By Workers World New York City bureau

Oct. 25 — The Amazon Labor Union filed with the National Labor Relations Board today to win the right to represent workers at Amazon’s Staten Island warehouses. If the close to 2,000 union cards are accepted by the National Labor Relations Board, the vote will be scheduled for mid-November.

The ALU has successfully built a workers’ committee and signed up over 2,000 workers. Amazon whistleblower Chris Smalls said at an earlier news conference, as he announced the planned filing with the Region 29 Brooklyn NLRB office, “On Sunday, October 17, 2021, members of the committee democratically ratified our constitution and elected me as president of the ALU.”

Smalls continued, “Since the campaign has launched, Amazon didn’t waste any time to begin union busting. We have endured the same antics seen in Bessemer, Alabama, from signs in the bathrooms to the same firm that was hired: T.B.G. The Burke Group was hired by Amazon to walk around the buildings creating doubt amongst the workers.”

Regardless of Amazon’s anti-union attempts, ALU has earned the trust of the workers, hosting a number of barbecues, as well as handing out food and cold water along with masks and T-shirts daily. Amazon refuses to acknowledge ALU as a current worker-led collective, instead sending out false messaging telling workers they will lose their voices and wages.

Members of the committee will be addressing their experiences and why they have decided to join ALU.

Smalls said, “We are proud to be joined by our comrades and several community organizations from the NYC metropolitan area to help support the efforts of the ALU. Workers are demanding Amazon stop their union-busting practices and allow workers to use their rights to organize toward collective bargaining without interference.”

The ALU president explained, “ALU has put together a list of demands which we have full intentions to fight for as a bonafide union. We intend to fight for higher wages, job security, safer working conditions, more paid time off, better medical leave options and longer breaks. We also want to fight to bring back monthly VCP [variable compensation pay] bonuses for attendance and productivity and for becoming shareholders again upon employment with the company on Day 1. Both ended in 2018.”

Part of ongoing struggle for Amazon worker justice

Smalls emphasized, “This is truly a remarkable historical moment for all Amazon workers all over the country. ALU has already broken barriers and will continue to do so, but we’re not getting complacent. We now need the support of the communities more than ever as our fight is just getting started.”

This day was over a year in the making. The devastating impact of COVID on workers and the lack of basic safety on the job at Amazon facilities and Amazon-owned Whole Foods stores led to walkouts and job actions at multiple locations in the spring of 2020. Chris Smalls was fired March 30, 2020, after leading a walkout at the Amazon JFK8 warehouse. The unsafe COVID conditions, combined with the general brutal working conditions that leave workers exhausted and lead to frequent injuries, made it imperative to unionize the company. In April of this year, Smalls and other current and fired workers at JFK8 formed the Amazon Labor Union.

That same month the National Labor Relations Board announced the results of a union representation election at Amazon’s Bessemer, Ala., facility. The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union had lost the election by a wide margin. The union appealed to the NLRB, filing multiple Unfair Labor Practice

Continued on page 7
Mark Indigenous Peoples Day
Support Workers World

Boston Mayor Kim Janey proclaimed Oct. 6 that the second Monday of October every year would be Indigenous Peoples Day. The document says the commemoration will be “in lieu of Columbus Day ... and renounces the racist and colonial his-
tory of Boston and its impact on Indigenous peoples.”

This was a victory for Native people, considering that the European invasion, theft of their land and culture, denial of all rights, torture and genocide, began in what is now the state of Massachusetts and continued there for years. Then on Oct. 8, President Joe Biden proclaimed a federal Indigenous Peoples Day and acknowledged the “wrong and atrocities that many European explorers inflicted on Tribal nations and Indigenous communities.”

These pronouncements came about due to the unified mil-
tant struggles by Indigenous peoples and their allies, which have intensified in the last five years.

The movement for recognition of Oct. 12 as Indigenous Peoples Day began in Berkeley, Calif., following a huge march in San Francisco, on Oct. 10, 1992, protesting the celebration of conquistador and genocidal murderer Christopher Columbus’ arrival 500 years earlier. Since then, at least 130 cities and towns and 11 states have dumped the holiday honoring the genocidal conqueror and now revere Indigenous people, their heritage and culture on that day.

A rising tide

Thousands of people from around the world traveled to join in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and other Native nations to stop the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, starting in 2016.

Protests, including civil disobedience, led by Indigenous organizers have been joined by environmentalist and other allies against the reouting and expansion of Enbridge Line 3, which brings tar sands oil from Alberta, Canada, to Superior, Wis. In the U.S., this dirty fuel travels across the ancient wild rice beds in Anishinabe lands in Minnesota, threatening many waterways.

Non-Native supporters have joined the movement to rename sports teams bearing racist, anti-Indigenous names.

Indigenous activists participated in the courageous Black Lives Matter protests in Minneapolis and elsewhere decreeing

“Treaties, not Tar Sands” at Minnesota State Capitol, Aug. 25.

the police murder of George Floyd. BLM demonstrators have joined Native peoples’ struggles, the Chicago BLM had a del-
egation at Standing Rock. Unity and allyship have grown between these movements and strengthened their struggles against their common enemy: white supremacy.

Workers World has continually supported the righteous struggles of Native peoples on the streets and in our news-
paper. WW joins Indigenous communities to demand: Drop Columbus Day as a federal holiday! Commemorate Indigenous Peoples Day in every city, town and state! Down with white supremacy!

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 doc-
ument. The newspaper is printed and mailed out monthly.

For annual donations of $60, $120 or $300, members receive a year’s subscription, letters to editors, newsletters 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.

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Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a mul-
tinational, multinational and multigendered organiza-
tion 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, as they plan itself in the ever-nearing quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repres-
sion, attacks on im/migrants, misogyny, LGTBQ2+ op-
pression and mistreatment of people with disabili-
ties. 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. Workers are poorer than ever and are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth

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

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Vol. 63, No. 43 • October 28, 2021
Closing date: October 27, 2021

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Subscriptions: One year: $36; institutions: $50.

Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St. 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from NA Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 998, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-0998. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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workers.org
ACT UP Boston demands ‘Housing & health care, not jails!’

