

With high-tech weapons to Ukraine

U.S. escalates war

By John Catalinotto

April 25 — Twice in the last week, the Biden administration promised to deliver \$800 million in heavy and technologically advanced weapons to Ukraine, for a total of \$1.6 billion, added to nearly \$3 billion earlier. The U.S. has coordinated deliveries from Canada, Britain and other NATO powers. These deliveries are just a beginning.

According to the U.S. government, the weapons involved include heavy artillery, drones that can fly themselves into targets and explode, anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons and tanks. And more ammunition of all sorts.

“The push now is to get countries [in Eastern Europe] with Soviet-era tanks, artillery and perhaps even fighter planes to provide them to Ukraine, with the promise that the United States will replenish them with more modern, Western-made arms in return.” (New York Times, April 20)

It is nearly impossible, except for military commanders, to learn what the actual military situation is in Ukraine. As in



Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and the Communist Youth (CNU) members block train with military equipment and U.S.-NATO combat vehicles exiting the port of Alexandroupoli April 10. Greek railway workers have blocked the transport of U.S. military equipment out of Thessaloniki.

PHOTO: KKE

of uncontested anti-Russian propaganda with the goal of demonizing Russia and its leaders. As in Bucha, a town near Kiev temporarily occupied by the Russian army, the imperialist media collaborated with the Ukraine regime to invent massacres or blow them out of proportion. (workers.org/2022/04/63341/)

Despite the lack of accurate information, some obvious conclusions can be made about the consequence of these weapons deliveries and the goal of the U.S.-NATO forces.

Washington aims to prolong war

The first conclusion is that the weapons deliveries show that Washington aims to prolong the war against Russia and will continue to use the Ukrainian population as cannon fodder in that war. Long before Washington orchestrated the 2014 coup in Kiev that brought an anti-Russia regime to power, its strategists had as a goal weakening Russia and changing the government there. Prolonging the war will kill or wound large numbers of Ukrainians and Russians.

The second conclusion is that the Biden administration is risking this step even though it can lead to a direct confrontation between U.S.-NATO forces and Russia. The current proxy war can escalate to a war between

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Resisting imperialist war 8

‘Take This War & Shove It’
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all wars, no one tells the truth publicly about their casualties and how precarious their forces are. U.S. corporate news reports about the results of battles have been skewed to exaggerate setbacks for the Russian army and glorify resistance from Kiev’s army.

Corporate news on the war in the U.S. and Western Europe have amounted to an avalanche

of uncontested anti-Russian propaganda with the goal of demonizing Russia and its leaders. As in Bucha, a town near Kiev temporarily occupied by the Russian army, the imperialist media collaborated with the Ukraine regime to invent massacres or blow them out of proportion. (workers.org/2022/04/63341/)

Despite the lack of accurate information, some obvious conclusions can be made about the consequence of these weapons deliveries and the goal of the U.S.-NATO forces.

Editorial International Workers Day 10



With Amazon Labor Union President Chris Smalls at the militant April 24 rally, Vice President of Organizing Derrick Palmer asserts: ‘Jeff Bezos, your time is coming! The people have spoken.’ Page 4.

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TEAR DOWN
THE WALLS

Melissa Lucio:
execution stayed

Happy birthday,
Mumia Abu-Jamal!

End death by
incarceration

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May Day means internationalism

Support Workers World!

May Day. Workers. Resistance. Solidarity. Fight back.

May 1 is International Workers’ Day. Although officially commemorated in 80 countries, it is not recognized in the U.S., where it originated in 1886 in Chicago during the struggle for the eight-hour workday. Its militant legacy is marked by protests by the global working class against capitalist exploiters. It is a day of solidarity with workers everywhere.

The class struggle is alive in the U.S., as shown by the hundreds of strikes in the last year. Workers are rising up in hospitals, schools, factories, coal mines, stores and eateries. Workers World applauds the successful worker-led union drives at a Staten Island Amazon facility and at about 30 Starbucks stores, with organizing drives at 220 or more eateries. These wins have spurred on more worker organizing around the country.

WW newspaper is partisan. We side with workers fighting for their rights. Their struggles are featured on our pages and in our bi-weekly column “On the Picket Line.” Not only does WW write about worker organizing, but our staff members join rallies and picket lines.

On this May Day, WW supports all workers, organized and unorganized. We express solidarity with the millions of workers, especially Black, Latinx, Indigenous, immigrants, women, other gender-oppressed people and those who are disabled, low-wage earners,



jobless or incarcerated.

WW agrees with May Day’s socialist founders: End capitalism! Fight for socialism!

Your help is needed!

