Struggle from 1970 to now

National Day of Mourning

By K. James

What are the United States' foundational myths? Who created them, and who do they erase and harm?

For the past 51 years, United American Indians of New England (UAINE) and supporters have gathered on so-called Thanksgiving Day in Plymouth, Massachusetts, to ask these questions, confront settler mythologies and commemorate a National Day of Mourning for the Indigenous people murdered by settler colonialism and imperialism worldwide.

The National Day of Mourning protest was founded by Wamsutta Frank James, an Aquinnah Wampanoag tribal member. In 1970, Wamsutta had been invited by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to give a speech at a banquet commemorating the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims. The organizers of the banquet imagined that Wamsutta would give an appreciative and complimentary speech, singing the praises of the American settler-colonial project and thanking the American Indians of New England for bringing “civilization” to the Wampanoag.

However, the speech that Wamsutta wrote, which was based on historical fact instead of the hollow fiction portrayed in the Thanksgiving myth, was a far cry from complimentary.

The pride and power of Wamsutta Frank James

In his speech, Wamsutta not only named atrocities committed by the Pilgrims, but also reflected upon the fate of the Wampanoag at the hands of settlers. The speech contained a revolutionary spirit, clearly inspired by the fledgling “Red Power Movement,” which demanded equal rights and self-determination for Native Americans. This without a doubt frightened the state officials, whose minds were likely drawn to the 1969 Occupation of Alcatraz, a 19-month-long protest involving Native Americans and supporters taking over the abandoned federal penitentiary on Alcatraz Island in California. The Occupation of Alcatraz was the first intertribal protest that garnered national attention, and it had struck fear into the hearts of the ruling class, because it was becoming clear that Native Americans, like African Americans and other oppressed peoples, were saying “no more.”

Wamsutta decided that something had to be done to ensure that the words put into his mouth. His suppressed speech was printed in newspapers across the country, and it had struck fear into the hearts of the ruling class, because it was becoming clear that Native Americans, like African Americans and other oppressed peoples, were saying “no more.”

The pride and power of Wamsutta Frank James is clear that Native Americans, like African Americans and other oppressed peoples, were saying “no more.”

 attempted suppression of defiant speech

Clinging to the Thanksgiving mythology, the state officials told Wamsutta that they would write a more “appropriate” speech for the banquet, but he refused to have words put into his mouth. His suppressed speech was printed in newspapers across the country, and Wamsutta decided that something had to be done to ensure that the truth about the Pilgrims was still heard. He and other local Native activists began to plan a protest.

The flyer for this protest, which was circulated among Native people nationwide, read, “What do we have to be thankful for? The United American Indians of New England have declared Thanksgiving Day to be a National Day of Mourning for Native Americans.”

First National Day of Mourning

Members of the American Indian Movement (AIM), such as Russell Means and Dennis Banks, as well as Native people from all over the country, traveled to Plymouth, Massachusetts, for the very first National Day of Mourning. On Nov. 27, 1970, a crowd of around 200 Native Americans and supporters gathered on Cole’s Hill in Plymouth. Native American leaders made speeches about the deplorable conditions Native Americans faced, the genocidal actions of the United States government and the devastation caused by the Pilgrims.

The group next went down to the waterfront, where they buried Plymouth Rock in sand and painted it red. A small group of protesters made their way to the Mayflower II, a replica of the original Mayflower, and...
Honor Day of Mourning—Support Workers World

Workers World honors Indigenous peoples on their commemorations of the 51st National Day of Mourning on Nov. 26, on so-called “Thanksgiving.” On that special day, Native people pay homage to their ancestors and tell their true history as the original inhabitants of this country, while exposing European colonialists’ mass-slaughter crimes against Indigenous peoples, including theft of their lands and foods, obliteration of their culture, and racism, oppression and genocide.

In 1979, the United American Indians of New England gathered in Plymouth, Mass., site of the original “Pilgrims” invasion, and observed the first National Day of Mourning. Only Indigenous people spoke then, and this is still true.*

Workers World has attended the Day of Mourning commemorations every year since 1981 and has reported firsthand on these events on our pages.

WW applauds Indigenous peoples in the U.S. and globally who fight oppression and lead struggles to save lands, forests and rivers from capitalist destruction. Our newspaper hails courageous Native water, land and forest protectors who lead these movements, often putting their lives on the line to confront rapacious corporations, which, in their reckless drive for profits, harm the planet.

We especially honor those who have lost their lives in these struggles, including Indigenous organizer and Lencoa leader, Berta Cáceres, of Honduras. WW has continually supported Native peoples’ struggles on the lands, in the streets and in our newspaper.

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. Supporters can receive the book, “What road to socialism?” (Notify us.) Or read it at workers.org/books.

Write and mail monthly or annual checks to Workers World, 147 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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Vol. 63, No. 46 • Nov. 18, 2021

Editorial Long live the Cuban Revolution! ………………… 10

Noticias en Español Obreros de Starbucks luchan ……………. 12
Kellogg’s en huelga ………………………………………….. 12

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ACT UP Boston charges city with mass violations of human rights

By Ezra EL Boston

On Nov. 5, ACT UP Boston, labor leaders, frontline housing advocates, housing constituents, officials of state groups who have been houseless and people who use drugs converged on City Hall for a protest press conference and news conference. The Boston Police Department targeted people who were seeking treatment in line at methadone clinics and needle exchange programs. They targeted people who were getting help.

The organization called on “all organizations and individuals to join us in demanding public health solutions and social supports instead of further violence, neglect and criminalization” (ACT UP Boston Facebook).

“ACT UP says ‘Join the struggle!’”

