STOP EVICTIONS!

By Martha Grevatt

For anyone struggling to pay their rent and worried about eviction, the past few weeks have been an emotional roller coaster.

The moratorium on evictions instituted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expired Aug. 1. Some relief was afforded when the CDC extended it for another two months. The CDC’s action was based on medical science: the very real danger of COVID spread if evicted families had to move into houseless shelters or board with extended family members or friends.

But the Supreme Court of the United States ruled Aug. 26, by a 6-3 majority, “that the CDC has exceeded its authority,” and the eviction moratorium was no longer enforceable. (supremecourt.gov)

This exposes the real character of the highest court in the land: pro-landlord, anti-worker and anti-poor.

Congressional Rep. Cori Bush rightly stated after the court ruling, “We already know who is going to bear the brunt of this disastrous decision — Black and Brown communities, and especially Black women.” (The Nation, Aug. 27) People with disabilities, immigrants, LGBTQ2S+ people and other oppressed groups will also suffer disproportionately.

The SCOTUS ruling will not affect city, county or statewide moratoriums. But only six states currently have eviction moratoriums, all but one of which are due to expire on or before Sept. 30. States with nothing in place to address the impending housing crisis certainly are partially to blame for it.

Evictions will be a big problem in the U.S. South, where “fast-track” evictions are a scourge. Millions of Southerners could find themselves on the street. Northern cities are also threatened with disaster. Look at Detroit. Detroit’s housing crisis predates COVID by well over a decade. This Black majority city once had the highest homeownership rate and the highest Black homeownership rate in the U.S. Detroit was targeted by racist, avaricious banksters who took people’s homes away, turning a city of homeowners into a city of renters. Now many of these renters face eviction.

Where the power lies

The plaintiffs who filed suit against the CDC moratorium— real estate tycoons and big landlords led by the Alabama Association of Realtors— have deep pockets. The estimated 10 million renters, who could now potentially become homeless, do not.

This gross imbalance of economic power— not legal technicalities around the CDC’s Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite! workers.org Vol. 63, No. 35 September 2, 2021 $1

Legal system?

Legal oppression

Texas incarceration:

Shut it down!

TEAR DOWN
THE WALLS

In Kabul, U.S. lies to hide crimes—again

The bloody final week of the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan is replaying Washington’s crimes of the past 20 years. A war whose pretext was combating “terror” is ending, amid terror that U.S. mass murderers have generated.

Blame for the carnage during the last 20 years was first covered by lies. In the accelerated timeline of the impending U.S. departure, some truth was exposed.

A suicide attack at the Kabul Airport left nearly 200 dead, including 150 Afghan civilians, 30 Taliban and 13 U.S. troops. In the midst of mourning for the victims—and wondering how one 25-pound explosive produced so many victims—we learned that many of them were killed by U.S. troops firing automatic rifles.

Joe Biden, in Rambo mode, promised quick Continued on page 10...
Workers Assembly Against Racism

Union rights, cancel rent!

By Tony Murphy

On Labor Day weekend, show solidarity with Workers World Assembly Against Racism, Chris Smalls and workers fighting to organize Staten Island’s Amazon facilities. They are demanding union rights, passage of the PRO Act and a permanent eviction moratorium. Join them at their rally at 5:00 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 4, at Union Square across from Amazon-owned Whole Foods in Manhattan.

Since New York City’s traditional Labor Day parade was canceled, activists have called for this Labor Day rally to demand union rights for Amazon workers, as well as passage of the PRO Act.

With the U.S. Supreme Court decision striking down the eviction moratorium mandated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and with the New York state moratorium ending Aug. 31 — the Sept. 4 rally will also include the all-important demand for a permanent eviction moratorium.

“The fight to organize the unorganized goes hand-in-hand with the fight against evictions,” Chris Smalls told this writer. “The Amazon worker and whistleblower was fired by the tech giant’s bosses in 2020, for leading an Amazon warehouse walkout over unsafe work conditions.

Smalls added: “Here in Staten Island, some of the Amazon workers we are trying to win a union for are unhoused. Some have been sleeping in their cars in the Amazon parking lot.” Smalls is central to efforts by Staten Island workers to build their own worker-led union, Amazon Labor Union.

This Sept. 4 action was called by WAAR, which organized a series of dynamic New York demonstrations over the winter — in Harlem, in Union Square and outside Jeff Bezos’ penthouse — supporting the Amazon union drive in Bessemer, Ala.

Organizers emphasize that, since Labor Day is dedicated to workers rights, Saturday’s Union Square rally will call for an extension of federal unemployment benefits. The payments set to expire Monday, Sept. 6, the federal holiday — will in reality expire Saturday, Sept. 4 — the day of the rally. And WAAR leaders encourage New Yorkers to support the Community and Clergy March Against Evictions set for noon, Tuesday, Aug. 31, at 409 W. 39th St., Manhattan.

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 multiracial, multigenerational and multigendered organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward! Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on 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. Workers who don’t have even youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and bigots on a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out 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 multiracial, multigenerational and multigendered working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge — the capitalist system.

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

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

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

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A Marxist history of HIV/AIDS:

Part 3

Early Fightback, 1981-1982

By Devin Cole

HIV refers to human immunodeficiency virus. If left untreated, HIV can lead to the disease AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). HIV is transmitted by four fluids: semen, vaginal fluid, blood and breast milk, and through mother-to-child transmission during pregnancy/birth.

On July 3, 1981, the New York Times published a headline, “Rare cancer seen in 41 homosexuals.” Buried on page 20, the story noted two simultaneous and similar outbreaks of a cancer, Kaposi’s sarcoma, among homosexual men in New York City and San Francisco, with some of the cases dating back to January 1980. A doctor quoted in the article describes the outbreak as “rather devastating.”

“Rather devastating” was an understatement as to what was to come. People infected with HIV who develop AIDS frequently contract Kaposi’s sarcoma. By 1987, just six years after that headline, at least 5 million people worldwide were living with HIV/AIDS, at least 45,000 in the U.S. (bit.ly/3zSD8jO) There had been at least 40,000 deaths. (bit.ly/3xWIL0j)

The year 1987 would prove to be a watershed moment in HIV/AIDS history. ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) was founded in New York City in 1987 and began a string of direct actions to force the U.S. government to not only acknowledge the plague, but to begin to take steps to treat people and find a cure. President Ronald Reagan had refused to comment publicly on HIV/AIDS, until the resistance of masses of people forced him to speak that year.

Today it can be a common view that ACT UP was the first group in the U.S. organized to deal with the HIV/AIDS crisis. While ACT UP did coordinate and execute fabulous direct actions against bourgeois scientists, government officials and those who claimed AIDS was God’s punishment for being gay, fightback and resistance to the epidemic began almost immediately in 1981 when the disease appeared.

In August 1981, The Sentinel, a LGBTQ+ newspaper serving San Francisco, reported: “Just a few weeks ago, the government dropped millions of dollars into research to determine the cause of Legionnaires’ disease, which affected relatively few people. No such outpouring of funds has yet been forthcoming to research the how’s and why’s of KS (Kaposi’s sarcoma), a rapidly fatal form of cancer that has claimed far more victims in a very short time than did Legionnaires’ disease.”