By Steve Gillis
Boston

On Oct. 19, Massachusetts Republican Governor Charlie Baker, Democrat Attorney General Maura Healy and Mayor Kim Janey declared a “public health emergency” in Boston. Why? In order to call out forces of the state to eradicate a tent city with hundreds of structures housing people experiencing homelessness. A day later, the nearest major city, Providence, R.I., announced similar draconian measures, outlawing sleeping in tents. For months during the pandemic lockdown, a multination victory has been won here: a city that has developed in Boston’s largest food warehouse district, also known as “Mass & Cass,” located in the Newmarket neighborhood, a food warehouse district, also known as “Mass & Cass,” located in the Newmarket neighborhood. The tent city grew up in the shadow of the Boston Food Bank, an Amazon Fresh warehouse, meat packing plants, Boston Medical Center, Citizens Bank and theskyscraping Suffolk County House of Correction. Encampment residents are mostly people who use drugs (PWUD), forced to the fringes by a stigmatizing society, as well as unhoused people forcibly evicted by landlords and people with debilitating health conditions. The residents of Mass & Cass, many who have earned meager livings on the streets of greater Boston for years, have been pushed into the Newmarket neighborhood by rampant gentrification and their search for medical services as pandemic-era capitalist crises have effectively eliminated housing, health care, even unemployment and food benefits for these workers. Azra EL, a harm reduction specialist and ACT UP activist who works in the neighborhood, told Workers World: “My people down here have constructed their own housing and sort out their own meals, watch out for each other, clean their own spaces. The Boston Food Bank will beef up security, but you won’t see them setting up a tent to feed people. Local property holders and businesses will fight tooth and nail against supervised consumption sites and transitional housing for PWUD, but still complain about tents and public consumption by PWUD. Developers are building million-dollar condos across the city, but not for my people down here. They’re looking to run them out of town.” Corporate media has followed the line put out by the Newmarket Business Association, which has an elephant in its boardroom. The business people charge all who reside in Mass & Cass with being criminals who need to be saved from themselves. Headlines push “the sheriff’s plan” for mass arrests, “mobile courthouses,” “clean sweeps,” private armed security, surveillance systems and locking up people who have problematic relationships with drugs into “treatment” at the county jail. In recent weeks, the state erected miles of fencing around the area as its public health response, while ordering police to harass, arrest or involuntarily commit to “treatment” anyone who refuses the city’s woefully inadequate shelter system as an alternative to eviction from the street community. ACT UP Boston mobilizes In emergency response to these attacks, the reinvigorated Boston chapter of ACT UP (ADIDS Coalition To Unleash Power) has launched a mass media campaign of flyers, memes and a petition with the following demands: • Hands off the tent city in Newmarket! Immediately provide sanitation and hygiene resources. No more sweeps! • Homes, not shelters, not detentions! No exceptions. • No new police force, no new security, no mass surveillance. • Free science-backed treatment on demand for problematic relationships to any substances and/or behaviors, now! • Culturally responsive and expanded access to HIV medication and PrEP, and expanded HIV prevention eduction, now! • Supervised consumption spaces in Massachusetts, now! ACT UP Boston with the SIF MA NOW! Coalition at the Boston Science March, April 22, 2017. A SIF is a medically supervised injecting facility, a harm-reduction strategy for drug users. ACT UP — “a multinational, multi- generational, multigender organization united in anger” — was formed in the 1980s to address systemic inaction in the face of the growing HIV/AIDS crisis. This legacy is ongoing, and ACT UP in Boston and elsewhere continues on the front line of the struggle to support not only people with HIV or at risk of becoming HIV positive but anyone marginalized by the ruling class and its greed. The opening of the Oct. 19 statement by ACT UP, Boston against supervised consumption sites and expanded HIV prevention education was scathingly critiques the attack on the tent cities: “We unequivocally denounce the executive order released by the Janey administration, which essentially is in effect a declaration of war to the same disproven clean-sweep methods carried out under the previous administration. “This serves only to embolden the racist, sexist, ableist and poor-hating Boston police department and Suffolk County sheriff to further their programs of harassment, rights violations, incarceration and forced treatment.” “The notion that the woefully inadequate and racist and sexist and ableist and poor-hating alternative to the encampments ignores the fact that many unhoused neighbors have chosen to risk scorching heat, freezing cold and unhealthy conditions simply to avoid that system. “The increased police activity outlined in the order is in effect a declaration of war against people experiencing homelessness and people who use drugs. State violence and neglect is the root of this public health emergency; its increase will run antithetically to its resolution, . . . .” Updates and ACT UP’s action plans are available at linktr.ee/actionboston.

Steve Gillis is an elected officer of USW Local 8751, the Boston School Bus Drivers’ union, whose membership voted unanimously at its Oct. 20 meeting to endorse ACT UP’s petition and demands.

Defend Apache peoples’ Oak Flats

Apache Stronghold activists rallied in San Francisco Oct. 21, the day before the federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals heard arguments by grassroots Apache activists, legal representatives and allies against the total destruction of the Apache peoples’ most sacred site, about 60 miles east of Phoenix, Ariz. A 12-day spiritual struggle of Apache Stronghold activists and environmentalists journeyed from Arizona to San Francisco for the hearing, in the latest chapter of the 17-year battle to save Oak Flat, the historic Apache Stronghold, Chí’chil Biłdagoteel. Oak Flat is threatened with the destruction by Resolution Copper — owned by notorious mining barons Rio Tinto and BHP — and exploitation for copper mining and being turned into a 1,000-foot-deep, two-mile-long crater. (azcentral.com, Oct. 23)

Arguements in the Oct. 22 hearing were made in defense of Apache First Amendment Rights of religious exercise, Resolution Copper’s plans would, according to the Baboquivari Paiutes, “take away the mountains from my grandchild’s grandchild.” And their plans to dump mining tailings behind the dam at Skunk Camp, Ariz., threaten the Gila River with billions of gallons of toxic sludge. The U.S. Forest Service has withdrawn its Jan. 15 environmental impact statement, which was filed under the previous administration. The 22-acre site is part of the Tonto National Forest. — Report by Stephanie Hedgecock, photo by Perry Matlock

Support activist Joe Lombardo

By The Coalition for Civil Freedoms

The Coalition for Civil Freedoms, its Board, staff, member organizations, and concerned individuals stand in solidarity with activist and organizer Joe Lombardo after an incident of FBI harassment. Joe has been an organizer in the anti-war movement for decades and is presently a co-leader of the country’s largest and most active anti-war coalition, the United National Antwar Coalition (UNAC), a CFC member organization. Recently, out of the blue, FBI agents contacted Joe’s former spouse in Albany, N.Y., for questioning. They first visited her house, saying they wanted to talk to her about Joe’s visits to Venezuela and Russia. She wasn’t home. They then called and pressed her to meet with them in person to discuss Joe’s past activities and travels, specifically his visits to Venezuela and Russia, his past contacts with them, and his known affiliation with a U.S. Peace Delegation. Joe’s former spouse, sensibly, never spoke to the agents.

Joe has been doing a lot of work against U.S. sanctions in a coalition he helped found, called the Sanctions Kill Coalition. He and others from the group met with the Venezuelan delegation that was in New York for the U.N. General Assembly a couple of weeks ago. (Venezuela has initiated meetings with others of the 39 countries that have had U.S. unilateral sanctions placed against them. These sanctions are illegal under the U.N. Charter.) These meetings have been very successful and have included Russia and China. Joe’s group just came out with a major report on the effect of sanctions [sanctionskill.org] that has also gotten some play. Maybe this is why they are interested in him now.

We must lend as much support as possible to those individuals whose work on behalf of oppressed people worldwide leads them to become targets of the FBI. We know all too well the consequences of speaking with the FBI and what such contact can lead to. We stand in solidarity with Joe Lombardo and other anti-war activists ready to take any action necessary to support them. The Afia Foundation, Amith Gupta, Ashley Young, The Committee to Stop FBI Repression, DRUM (Desis Rising Up Movement), CCNSA, Congress of Human Rights, ICNA Council for Social Justice (ICNA CSJ), International Action Center, Center Al-Arzan, Mauri Saadallah, Mel Underburk, Social Forum, Samudra Sadeque, Stephen F. Downs, Theodore Miccari, United National Antwar Coalition (UNAC), Zahran Bin Absin, scathingly critiques the attack on the tent city: “We unequivocally denounce the executive order released by the Janey administration, which essentially is in effect a declaration of war to the same disproven clean-sweep methods carried out under the previous administration. “The increased police activity outlined in the order is in effect a declaration of war against people experiencing homelessness and people who use drugs. State violence and neglect is the root of this public health emergency; its increase will run antithetically to its resolution, . . . .” Updates and ACT UP’s action plans are available at linktr.ee/actionboston.