If you appreciate our coverage, it’s time to join the Workers World Supporter Program or renew your membership. It was established 45 years ago so readers could help WW publish anti-racist, working-class truth and build campaigns needed to fight for revolutionary change leading to socialism.

Since the early 1990s, the fund has helped sponsor the workers.org website. Throughout the pandemic when fewer print issues have been produced due to staff health concerns, new articles have been posted daily at workers.org, where the weekly newspaper’s PDF has been displayed. Not one online issue has been skipped throughout this two-year health crisis.

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May Day 2020, at Amazon Labor Union protest, Staten Island, New York.

WW PHOTO

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the neverending quest for ever-greater profits.

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

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

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

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

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the workers and oppressed here and

worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you. □

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Vol. 64, No. 17 • April 28, 2022
Closing date: April 27, 2022

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

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

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



‘By Any Means Necessary’ Rally supports Palestinian resistance

By Richie Merino
New York City

Hundreds of protestors marched through midtown Manhattan streets April 20 in support of the Palestinian liberation struggle. They were rallying against Zionist attacks on the al-Aqsa Mosque, as well as cities and villages throughout occupied Palestine.

The demonstration began outside the Zionist Israeli consulate, as people gathered to hear activists from Within Our Lifetime-United For Palestine, Samidoun New York/New Jersey, Palestinian Youth Movement, Existence is Resistance and Decolonize This Place. The speakers and audience alike expressed full support for the Palestinian people’s struggle to liberate their land “from the river to the sea.”

Protesters then marched, waving Palestinian flags, shouting chants for liberation and return and carrying



New York City, April 20

WW PHOTO: TONI ARENSTEIN

banners: “Globalize the Intifada,” “Honor the Martyrs of Palestine” and “We Will Free Palestine Within Our Lifetime.” The demonstration was met with applause,

whistles and claps by passersby on the streets and at its endpoint at the public plazas at 59th Street and Fifth Avenue.

During times of increased Israeli aggression, a thunderous defense and support of Palestinian resistance is imperative in every way possible. Zionist attempts to weaken the collective Palestinian spirit and to undermine popular support and trust for Palestine will fail, when faced by solidarity with Palestinian resistance.

Those who marched affirm that we remain steadfast in our determination to liberate Palestine — including the 4,500 Palestinians incarcerated for their leadership in the liberation struggle.

We demand: End all U.S. aid to the racist state of Israel! Free all incarcerated workers struggling against the forces of Zionism!

We assert: Strength and victory to the resistance! Palestine will be free from the river to the sea! □

Defend Alice Walker

Anti-Zionism is not anti-Semitism

By Monica Moorehead

While the war in Ukraine — egged on by U.S. imperialism and its NATO ally — continues to dominate the mainstream media in the U.S. and globally, terrorist attacks on the Palestinian people continue unabated. Crocodile tears are being shed for Ukrainian refugees, but there is little-to-no sympathy being shown toward Palestinians who have suffered colonial oppression for decades.

These genocidal attacks, now carried out by the fascist Israeli Defense Forces, have been the bloody foundation that created Israel in 1948.

That year is referred to as the Nakba, or the catastrophe, by Palestinians — the year they were brutally forced off their ancestral lands. Most notable was the attack by far-right Zionist paramilitary groups on Deir Yassin, a village where close to 300 Palestinians were massacred April 9, 1948. Since the official “founding” of Israel on May 15, 1948, the U.S. has provided billions of dollars in military aid to this racist, apartheid regime.

This year, during the holy month of Ramadan, Israeli storm troopers raided the al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied East Jerusalem April 15, brutally assaulting Palestinian worshippers. Though much of the assault was videotaped and posted on social media for the world to see, the bourgeois media gave the attack scant attention compared to the barrage of imperialist propaganda about Ukraine. (Read “Palestinians resist Israeli attack on mosque,” April 20, workers.org.)

The roots of Zionism

The U.S. ruling class has always been united in its support for Israel. That military garrison state defends lucrative profits for capitalist interests in this oil-rich region — under the guise of being a safe haven for Jewish people. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Consider the fact that Theodore Herzl, known as the founder of Zionism, was an imperialist who greatly admired the despicable British colonizer of Africa, Cecil Rhodes. Herzl strived to become a member of the ruling class rather than identifying with poor Jewish people. Herzl was, in essence, a class collaborator and a vehement racist.