The Sentinel’s sentiment foretold the grim future to come for those suffering from HIV/AIDS, as lack of response from the U.S. government allowed thousands and thousands to die.

On the other side of the country in August 1981, future ACT UP founder Larry Kramer held a meeting at his New York City apartment with at least 75 gay men. They listened to Dr. Alvin Friedman-Kien report that virtually every AIDS case in New York City was preventable — and that the government was not doing enough to prevent it. This led to what was perhaps the first-ever fundraise for HIV/AIDS research and the foundation of Gay Men’s Health Crisis. Over Labor Day weekend on the legendary gay beach Fire Island, Kramer’s call to action electrified attendees, and one attendee got was $1 billion. (bit.ly/3y5DmRo)

On Sept. 15, 1981, the National Institutes of Health’s department, the National Cancer Institute, held a conference on Kaposi’s sarcoma and opportunistic infections. These diseases, such as Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP) are usually only seen in people with weakened immune systems, typically due to cancer treatments. Clinicians, many of whom had been treating patients with KS, traveled from all over the country to Maryland to attend this conference, hoping it would serve as a springboard for research and contain this mysterious disease.

The clinicians attending this conference likely expected the NIH/NCI to flex its muscle. At this time, its annual budget was $1 billion. (Randy Shilts, “And the Band Played On”) Because of inflation, this figure would be between 2 and 3 times higher in 2021 dollars.

Instead, what attendees received was a lackluster, apathetic presentation on KS in Africa, where the disease was reported to be much higher than in the U.S. Luckily for them, they were told that the disease should simply be treated with radiation or aggressive chemotherapy.

There was no discussion of its relationship to the immune system, the relationship between KS and Pneumocystis, and hardly any discussion on possible causes for the cancer. The latter point was important as KS is associated with or the result of a weakened immune system, rather than causing the weakened immune system.

“GRID/4H Disease”

Names for the “mysterious gay cancer” changed over years of diagnosis, treatment and struggle—with most terms involving not only anti-gay discrimination but anti-Black, anti-disabled and anti-addict discrimination as well. Though designated as HIV/AIDS today, in 1982 the disease was called “GRID” or “Gay-Related Immune Deficiency,” inciting even more discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community. (nytis.ly/2VnYNg)

This label fueled the right-wing camp that had spent years platforming against LGBTQ+ issues, under the guise of “saving children” and “keeping American values.” Although GRID only stuck for roughly four months, its stigma has carried on.

Just as odious was the lesser-known but still-used term, also coined by the CDC: the “4H Disease.” This bigoted name was invented when it was erroneously believed that only four groups of people were at serious risk of infection: Haitians, heroin users, homosexuals and hemophiliacs.


Heroin users and hemophiliacs were looped into the blame because of the higher rates of infection among users and those stricken with hemophilia, due to needle-sharing and blood transfusions. And then there were “the homosexuals”—who were blamed from the start.

As early as June 1982, it was known that heterosexual people, cisgender people and women other “low-risk groups” could and did contract HIV/AIDS. Another group initially considered “low-risk” was infants and children; in the early months of 1982, it was believed by medical professionals that HIV/AIDS could not spread to infants or children.

However, in a July 2021 interview conducted by this writer, Workers World Party member Marie Kelly, a retired pediatric nurse, spoke of working in a Philadelphia hospital in a predominantly Black, working-class part of town in the early 1980s and treating children who were dying from AIDS, as a result of either being born with it or contracting HIV through blood transfusions to fight their hemophilia. People who had injected drugs who were pregnant and given birth had unknowingly contracted HIV that way.

In December 1982 the CDC finally published reports of AIDS in babies and children. (tinyurl.com/24zyp8af)

Despite this, even with knowledge from medical professionals in hospitals and even top scientists themselves, the focus was on HIV/AIDS centered around LGBTQ+ people as the cause and thus allowed anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination and prejudice to intensify. Though “GRID” was officially renamed “AIDS” in September 1982, the damage had been done.

Ellen Catullotto, who contributed to this article, worked for nearly 30 years as a midwife in New York City hospitals, where she participated in research that led to the first breakthrough in preventing mother-to-child transmission of the AIDS virus. Devin Cole is the president of Workers World (Socialist Trans Initiative), a transgender advocacy organization in northwest Florida, and a member of the Workers World Party — Central Gulf Coast (Alabama, Florida and Mississippi) branch.

All parts of this series, “A Marxist History of HIV/AIDS,” are available at workers.org/tag/hiv-aids/.

Next: ‘Fighting for our lives’ against AIDS in San Francisco.
Nabisco workers strike across the U.S.
By Lyn Neeley
Portland, Ore.
Aug. 28—Nearly 200 supporters attended a rally in support of Portland Nabisco workers, who went out on strike Aug. 10. As of Aug. 25, approximately 1,000 members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union have been on strike across all six Nabisco bakeries and distribution centers in the U.S. The World Federation of Trade Unions, who supports Portland includes Chicago, Richmond, Va.; Aurora, Colo.; Addison, Ill.; and Norcross, Ga. Workers are striking against company proposals to change the health care plan and cut overtime pay on the weekends by altering schedules.

The Portland strikers, some of whom have worked at the company for years, spoke at the rally. One said: “The union has done so much. We are so thankful to the retirees and people from other unions supporting us here today.”

A group of about 20 people from the United Food and Commercial Workers were present to show support. They told this reporter that, like the Nabisco workers, they had worked through the COVID-19 pandemic and are now having their benefits taken away by their employers.

Venezuela workers send solidarity
By Minnie Bruce Pratt
Workers of the Sisostrokrat Union at the Mondelez factory in the city of Barquisimeto, in Venezuela sent a solidarity message Aug. 28 to striking Nabisco workers in the U.S. Both the U.S. and the Venezuelan workers are employed by Mondelez International, Inc.

The video message opened with the logo “Sisostrokrat: La Verdadera Revolucion Obrera at Mondelez International Vz.” or “Sisostrokrat: The Worker Revolution at Mondelez Venezuela.”

SISOTRASKRAT is aligned with the FNLC/FTUN: Front Nacional de Lucha de los Trabajadores/Union National of the Struggle of the Working Class and Central of Unions.

The message was delivered by Victor Gutierrez, president of the Sisostrokrat Union, from the factory floor. A large group of white-jacketed, COVID-masked workers were present voluntary working in the back-ground on an active assembly line — and others held a sign with a solidarity motto: “Fight and Victory.”

Garutierrez emphatically affirmed: “From here, together with the workers, we stand in solidarity with the workers at the Mondelez company in the United States, in the cities of Oregon, Illinois, Virginia, Colorado, and Atlanta, where they started a strike for 20 days to demand their rights and labor benefits that this employer has taken away from them. This employer’s association has a worldwide policy of reducing jobs and reducing the benefits and labor rights of the working class. So the call is to unite our struggle to achieve our goals.”
Caste: Legal oppression through our legal system

By Wesley Massey

Wesley Massey is currently incarcerated in State Correctional Institute Pine Grove in Pennsylvania.