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END

ACT UP Boston with the SIF MA NOW! Coalition at the Boston Science March, April 22, 2017. A SIF is a medically supervised injecting facility, a harm-reduction strategy for drug users.
sentences of life without parole in 1983. In 1991, he was again placed in solitary for over 22 consecutive years until successfully completing a "step-down" program in 2014. In 2016, Shoatz won a $99,000 settlement and a permanent reprieve from solitary in a case that challenged Pennsylvania’s use of this cruel and unusual punishment.

In 2019 Shoatz was diagnosed with colorectal cancer, survived 12 rounds of chemotherapy and was scheduled for surgery last fall to remove the primary cancerous mass. However, in October 2020 Shoatz was placed in lockdown at the State Correctional Institute Dallas (PA) where he contracted COVID-19. Guards had brought the virus into the prison. When Shoatz was finally able to have surgery after months of delays, the cancer had metastasized. By the spring of 2021, he had terminal stage 4 cancer.

Shoatz first petitioned for medical release in August 2021 but was denied by Judge Scott. In repetitioning today, Shoatz’s attorney Bret Grote, with the ACLU of Pennsylvania, argued that Shoatz should be released to hospice care outside. Shoatz was placed in lockdown at the prison’s substandard care. Judge Scott’s decision could have a precedent to provide medical care,” said the abolitionist. “This hearing exposed the DOC’s failure to provide the health care they need. They have effectively killed my father. There is a lawsuit here, not just for my father but for the geriatric ones, to provide the health care they need. They have completely obstructed Shoatz’s intestines, essentially withholding all nutrition and water from a person, one parenteral nutrition was started, is a death sentence. For the record, SCI Dallas never provided that treatment but to send him to hospice outside. She noted that the DOC was either unable or unwilling to provide the necessary end-of-life care and that every person is entitled to die with dignity.

Speaking at a gathering outside the court, Judge Scott’s decision, Russell Shoatz III stated that it was heart-moving to hear his father speak for himself. The transcripts from this hearing contain the evidence that the prisons don’t have the ability, not just for healthy prisoners, but for the geriatric ones, to provide the health care they need. They have effectively killed my father.

“There is a lawsuit here, not just for my father but for prisoners in general who have historically suffered poor health care. The judge stated she can’t believe that the prison can’t afford not to send him to hospice outside. There is no way that their prison system can take care of any of them in any sustainably healthy way.”

Philadelphia police and prison abolitionist YahNé Ndgo, speaking with Workers World, expressed hope that Judge Scott’s decision could have a positive impact for the passage of Pennsylvania SB235, which seeks to eliminate the sentence of life without parole. Another bill, SB835 would provide for parole for the sick and elderly.

“This hearing exposed the DOC’s failure to provide the health care they need. The cited legal action will continue and we will continue to fight for justice for Shoatz, and the abolitionist. ’If the legislation is passed, it would benefit all of our older political prisoners in Pennsylvania and set a precedent that would help in other states as well.’

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**Black Trans Lives Matter! CeCe McDonald: the right to self-defense**

By Leslie Feinberg

This is a part of an article published Dec. 7, 2012, in Workers World in the series of articles by Leslie Feinberg on the local, the national, and international campaign to “Free CeCe”! Trans woman CeCe McDonald was charged with murder for defending herself and friends from attackers attacked by a white-supremacist mob in May 2011 in Minneapolis. In June 2012, Feinberg committed civil disobedience and was arrested for spray-painting “Free CeCe!” on the walls and pillars of the Hennepin County Courthouse, where McDonald was to be sentenced. Tenced to prison, CeCe McDonald served much less time because of the powerful campaign for her freedom. She was finally freed Jan. 13, 2014.

At certain moments in history, the struggle of individuals to survive and organize against fascist attacks, police and prison terror sharply reveals the societal relationship of forces — between oppressor and oppressed, exploiter and exploited. These battles unite and action that help shape and define political eras — like the demands to free the Scottsboro Brothers, Lolita Lebrón, Leonard Peltier, George Jackson, Joanne Little, Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The struggle to “Free CeCe!” is sparking a growing, broad united front against white supremacy and anti-trans violence. CeCe McDonald’s courage and consciousness and the tireless solidarity work by her friends and supporters in Minneapolis and the region — led by those who are oppressed — has widened and deepened the demand to “Free CeCe!” in cities across the U.S. and around the world.

Hundreds of thousands of people in the U.S. and internationally now know more facts about the attack on CeCe McDonald than the judge and prosecutor allowed a jury to know during her trial.

CeCe McDonald and her friends were assaulted in Minneapolis on June 5, 2011, by a group that announced its ideology as racist and fascist in words and action. The attackers shouted white-supremacist Klan language, transmisogynist epithets and a slur against same-sex love.

CeCe replied that “her crew would not tolerate hate speech.” One of the attackers then assaulted CeCe McDonald with a weapon — smashing her in the face with a bar glass that deeply punctured her cheek.

In the fight that ensued, one of the attackers died. He had a swastika tattoo.

CeCe McDonald was the only person arrested by the police that night. McDonald has been punished ever since as the “aggressor” for defending her life and the lives of her friends — and surviving. Police, sheriffs, jailers, prosecutors, judge and prison administration have arrested her, locked her up and held her in solitary confinement for long periods.

At least 14 people have died in city jails this year, the majority of them by homicide, suicide or drug overdose. This rate for Philly is far above the national average. Over 4,600 people, most of whom are people of color being held in cells while awaiting trials, suffer from horrific inhuman conditions made worse by staffing levels that are 52% below legal requirements. City health administrators have completely failed to adequately address the crisis.

In August, a federal judge filed an order requiring the prisons to ramp up hiring, ease pandemic lockdowns, institute staff COVID-19 testing, and move to resume normal operations. In September, the district attorney’s office began a grand jury investigation. The inhumane, medieval-like jail conditions remain abysmal.

Organized by the Human Rights Coalition, Straight Ahead and the Abolitionist Law Center, organizers emphasized these incarcerated people are our family members, friends and neighbors, and they deserve to be treated like human beings. They pledged to continue protesting and ended the demonstration with chants of “We’ll be back!”
Global class struggle drives supply chain logjam

By Betsey Piette

The global supply logjam continues to receive attention from the corporate media, the most influential CEOs and politicians. They claim to be concerned that shortages may lead to higher prices or that layoffs of workers are negatively impact workers, who are already economically challenged by historically low wages.

On Oct. 14, President Joe Biden called for two key California ports—Los Angeles and Long Beach—to be opened 24/7 to unload containers from the growing number of cargo ships waiting to dock. The ink wasn’t dry on Biden’s press release when it was revealed that unloaded goods are already waiting for trucks—due to a shortage of available drivers.

