New York Times as well as Le Monde and the Miami Herald have all blamed this scarcity of fuel on so-called “gangs” that are demanding payments to allow fuel trucks to pass through territory they control. They are mainly found in Port-au-Prince, yet the scarcity of fuel affects the whole country, which raises doubts about their responsibility for the fuel crisis.

These groups have a history of being paid, armed and directed by the governing class, and this may be the case again. They are now demanding payment, which could lead to increases in the price of fuel.

The Pandora Papers scandal named Lasso as a participant in moving money to tax havens. This exposed Lasso as guilty of tax evasion and corruption.

The government's neoliberal program has failed, with a sharp fall in support for the current president, Guillermo Lasso, continuing since February, all contribute to a sharp fall in support for the current government. Lasso's regime has failed to keep the promises his campaign made regarding employment.

The early foreign aid that George Washington gave to French enslavers to put down the Haitian revolution had failed.

From the mid 1950s to 1986, the U.S. acted to support the Duvalier regimes as a bulwark against the Cuban revolution. U.S. support continued even after the U.S. Air Force flew the deposed president of Haiti, Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier, to the shores of France in 1986. Later Washington backed the two coups against Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide.

The U.S. threw its political muscle in getting Michel Martelly of the Haitian Party of Tet Kale to become president in 2011, although Martelly had little popular support.

In a process that lasted over a year, Jovenel Moïse was maneuvered into the presidency in 2017 with firm U.S. backing. He ignored the requirements to organize parliamentary and local elections and refused to step down when his mandate expired.

When Moïse was assassinated in July, he and 10 senators were the only elected officials in the whole country, which had been ruled by decree for months. The U.S. State Department had mildly chastised Moïse for failing to hold elections but carried no significant pressure.

There was a general strike of fuel truck drivers and associated workers in the last week of October against the dangerous conditions the current lack of security imposes on drivers. There was no movement on the ransom demands of 17 kidnapped North American missionaries.

What Haiti really needs from U.S. workers is understanding, solidarity and a commitment to prevent further U.S. intervention.

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### Another October uprising in Ecuador?

By Hari Villareal


This is a result of the government’s neoliberal program, which has failed to keep the promises it made regarding employment.

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Biden submits to capital

The Joe Biden administration, having promised an elephant, is delivering a mouse. So far Biden’s “Build Back Better” bill is just talk, and what it promises dwindles day by day. Disappearing fastest are those programs that might have helped the working-class and poorest sectors of the population. To understand this evolution, first look at how U.S. capitalism usually functions. First of all, the capitalist state apparatus—army, police, courts, government media—protects the property interests of the 0.01% superrich, no matter who runs the White House or Congress. In addition, the state, and the apparatus of the government through the two major capitalist parties, Republicans and Democrats. Is this mean the two parties are identical? No. The now-Trumpite Republican Party, besides being the party of, and by, and for the superrich, has become the leading party of white supremacy, xenophobia and misogyny. The Democratic Party sometimes proposes policies that reduce inequalities and injustices. But it fears a social explosion. The Democratic leadership, however, rarely fights for these positions when it confronts determined ruling-class obstruction. It wins social programs only when mass struggle accompanies the legislative program. The main examples were Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal in the 1930s—accompanied by the unionization of the U.S. industrial working class. Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society increased these concessions—under the pressure of the Black Liberation Movement in the late 1960s.

Crisis, confrontation, submission

The banking and real-estate crisis of 2008–09, rampant income inequality, the ongoing Climate Crisis and the COVID pandemic have exposed the fragility and instability of the U.S. economy based on enslavement. The 1830 Indian Removal Act and the 1850s California Gold Rush, which began 160 years ago in October 1859, was originally built on Indigenous lands forcibly expelled over 60,000 members of the Cherokee, Muscogee (Creek), Seminole, Choctaw, and Chickasaw nations from their ancestral home-lands in what is now the U.S. South. White settlers then died from hunger, starvation and sickness during the removal that came to be known as the “Trail of Tears.” But Indigenous people fought back. The 1830s Red Stick uprising by the Creek Nation was a militant defense of land and culture against the steadily encroach- ing economy based on enslavement. The “chop” has been a mainstay of baseball— long touted as a “soft infrastructure” that justice demands. The time is long, long past due for reparations, sovereignty and respect to be paid to the peoples whose lives, lands and cultures have been so violently seized, attacked and exploited. The end of vile behavior at a baseball game and the abolition of racist team names and mascots is just the beginning of the thoroughgoing change that justice demands. 

Another October uprising in Ecuador?

Continued from page 9

has imposed upon the people its demands for expansion, its guarantee of privileges and its class interests. In the current historical moment, when neoliberalism is in full force, when imperialism reigns over the foreign debt, and when the U.S. Marines patrol the streets of the International Monetary Fund by then-President Lenín Moreno, who many consider the worst president in Ecuador’s history. Lasso supported Moreno’s brutal repression of the 2019 October Uprising, which was part of a wave of popu- lar resistance in Haiti and Latin America. Ecuadorian neoliberalism has its roots in the brutal exploitation of the cacao and banana fields going back 100 years and more. Mike Otto’s article following the election of Lasso, “Ecuador election: Analysts debate why neoliberal banker won” was published in Workers World on May 4, 2021.