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Mourning, indicting and protesting the repression of Native peoples

Every year since the first protest in 1970, protesters have gathered on Cole’s Hill to observe a National Day of Mourning. At the 1972 National Day of Mourning, a young man was attacked by the police for wearing an upside-down American flag draped over her shoulders. At the 1994 National Day of Mourning, Wamsutta and protestors liberated the bones of a 16-year-old Wampanoag girl from the Pilgrim Hall Museum.

Current year’s events

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Survivors of mass incarceration speak truth to power

The following are excerpts from testimony given at the Oct. 23–25 “Spirit of Mandela” international tribunal held in New York City. The U.S. was found guilty of six counts of human rights violations, including mass incarceration and in particular, how it treats political prisoners and prisoners of war. These excerpts include opening remarks and answers to questions asked by tribunal examiners.

Jose Saldiva, Director, Release Aging People in Prison; incarcerated for 37 years for conviction of attempted murder of police officer in New York City. Saldiva claimed self-defense.

I actually see the face of mass incarceration, and that face is grandparents, fathers, sons, brothers. We can also apply it to grandmothers and mothers and daughters, all scattered across the New York State Prison system. Just imagine the devastation that this would do to the family structure, not only to us, but to the community. So the face of mass incarceration is to eliminate vital parts of families from communities. And this was devastating seeing that this is what was happening and equating it to what happened during the chattel slave history, and then understanding that my children—this becomes relevant to this.

I watched 16-, 17-year-old kids languish in prison for 30, 35 years. We’re talking about Brown and Black kids coming of age, that youth, the dores, some dying, never returning back to their families. I saw this as new genocide because if it was happening to white kids at the level that it was happening to Black and Brown kids, there would be a public uproar. To me, this is neo-genocide.

It’s not as brutal as the genocide we’re accustomed to seeing in the history. But is so subtle that if you’re not fully in the face of the storm, you might miss it, and you might not make the connections. It’s definitely a new form of genocide, but it’s just as devastating and it’s just how people are now being targeted. The highest office labeled our children “predators” and then funded every aspect of the state to kill, to create more prisons for them. That’s a conspiracy.

Sharonne Slaama: Justice the Wrongfully Incarcerated; mother of Yusef Salaam of the Central Park Five

Sharonne Slaama: When my son, Yusef Salaam, returned from prison, he had spent just about seven years in prison. He had done three years on parole from prison. He had spent just about seven years in prison. When the police capture somebody or arrest someone, they don’t torture them for no six to seven hours. They might smack them upside the head or beat them up for 10 to 15 minutes. That’s par for the course, you know. But for political prisoners, they usually save a particular brutal torture. My head was split open with a handheld walkie talkie that one of the cops, after he cuffed me with my hands behind my back, decided to hit me in the head and knocked me down, almost knocking me out.

At the precinct, they kept me cuffed with my hands behind my back, stood two police on each side of me and started interrogating me. And every time I would answer a question that they didn’t like, they would beat me or burn me with a cigar, or they would take my shoes off and grind my toe until the toenail came off. And this went on for about six to seven hours, all the time asking me questions about other comrades that they were looking for, Assata Shakur being one of them. Abdullah Majid being another one.

Oscar López Rivera: member, Armed Forces of Puerto Rican National Liberation; incarcerated 36 years

Solitary confinement is a very detrimental instrument, and it does create a lot of problems for those of us who are the victims. To commit any kind of terror, like ADX or Marion is very dehumanizing.

What the United States government wanted most was to make us pay for a movement that was creating a lot of problems for them. We were condemned to as many years as they could sentence us to. But all of us made a commitment to the independence of Puerto Rico. We were willing to go to prison for Puerto Rico and for the decolonization of Puerto Rico. And for the decolonization of other places, because we never focused only on Puerto Rico.

For us, the injustices that the United States government was doing was painful. When the United States government thought that they really had us, we were, and we were also to face the challenges that they imposed on us. Puerto Rico’s independence is absolutely necessary. Colonialism is that tool the United States government has used effectively to take our most fundamental rights as human beings, and that’s the right to self-determination. I am profoundly grateful for what Puerto Ricans did for us. After 36 years of imprisonment, I came home feeling stronger than the day that I entered the first penitentiary, and the time I spent in those penitentiaries was always awful. But little by little, I was able to transcend all the punishments that they threw at me. And I walked out of the United States and into Puerto Rico. And for the independence of Puerto Rico, I have not given up.

Saleem Holbrook: Executive Director, Abolitionist Law Center

It’s clear-cut when you have a system that was founded on exploitation, that was founded on genocide, and its legacy continues today, there’s no alternative but abolition. We have tried for centuries to reform this system. In 2020, we all witnessed national uprisings against police violence, against police murder, against extrajudicial murder in this country. However, that uprising was nothing new. We saw it in the 1960s. We saw it in the 1990s in Los Angeles. We could go back to the riots of 1919, and we could go back further. This is an epidemic in this country that we have been dealing with for generations.

It’s unfortunate that we had to experience this when political prisoners and movements 30, 40 and 50 years ago were fighting against this system and the abuses that it brings upon us.

The common failure that I see is that when you look at all of the after-action reports, when you look at all the government reports, all of the city reports, all of them treated as the same forms that were trotted out the last time there was an uprising, the last time there was a riot, the last time we felt the need to have to take to the streets and set something on fire. You have to come to the realization that this tactic has failed. And now we have to push further for abolition, because we can’t reform it.