As I sit here reading “Caste” by Isabel Wilkerson, I am reminded how dark our history in the U.S. was and still is. When I say “our,” I mean Black and Brown people.

Race is a creation of a social construct. Race or racism is not based in science or fact and certainly not true. It is a tool used to create a caste system that gives distinction or status to people based solely on skin color — or better put, on the presence of a chemical component or the absence thereof.

In India, in the origins of caste, there were the “untouchables,” or Dalits, deemed the lowest caste — an inescapable prison determined at birth. Fast forward to Nazi Germany, where racist Aryans considered themselves superior to all.

The Nazis had been watching the U.S. and how that country had perfected a caste system regarding African Americans, and kept them to the lowest caste, using the very foundations, the mudsill that built this country — law! They made it illegal for an African American to ever be considered equal or have the same equity in this country.

The U.S. is still using the legal system as a tool of oppression on African Americans. They have systematized a legal system in a way that keeps African Americans in cages. Our enslaved ancestors were brought to this country under the guise of a lawful legal practice. Slavery began in 1619 on the shores of Jamestown, Va.

The state of Texas continues to be hostile to migrants. The Kinney County Sheriff’s Department posted videos Aug. 6 of migrants being magistrated in mass hearings.

During a special legislative session Aug. 27, the Texas House of Representatives passed House Bill 9. If signed into law, this bill will grant the Texas House of Representatives the power to move its agents to enforce “border security” in the Rio Grande Valley. That day, six Congress members of the Texas National Guard serving El Paso’s food banks to enforce “security” in the Rio Grande Valley. That day, six members of the El Paso state legislative delegation wrote a letter to Abbott, urging him to reconsider his decision: “If you pull the 90 assigned National Guard members from this post, the El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank estimates they will lose about 70% of their distribution power, as they don’t have the ability to sustain the demand of the current output with only 67 employees, a small number of AmeriCorps fellows and low volumes of volunteers. That means hundreds, if not thousands, of border families could lose their access to food.” (ElPasoMatters.org, Aug. 26)

During a special legislative session Aug. 27, the Texas House of Representatives passed House Bill 9. If signed into law, this bill will grant Abbott’s office $1.8 billion for “border security.” In prior months, Texas Democrats had fled the state to defend against accusations of the dominant caste. It is incumbent upon us to not allow the state to harm our will and agenda. What we are seeing now with the passing of new state voter laws is the protection of the caste system. They feel threatened by the empowerment of African American voters to change and swing the elections in favor of a suitable candidate of their choice!

Sounds like democracy, right? Democracy is an illusion that is veiled behind a curtain that has “caste” written in bold letters on it and under it — for whites only and only the whites of our choosing. They let those in the lowest caste know that they are allowed only as much democracy as the dominant caste allows them to have, and only the amount of freedom the dominant caste allows!

The magic show called the justice system is only designed for the dominant caste. For instance, up to the year 2000, it was illegal in Alabama to marry someone outside of your perceived race. Or look at the disparity [in the legal] sentencing of the dominant caste and those assigned to the lowest caste.

During slavery, African Americans were denied the most basic of human impulses — to defend oneself and to want to be free. They don’t want us to arm ourselves; they don’t want us to have the right to choose. Caste has established a legal system that justifies the denial of adequate counsel, so that a person born into poverty cannot defend against accusations of the dominant caste.

Imagine running on a treadmill with someone in control as you run faster and faster. You believe you’ve reached your goal only to be told you’re only halfway there, and you must run faster! We have not progressed past the 1860s as African Americans. Mental movement in the illusion we have been told to accept as the semblance of progress, while the dominant caste creates more laws to set us back further.

A bigot, tyrant, oppressor and castelist has held the highest office in a so-called free democracy and pushed his racist and castest agenda through policies and legislation. I’m talking about Donald Trump or Joe Biden or both.

We are made to pledge allegiance to our oppressor. But silence in the face of evil is evil itself.

Texas arrests migrants, abandons food bank

By Mirinda Crissman

The state of Texas continues to be hostile to migrants. The Kinney County Sheriff’s Department posted videos Aug. 6 of migrants being magistrated in mass hearings in a parking lot.

Magistrate judges are appointed by judges of the district court. They may “dispose” of minor criminal offenses and may hold bench or jury trials in civil actions on “consent of the parties.” It boggles belief that a group of migrants forced by arrest into a parking lot “courtroom trial” have given free consent to such proceedings.

According to the Aug. 19 Grassroots Leadership News, the state of Texas continues to be hostile to migrants. The Kinney County Sheriff’s Department posted videos Aug. 6 of migrants being magistrated in mass hearings in a parking lot.

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As an example of how race and caste work in the U.S., a Chinese man, whose skin color was whiter than the whitest man he knew, sought to have the privileges of the dominant caste (whites) but was denied. He fought his way all the way to the highest court in the land, and in [Laun v. Rice, 1927] was told that it did not matter that his skin was white, as he was not Caucasian — Aryan. Therefore he was not afforded the privileges of the dominant caste, when in actuality less than one percent of the country’s population is actually from the Caucasus Mountains near Russia.

New voter laws protect caste system

The dominant “caste” has perverted the law and subverted the laws created in this country to bend it to fit their will and agenda. What we are seeing now with the passing of new state voter laws is the protection of the caste system. They feel threatened by the empowerment of African American voters to change and swing the elections in favor of a suitable candidate of their choice!

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Hazardous heat: Capitalism can't cope

By Lyn Neelley

Bill Stevens died from hyperthermia after falling asleep in his chair on July 2 during Portland’s record-breaking temperatures of up to 106 °F. He was this writer’s cousin. Bill was one of 1,255 Oregonians who didn’t live through the heat.

In the same month, temperatures were at historic highs in Greece and Italy, bringing death there. “Heat is an invisible and insidious killer. Heat is one of those climate hazards that you don’t really see,” said first Chief Heat Officer Eleni Myrivil. (tinyurl.com/3xzdbd8st)

In Oregon, most of those who died were older, lived alone and had no working air conditioning. Sentinel papers and reports on the heat wave killed an estimated 1,260 people in the entire region.

The resulting heat wave “would have been virtually impossible . . . without human-caused climate change. The observed temperatures were so extreme that they lie far outside the range of historically observed temperatures. . . . An event like this—currently estimated to occur only once every 1,000 years—would have occurred roughly every 5 to 10 years in a future world with a 2 °C of global warming,” (tinyurl.com/jpy9cx2)

The heat dome caused Portland’s mass transit system to shut down. Rubber-lined streetcar cables melted; and overhead copper power wires popped, swelled and bowed, so that the power arms could have tangled in the sagging wires. (tinyurl.com/yd3prqng)

The Portland temperatures rose again to a record 104 °F. The number of hot days over 90 °F has increased in Oregon over the last 20 years, causing severe drought in more than a third of the state since the year 2000.

Increasing temperatures have caused a 60% decline in snowpack in the state’s mountain ranges. This impacts water availability and has greatly reduced agricultural production in Oregon’s Willamette Valley.