Another October uprising in Ecuador?

The current regime of Guillermo Lasso inherited the reins of a neoliberal state that was driven into the arms of the International Monetary Fund by then-President Lenín Moreno, who many consider the worst president in Ecuador’s history. Lasso supported Moreno’s brutal repression of the 2019 October Uprising, which was part of a wave of popu- lar resistance in Haiti and Latin America. Ecuadorian neoliberalism has its roots in the brutal exploitation of the cacao and banana fields going back 100 years and more.

Mike Otto’s article following the election of Lasso, “Ecuador election: Analysts debate why neoliberal banker won” was published in Workers World on May 4, 2021.
Without U.S. interference Nicaragua’s right to sovereignty, development

By Monica Moorehead
Managua, Nicaragua

The Central American country of Nicaragua followed the National elections Nov. 7. Already the U.S. bourgeois press, a mouthpiece for U.S. imperialism, has decided that the election will be “unfair and undemocratic.” For example, the New York Times ran an article Oct. 7, entitled “Democracy, or Something Like It,” in which the first four paragraphs label democracy in Nicaragua as being a “facade.” The article also holds Daniel Ortega, the current president of Nicaragua, responsible for not clearing or detaining any opposition candidates who are neither allies nor friends of theSandinista government. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was victorious in carrying out a grassroots revolution in 1979 against the U.S.-backed fascist Somoza regime. The FSLN regained its governmental power in 2007, following an electoral defeat in 1990. It is the height of hypocrisy that the U.S. would accuse any elections of being fraudulent after what happened in the 2020 presidential elections, when Donald Trump and his ilk did everything possible to steal Joe Biden’s victory by attempting to deny registered voters — especially if they were Black — the right to vote in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Michigan and other states. It is also ironic that the U.S. deploys detentions of political opponents while having the highest prison population globally, 25% of the world’s incarcerated population, yet only 4.25% of the world’s population.

A U.S. delegation, organized by the Alliance for Global Justice and the National Action and the proposed RENACER Education and development project and the U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua. The delegation was organized by the 6-15 NY Committee for the Reunification of Nicaragua and drew support from many sectors of society.

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La lucha de clases mundial impulsa el bloqueo de la cadena de suministro

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conductores a condiciones de trabajo inseguras y poco recomendables, incluían semanas laborales de 70 horas, y los salarios de los trabajadores se redujeron más reducidos. Esta situación se ha visto agravada por la pandemia de COVID-19. Muchos conductores estaban abandonando el sector en busca de mejores opciones. Esto es una realidad, tanto si un trabajador conduce un camión comercial como un autobús escolar, otro sector que enfrenta a las mismas condiciones. "La escasez nacional más grave es la de los salarios dignos"

Los conductores de autobuses escolares de Boston, pertenecientes al Local 875 de los Steelworkers, que cuenta con 1,000 miembros, exigen justicia para los conductores y desafían el mito de una "escasez nacional de trabajadores que quisieran conducir autobuses escolares bien pagados y seguros". El líder del sindicato, Steve Gillis, dijo a Workers World: "Hay una gran escasez nacional de trabajadores que quieran conducir autobuses escolares bien pagados y seguros".

Los trabajadores están en huelga por los derechos de seguridad. Deben tener un trabajo seguro, con una remuneración justa, y el gobierno debe compensar a los trabajadores. "Los trabajadores del transporte escolar, que se enfrentan a riesgos de seguridad, deben tener un salario que les permita vivir de manera segura. Ellos son los que enfrentan el riesgo de su vida diariamente y trabajan muchas horas.

Por primera vez en años, una gran parte de los conductores exigen mejores condiciones de trabajo y mayores salarios, y se niegan a trabajar a bajo costo. La lucha de los trabajadores de los autobuses escolares de Boston es esencial de la clase obrera. Por primera vez en años, una gran parte de los conductores exigen mejores condiciones de trabajo y mayores salarios, y se niegan a trabajar a bajo costo. La lucha de los trabajadores de los autobuses escolares de Boston es esencial de la clase obrera.
Los camiones esperan entrar en el puerto de Long Beach para recoger cargas, octubre de 2021.

Por Betsey Piette

El traslado de los contenedores de carga desde los puertos hasta los almacenes se ha vuelto una empresa crucial.

Por primera vez en años, una gran parte de los trabajadores exigen mejores condiciones de trabajo y mayores salarios, y se niegan a trabajar hasta conseguirlos. La crisis de la cadena de suministro mundial está mostrando el poder que tiene la clase obrera internacional para detener el sistema capitalista, paraponando toda la producción y, por tanto, todos los beneficios.

La cadena de suministro mundial impulsa el bloqueo de la cadena de suministro