Truck drivers say they can only carry the contents of one massive cargo container per vehicle, and the warehouses they bring them to are already full. In the warehouses, the bosses are driving workers to work faster and faster, making the work more difficult and exhausting. These warehouse workers, including about a million at Amazon’s giant complexes, are organizing against oppressive working conditions.

If the bottleneck at the port is resolved, this just pushes the bottleneck further down the supply chain and in the process exposes the contradictory relations between bosses and workers at the crux of the problem.

The global supply chain involves a complex network of companies and the over 3 billion workers they exploit. And the COVID-19 pandemic has left millions of workers no longer willing to risk their health and safety in jobs where bosses refuse to provide living wages and benefits to address health and safety.

High tech and globalization

The big capitalists took advantage of the high-tech revolution in the early 1980s and the political changes in the 1990s: counterrevolution in the Soviet Union; and China opening its workforce for employment in and exploitation by internationally based industry. (See “High Tech, Low Pay,” by Sam Marry and “Low Wage Capitalism,” by Fred Goldstein.)

In their drive to maximize profits, multinational corporations began to export apparatuses of production, moving entire factories from country to country to find where they could pay workers the lowest wages. These same corporations formed parts manufacturers to compete against each other to offer the lowest bids.

Retail industries employed “just-in-time” inventories to reduce overhead costs. This strategy allowed the corporations to minimize storing goods—their inventory—in warehouses or parking lots, but required asmooth delivery of manufactured goods. Faced with the COVID-19 pandemic and impacted by major weather events due to the climate crisis, some pro-capitalist analysts now say increasing inventories to “just-in-case” levels might be economically beneficial.

All these cost-cutting measures were employed against a background of recurring global overproduction crises, each time leaving fewer workers employed, while the income gap between corporate bosses and workers grew exponentially.

Long before COVID-19 was first reported in early 2020, the capitalist system was in crisis. The pandemic has exposed these inequities by creating the first bottleneck in delivering inventory, at the ports.

Dock workers challenge bosses’ narrative

The capitalists claim they can’t find enough people to take available jobs in industries that transport goods. But in an Oct. 14 interview with Work Week’s Steve Zeltzer, Trell Wills, president of Steelworkers Local 8751 are demanding justice for drivers: “It is a struggle for the working class right now. We first have to challenge the narrative of employers who say they can’t find enough people to take jobs, implying that workers are lazy.

“We all know profits for the wealthy класс have gone up dramatically in the years, while wages for workers have not kept up. The minimum wage has been the same for multiple years. People can’t afford to live in the United States, let alone buy goods. And so the corporations have shifted shortages and benefits. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed this, along with other conditions that impact working people.

Willie challenged the narrative that cargo ships were unable to unload on the West Coast, noting that there is no backlog of carrier trucks and that agencies and the truckers have decided to back up ships in the Los Angeles area, which handles 40% of West Coast docks.

Bay Area gentrification, including the effort to privatize the Oakland Port Terminal section of the Port of Oakland to build a new stadium for the Oakland A’s baseball club, adds to the problem. Willis noted: “Longshore workers cannot afford to live in San Francisco and Oakland. Many have to drive hundreds of miles [cumulatively] from Sacramento to go to work, while million-dollar condos are being built in Oakland and San Francisco.”

Ramon Ponce de Leon, president of ILWU Local 13, representing 5,000 longshore workers, stated: “This is a struggle for the working class. The [Port of San Francisco] is not facing a shortage in the drivers. We are facing a shortage in warehousing—which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many drivers are leaving the industry in search of better options. This is a reality, whether a worker is driving a commercial truck or a school bus—a sector facing severe shortages.

“Gross national shortage is in livable wages”

Boston School Bus Drivers in the 1,000-strong Steelworkers Local 8751 are demanding justice for drivers and challenging the myth of a “national shortage of workers who would like to drive good-paying, safe, school bus jobs.” Union leader Steve Gillis told Workers World: “There is a gross national shortage of livable wages, benefits, health and safety, and respect for school transportation workers, caused by greedy corporations and their governments!

“Workers are striking for their rights across the country in unprecedented numbers! We must demonstrate our unity and solidarity, speaking in one voice, letting the company and city know that if we don’t get our justice at the negotiating table, we will get it on the picket line.”

In growing numbers, workers are demanding better working conditions and higher wages—and refusing to work until they get them. The global supply chain crisis is showing the power that the international working class has to bring the capitalist system to a halt, by stopping all production and thus all profits.

Truck drivers waiting to enter the Port of Long Beach to pick up loads, October 2021.

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Boston School Bus Drivers in the 1,000-strong Steelworkers Local 8751 are demanding justice for drivers and challenging the myth of a “national shortage of workers who would like to drive good-paying, safe, school bus jobs.” Union leader Steve Gillis told Workers World: “There is a gross national shortage of livable wages, benefits, health and safety, and respect for school transportation workers, caused by greedy corporations and their governments!

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U.S. political prisoner
Free Dr. Aafia Siddiqui!

By Sara Flounders

The case of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui is another great miscarriage of justice in the long history of the U.S. legal-carceral system, which reinforces xenophobia, anti-Muslim prejudice and white supremacy.

Arrested and brought to the United States for a “crime” she supposedly committed while living on U.S. soil, Dr. Siddiqui has been imprisoned at the Federal Medical Center Carswell in Fort Worth, Texas, for the last 18 years. She is known as the “Daughter of the Nation” in the U.S. political prisoner movement.

The KCTU demanded that in times of economic crisis, when the economy is going through transitions, changes to working conditions should be implemented “based on strong voices of workers,” with guaranteed employment during times of crisis.

The threats and damages created by U.S. imperialist machinations in the world economy produced this fictional series so pain-filled, brutal and disturbing that many viewers report it is almost impossible to watch. But worker organizing can break through the very real horrors of capitalist life.

Given the responsibility of the U.S. in creating the long and violent history of suppression of workers in South Korea, solidarity from workers in the U.S. with the KCTU and future actions are especially crucial in changing the narrative of history.

That so many other oppressed areas of the world have felt the lash of U.S. domination and the need for U.S. workers to organize for international working-class solidarity.

Oakland rally demands: ‘Free Julian Assange!’

By Judy Greenspan

Oct. 23 — A broad coalition of antiterror and anti-imperialist groups converged here at the Grand Lake Theater, known for its historically strong support for free speech, to demand the U.S. government drop all charges against Julian Assange and stop all extradition plans.

Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, is currently being held in prison in Britain awaiting extradition to the U.S. Today’s rally was part of an international effort to protest a hearing scheduled for Oct. 27, when the U.S. will argue for his immediate extradition to this country.

Assange is charged with conspiracy to publish secret U.S. military documents leaked by Chelsea Manning, former Army intelligence analyst, that exposed U.S. war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan. The campaign to force Assange’s extradition to the U.S. has been a bipartisan effort by both U.S. political parties and is being led now by President Joe Biden.