Extreme heat has caused longer-lasting and more intense wildfires in the last three years in the state. Oregon’s four largest wildfires have occurred in the last 20 years. So far in 2021, more than 1,000 fires have destroyed over 550,000 acres, 60 times more land area than in 2020.

The Bootleg Wildfire sent dense smoke 3,000 miles all the way across the U.S., causing a thick brown haze in New York City. The fire was so large it created its own share of thunderstorms and tornadoes.

According to the World Meteorological Organization, 2011-2020 was the warmest decade on record, and 2020 was the warmest year on record.

What is the U.S.—a capitalist country that boasts of its wealth—doing to avert the climate crisis? According to our World in Data, the U.S. is the biggest carbon dioxide emitter in history, creating 25% of the world’s CO2 and greenhouse gas emissions since 1751. (ourworldindata.org/contributed-most-global-co2)

President Joe Biden’s climate plan is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions 50% by 2030. But his focus is on the private sector, to invest more heavily in private industry. Biden’s “plan” falls drastically short of addressing the U.S. impact on the world’s climate crisis.

Currently the fossil fuel industry, which produces 80% of the energy used by the U.S., spent over $2 billion between 2000 and 2016 to lobby against climate action. For the third time in recent months, the Interior Department has lowered a coal company’s fees for the mining of coal on publicly owned lands. (tinyurl.com/canma9c)

Biden’s plan continues to subsidize fossil fuel pipeline expansion to bring nearly a million barrels of tar sands oil into the country from Alberta. The production of this oil emits up to three times more global warming pollution than that of the same quantity of conventional crude oil.

Jason Hickel, an economic anthropologist from the small African nation of Eswatini, writes that, as of 2015, the U.S. has already overshoot its share of the total carbon emissions budget by 40%. He said Biden’s emissions pledge only ensures “the U.S. will continue to colonize the atmospheric commons, gobbling up the fair shares of poorer nations, causing enormous destruction in the process.” (tinyurl.com/5p2vnx4)

The U.S. Climate Fair Share Project notes that for the U.S. to cover its fair share of climate impact, it would actually have to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 70% (usfairshare.org)

Socialist planning answers climate crisis

In a Sept. 10, 2019, Workers World article, Joshua Hanks wrote, “Socialist countries with economies that incorporate significant degrees of public ownership and economic planning, like Cuba and China, have proven capable of making rapid, drastic changes, the kinds of changes necessary to keep the environment from facing total catastrophe.” (“Climate crisis cries out for social change”)

According to a BBC report by David Brown: “Although China has a population 3.5 times bigger than the U.S., the country’s total energy production is only 10% of the U.S. China’s national energy policy is to switch to global warming as the U.S. China’s goal is to achieve a CO2 emissions peak before 2030 and attain carbon neutrality before 2060.” (tinyurl.com/gnmfkld)

By the end of 2020, more than 40% of China’s power generation came from renewable resources, supporting nearly one-third of the country’s electricity consumption. According to China’s National Energy Administration, that country generated more solar power than any other country and had tripled the amount of wind power installations. (tinyurl.com/3k8vh8q)

Guizhou, a rural mountainous province in southwest China, has become a center for the development of photovoltaic cells and wind energy production. Thousands of jobs will be created. Guanling Boyi and Miao Autonomous County in Guizhou has known as the “Great Green Wall” program. The country deployed 60,000 People’s Liberation Army soldiers from 1990 to 2015 to plant trees which reduced soil erosion, pollution and desertification and absorbed carbon dioxide. (tinyurl.com/jyrdavoo)

In 2019 fly-overs, NASA satellites show an overall increase in global foliage, with China being largely responsible. (tinyurl.com/68lphbwq)

In the example of another country addressing the climate crisis with socialist planning, Cuba has nearly tripled its forested area since the revolution in 1959, from 15% to over 30% in 2019, according to a report by the Cuban Ministry of Agriculture. (tinyurl.com/6qbgknkh)

An international statement of solidarity with revolutionary Cuba was delivered Aug. 26 at the Mexican Consulate in Denver, as Deputy Consul Jose Federicio Bass Villarreal warmly received a delegation from the Denver Peace Council.

Deputy Consul members presented the deputy consul with a letter of gratitude to the Mexican people and their president, Manuel Lopez Obrador, for breaking the record 60-year U.S. blockade on Cuba. Mexico sent two shipments of food and medicine to the Cuban people on July 2.

Before the deputy consul reminded the delegation of the 500-year history of the Spanish conquest of Cuba and of Mexico and the fraternal relations both countries have continued to this day.

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The letter ended by saying, “Mexico can be proud of its solidarity with the rest of the world.”

— Story and photo by Viviana Weinstein

‘Thank You, Mexico!’ for sending aid to Cuba

An international statement of solidarity with revolutionary Cuba was delivered Aug. 26 at the Mexican Consulate in Denver, as Deputy Consul Jose Federicio Bass Villarreal warmly received a delegation from the Denver Peace Council.

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Sordid source of ‘lab-leak’ accusation against China

The following lightly edited statement was released Aug. 24 by the International Action Center (actcenter.org).

The U.S.-China Solidarity Project has just released an up-to-date, in-depth look at the networks of anti-China think tanks and the people behind them. The project is the result of a long-term effort by the project, and is funded by the Open Society Justice Initiative.

The report was written by a team of researchers from the International Action Center, and is available for free download at tinyurl.com/CapVent-ebook.

Capitalism on a Ventilator

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Overdose Awareness Day—mournning those lost

By Princess Harmony

August 31 may seem like a normal day to people, but to those who have been touched by overdose, it is a day of mourning. Overdose Awareness Day, which memorializes those who have been lost to overdoses, was founded in 2001. Many governmental and nongovernmental organizations and well-known individuals, have taken action on this day.

The stated goals of International Overdose Awareness Day are:
1. To provide an opportunity for people to publicly mourn loved ones in a safe environment, some for the first time without feeling guilt or shame;
2. To include the greatest number of people in International Overdose Awareness Day events and encourage nondenominational involvement;
3. To bring attention to an issue that is not well understood and to create awareness about the issue of fatal and nonfatal overdose;
4. To send a strong message to current and former people who use drugs that they are valued;
5. To stimulate discussion about overdose prevention and drug policy;
6. To provide basic information on the range of support services available;
7. To prevent needlessly related harm by supporting evidence-based policy and practice; and
8. To inform people around the world about these issues.

When a friend or loved one fatally overdoses, there is often no place for the families of drug addicts to go, where they can mourn without experiencing insults to themselves and their deceased loved one. Besides people maligning the deceased and their family, friends and others often feel guilty and shame that they couldn’t prevent the steps that led to overdose, even if they did try to help. The pain can be extra hard on parents. Giving community members information about overdose has the potential to turn around the negativity that people have towards addiction encumbrances, such as those in the following text.

By educating people, we begin to wipe away the stigma of being addicted and push society forward in viewing addiction as a mental illness or like a mental illness. Studies have shown that both addiction and recovery bring a sense of shame or failure. People blame themselves for being addicts, ignoring the fact that they have both a mental illness and a condition exploited by capitalist companies that push opioids and lie about their addictions. (tinyurl.com/4k2az) Addicts feel alone and feel like they can’t be valued. International Overdose Awareness Day raises them up and treats them like they’re people and like they’re cared about.