Jail Muntaqim: member, Black Liberation Army and Black Panther Party; incarcerated for 49 years

COINTELPRO was an operation by the federal government, by the FBI to destroy any progressive, revolutionary or national militant organization during the ‘50s, ‘60s and the ‘70s. COINTELPRO operated to create dissenion to infiltrate and to destroy a movement — to use every resource available to them to destroy the Black Panther Party. And by virtue of that, we fought back. It’s very important to understand that our relationship to the state is political. Although they criminalize our politics, they try as much as possible like us to the court of the criminal courts of law; and therefore, they try to deny the existence of political prisoners. I just want to make this point clear.

Back in 1977, I initiated the first petition to the United Nations to acknowledge the existence of political prisoners, and in the course of that, the condition of the prisoners itself. They denied the existence of political prisoners in the United States, the only industrial nation in the world that I’m aware of which denies the existence of political prisoners.

Because we are political, the state tries to suppress our capacity to teach. I was sent to solitary confinement for four months for my teaching classes. I was teaching the history of resistance.

One of the things that they did not want us to do in prison was teach prisoners. To open their consciousness, to remove their relationship with a criminal mentality, to move one towards a revolutionary mentality. And so by virtue of that alone, we, political prisoners are targeted inside prisons. We are targeted for segregation. We’re targeted to be removed from the populations, we’re targeted in every kind of way that we try to evolve ourselves inside prisons. They try to suppress it.
New film on Attica uprising

A fight for human rights

By Monica Moorehead

The Prisoners Solidarity Committee of Workers World Party will be sponsoring a free zoom showing Dec. 10 of the new documentary, “Attica,” directed by Stanley Nelson and Traci A. Curry, which premiered on Showtime. One of the surviving participants of the rebellion and a member of the Young Lords, Che Nieves, who was interviewed for the documentary, will be leading a Q&A session.

The discussion will connect the legacy of Attica with the ongoing struggle to free political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, falsely arrested 40 years ago on Dec. 9 in Philadelphia for killing a white police officer. Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther, was convicted of murdering Patrolman Daniel Faulkner, a member of the Philadelphia Mounted Police, in 1976. His case, and in particular the prison board’s acquiescence to Faulkner’s family’s plea for lethal injection, has been appealed numerous times to the highest courts in Pennsylvania and the United States, and recently to the U.S. Supreme Court, which is expected to rule in the coming months.

The Attica/Abu-Jamal connection is a reminder of the ongoing struggle to free political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, falsely arrested 40 years ago on Dec. 9 in Philadelphia for killing a white police officer. Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther, was convicted of murdering Patrolman Daniel Faulkner, a member of the Philadelphia Mounted Police, in 1976. His case, and in particular the prison board’s acquiescence to Faulkner’s family’s plea for lethal injection, has been appealed numerous times to the highest courts in Pennsylvania and the United States, and recently to the U.S. Supreme Court, which is expected to rule in the coming months.

The demonstration occurred one week after Cleveland voters passed Issue 24, a measure to hold police accountable for brutality and misconduct.
Hospital workers hit the picket line

By Otis Grotewohl Huntington, W.Va.

After three months of contentious contract negotiations, close to 1,000 members of SEIU District 1199 WV/KY/OH Service Employees Union have been without a contract with Cabell-Huntington Hospital since Oct. 1. The hospital management is set to begin enforcing the current contract whenever the SEIU contract expires Nov. 2.

Lanndry explained, "Right now the bosses and a few others are working at the refinery, but the production is way, way down," Landry explained. "They are asking for a raise but had refused to make concessions on safety issues and job security."

More at SEIU District 1199 on Facebook @ seiu1199wvkyoh.

On the picket line

By Marie Kelly

Wheels on the bus go round and round

Reno, Nevada

bus drivers have voted down the most recent contract offer and went back on strike Nov. 9. City bus service is contracted out to the privately owned Keolis bus company. The Teamsters Local 533 members won 90% “no,” with only six drivers voting to return to work. Wages are still the issue. Salary concessions by Keolis would have kept up with the rate of inflation. This is the drivers’ third strike in four months.

In Howard County, Maryland, school bus drivers won a $4,000 bonus after 80% of AMESE union drivers called out sick for one morning shift and demanded wage and benefit increases. Drivers had no pay increase since 2009. The Board of Education agreed to negotiate with drivers about benefits before the end of 2021. The community supports the drivers. One parent, who drove her child to school on the day of the strike, stated she was all for the drivers getting a raise: “We love our bus drivers.” (tinyurl.com/4yk5evck)

Nurses know safe staffing saves lives

St. Vincent Hospital nurses in Worcester, Massachusetts, continue their heroic battle against employer Tenet, a for-profit hospital conglomerate. The nurses have been on strike for eight months. Tenet seems unfazed by repeated appeals by state legislators and the city’s mayor that it meet the nurses’ demand for their reinstatement to bedside positions, which some have held for as long as 35 years.

Nurses at Mercy Hospital in Buffalo, New York, have been on strike for 20 years, says he knows it would be easier to quit, but he is striking to improve conditions for all workers at the facility. “It’s not the pay,” Young said. “It’s really trying to get a change in there.” (tinyurl.com/jqzhrf5f)

Exxon locks out Steelworkers at refinery

By Gloria Rubac Beaumont, Texas

Nov. 13 – On May Day this year about 650 union workers, members of United Steelworkers Local 2-243, showed up at the Exxon refinery here only to discover that this billion-dollar company had locked them out.

Contract bargaining had come to a standoff, with Exxon demanding concessions that would undermine safety and job security, as well as putting the community at risk.