The marquee of the Grand Lake Theater boldly proclaimed “Free Julian Assange!” over the rally, organized by Free Julian Assange-SF Bay Area. The gathering was a speak-out with taped messages by renowned activists and writers, including such as Mumia Abu-Jamal, Alice Walker and Daniel Ellsberg. Solidarity statements were read by representatives from many organizations including the Haiti Action Committee, United National Antwar Coalition, Task Force on the Americas, Code Pink, Answer and the International Action Center.

Hundreds of people passed by during the rally, stopping on their way to and from a nearby popular farmers’ market, and listened to the many statements demanding freedom for Assange and all political prisoners. Speakers also demanded freedom for former diplomat Alex Saab, recently renditioned and illegally kidnapped from Cape Verde and imprisoned in the U.S. for his support of the Bolivian Venezuelan government.

Over 40 international human rights groups, including the International Federation of Journalists, Amnesty International and Reporters Without Borders, have called for freedom for Assange. Demonstrations are planned around the U.S. and the world leading up to the Oct. 27 court hearing in London.

Protesters outside the Grand Lake Theater in Oakland, Calif., Oct. 23.

South Korea general strike organizes answer to ‘Squid Game’

By G. Dunkel

The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, which has 1.1 million members, called a one-day general strike on Oct. 20. Over a half a million workers stayed home, and tens of thousands demonstrated. About 1,000 delivery workers turned off their apps and joined the strike.

South Korean workers took a real risk to come out by the thousands on the streets of 13 cities to say that they, like the workers in the highly popular and grim Netflix series “Squid Game,” are struggling to make a living and pay their crushing debts. The series was inspired by the 2019 StangVang auto worker strike, which was ended after 77 days by a deadly police attack, followed by crushing state reprisals against the workers.

The KCTU said in a statement that during the strike, “About 50 youth union members dressed up in costumes that parodied the ‘Squid Game,’ which bitterly satirizes the bare face of our society.” A group of militant KCTU youth led the march, beating drums, some with slogans painted on their vests reading “Inequality Out” and “Safe Youth Employment, Quality Youth Employment,” according to videos posted on the KCTU’s Facebook page.

One demand of the strike highlighted by the KCTU on its Facebook page was “expansion of labor law for all workers and the abolishment of precarious work.”

While contingent workers, categorized as “irregular, part-time, or temporary,” make up 36.1% of the labor force in South Korea, workers to organize for international working-class solidarity.

workers.org
Solidarity with ALU filing for election Oct. 25, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Every day workers continue to deal with COVID and the so-called “labor shortage.”

The struggle for safety on the job is the backdrop to the Oct. 21 shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins. Her death on the “Rust” film set is a stark reminder of what every injured worker knows: that “accidental” workplace deaths and injuries are the result of overwork, cost cutting and deliberate neglect of worker safety by management. In this case management includes the star and producer of “Rust,” Alec Baldwin, who fired the fatal shot. Baldwin is a popular comedian (Phantom Director Joel Souza). The role of assistant director David Halls who handed Baldwin the loaded prop gun is under investigation as well.

Hutchins’ death occurred during the struggle of film production workers for sufficient hours between shifts and for needed breaks. Halls was reported to work 12-hour days. To drive 50 miles each way from Albuquerque, N.M., but the movie company broke that promise. “Rust” were promised housing in Santa Fe, New Mexico, but the movie company broke that promise as well. “Safety on Set” is the slogan that preceded the Oct. 21 shooting. Hutchins, a member of the International Association of Machinists, was a resident of 60-hour weeks on film sets. Workers on the “Rust” set wanted an end to this miserable situation.

What happened in Santa Fe is an isolated incident. “Safety on Set” is the primary issue for the 60,000 IATSE members across the country who voted in favor of a strike earlier in October. A strike was averted when the union reached a tentative agreement with movie and television industry executives, but the contract could be rejected if members don’t think it goes far enough in addressing their issues. That could lead to a strike.

As the contract vote gets underway, the tragedy in Santa Fe reminds workers of the importance of solidarity.

Will Strikebreakers become Strikeveters?

By Martha Grevatt

By Monica Moorehead

Film set killing spotlights unsafe conditions

By Stephanie Hedgecoe

Rally demands end to gender violence

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Amazon workers take big step

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U.S. protesters demand release and repatriation of Aafia Siddiqui

Excerpts from an article in Al Jazeera

Dozens of protesters and human rights activists are calling on the Pakistani government to work to end the continued imprisonment of Pakistani neuroscientist Aafia Siddiqui in the United States.

Carrying pictures and banners, the protesters gathered outside the Pakistani Consulate in New York on Wednesday to decry Siddiqui’s situation and urge the Pakistani government to actively seek her immediate release and repatriate her.

“Free, Free Aafia,” the protesters shouted in unison.

The rally was part of a series of protests organized by the International Tribunal on Crimes, Law and Genocide 2021. The tribunal, which was held Oct. 22-25, will hold International tribunal judges U.S. human rights abuses

The following are excerpts from a press release issued by the tribunal, which was held Oct. 22-25:

In the Spirit of Mandela, an unprecedented U.S. alliance of attorneys, academicians, and organizers from the movement for Black, Brown, and Indigenous people; Afro-Brazilian de- rectionization, immigrant rights, and Indigenous sovereignty/Earth protection, will put the U.S., state and local governments on trial for crimes against people of color. From Oct. 22 to 24, all the leaders of the International Tribunal on U.S. Human Rights Abuses Against Black, Brown, and Indigenous Peoples will convene, both in person at a Manhattan historic landmark and virtually via livestream.

“This proceeding will establish overwhelming evi- dence that this country and its settler colonial prede- cessors have committed genocide, as defined by the United Nations, against Black, Brown, and Indigenous Peoples for over 400 years,” said Jihad Mabdulmumit, United Nations, against Black, Brown, and Indigenous history of diverse global activists, including Nelson Mandela, Winnie Mandela, Graça Machel Mandela, Ella Baker, Dennis Banks, Cesar Chavez, FannieLou Hamer, Fred Korematsu, Lolita Lebron, Rosa Parks, Ingrid Washinawatok, and many more in the resistance tradi- tions of Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples.

The year 2021 marks the 70th anniversary of the cam- paign in which African-American human rights leaders Paul Robeson and William Patterson, with the support of eminent sociologist Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, presented the “We Charge Genocide” petition to the burgemeesters and city councils’ headquarters in 1943. Then in 1964, Minister Malcolm X (El Haj Malik el-Shabazz) formed the Organization of Afro-American Unity, in part to bring the case of U.S. human rights abuses to the attention of the U.N.

2021 International Tribunal — follow-up efforts

The 2021 International Tribunal has a unique set of objectives and an opportunity to organize on a mass level across many social justice arenas. Upon the verdict, the results of the Tribunal will codify and publish the content and results of the Tribunal to be offered in high school and university curricula, and provide organized, acade- mic information for reparation initiatives and commu- nity and human rights work.

It will present a stronger case, building upon previous and respected human rights initiatives, on the interna- tional stage, and establish a healthy and viable massive national network of community organizations, activists, clerics, academics, and lawyers concerned with challeng- ing human rights abuses on all levels and enhancing the quality of life for all people.