Fighting overdose epidemics with evidence

An important part of fighting the overdose epidemic raises it to push evidence-based treatments, policies and actions. An unfortunate truth—without putting down those who use the drugs and existing treatment facilities often fail their patients.

We need to push forward evidence-based treatment like methadone (Methadose, Diskets) and buprenorphine (Suboxone, Subutex, Sublocade, Zubsolv). Methadone and buprenorphine alone have been highly successful in their treatment of people in opioid addiction.

In the United States, methadone can only be acquired from methadone clinics, a major inconvenience and threat for addicts in recovery. Methadone clinics distribute methadone at limited hours. During methadone titration and detoxification, patients have to come in daily. Before the COVID-19 pandemic in Pennsylvania and other states, a methadone patient could only get two weeks worth of methadone. This difficult access is very problematic for people’s jobs schedules and home life.

After COVID-19 hit, these restrictions were lifted and in some states, like Pennsylvania, patients received doses for a full month. New York state created a certification for people in need to home to prevent the spread of the virus in methadone clinics.

A more humane policy needed

Under a humane and better policy, methadone would be distributed by organizations and drug stores. More people could get methadone for themselves at times that benefit them. COVID-19 pushed states into altering their methadone regulations, but it was only a baby step and still won’t lead to the necessary reforms.

Although methadone is much more regulated, buprenorphine is regulated in a way that still inconsistencies the patient. To prescribe buprenorphine products, one must be registered with the Drug Enforcement Administration, have an X-Waiver and go through up to 24 hours of training to dispense. Although the Biden administration loosened the X-Waiver requirements by not requiring training or an X-Wafer for doctors and nurse practitioners with DEA certifications who see 30 or fewer patients, the X-Waiver is still necessary for doctors who need to see more. The lack of X-Waiver providers in areas hit hard by the opioid epidemic, such as rural areas, causes people to lack access to gold-stained treatment.

Harm reductionists, activists, addicts in recovery and addicts still using—we all are demanding the Biden administration push Congress into repealing the X-Waiver requirements. Of course, asking our president to work with drug manufacturers to save the painkillers—do the right thing can be a fool’s errand. But we should try anyway.

Alternative policies, practices

Evidence-backed policy and practice have been discussed in this article but there are still more methods we need to examine. In Canada, members of the Drug User Liberation Front (DULF) and the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU) took the access to methadone and buprenorphine to logical, necessary ends.

They’ve been pushing their government into legalizing diacetylmorphine (heroin) and hydromorphone (Dilaudid) as injectable medicines that would serve as a next level of medication-assisted treatment. The U.S. needs to follow this example. Although the U.S. should use funds it spends on imprisonment to establish rehab facilities that have successful programs.

One last method of evidence-based practice is what the DULF did: handing out untainted, fentanyl-free drugs to people. Heroin, cocaine, meth—all on the streets now tainted by fentanyl—were given out to those who needed them.

We call this safe supply: An addict is given safe drugs to use until they decide to get clean, if they decide that.

What does all this have to do with honoring International Overdose Awareness Day? An easy answer to question: If we want to help drug addicts, we need to create new policies, push for the necessity of new drug policies, we prevent overdoses and do justice for those who’ve died and even those who overdosed and lived.

We must do everything we can to save lives and prevent overdoses. For everyone who has left us.

This article is dedicated to my friends—Paul and anonymous others. If only we had the safeguards we’re pushing for, all of you might still be alive.
The war against Afghanistan has never been about the liberation of women, not even as a ‘collateral benefit.’ The war is about imperialist domination for capitalist profit.

This article originally appeared in Workers World, Dec. 6, 2001.

As U.S. bombing and troop presence has intensified in Afghanistan, the mainstream media have issued a barrage of articles, photographs, opinion pieces and interviews claiming that the war will liberate the workers and peasants from the grip of feudal landlords. The secular mandate of the Taliban’s oppression of women and even give women a chance to get political rights under a new government.

Government officials, including Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin Powell have addressed the subject in news conferences, briefings and interviews.

Most dramatically, “First Lady” Laura Bush was in front of the microphone on Nov. 17, 2001, the president’s usual Saturday radio address, so she could testify about the oppression of Afghan women under the Taliban.

This media blitz has been orchestrated through the governmental Coalition Information Center, set up to counter any criticism of the U.S. war. The campaign is coordinated by spin-doctors like public relations industry legend Charlotte Beers, former chair of giant ad agency J. Walter Thompson. Four of the key “gatekeepers” of this campaign are women, including chief Pentagon spokesperson Victoria Clarke and Mary Matlin, chief policy adviser to Vice President Dick Cheney.

Matlin said of these women’s commitment to advocating for the war: “I think we probably bring—and I don’t mean this to sound sexist—but we probably have more of a subconscious outrage at these issues.... This is something that crosses my mind more than other people [believe].” A third of these women in pre-Taliban days were doctors, lawyers and teachers. You can’t help but be outraged.” (New York Times, Nov. 11, 2001)

The real outrage

Which pre-Taliban days is she talking about? The outrage is ours if we look at the real history of women’s liberation in Afghanistan. Yes, terrible things have been done to women under the Talibani rule, but how did the Taliban come into existence? And what was the role of the U.S. in this campaign?

The war against Afghanistan was a bitter conflict that lasted more than a decade, a result of the CIA-orchestrated war of 1979. A CIA-orchestrated war forced the Afghan government to call for Soviet military assistance. What followed was a bitter conflict that lasted more than a decade and eventually overthrew the progressive regime. More years of war followed, as the Taliban, the Northern Alliance and other factions—all of which drew their power from the feudal landlord class—fought for supremacy. (Workers World, Oct. 20, 1996)

The CIA had facilitated the formation of Osama bin Laden’s organization in the 1980s to attack the progressive government in Afghanistan. As U.S. vice president, George Bush Sr. oversaw the operation. Subsequently, bin Laden’s forces, including terrorists, doctors and nurses, disfigured women who took off the veil, and they shot down civilian airliners with U.S.-supplied Stinger missiles. (World Today, Dec. 27, 2006)

What the U.S. does care about

Now Bush and the generals claim to care about the rights of women living in the counterrevolution they financed and engineered. But the U.S. has consistently disregarded the plight and status of women in Afghanistan.

The White House and Pentagon knew the reactionary position of the U.S.-financed and trained fundamentalist groups toward women. But this was immaterial to the goal of the U.S. government to support the interests of oil corporations that have been trying to get a pipeline through Afghanistan for 10 years. In a May 26, 1997, New York Times article, John F. Burns wrote: “While deploring the Taliban’s policies on women and the adoption of a penal code that provides for the amputation of thieves’ hands and the stoning to death of adulterers, the United States has sometimes acted as though a Taliban government might serve its interests.”

“The Clinton administration has taken the view that a Taliban victory would end a war that has killed 1.5 million Afghans, would act as a counterweight to Iran, whose Shiite Muslim leadership is fiercely opposed to the Sunni Muslims of the Taliban, and would offer the possibility of new trade routes that could weaken Russian and Iranian influence in the region.”