Herzl’s “dream” of a Jewish homeland was elaborated by Chaim Weizmann and backed by British imperialists, including “Christian Zionist” A. J. Balfour, who wanted a permanent European wedge in the region of Islamic nations. The 1917

Balfour Declaration, signed by British imperialists, declared Palestine a “national homeland” for Jewish people. This was a cover to bring in Zionist settlers to set up an armed state and forcibly displace hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

The U.S. ruling class has always been one of the biggest promoters of anti-Semitism. Many, like Henry Ford, were not-so-secret supporters of Adolph Hitler. As Jewish people were attempting to escape the horrors of Nazism during World War II, the U.S. issued a strict quota on how many Jewish people would be allowed to come into the U.S., turning thousands away.

In 1975, the United Nations General Assembly approved Resolution 3379 that stated: “Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination.” With the collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries, the U.N. voted to repeal this resolution in 1991.

Alice Walker under attack

Despite the oppressive history of Zionism, anyone or any organization — like the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement — which expresses one iota of solidarity with the Palestinian people is falsely accused of being anti-Semitic.

Most recently the Pulitzer Prize-winning African American novelist and activist, Alice Walker, was disinvited from participation in the Bay Area Book Festival in San Francisco, May 7-8. Why? For simply supporting the Palestinian people’s right to return to their lands. The festival organizers claim that her actions are “anti-Semitic.”

Despite bigoted efforts to censor the BDS movement or activists like Alice Walker, they refuse to be silenced in their solidarity with the Palestinians, who continue to courageously resist the Zionist occupiers, especially in the occupied territories in Gaza and the West Bank.

An online petition in solidarity with Alice Walker reads:

“We, the undersigned, include a growing list of community leaders, writers, artists,



Alice Walker

journalists, academics, workers, social justice advocates and organizations who call on the Bay Area Book Festival to immediately reinstate their invitation to lifelong civil and human rights fighter, anti-war activist, feminist and world-renowned Pulitzer Prize-winning author of ‘The Color Purple,’ Alice Walker, to participate in their May 7-8, 2022, annual festival in Berkeley, California.

“We strongly condemn the Bay Area Book Festival’s decision to cancel Alice Walker’s participation based on spurious charges of anti-Semitism that falsely equate opposition to discriminatory policies of Zionist Israel with hatred of Jewish people.

“We stand unequivocally against the Book Festival’s shameful and slanderous statements — which are just the latest in a long line of concerted Zionist attacks on prominent Black intellectuals who espouse solidarity with the Palestinian people. Attacks on other Black people prominent in public life include, but are not limited to, Angela Davis, Michelle



New York City, April 20

PHOTO: SHANZA DEEN

Alexander, Marc Lamont Hill, Cornel West and even the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

“We assert that defense of the Palestinian people, who suffer the daily horrors imposed on them by the racist, colonial, apartheid, settler state of Israel, has nothing in common with the despicable views and practices of Jew-hating anti-Semites, whose vitriol and violent deeds increasingly permeate political life in the U.S. and around the world.”

Alice Walker’s motto is “Activism is the rent I pay for living on this planet.”

Go to standwithalicewalker.org to sign the petition.

Portland says: ‘¡Cuba sí, bloqueo no!’

By Lyn Neeley
Portland, Oregon

May 23 — Carlos Lazo, a teacher and outspoken Cuban American activist, drove from his home in Seattle to join the Portland End the Blockade of Cuba Committee in their monthly rally.

Last July, Lazo was one of six Cuban Americans who walked 1,300 miles from Miami to Washington, D.C., to call for the lifting of the illegal U.S. blockade of Cuba. They presented President Joe Biden with a petition signed by over 25,000 people.

In July 2020, Lazo made a 3,000-mile bicycle trip from Seattle to the U.S. capital with four family members. They met with community groups and elected

officials along the way. Arriving in D.C., Lazo asked then-President Donald Trump to lift his increased sanctions on Cuban families.

In addition to working for the end to all U.S. sanctions, Lazo wants to see airline flights restored to Havana and to all of Cuba’s regional centers, renewal of a program of family reunification and the reopening of the U.S. Embassy in Havana. □



Portland, Oregon, April 23.

WW PHOTO: LYN NEELEY

ALU organizes movement for second union vote

By Monica Moorehead
Staten Island, New York

An earth-shattering victory was won April 1 by the Black, rank and file-led Amazon Labor Union to organize a union at Amazon’s JFK8 warehouse — the first such win against Amazon in the U.S. On the heels of this historic victory, the largest ALU rally to date was held April 24 outside JFK8 in Staten Island.

Hundreds of unionists and supporters, including representatives from the progressive movement, cheered as speaker after speaker expressed their wholehearted gratitude to and solidarity with the ALU, which has uplifted and changed the social landscape of the entire labor movement.