Goals are to strengthen the demand to free all political prisoners and establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission mechanism to lead to their freedom; estab- lish the foundation to build a ‘Peoples’ Senate’ repre- sentative of all 50 states, Indigenous Tribes, and major religions; and provide the foundation for civil action in federal and state courts across the United States.

For more information contact: Dr. A’isha Mohammad, aishamohammed72@gmail.com, 510-779-6678.

For more information: spiritofmandela.org/tribunal2021/; facebook.com/Spirit-Of-Mandela-105429717560666/. Videos: All educational webinars and additional videos can be found at vimeo.com/spiritofmandela and tinnym.com/apasewyq Videos of the Tribunal will be available at these links shortly after its conclusion.

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San Francisco State University

**Dr. Rabab Abdulhadi hails ‘win for pro-Palestinian movement’**

**By Michael Kramer**

Dr. Rabab Abdulhadi, an associate professor at San Francisco State University, and Dr. Tomomi Kinukawa had scheduled an open online class to be held Sept. 23, 2020, featuring Palestinian hero Leila Khaled. But tech giants Zoom, Facebook and Google-owned YouTube caved in to Zionist pressure and shut it down just as it got started.

Abdulhadi is an internationally known Palestinian scholar and founding director of the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas (AMED) Studies program at SF State and a member of the Department of Race and Gender Studies. Kinukawa is a lecturer in the university’s Department of Women and Gender Studies.

The open class was entitled “Whose Narratives? Gender, Justice and Resistance: a Conversation with Leila Khaled.” The program was to include panelists Rula Abu Dahou, acting director of the Institute For Women’s Studies at Birzeit University in Palestine’s West Bank, and Rabea Karras, member of the South African Communist Party, the African National Congress and a founder of the ANC’s armed struggle formation Umkhonto we Sizwe.

Other scheduled speakers were Sekou Odinga, member of the Black Panther Party, the Black Liberation Army and a former 30-year political prisoner, and Laura Whitehorn, a civil rights and antiwar activist who served 14 years in federal prison. Kaarla and Whitehorn are Jewish.

Leila Khaled is an icon of the Palestinian struggle. She was born in Haifa and is a refugee. She is a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Zoom representatives said her participation was the reason the company shut down the class. The tech giant’s action was an attack on academic freedom, the Palestinian community and anti-Zionist Jews.

Israeli lobbying groups and Zionist organizations have attacked Abdulhadi and the AMED program for years both on- and off-campus. These groups include the Anti-Defamation League, Lawfare Project, StandWithUs and Act.II., an app funded by the Israeli government.

But Abdulhadi not only mobilized local, national and international community support for the online program, she submitted a formal grievance through an internal SF State procedure.

“We were vindicated!”

On Oct. 14, a panel of three SF State faculty members upheld the grievance. It ordered the university to issue a public apology to Abdulhadi for not upholding academic freedom and said the school must provide a site for rescheduling the event on an alternate platform without interference.

The panelists asserted that SF State had not only not defended Abdulhadi and Kinukawa against threats of arrest made by Lawfare Project if the class went forward, but they stressed that the university amplified the threats.

Abdulhadi commented on the panel’s findings: “This is a huge victory not only for us, but for everybody speaking about Palestine and for our ability to teach about Palestine as part of the indivisibility of justice. After the pain and the anguish for over a year that we have suffered, by being vilified by character assassinations, by being chased by Zionists, by the hate mail, by all the nastiness that has happened, by the fact that the university did not have our backs, we were vindicated.”

**Alex Saab petition**

**Kidnapped Venezuelan diplomat speaks in court**

**By Solidarity Center**

Alex Saab made the following statement in U.S. Federal Court in Miami on Oct. 16. To sign a petition in solidarity with the Venezuelan diplomat, now prisoner of the U.S. government, see bit.ly/Freedom4AlexSaab

My name is Alex Nain Saab Moran, with Venezuelan diplomatic passport number 045798720. I am a special envoy with diplomatic immunity to the Russian Federation, Islamic Republic of Iran since April 2018 and Venezuelan Ambassador Plenipotentiary Alternate to the African Union.

I was hijacked by Cape Verde on June 12, 2020, when my flight stopped to refuel on a special humanitarian mission to continue to the Islamic Republic of Iran by order of my president, Nicolás Maduro Moros. I was kidnapped without an arrest warrant — required by law in Cape Verde — and without an INTERPOL warrant, in a country that has no extradition treaty with the U.S. They disregarded my diplomatic immunity, which was claimed by Venezuela immediately.

I was tortured physically and psychologically by the U.S. and Cape Verde, with the consent of the government of Donald Trump, and members of the government of Cape Verde including Minister Landim; Prime Minister Ulysses Correia da Silva; Carlos Reis, head of national security; Paulo Rocha, minister of [internal affairs]; and the director of the Sal Prison, Mr. Correia, for eight months — and with the economic support of the U.S., Juan Guaidó [U.S.-backed pretender to the Venezuelan presidency], and former Venezuelan head of security, Narmín Iván Simonovis.

Under international pressure on the U.S. government and the decision of [Electronic Intifada, Oct. 15]

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I filed the trial with total dignity and asserting my diplomatic immunity as a servant of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela since April 2018.

I wish to make it clear that I have nothing to collaborate with the United States, that I have not committed any crime in the U.S. or in any other country, that I will not lie to favor the U.S. against President Nicolás Maduro or his government — a government totally dedicated to the welfare of the people and which is going through an inhumane blockade by the United States that wants to take over the wealth of the country.

Let us surround our president and our government with a human shield and let us not allow ourselves to be defeated. They will never give in!

I declare that I am of sound mind, that I am not suicidal, just in case they assassinate me and say I commit suicide, which I would never do.

I love my wife Camilla and my children Shadi, Isham, Jad, Mariam Rose and Charlotte more than my own life. I ask you to be strong and always stay united.

United we shall overcome! Always have faith in God!

Petition with statement in English and Spanish, bit.ly/Freedom4AlexSaab
Colin Powell: a lesson

Colin Powell died on Oct. 18. Within hours of his death, rallying capitalist critics, including all former presidents except Trump, had publicly praised him. Powell had been this country’s first Black national security adviser, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and secretary of state.

The corporate media, from the New York Times to Fox News, are now presenting the four-star general as a shining icon for others to emulate. And that’s a problem for those who love liberation and fight imperialism.

Any Black man appointed to those posts must have enormous drive and talent. And if Powell had grown up in a country where he was able to apply those qualities to become a warrior on the side of the oppressed, he might have become a great hero.

But Powell grew up in the United States. He competed within the capitalist system, not as a resistance fighter against that system. To succeed, he had to overcome enormous obstacles, and he twice as good as his rivals.

He ended up in the service of U.S. imperialism, impos- ing the Pentagon’s military power on the world’s people. Instead of becoming a hero for the oppressed, he became a servant of the billionaire ruling class, against the oppressed.

Powell came of age as an officer during the U.S. war against Vietnam. He watched a long, drawn out war against a people’s army wear down the U.S. military and turn ordinary soldiers into war resisters.

Perhaps as a result of this experience in Vietnam, Powell developed this strategy: “Identify clear political objectives, gain public support and use decisive and overwhelming force to defeat enemy forces.”