USW Local 2-243 oil workers are fighting one of the largest and most powerful corporations in the world. In the first quarter of this year alone, the company reported $2.2 billion in revenue. Exxon’s latest attempt to break the union is by demanding that the NLRB hold a decertification vote, the very system which pushed them to the picket line.

Texas Nurses picketed Mercy Hospital in Buffalo, N.Y., during their month-long October strike

are still-out and strong. In all three instances, the bosses operated in bad faith by arbitrarily trying to make health care costs unaffordable for many employees.

Wage and benefit increases. Drivers had no pay increase since 2009. The Board of Education agreed to negotiate with drivers about benefits before the end of 2021. The community supports the drivers. One parent, who drove her child to school on the day of the strike, stated she was all for the drivers getting a raise: “We love our bus drivers.” (tinyurl.com/4yk5evck)

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Boston bus drivers take contract struggle to the street

By Steve Gilliss, Executive Board, USW Local 8751

Boston, Nov. 14 — Banging drums and chanting “No contract, no work,” hundreds of Boston school bus drivers from far-flung districts converged on their employer Transdev HQ early on their morning break. With a week to go until their contract expires, Boston School Bus Drivers, Local 8751’s drivers and their supporters blocked the street and entrance to the billion-dollar, transnational corporation’s headquarters for two hours in a dress rehearsal showing their intention to strike.

Darlene Lombok, secretary treasurer of the Greater Boston Labor Council, opened the “Contract Justice Now!” rally championing “the dangerous work of you essential, frontline workers during the pandemic. You have a right to better wages, benefits, retirement and respect for your service to the children of Boston.”

Lombok referenced the five deaths, including four Local 8751 members, and many COVID-19 illnesses in the school bus operation since the March 2020 lockdown. At that time union organizers delivered barely a handful of demands to Boston children and their families.

This week a spike of delta COVID-19 has begun in Boston schools in district after district again, with rapid spread to the bus yards where a surge of breakthrough cases, sickness and quarantines has hit drivers, maintaining the reverse commute.

John Buonopane, Steelworkers’ staff representative, brought leaders of USW local who were recently victorious after being locked out by National Grid Energy Corporation to the rally, He said, “We demand extended COVID-19 full pay and benefits for our hardworking members who have sacrificed so much. Our physical and financial health and safety is the only thing that can keep this school system running. If not, that system will completely shut down.”

Local 8751’s spiritual advisors Bishop Felipe Teixeira and Imam Abdullah Faaruuq inspired the crowd, recounting many instances of Local 8751’s solidarity with workers in their communities. Imam Faaruuq led the crowd from atop the picket line in a militant, festival-like display that bossing people out their windows could see. Workers World Party’s young activist singer Kristen Tunegun fired up the revelry belting out the coal miners’ anthem, “Which Side Are You On?”

André François, Local 8751’s three-term elected President, spoke to the members’ seething anger at Transdev’s weekly pay shortages, constant discipline harass-ment, refusal to negotiate and brutal punishment, working conditions. François condemned “Transdev bosses who continue to sit in their cozy offices counting their big paychecks, while drivers and dispatchers are left to burn our own gas to survive all day outside in Boston’s freezing and rainy weather.”

“The district that has near 1,000-strong work-force are predominantly immigrants from Haiti and Cape Verde. They took up President François’ call with repeated demands: “transdev bosses, do you know? Union busting’s got to go!”

François congratulated mayor-elect Michelle Wu, saying, “We are optimistic that when Mayor Wu takes office next week, her campaign promise to be the workers’ rights mayor for all can force Transdev to do the right thing and avert another school bus drivers’ strike.”

It’s a shortage of wages, benefits, respect

Ten-year veteran driver Dulande Florestal told Workers World: “We are suffering. We can’t afford to pay rent, buy food for our families and commute to work with prices going so high. They say there’s a shortage of school bus drivers. Look at Brockton and all the other dis-tricts raising wages to $30 and more. If Transdev wants to keep them driving, they have to pay for it.”

In the greater Boston region, Governor Charlie Baker has called in the National Guard to drive school children in cities and towns whose drivers earn significantly less than those in Boston. Boston officials rejected such a military solution, because Local 8751’s contract agreements would allow the union to fight non-union replacements. (Boston Herald, Oct. 7) Felipé Martínez, an Uber/Lyft driver organizing in Boston as a Boston Independent Drivers Guild, pledged his building union’s solidarity. Martinez con-demned “Uber’s campaign to turn all pro-fessional drivers into contractors without worker rights. We won’t cross the lines!”

Myles Galvay, Business Manager of the fighting Verizon Workers International Electrical Workers (IBEW) 2222, recalled decades of strike solidarity with Local 8751. Calvey pledged, “Whatever backup your great local needs, IBEW 2222 will be there!”

Union veep blasts city’s disrepect

Steve Kirschbaum, Local 8751 vice president, helped found the union during syrco street battles against racist, para-military forces, who violently attacked buses carrying Black and Brown children to segregated white neighborhoods.

Kirschbaum blasted the city government for its disrespect and negligence in siding with Transdev. “When Transdev, then called Veolia, first came to town in 2013, they told us that workers must control the means of pro-duction notwithstanding), but they have been unable to change the fundamental charact-class character of the ballot box. White men with property remain its prime beneficiaries.

Most importantly socialism requires the organized working class to destroy the existing state apparatus and substitute its revolutionary organization.

By Ryan Lockwood

According to the magazine Labor Notes, the biggest problem of the USW Local 8751 in 2020 was the Covid-19 pandemic, which forced the union to focus on maintaining social distance and protecting the lives of its members. The union also faced challenges in organizing new members, as many of them were already unionized or had never considered joining a union before. In addition, the union had to deal with the challenges of organizing in a city with a long history of labor struggles, where management was often resistant to union efforts.