“For example, a proposal by the Unocal Corporation of California for a $2.5 billion pipeline that would link the gas fields of Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan is attracting strong support in Washington, though human rights groups are likely to object to the plan.... The Afghan project, strongly endorsed by the Taliban, is part of a broader concept under which the vast mineral resources of the former Soviet republics would be moved to markets along routes that would offer those countries a new autonomy from Moscow.”

In May 1998, Time magazine reported the U.S. government “set up an intelligence task force to monitor the region’s politics and gauge its wealth. Covert CIA officers, some of them well-trained petroleum engineers, had traveled through southern Russia and the Caspian region to sniff out potential oil reserves. When the policymakers heard the agents report out of a State Department (New York Times) Allright concluded that ‘working to mold the area’s future was one of the most exciting things we can do.’”

Stop the war

That is a future this Afghan woman shares with many women in the United States—women on welfare who soon will be “free to beg” under the so-called Welfare Reform Act.

During the Clinton administration, it essentially eliminated Aid to Families with Dependent Children and set up a strict limit on the time length of benefits. The cut-off date of Dec. 1 is now fast approaching for thousands of already impoverished women. Some will be evicted in the middle of freezing winter. Others will be forced to place their children in foster care. Still others will be denied the most basic health care and reproductive services for themselves and their children.

And the astronomical economic cost of the war on Afghanistan will take an even greater toll on the poor in this country—especially women and children.

The war against Afghanistan has never been about the liberation of women, not even as a “collateral benefit.” The war is about imperialist domination for capitalist profit. Opposition to this war, and this imperialist system, is the only thing that will help bring about the full liberation of women.

Minnie Bruce Pratt is an anti-racist, anti-psychotic, lesbian author and long-time leader in the struggle for women’s liberation.
In Kabul, U.S. lies to hide crimes—again

By G. Dunkel

For a look at how the following figures were derived, given the difficulty of comparing data on COVID-19, see the article endnote.

On Aug. 26, CNN was running a short news report on the spike of COVID-19 in Florida, highlighting the 290 deaths that day from the virus. Suddenly, news anchor Don Lemon broke in: “There have been only three COVID deaths in China today, and it has 2.5 billion people.” Florida, according to the 2020 census, has 21.5 million people. Lemon was obviously struck by this disparity. The question that his remark raises is broader: Are Florida’s people “not protecting themselves”? Is that the real reason for the disparity? Is there something else to it?

A note from the writer on the figures: “I created a spreadsheet using data from the following websites: worldometers.info/coronavirus/, statistica.com/topics/the-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-update/, and coronavirus.blu.edu/. For the EU, I used their statistical service ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19/situation-reports/. For the United States I used covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/. For population figures I used data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL/locations/1W. I also used the World Bank to get GDP figures for each of the countries included in the spreadsheet.”

STOP EVICTIONS!

Continued from page 1

authority— is what pushed the high court to deny renters the protection to affordable housing, here in this so-called “great democracy.” (The CDC moratorium did not protect homeowners in mortgage payments from being cut off.)

As even this rotten court ruling acknowledges, Congress has the power to extend the eviction moratorium. But these capitalist politicians went on summer recess before taking action. They have done nothing to make the $47 billion in the latest “stimulus” bill earmarked for renter assistance more accessible— only $5 billion of it has been tapped.

Florida Governor DeSantis could extend the moratorium by executive order. It’s a sort of thing President Franklin D. Roosevelt often did, when the courts ruled against programs in his New Deal. Biden would rather spend his time saber-rattling and threatening China. The working class must use its power to keep people in their homes. The Unemployed Councils in the 1930s, led by the Communist Party USA, were mass organizations that forcibly blocked countless evictions. When a family was evicted and their belongings hauled to the curb, the Council would come and carry their possessions back into their home. Confrontational tactics also stopped state evictions in this period.

In response to these militant struggles, moratoriums on foreclosures were enacted by 27 states. The Minnesota Governor’s act was upheld by SCOTUS in 1934— not because the high court was progressive, but because it felt the mass pressure. That was a year of fierce class battles, including the famous San Francisco and Minneapolis general strikes.

Labor must do more than make demands.

The threat of eviction is definitely a labor issue. The family in fear of houselessness could be that of a striking coal miner in Alabama or a striking nurse in Massachusetts.

Also consider the issue that is propelling union drives on Amazon— dangerous working conditions. An injured COVID-afflicted Bessemmer Amazon employee, now unable to work, could easily fall behind in their rent. Real estate barons from their own state led the suit against the CDC moratorium!

In its document “Priorities of the Labor Movement to Address the Coronavirus,” the AFL-CIO presents a long list of progressive demands including, “Issue a moratorium on foreclosures, evictions and student loan defaults.” That is the right demand.

But what is the AFL-CIO prepared to do win this? There is no strategy!

They might start by looking at the example set by some Detroit locals of the United Auto Workers, who have been assisting local groups in eviction defense for a number of years. What if the whole labor movement was given a directive: Mobilize to block evictions.

And how about a call for a general strike to demand the eviction moratorium be extended indefinitely and be expanded to cover all renters and homeowners in financial distress?

Enough is enough!

There is a housing crisis across the country, driven by skyrocketing rents and stagnant or falling wages, with millions of wage-earners still out of work. Down with landlords and bankers — and their stooges in the Supreme Court! Not one more eviction! Housing is a human right!

COVID-19

Socialist/progressive countries vs. capitalist?

Continued from page 1

choice, decided that even the Taliban was preferable to the Yanks. As the Aug. 31 deadline for U.S. withdrawal approached, last week’s lists were vastly expanded. They are the last remains of U.S. aggression and occupation built on lies. And not only from the Biden administration, which has the unequaled task of closing shop.

Republican and Democratic Party politicians and Pentagon officials lied consistently up to the 20-year occupation, and they lied last week. They lied to cover up the pillage, waste and corruption they promoted in — along with the drone and military expenditures industry and military contractors. And they lied to cover up Washington’s motives for seizing Afghanistan.

They are all responsible for the 20 years of horror inflicted on the Afghan people. They have shattered Afghan society and aroused such fury against U.S. crimes that some Afghans are willing to strap suicide bombs to themselves if U.S. troops or their collaborators.

This is neither a war on terrorism nor a war on war. It is a criminal war that both big capitalist parties own. George W. Bush ordered the invasion. Barack Obama expanded the U.S. military troop deployment and the drone war. Donald Trump dropped a nonnuclear superbomb on Afghanistan.

President Biden’s handling of the exit grows out of U.S. military strategy during the 20-year occupation. The crime of the Afghan war is not that one or another of the U.S. presidents was incompetent or a fool — that would be a minor crime compared to what was committed against the Afghan people.

The crime of each successive administration is that they represent the military, economic and diplomatic domination of world imperialism — with the U.S. its center — and they inflict, expand and defend the exploitation of workers and toiling people around the world, for the profits of a handful of billionaires and bankers. There is no way they can do that except through war and lies.