“Powell was the architect of the invasion of Panama in 1989 and of the Persian Gulf war in 1990,” wrote the New York Times on Oct. 18.

So Powell applied his strategy in Panama and in Iraq. It led to quick victories, with few U.S. casualties, accompanied by terrible war crimes against those two countries.

In Panama, the U.S. bombed civilian housing proj- ects. In Iraq, besides murderous attacks on civilian tar- gets, the U.S. trapped retreating Iraqi soldiers in 1991 after the war had officially ended and slaughtered thou- sands of them on a road thereafter called “the highway of death.” (“War Crimes,” by Ramsey Clark and others, Maisonneuve Press, Washington, D.C., 1992)

Then Powell committed a different kind of crime, lead- ing to the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. As secretary of state he lied to the world’s people, telling them that the U.S. had proof that Iraq possessed “weapons of mass destruc- tion.” He knew Washington really had no evidence, as he admitted later.

Powell was loyal to an imperialist government. That meant he had to lie to justify a war, even if he thought the war was a bad idea. According to Powell, this caused him pain — but he did it. He followed orders.

That is the lesson of Colin Powell’s life: Avoid becom- ing a servant of imperialism, or run the risk that most of the world will condemn you as a willing accomplice of a mass-murdering empire and a war criminal.

Lebanon

Rightist militia fires on demonstrators

By G. Dunkel

Demonstrators at an unarmed march in southern Beirut Oct. 14 were fired on by snipers from the Lebanese Forces, a Maronite Christian party whose militia was notorious for its brutality during the 1975-90 civil war.

According to Johnny Achi, founder of the Arab Americans for Syria, Lebanon’s Lebanese Forces leader Samir Geagea is “nobody on the ground. He doesn’t even represent one fourth of the Christian voters, and he’s losing ground even there. This is a dirty militia who have no shame, who go out on the top of buildings and snipe at civilians.”

The demonstrators, from the organizations Hezbollah and Amal, with support from a Maronite Christian group called Marada, fetched rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers they had left in their vehicles and fired back. The ensuing firefight lasted for over four hours and only ended after massive intervention from the Lebanese army.

The demonstration was protesting about how the investigation of the explosion of improperly stored fertilizer 14 months ago has been “politicized.” That Aug. 4, 2020, largest non-nuclear explosion in world history killed 200, wounded 6,000 and left 300,000 people homeless in densely populated Beirut.

The billions of dollars in damages to the port facilities of Beirut and the loss of tourist income due to the onset of the pandemic, plus the effects of the conflicts in Syria, have led to a drop in its gross domestic product of nearly 40%. (France 24, Oct. 14)

Hezbollah is a mass-based organization in the Shiite community that led the fight against the Israeli invasion of 2006 and aided the Syrian government in its recent battle against imperialist intervention. It wins seats in Lebanon’s parliament and is part of the government.

What made the Oct. 14 clash especially important is that it was an obvious attack by the right-wing Lebanese Forces on Hezbollah. For many Lebanese this recalled bloody fighting before and during the civil war.

A people’s victory

The sanctions that the U.S. has imposed on Hezbollah, and on Syria and Iran, have damaged Lebanon’s economy and require elaborate and expensive workarounds to obtain essential goods.

Since almost all of Lebanon’s electricity is produced by burning diesel, this loss of income has meant that most households get one or two hours of electric service a day.

Thus it was a people’s victory when Hezbollah arranged for a shipment of diesel fuel from Iran. An Iranian tanker delivered the fuel to the Syrian port of Baniyas, which is already under U.S. sanctions. There it was picked up by trucks from a Hezbollah-owned company, al-Amana, which is also under sanctions, and driven across the border in mid-September without going through customs. Because it was done this way, no Lebanese official was responsible for violating the U.S.-imposed illegal sanctions.

U.S. Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland, who helped arrange the coup overthrowing Ukraine’s government in 2014, ended her visit to Lebanon on Oct. 14, coinciding with the attack on the demonstration.

Arab Americans for Syria activist says

U.S. applied ‘divide and conquer’ strategy to Lebanon, Iraq

Following the armed attack by the Lebanese Forces militia on Hezbollah and its allies at a demonstration in Beirut Oct. 14 and the subsequent firefight, Workers World correspondent Ted Kelly interviewed Johnny Achi, coordinator of Arab Americans for Syria. Below are excerpts from Achi’s remarks.

What Syria fought ten years for was to evade “Lebanonizing” Syria. What do I mean by Lebanonizing? That is the condition, when [the U.S.] talks about “progress in the political process.”

That’s what Lebanon is living today, a sectarian divide. And these elements, the Christian militias of Lebanon, Hezbollah, which has been so incredibly patient. Every time that Iran or Hezbollah or Syria has a victory, Israel will retaliate through its dirty allies in Lebanon — through Samir Geagea.

The guy is not strong, believe me, but he receives billions of dollars from Saudi Arabia and is CIA-backed. He knows they have his back. He’s nobody on the ground. He doesn’t even represent one-fourth of the Christian voices, and he’s losing ground even there. This is a dirty militia that has no shame, who go out on the top of buildings and snipe at civilians. They killed six people yesterday [Oct. 14].

Lebanese people went out on the streets to protest Continued on page 11
Post 9/11

Human costs high for subsequent U.S. and NATO wars

By Joachim Guillaud

The author is an anti-imperialist German analyst of the U.S./NATO wars in Central and West Asia. Translation by John Catalinotto.

According to the latest report from the Costs of War Project at Brown University in Rhode Island, the wars the U.S. and its allies unleashed after September 11, 2001, killed over 900,000 people. This is a minimum.

Taking into account the large gaps in coverage and the far higher number of indirect casualties, the actual figure may exceed four million. In addition, the wars wounded and traumatized far more people in the affected countries, and displaced over 38 million people.

Nearly 20 years ago, within four weeks of the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania, the United States launched its “Global War on Terror” on Oct. 7, 2001, with the invasion of Afghanistan. The campaign against Iraq followed in March 2003 and has since expanded to more than 80 countries in the Western world.

Although the George W. Bush administration and U.S. allies originally used the pretext of preventive or “preemptive self-defense” to justify the wars against Afghanistan and Iraq, they justified their continuation by humanitarian goals, such as the defense of human rights. This latter pretext was also used to justify the NATO war against Libya and the intervention in Syria.

However, neither the U.S. nor its allies ever tried to determine the humanitarian costs of these types of “humanitarian interventions.”

A meta-study [study of studies — March 19, 2015] by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) which directed the available research, estimated the total number of all deaths in the countries initially mainly affected — Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq — to have reached at least 1.3 million after the first ten years.

For the second decade of the “post 9/11 wars,” as the Western world’s wars of this century are commonly called in the United States, no similarly careful analysis has yet been done.

However, Neta Crawford and Catherine Lutz of Brown University’s renowned Costs of War Project have consistently published case numbers for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, and later for Syria and Libya. Their 2021 9 report this year, over 900,000 people had been killed in combat operations in these five countries by August 2021, about 370,000 of whom they classified as civilian casualties.

These case numbers are based on passively observed cases, that is, those reported by media and similar sources or registered by clinics. Under war conditions, however, a small portion of cases can be recorded, depending on the intensity of the fighting.