Despite these challenges, the union was able to achieve some important victories in 2020, including the re-election of President André François and the election of a new vice president, John Buonopane. The union also continued to fight for better wages and benefits for its members, as well as for the protection of their rights in the workplace.

Lesson of the Buffalo, N.Y., mayoral election

By Ryan Lockwood

November 14—Under normal circumstances, Buffalo’s mayoral election would have been little more than the 16-year incumbent Democrat Byron Brown’s coronation ceremony. But India Walton, who declared herself a socialist, interrupted the well-rehearsed proceedings with a stunning June primary upset against Brown. Both candi-dates are African American.

Walton ran on a platform of police reform and tenants’ rights. She had become a face of the Black Lives Matter movement during the George Floyd uprisings in 2020. Instead of conceding after the primary, Brown ran on a platform of police busting’s got to go!”

Of course, Walton was not merely running a campaign to become mayor. She ran a campaign to build a better world is to join the national wave of strikes, job actions and resistance orga-nizing against big capital.
A Sandinista’s view on autonomy

We became visible

By Johnny Hodgson

The following is part two of a presentation given by Johnny Hodgson, Sandinista National Liberation Front’s Political Secretary for the Autonomous Region of the South Caribbean (RACS), on Oct. 6 in Managua, Nicaragua, to a U.S. delegation comprised of Coleen Littlejohn, Sara Flour (# wears), Monica Mouford, Joan Elmyrne and Stan Smith. The transcript is lightly edited. Read part one at workers.org/2021/11/60020/

The Sandinista revolution established the mission to create a new nation, a new Nicaragua, national, multiracial, multicultural and multilingual country, where the Indigenous and Afro-descendant would have the possibility of participating on equal basis in the construction of this new Nicaraguan nation.

We reached the conclusion that for the well-being of the Caribbean coast, for the people, what we call the buen vivir in Spanish or good living, we needed autonomy. The people from the Caribbean coast needed to have an autonomy that was equal to the one in the construction of this new Nicaraguan nation.

We reached the conclusion that for the well-being of the Caribbean coast, for the people, what we call the buen vivir in Spanish or good living, we needed autonomy.

The three bases to build this autonomy on. One will be the constitutional principle. We have to make sure that those principles are clear.

One of the principles in the Constitution established in Nicaragua is a multiethnic, multicultural country, where the Indigenous and Afro-descendant people, and these Indigenous and Afro-descendant people have rights. They have their own language. They had their own culture. They have a right to own property, of cetera. So we began to be visible. Indigenous and Afro-descendant people came into the Constitution, and we began to discuss the topic of national unity.

Everybody said national unity is important. But when we began to talk about national unity, some people were saying yes, but if we are to build national unity, why is it that you all Black and Indian uncivilized people.

Something that hurt me so much was hearing, “It is a mistake to put practically 50% of the population of the Caribbean coast want to speak your own language? Why do you want to have your own team, you know? And so we reached the conclusion that the right to build national unity based on the recognition of diversity.

Unity in diversity means that I as a Black man can participate on an equal basis with the White man or the Miskito man or woman, but that I don’t have to stop being who I am to be able to participate on an equal basis; the man, the woman, and participate and preserve my identity and not only preserve my identity, but create the condition where I could become proud, to become proud of being a Creole, of being proud of being a Mestizo. So those are the things that we were defining.

Then we could define our autonomy as the recognition and effective exercise of the historical rights of the Indigenous and the Afro-descendant people in the context of national unity and the constitutional principles. The recognition — but not only recognition. The recognition and effective exercise of the historical rights of the Indigenous people and ethnic communities of the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua in the context of national unity and constitutional principles.

We got our autonomy law approved in 1987 to make the changes. Autonomy is the revolution on the Caribbean coast, that is the instrument to make the revolution, to do all the changes that we need to make on the Caribbean coast.

The Sandinista revolution established the mission to create a new nation, a new Nicaragua, national, multiracial, multicultural and multilingual country, where the Indigenous and Afro-descendant people, and these Indigenous and Afro-descendant people have rights. They have their own language. They had their own culture. They have a right to own property, of cetera. So we began to be visible.
A Sandinista’s view on autonomy

‘We became visible’

Continued from page 8

By Devin Cole

First part of the author’s appreciation of the role of the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua.

In the 1970s, Nicaragua was a country divided. A civil war was raging between the Sandinistas and the government of Anastasio Somoza. The Sandinistas, led by Tomás Baudelio, were fighting for a socialist revolution in Nicaragua.

On November 17, 1978, a group of Sandinistas attacked the Sandino National Guard headquarters in Managua, marking the beginning of the Sandinista Revolution. The Sandinistas were able to seize control of the government and establish a socialist state.

The Sandinistas were able to mobilize the people of Nicaragua to support their struggle. They encouraged the people to organize and take part in the fight against the government. This led to a mass mobilization of the working class and the peasantry.

The Sandinistas were able to build a large and diverse base of support. They were able to mobilize workers, farmers, and students to support their revolutionary efforts.

The Sandinistas were able to win the support of the people of Nicaragua. They were able to build a strong base of support that was able to sustain the revolution.

The Sandinistas were able to build a strong base of support that was able to sustain the revolution. They were able to build a strong base of support that was able to sustain the revolution. They were able to build a strong base of support that was able to sustain the revolution.
Workers World editorial

When on Jan. 8, 1959, a triumphant Fidel Castro entered Havana, he called on Cuban revolutionaryaries to “settle down to the peaceful aims of the Revolution.” He spoke with a white dove on his shoulder, a symbol associated with Fidel throughout his long life.