The task of anti-imperialist forces in the United States is to expose the lies and prevent the U.S. from bringing more harm to the Afghan people.

No more war, no more occupation, no more sanctions!

Resource Center appear to be sticking to the data India updates/. For the United States I used covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/. For population figures I used data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL/locations/1W. I also used the World Bank to get GDP figures for each of the countries included in the spreadsheet.”

In a COVID patient, it can be difficult to decide which is low. If there are multiple factors, such as a heart attack or stroke, which had taken responsibility for the bombing. Another drone strike blew up a car, which killed the Pentagon “pinpoints” terror targets.

Then we learned that the real victims of the drone strikes were Afghan civilians, including seven children. Under five years old.

This is exactly how U.S. imperialism was waged against the Afghan people for 20 years: Every drone and rocket attack, every night raid into Afghan homes, produced civilian victims. It created enemies, who, having limited
Entrevista con un economista argentino sobre Cuba

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que hay en el campo mismo con las fuerzas derechistas [criticando al gobierno cubano].

MH: Recuerdo que Guillermo Almeida decía “corrientes que nunca entendieron el problema del imperialismo”.

CK: Pero además con tantas experiencias que ya tenemos. Porque si marchas con fuerzas derechistas en contra de Cuba, no comprendo cómo de ahí va a surgir una especie de proyecto socialista. Es un misterio.

MH: La historia demuestra que eso no ocurre.

CK: Justamente a eso voy. Ya tenemos la experiencia de lo ocurrido en décadas pasadas en Polonia, Alemania Oriental, Rusia, y especialmente Argentina, el imperialismo, lo que tuvimos es restauración pura del capitalismo. Yo creo que ese es un camino totalmente desvariado. Hay otras corrientes con posiciones más “light” que plantean otra contradicción. Hay muchos pensadores que critican al gobierno cubano, a la posición burocrática, pero al mismo tiempo, dicen que no se restaura ahí el capitalismo. Entonces hay algo raro, porque ellos piensan que el capitalismo no se restableció solo en Cuba, en China se restableció el capitalismo, en Vietnam, en Rusia, etc. En un mundo de 200 países y 6.000 millones de habitantes, habrá una idea con 10 millones de habitantes que sería el único caso de no restauración del capitalismo del planeta. Si eso es así, yo creo que lo único que uno tiene que hacer es declarar su admisión infinita por Cuba y listo. Si es el único lugar del mundo que ha logrado sostener el proyecto socialista, entonces más que ir a las marchas con los opositores lo que hay que hacer es felicitarlos y que traten de transmitirnos lo que se hace ahí en un mar de agitación. Es muy pequeño y la productividad agraria es muy baja, es una sociedad altamente urbanizada. Son problemas de gran complejidad.

MH: También con aquellos que podrían hacerse del Chega, de lo que hicieron en otros países, como en la Argentina. En Chile, Colombia, Brasil, con las fuerzas derechistas [criticando al gobierno].

CK: Pueden hacer demandas para que la Argentina rompa el bloqueo. Tenemos la obligación [expresa a [Presidente] Alberto Fernández que repita lo que acaba de hacer López Obrador, enviando un buque cargado con alimentos y medicinas en un acto de solidaridad con Cuba que al mismo tiempo establezca el principio de una unidad latinoamericana que si se llegara a consumar podría estructurar un nuevo escenario anti bloqueo donde Cuba podría recostarse en la región latinoamericana y salir de esa asfixia que le impone EE.UU. Dicho todo esto, yo creo y estoy dolido con infinitas oportunidades sobre los problemas que tiene Cuba, pero si un gobierno argentino quiso hacer una política anti bloqueo donde Cuba podría recostarse en la región latinoamericana y salir de esa asfixia que le impone EE.UU. es lo que primero que uno debe definir. Desde allí se puede empezar a cuestionar y promover transformaciones en el proceso político Cubano. Si ese lugar no está definido, se abre en el aire y no se sabe a quién uno condena con su política.

MH: Una última pregunta, que tiene que ver con la nueva camada de dirigentes cubanos. Problemas graves fueron enfrentados por la vieja camada de dirigentes, los marxístas, el período especial, ahora hay una nueva camada. ¿Estarán a la altura de las circunstancias?

CK: No lo sabemos, y tenemos que juzgarlos con esta cautela que estoy proponiendo. Yo creo que ha una nueva generación en la dirección y también en el pueblo cubano, que tiene otras inquietudes, eso es absolutamente cierto. Pero creo que uno puede estar en contacto a través de internet con distintas expresiones políticas de Cuba y hay un panorama muy amplio, de opiniones y visiones distintas que recrean en Cuba las cuestiones que tenemos aquí o en otros lugares.

Los cubanos apuestan por la revolución

Hay una larga serie de personas que han reconocido la existencia de un malestar, al mismo tiempo muchos subrayan que el grueso de la población apuesta a la revolución cubana.

Hay una decisión cuando se dice que [las marchas del 11 de julio] son las primeras grandes marchas de las últimas décadas, como si todas las marchas que hacen el pueblo cubano para conmemorar sus gestas, fueran marchas que no valen. Solo las que convocan una oposición se cuentan y las demás no valen.

Es un criterio un poquito raro cuando se dice “el gobierno no debe convocar marchas”. El gobierno tiene todo el derecho a convocar a marchas y los que están con la revolución tienen todo el derecho a expresarse.

Hay que observar, analizar y, sobre todo, tener en cuenta que hay un acervo de pensamiento socialista presente en la isla, que es muy rico y que se lo observa cuando uno ve el tipo de análisis que se están haciendo en estos momentos.

Yo apuesto a que esta generación está a la altura de las generaciones anteriores, por un hecho. En Cuba, siempre ha habido una diferencia y, al enfrentar desafíos, siempre logró superarlos. A lo largo de mi vida he escuchado tantas veces diagnósticos pesimistas sobre Cuba, sobre cuánto iba a ser el fin de la revolución y el transcurso del tiempo nos ha sorprendido a todos con resultados muy superados en los presupuestos más pesimistas. Esta pista de resultados positivos e innovadores puede volver a emergir en Cuba y eso sería una gran noticia para todo el pueblo latinoamericano. (7)

Alex Saab remains defiant

By Roger Harris

These are the opening paragraphs of a letter on Aug. 26 update on the struggle to free Alex Saab, published in Resumen Latinoamericano. See Alex Saab’s own letter on his struggle, ‘No retreat, No surrender’ in Workers World, Aug. 23. (workers.org/2021/08/5358/)
¡La vivienda es un derecho!

Boletín, 31 de agosto: El Centro para el Control de Enfermedades (CDC) siguió en inglés, anunció que la moratoria de desalojo se extenderá otros 60 días en partes del país con “niveles suscetibles y altos de transmisión comunitaria” – alrededor del 96% de los EE.UU. Pero el 26 de agosto, el Tribunal Supremo de Estados Unidos dictaminó la anulación de la moratoria de desalojos del CDC, poniendo a millones de familias en riesgo de desalojo.

Tener un techo sobre la cabeza es un derecho humano fundamental.

La Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos de la ONU de 1948, complementada por posteriores convenios internacionales, reconoce el derecho a “una alimentación, un vestido y una vivienda adecuada”.