Actual number of casualties is probably higher

It is also difficult to distinguish between civilians and combatants. The authors therefore assume that both the actual number of those killed and the proportion of civilians are much higher.

They omit the indirect victims of the wars, those people who died due to the collapse of supplies of food, water and electricity, blocked access to health facilities or the outbreak of epidemics caused by the war.

Their number usually exceeds that of direct casualties many times over. In general, “Costs of War” contributor David Vine said, one should assume a total of four times as many dead as they had determined. By the end of October 2019, he already estimated these losses at .3 million. (tinyurl.com/7yvgb5qg)

Vine referred to a comparative study by the September 2008 Geneva Declaration Initiative, which found that indirect deaths in most armed conflicts were three to fifteen times higher than direct deaths.

The IPPNW study reached a similar conclusion. Comparison with mortality studies on Iraq showed that realistic estimates obtained through representative surveys were at least five to eight times higher than casualty figures obtained through passive observation.

In Afghanistan, according to Crawford and Lutz, combat operations directly killed some 170,000 Afghans over the course of nearly twenty years of U.S. and NATO warfare. Thus, we must assume at least 900,000, and possibly more than a million direct and indirect casualties in that country alone, which means over 40,000 per year.

According to the information collected by the two researchers, around 284,000 Iraqis fell victim to the war in their country. This nearly doubled the 165,000 war deaths they calculated for the first eight years after 2011.

Based on mortality studies in Iraq, the IPPNW study made a “conservative estimate” of the total number of Iraqi casualties through 2011 to be at least one million dead.

Extrapolating this accordingly, we must now assume over 1.8 million dead in Iraq. According to a representative survey published in May 2018 in the journal PLOS Medicine, 90,000 of these alone were victims of the recapture of the militant strong city of Mosul from the hands of the “Islamic State.”

Up to 3.6 million casualties — Libya excluded

David Vine’s extrapolation therefore rings entirely credible. Overall, the total number of victims in the wars considered by “Costs of War” would thus now already be 3.6 million. However, this still omits Libya, the third country against which NATO states waged direct war after 2001.

According to a plausible estimate by Groves Davies, a journalist and researcher at the U.S. peace organization Codepink, more than 250,000 Libyans fell victim to the NATO aggression and the subsequent collapse of the government. (tinyurl.com/azpka93) Finally, Somalia, where the U.S. has long intervened with air strikes, covert operations, and the arming and support of local forces, is also excluded.

Davies estimates that this war may have resulted in more than 500,000 deaths since the U.S.-backed Ethiopian invasion in 2006. It is therefore likely that the total number of deaths from the wars and interventions of the United States and its allies over the past two decades already exceeds four million.

Even more difficult to assess is the enormous human toll that the wars have also taken on the countries involved. These include the people who have been seriously injured in the wars, often permanently.

According to the U.N., their number is usually more than twice as high as the number of those killed. Far greater still is the number of those who have had to flee the war.

While the number of refugees and internally displaced persons recorded by the June 18 U.N. refugee agency UNHCR was already very high at the beginning of the century, at 38 million, it has since more than doubled to 82.4 million. As David Vine and colleagues identified in another recent study, at least 38 million finding flight or violent war waged by the United States since 2001.” In this study, they include Libya, Somalia, and the Philippines. (tinyurl.com/3jn2wa6) The number of displaced persons thus exceeds that of all wars since 1900, except for World War II. However, it is still a very conservative estimate, according to the authors.

The total number of people displaced by U.S. wars after Sept. 11, 2001, is probably closer to 49-50 million, which may even exceed that of World War II.

Translator’s note: From inside the U.S. we should point out that these wars have been led by both Republican and Democratic Party administrations, and that the only difference regarding human victims is that the Democratic Party leadership emphasized the “humanitarian” pretext for U.S. interventions. Also, since the author focused on the victims in West Asia, they exclude the victims of the U.S.-backed coup in Honduras and those from U.S.-imposed sanctions against Venezuela, Nicaragua, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Cuba.

U.S. divide and conquer’ strategy

Continued from page 10

the “freedom and democracy” the U.S. wanted them to do. They had no weapons, were in civilian clothing, standing out front of a court. They said, “Don’t politicize the investigation of the 2020 Port of Beirut explosion [that killed 200 people].” For that the Lebanese Forces snipers fired on them.

They were caught but we unfortunately will not be brought to justice. Because they want to draw Hezbollah into an internal fight, just like they want to push Syria to retaliate against the Jewish state.

We will not be brought into a fight that is not of our own choosing. They should know that our patience is too strong. Our diplomacy is stronger than the world will ever know. Innocent lives should not be lost just to gain some political ground. The armed clash was very unfortunate. But it will not lead to civil war.

Hezbollah knows there is one enemy and the enemy is south of us [in Israel]. This is where the fight is, if we’re going to carry on a fight.

That’s why the Axis of Resistance is coming back, because we will not be brought into a fight that is not of our own choosing.

Turn the Guns Around

By John Catalinotto

Draftees and enlistees — eighteen-year-olds from the South Bronx, factory workers from Buffalo, miners’ sons from Kentucky, unemployed youth from Watts — hate the military and the Vietnam War. They throw a wrench into the Pentagon’s war machine, becoming leaders of the anti-war movement and organizing a union in the conscript military to battle war, racism and their officers.

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Nicaragua, con atención médica y educación gratuita, desafía la dominación de EE.UU.

Por Sara Flounders

La razón por la que Nicaragua es etiquetada como una "amenaza inusual y extraordinaria para la seguridad nacional de los Estados Unidos", una supuesta corporación militar, quedó muy clara para la delegación de AFGJ que visitó Nicaragua del 3 al 10 de octubre.

Nicaragua, un pequeño país en desarrollo de 6.6 millones de habitantes, vive en marcado contraste con sus países vecinos: Honduras, El Salvador y Guatemala. El poder de estos países la hace un país donde más de mil millones de personas han huído de la violencia extrema, el caos y las desesperaciones. Desde entonces, Nicaragua ha resistido y se mantuvo como la única de los países no del OIG, y se mantuvo como el único de los países que no han privatizado sus servicios de salud y educación gratuita para todos. En cambio, otros países centroeuropeos que han privatizado han caído en la desigualdad y la marginación.

Nicaragua ha establecido una enseñanza obligatoria y una educación gratuita a los niños de todas las edades. En 2007, el 48 por ciento de la población tenía acceso a la educación primaria, y el 98 por ciento tenía acceso a la educación secundaria. El gobierno del FSLN respaldó ampliamente a la educación en todos los niveles, desde la educación infantil hasta la educación superior. Además, se han establecido programas de becas para estudiantes de bajos ingresos, lo que ha permitido a muchos estudiantes de bajos ingresos acceder a la educación superior.

En Nicaragua, los niños y las niñas tienen igualdad de oportunidades en la educación, independientemente de su género. Las mujeres y los hombres tienen el mismo acceso a la educación y a las oportunidades laborales. Las mujeres de todo el país en 2007, cuando 16 años de política corporativa militar, quedó muy clara para la delegación de AFGJ que visitó Nicaragua del 3 al 10 de octubre.