But the U.S. empire, with its south- ernmost point a mere 90 miles from the Caribbean, has never allowed Cuba to know peace. The U.S.-sponsored invasion of Cuba in 1961 at Playa Girón (the Bay of Pigs) suffered a resounding defeat, but President John F. Kennedy imposed an economic blockade in 1962.

This act of economic warfare remains in place to this day and has actually been tightened by Congress on more than one occasion. Cubans continue to suffer from the effects of the blockade through shortages of food, medicine, medical supplies, construction materials and much more. While Cuban medical science is very advanced, including the development of Cuba’s own COVID vaccines, the blockade has been hampered by a shortage of syringes.

U.S. economic warfare has been combined with numerous terrorist acts by Miami-based counterrevolutionaries and a long history of assassination attempts on Fidel.

It is in this context that the so-called “protests” taking place Nov. 15 in Cuba must be seen. They are a financed attack from U.S. imperialism, which has spent the past six decades creating the very shortages the “protesters” claim to be “protesting.” Paid agents have manipu- lated social media to foment and mobilize resentment arising from the shortages.

As Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel correctly pointed out, “U.S. diplomatic officials meet frequently with leaders of the counterrevolution, job and community servicers—paid agents who provide guidance, encouragement, and logistical and financial support.” (Reuters, Oct. 25)

These agents have the full backing of the U.S. capitalist media and its stooges in bogus “advocacy” groups such as Human Rights Watch.

Nevertheless, the Cuban government and mass organizations, such as the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, the Federation of Cuban Women and the Confederation of Cuban Workers, have reached out to people who have grievances in an effort to involve people in problem solving.

U.S. policy: no peace for Cuba

Either President Biden or Congress could end the blockade with the stroke of a pen and allow Cuba to pursue its “peaceful aims”—food, housing, jobs, education and medical care under a socialist economy—without interference. But the blockade has always had bipartisan sup- port, despite decades of repeated calls by the U.N. General Assembly to end this violation of human rights. This is because Cuba’s model is in sharp contrast to the neoliberal model, which imperial- ism has imposed on much of Latin America: ruthless exploitation, debt servitude and brutal political repression.

The Cuban government has the right to use any means necessary, including force or legal charges, to defend its sovereignty from this latest imperialist attack.

Since Workers World Party’s founding in 1959, the same year as the triumph of Cuba’s Revolution, we have defended this shining socialist example from imperialist subterfuge, economic warfare and outright lies.

We again proclaim: U.S. hands off Cuba! Long live the Cuban Revolution!

Long live the Cuban Revolution!

By The LGBT+ Caucus of Workers World Party

The LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Biexual, Trans, Queer+) Caucus of Workers World Party condemns the ongoing murders of transgender, Two-Spirit and gender-variant people.

We reaffirm our solidarity with transgender, Two-Spirit and gender-variant people, as well as our dedication to bringing about the total annihilation of capitalism, imperialism and the vicious oppression these systems generate, including transphobia and transmisogyny.

The fewer the systems seek is evident: The most number of transgender people in the U.S. in a year have already been recorded as of Nov. 4. To date in 2021, 43 transgender people have been murdered, with the major- ity of those killed being Black or Latinx trans women. These deaths continue a horrifying pattern that stretches back many years, and which must be stopped.

Only through the eradication of capitalism, which breeds racism as well as transmisogyny and transphobia, can we end these devastat- ing losses. Transgender liberation built on socialism—the theory laid out by our late leader—can be realized and maintained. There can be free and accessible housing, health care, educa- tion and community services centered around trans people, based on the recognition of the infinite spectrum of sex and gen- der within the human species.

As we build, we must continue organizing our communities to be safe places for trans people to live and Bours. Fostering a safe place for trans people to thrive allows trans people to fully develop the revolu- tionary action needed to take down this rotten system.

No Trans Liberation without Socialism and No Socialism without Trans Liberation!

Remembering...

Tiffany Thomas, 38
Keri Washington, 49
Thomas Hardin, 35
Whispering Wind Bear Spirit, 41
Sophie Vásquez, 36
Danika Danny Henson, 31
Serenity Hollis, 24
Poe Black, 21
Ollie Taylor, 17
Tierramere Lewis, 36
E.J. Boykin, 23
Tasha Aubon, 20
Shai Vanderpump, 23
Miss CoCo, 44
Pooh Johnson, 25
Zoella Rose Martinez, 20
Disaya Monae, 27
Briania Hamilton Ulmer, 25
Keri Lapet Kartier, 21
Mel Groves, 25
Royal Poetic Starr, 26
Jessi Hart, 42
Jo Acker, 26
Rikkey Outumuro, 39
Marquisa Lawlor, 28

No Trans Liberation without Socialism— No Socialism without Trans Liberation!

China establishes its first clinic for transgender youth

By Devin Cole

The Children’s Hospital of Fudan University, located in Shanghai, has announced the establishment of a health clinic to safely manage and maintain the gender identity of transgender youth and adolescents.

The clinic is a response to issues expressed by many transgender youth in China, including anxiety and depression. The clinic is multidisciplinary, combining the fields of psychology, endocrinology, urology and metabolism and offering a wide range of medical services to transgender youth. It will also have a social work department to assist youth with a safe and healthy transition.

China’s health care system, which is centralized, social- ized and universal, will guarantee that all treatment—whether therapy, hormone replacement treatment (HRT) referrals or surgery fees—will be either free or low-cost and affordable. This is similar to Cuba’s revolutionary health care system, in which all services for transgender people are free and guar- anteed, paid for by the government.