Se supone que los países miembros deben respetar esta carta. Sin embargo, incluso en países capitalistas desarrollados como Estados Unidos, millones de personas carecen de vivienda.

El año de los desalojos está a punto de comenzar debido al débil de la moratoria federal de desalojos del 31 de julio. Puesta en vigor por los Centros de Control y Prevención de Enfermedades en septiembre y prorrogada varias veces, la moratoria mantiene a millones de hogares a punto de desalojo.

Ahora, unos 3,6 millones piensan que es probable que se queden sin vivienda en los próximos dos meses, según la Encuesta del Piso de los Hogares de la Oficina del Censo, que hace un seguimiento del impacto de la pandemia. Más del doble de esa cifra declaró haberse retrasado en el pago del alquiler. Los desalojos crearían una emergencia de salud pública, con personas obligadas a vivir en refugios abarrotados, especialmente con el aumento de los casos de COVID a medida que se extiende la variante delta.

“La moratoria ha protegido a los inquilinos en apuros del desahucio, tanto si vivían en una vivienda pública como privada, siempre que pudieran demostrar que habían perdido ingresos durante la pandemia, que habían intentado obtener ayuda para el alquiler y que habían hecho un esfuerzo por pagar la mayor cantidad de renta posible”, explicaba el New York Times el 31 de julio. “Para muchos inquilinos y defensores, la extensión es un golpe especialmente doloroso porque sólo se ha distribuido una pequeña fracción de la ayuda al alquiler aprobada por el Congreso”.

De los $470,000 millones de dólares en ayudas al alquiler aprobadas por el Congreso, sólo se han distribuido $35,000 millones. Muchos de los que cumplían los requisitos para recibir la ayuda al alquiler debido a las dificultades económicas relativas a la pandemia, pero no pudieron ayudar a la ayudar, ahora deben alquilerlos atractivos que no pueden pagar. Sin embargo, el presidente Joe Biden se negó a julio de prorrogar la moratoria. Siempre se vendían desalojos masivos, los demócratas entran en reveso.

Al expiar la moratoria, los congresistas Cory Booker, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen y Alex Baldwin presentaron en las escaleras del Capitolio durante la noche para llamar la atención sobre el problema. Condensaron a los congresistas, que habían presentado los desalojos, que se habían decretado de reveso de veeran en lugar de quedarse el tiempo suficiente para extender la suspensión de los desalojos.

No todo el mundo quiere que se mantenga la moratoria de los desalojos. Proporcionaron poderosos teorizadores y organizaciones como la Asociación Nacional de Agentes Inmobiliarios presentaron demandas y ejercieron presión para tratar de poner fin a la moratoria antes del 31 de julio.

Los senadores republicanos Pat Toomey y Mike Crapo recibieron $183,000 y $281,000 dólares, respectivamente, de grupos inmobiliarios; ambos hablaron en el Congreso contra la moratoria el pasado diciembre.

Multinacionales como Jeff Bezos están obteniendo beneficios récord obscenos; el mercado de valores está en auge y el producto interno bruto se acerca a los niveles prepandémicos.

Pero, 9,5 millones de personas, la Oficina de Estadísticas Laborales, siguen oficialmente desempleadas. Muchos más están subempleados, mal pagados, obligados por la banca del COVID a quedarse en casa o han renunciado a buscar trabajo.

Controlar la pandemia del COVID no resolverá por sí solo la crisis de la vivienda. Según la National Low Income Housing Coalition, los trabajadores a tiempo completo que cobran el salario mínimo federal no pueden permitirse un apartamento en dos habitaciones en ningún lugar de Estados Unidos y sólo pueden permitirse una habitación en el 7% de los condados estadounidenses.

Los trabajadores con salarios bajos tienen que trabajar en más de un empleo sólo para poder permitirse una vivienda. Esto es criminal. Pero es lo normal en el capitalismo, porque las necesidades y los derechos humanos quedan en segundo plano frente a la obtención de beneficios por parte de las empresas.

Debe haber una moratoria sobre los desalojos y las ejecuciones hipotecarias, sin condiciones ni fecha de caducidad. Deben restablecerse inmediatamente los complementos temporales de las prestaciones regulares de desempleo. El salario mínimo debe ser un salario digno – un $15 dólares la hora no es suficiente!

Estos son demandas justas, pero la clase capitalista no las concederá ni buscará.

Friedrich Engels escribió una serie de artículos de 1872-73 sobre “la cuestión de la vivienda”. Sus palabras son relevantes hoy en día: “Solo mediante la solución de la cuestión social, es decir, mediante la abolición del modo de producción capitalista, se hace posible la solución de la cuestión de la vivienda.”

Entrevista con un economista argentino sobre Cuba

por Mario Hernández / Claudio Katz

Entrevista con Claudio Katz, de Economistas de Izquierda (EDI). Publicado por lahaime.org el 25 de agosto.

Mario Hernández: Hace unos días escribiste “Cuba inclina la balanza de la lucha mundial”, es un cálculo que dice que en seis meses de la variante delta—alrededor del 90% de los EE.UU. han contagiado con “niveles suscetibles y altos de transmisión comunitaria”. Es interesante el lugar que le das al bloqueo.

Yo creo que se creó una reacción defensiva frente a la agresión de EEUU y a esto se sumó Perú. El grupo de Lima [de regímenes pro-imperialistas latinoamericanos] quedó sin Lima y Perú se sumó a un proyecto de reconstruir la CELAC, recomponer la UNASUR y retomar el tema Cuba como punto de partida para un proyecto de sustitución de la OEA. Esa es la corriente progresista.

Pero hay otra corriente del progresismo que gira a la derecha y que está en el escándalo, por ejemplo, los intelectuales que firmaron una carta atacando a CLACSO [Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales] por no criticar lo suficiente al gobierno cubano, hay nombres de gente muy conocida por nosotros. Me refiero a Pablo Stefanoni y Horacio Taravì, por ejemplo [desde Argentina]. Ambos firmaron esa carta. Y después hay gente que le parece que ya no tenemos que hablar tanto del imperialismo, que no tenemos problema más que afronta un país. Es un caso único, de una pequeña economía de una pequeña isla aislada para una pequeña potencia que le impide comerciar.

Hay un cálculo que dice que en seis décadas de bloqueo, las pérdidas superan los 145,000 millones de dólares, porque Cuba tiene que pagar tres veces los fletes marítimos que cualquier otro país. Estos obligaciones se endeudan en forma adicional para poder comerciar.

Me parece que en ese escenario, es lmativo lo que ha logrado Cuba. No solo sobrepone pérdida de divisas, retracción del turismo, el impacto de la pandemia, así y todo tuve en este momento los logros insólitos, los avances en la vacuna Soberana, el primer país latinoamericano en producirlo, además es el país latinoamericano, luego de Brasil, con más logros en el medallero de las Olimpiadas de Tokio.

En estas condiciones a mí me parece que Cuba divide agua, en primer lugar en el progreso hacia una nueva época, una época progresiva que adoptó una postura de solidaridad y eso ha sido muy intere-

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