Meanwhile, in the U.S. …

While the U.S. continues its red-baiting smears attacks against China’s economic growth and prosperity, its transgen- der community continues to suffer. Thousands are unable to either afford to start HRT or to continue. Privatized health care boasted as “superi- or” guarantees that mental health care or physical health care of any kind is a constant uphill battle for transgender people. Over 45 trans people have been out- right murdered in the U.S. in 2021 alone, with an unaccounted death toll from med- ical neglect or hostility. (Human Rights Campaign, Nov. 9) State lawmakers con- tinue to try to pass— or have actually passed— legislation that ban trans youth from receiving treatment.

Now more than ever, the working-class LGBT+ movement in the U.S. can look to the example China sets and push for sim- ilar, humane treatment here in the U.S.

This brings the hope that trans libera- tion on every front can be fully recognized through an ongoing socialist revolution.

Devon Cole is president of Socialist Socialist Trans Initiatives), a transgender advo- cacy organization in northwest Florida, and a member of the Workers World Party—Central Gulf Coast (Alabama, Florida and Mississippi) branch.
Malian protests target imperialist intervention through MINUSMA.

By G. Dunkel

Although French President Emmanuel Macron has announced that his government is winding down its intervention in Mali, French interventions are still stirring out an active policy of raids and assassinations. Mali’s people are resisting. The United States is supplying France with intelligence and logistical support and has announced it is intensifying its sanctions against Mali. AFRICOM, the U.S. military command for Africa, has had training missions in Mali for years. The U.N. has a stabilization force of 14,000 in Mali, called MINUSMA. This is a major military asset given that Mali only has 22 million people.

The Economic Community of West African States has also announced it is intensifying its economic sanctions, because Mali will not call for elections during the next six months, defying what ECOWAS has demanded. This is a very serious sanction since ECOWAS countries border much of Mali.

There are reactionary armed bands operating in western Sahel — Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger — all former French colonies — especially in the area where all three countries touch. Each armed band claims allegiance to a different strand of Islamic thought. They attack civilians, the armies of each country and French and U.S. special forces, and sometimes each other.

There are also groups of smugglers — of drugs and cigarettes — and remnants of movements seeking the independence of northern and eastern Mali.

There were two significant demonstrations in Mali during the last weeks of October. The first one, Oct. 25 in Gao, was especially significant because Gao, the last port in Mali on the Niger River, is in the area of Mali where for months there have been multiple armed attacks. Still the Maj-Rally of Patriotic Forces was able to gather a peaceful march from the Monument of Martyrs to the office of the regional executive. Alahasne Guiête, the chairperson of the Maj, at the rally expressed his movement’s support for the policies of the National Transition Council, which has been subjected to “unprecedented pressure from the international community” against holding a national convention to establish and reconstitute a sovereign Mali.

Guiête raised some local problems ranging from the supply of water and electricity to the state of roads linking Gao, which is in the eastern part of Mali, to other towns.

Brigade General Moussa Traoré, the regional executive, welcomed the march, saluted its patriotism and said he would pass along their concerns. Another demonstration took place in Bamako five days later. Tens of thousands of people came out on the streets Oct. 30 at the call of the movement Verité (the dignified men) Standing on the Ramparts and Mg.

Madjour Ousmane Ag Mohamedoune, vice president of the Collective for the Reestablishment of Mali and member of the ruling National Transitional Council (CNT), spoke: “This is an essential step in the restoration and affirmation of the national sovereignty of our country, Mali. ... We say to the interferences of the international community, in particular the interference of France through its policy of dependence, its policy of colonization and contempt.” He also told ECOWAS to stop acting as an echo chamber for French politicians.

At the end of Mohamedoune’s speech, the crowd chanted in support of the military officers who are running the transitional government: “Down with France! Down with l’Europe! Down with RFI (Radio France International)! France, out! French army, out! Long live Russia!” (maliactu.net, Nov. 1)

Mali’s government is trying to hire Russian military technicians. The French foreign and defense ministers just held a meeting Nov. 13 with their counterparts in Moscow, according to the Russians that sending Russian troops to Mali was unacceptable to France.

COP26 Youth demand change, politicians protect fossil fuel industry

By Betsy Piette

Two weeks of high-profile negotiations, against a background of climate catastrophes, ended Nov. 13 with little to show for the 26th “Conference of the Parties.” Proposals included that “countries agree to accelerate the phasing out of coal and subsidies for fossil fuels — a potential first acknowledgment of fossil fuels’ central role in the climate crisis in a U.N. agreement.” However, the final agreements failed to establish concrete ways to make this happen.

Climate activists held a “funeral for COP26” in Glasgow, Scotland, on Nov. 13. These youth, whose presence was felt outside and within COP26, expressed outrage that over 700 fossil fuel corporations, rather than delegate count from any single country, were allowed to attend COP26. They delivered a strong message via social media: They delivered a strong message via social media: “Youth demand change, politicians protect fossil fuel industry.”

Youth demonstrate at COP26 in Glasgow, November 2021.

The unfolding climate catastrophe should propel not just the youth but everyone to act. Yet many U.S. politicians have no intention of curbing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). As COP26 was winding down, these politicians were opening new markets for fossils fuels and furthering extractions in the melting Arctic.

As existing coal mines and gas wells continue to produce GHGs, U.S. state politicians are actively legislating to limit the Environmental Protection Agency’s power to regulate carbon emissions under the Clean Air Act.

Science denied is climate protection delayed

All these politicians’ efforts to protect the energy industry involve the denial of scientific evidence by industry CEOs, who put their profits ahead of protecting the environment and public health and safety. Scientists working for the industry warned of the environmental dangers posed by fossil fuels; yet top CEOs not only refused to act, they repeatedly lied to the public, putting out disinformation.

A 1979 Exxon study revealed that burning fossil fuels “will cause severe adverse environmental effects in the coming decades. ... The problem is great and urgent.” (theguardian.com, June 30) Yet rather than act on the evidence, major oil companies buried the findings and created a narrative to promote the alleged benefits of their products.

For many decades, the fossil fuel industry bosses knew that the extraction and burning of fossil fuels was killing life on this planet. They knew that burning coal results in GHGs, causing 800,000 premature deaths each year. The major oil companies conspired to bury the findings. They promoted a counter-narrative and denied the growing scientific consensus around climate science.

The energy industry is part of a global capitalist empire, which has failed to provide livable wage jobs, affordable education, housing and other means of survival. Young activists today harbor no illusions about their future under this system. Organized globally, and facing the demise of their very future, today’s young activists will no longer sit idly back waiting for change.
Por Tom Suill
Buffalo, N.Y.

Boletín — 9 de noviembre: Tres tiendas adicionales de Buffalo han presentado ante la Junta Nacional de Relaciones Laborales para una elección sindical — duplicando el número en el zona a un total de seis. Las tres tiendas iniciales recibirán las papeletas de voto por correo el 10 de noviembre, a la espera de una decisión de la NLRB sobre cualquier intento de última hora por parte de Starbucks de retrasar más la votación.

Desde que los trabajadores de Starbucks anunciaron públicamente una campaña sindical aquí en octubre, los trabajadores se enfrentaron a una infracil expresión sindical por parte de la empresa, que pretende aplastar al sindicato. Durante los últimos meses, los trabajadores han soportado amenazas, acoso, intimidación, vigilancia e incluso el cierre de las tiendas que contaban con el apoyo del sindicato durante largos períodos de tiempo. La empresa también ha intentado aislar a los trabajadores todo lo posible, cambiando los horarios de las tiendas fuera de la disponibilidad de los trabajadores, obligándoles a la empresa de circular que podrían denunciar con el apoyo del sindicato durante largos períodos de tiempo.

La empresa ha querido que se negaran de nuevo a hacer recogidas y entregas en las tres tiendas del distrito de Buffalo Starbucks han presentado una petición por un sindicato, con un amplio apoyo de los trabajadores en otras tiendas. El 10 de noviembre, la Junta Nacional de Relaciones Laborales dictaminó que la votación por correo daría lugar en esas tres tiendas del 10 de noviembre al 8 de diciembre. En respuesta, Starbucks adaptó su estrategia antisindical, desde reuniones con público cautivo que instruía a los trabajadores a ser bajadores para que votaran no, hasta sacar a los trabajadores de la planta durante su turno para ahuyentarlos del sindicato mediante conversaciones individuales.

Seis de las veinte tiendas del distrito de Starbucks de Buffalo han solicitado una elección sindical, con un amplio apoyo de los trabajadores en otras tiendas.

Los trabajadores han pedido a la empresa que firme desde el principio de la campaña sindical. Starbucks se ha negado, y Schultz se negó de seguir con el diálogo. La empresa Starbucks lejos de alentar al aficionado a que se negaran de nuevo a hacer recogidas y entregas en las tres tiendas, ha pedido a la empresa que se negaran de nuevo en el último momento para que no se negaran de nuevo a hacer recogidas y entregas.

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Gracias a las grandes cantidades de alimentos donados, “no vamos a pasar hambre”, explicó un huelguista. Han recibido un “múcho cariño”. Los conductores de una empresa de camiones, que conocen personalmente a los trabajadores de Kellogg’s, se niegan a hacer recogidas y entregas diarias, aunque no tienen sindicato. Aunque la BCTGM no ha convocado un huelguista oficial a Kellogg’s, muchos consumidores han dejado de comprar “ceréal rompehuesos”.

Los trabajadores dan un golpe al capital

Los trabajadores y las trabajadoras de Kellogg’s no son los únicos en huelga. Las 14 plantas del fabricante de maquinaria pesada John Deere siguen en huelga después de que los trabajadores votaran en contra de una segunda propuesta de contrato el 2 de noviembre.

Consideran que todavía no se han abordado una serie de cuestiones, entre ellas las pérdidas salariales que han sufrido debido a problemas de la cadena de suministro que escaparon a su control. Antes de la frecuente escasez de piezas, se pagaba una bonificación “KIP” si los trabajadores alcanzaban una determinada cuota, pero ahora es imposible alcanzarla y la empresa se niega a ajustar la fórmula.

Ante el atraso que Kellogg’s, John Deere no quiere poner fin a la remuneración de los trabajadores, incluso desde 1997. Los trabajadores “post 97” se organizan en las redes sociales y están en el campo de trabajo para no dejar sin los que ganaban los trabajadores más antiguo -en algunos casos sus padres- hace varios contrastes. Mientras tanto, 1,500 enfermeras de Huntington (Virginia Occidental) y 3,000 trabajadores de la Universidad de Columbia (Nueva York), que llevan cuar- cien años luchando por su primer contrato, se han negado al auge de la huelga. La huelga de octubre ha pasado y la de noviembre ha comenzado, para consterna- ción de la clase capitalista.

Si los huelguistas de Kellogg’s, representan por un pequeño sindicato con 63,000 miembros en todo el país, cons- siguen desbancar de los salarios de dos niveles, será una gran victoria con rami- ficaciones para todo el movimiento obrero. ¿Qué lado está usted? Estamos del lado de los trabajadores.