The rally was anticipated even before a second union vote for ALU got underway April 25-29 at Amazon sorting warehouse LDJ5, near the now-unionized JFK8 facility.

This second union drive at Amazon facilities is so significant that seasoned organizers with the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Union (UE) from North Carolina, Virginia and Chicago traveled



Chris Smalls and Sara Nelson at ALU rally, April 24.

to Staten Island to help do outreach to Amazon workers before the vote and to be present at the epic rally as well.

ALU president Christian Smalls chaired the rally. Speakers included U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders; Sara Nelson, international president, Association of Flight Attendants-CWA; Kshama Sawant, socialist Seattle city council member who pledged \$20,000 to ALU; Charles Jenkins, president, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, New York City chapter; Randi Weingarten, president, American Federation of Teachers (AFT); Jessica Roberts, state senator, Queens, New York; Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, U.S. representative, New York District 14; a delegation of Amazon workers; and others.

May Day at Union Square

Larry Holmes, representing Workers Assembly Against Racism, invited everyone to attend the May Day rally and march, May 1 at Union Square, New

York City. Holmes stated that the ALU, Starbucks Workers United and other unionizing efforts and victories will be celebrated there. He urged that all workers of all generations come to support these youth-led revolutionary campaigns that are scaring the bosses — like Jeff Bezos, Howard Schultz and others on Wall Street — to death! □



Larry Holmes, center, with UE organizers, Charles Brown and Chris Hollins, April 24.

Union surge puts serious pressure on NLRB

By Martha Grevatt

When it comes to busting unions, there’s no shortage of tricks that a boss will use to mislead and intimidate potentially pro-union workers. High on the list are mandatory “captive audience” meetings. Up until now the National Labor Relations Board has allowed companies to require attendance at these meetings — held when workers are on the clock — and force workers to suffer through a negative, one-sided presentation.

While workers seeking union representation wait weeks or months for the NLRB to schedule an election, a union-busting corporation such as Starbucks or Amazon can use the wait time to propagandize in favor of a vote against the union. Facing retaliation — even firing — if they do not attend, workers really are held captive during these obligatory sessions.

One might think this would be illegal under Section 7 of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, which grants “the right to self-organization,” and Section 8(a) which deems it an Unfair Labor Practice for an employer “to interfere with, restrain or coerce employees in the exercise of the rights guaranteed in

Section 7.” (nlrb.gov)
Now at long last, NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo purportedly agrees. In an April 7 memo to the Board, she states: “The Board years ago incorrectly concluded that an employer does not violate the Act by compelling its employees to attend meetings in which it makes speeches urging them to reject union representation” and adds she “will urge the Board to correct that anomaly.”

Abruzzo cites a 1948 case allowing the mandatory meetings. Now she has counseled the Board to abandon that 74-year-old precedent.

Four days later on April 11, Abruzzo’s office filed a brief in a current case, involving the Teamsters union (IBT) and a West Coast cement company that could have an even greater impact for workers trying to unionize. The brief called on the NLRB to “revisit its decision in Linden Lumber Div., Summer & Co. and reinstate the doctrine under Joy Silk Mills, Inc., prospectively, because the Board’s current remedial scheme has failed to deter unfair labor practices during union organizing drives and provide for free and fair elections.” (aboutblaw.com/2wC)

Why now?

What is significant about the Joy Silk doctrine — which came out of a 1949 case but was overturned in the 1974 Linden Lumber case — is that it mandated that an employer generally had to recognize a union by “card check.” Before the 1974 ruling, if a majority of workers signed union authorization cards, the company could only require a secret ballot election if it demonstrated a “good faith doubt” that a majority of eligible employees had actually signed cards.

There are currently many examples of unions collecting cards signed by a majority of workers, only to later lose a representation election. The NLRB election process gives the boss time to misinform and scare enough workers into voting “no.”

If the NLRB votes to ban mandatory captive audience meetings and/or reinstate Joy Silk, that will give unions a huge advantage in organizing campaigns. But until the Board votes, it’s union busting as usual.

Abruzzo, formerly on the legal staff of the Communications Workers union (CWA), was appointed NLRB general counsel in February 2021, after President Joe Biden fired Trump appointee Peter B.

Robb. However, there have been plenty of attorneys in her position who were appointed by Democratic presidents, yet took no action to reverse Board practices that undermined unions. Why now?

What has made a change is the current labor upsurge being led by Starbucks and Amazon workers. Even before the memo and brief from Abruzzo’s office, some unions, including the Teamsters, were weighing the idea of skipping the election process altogether and going on strike if an employer refuses to recognize the union via card check.

A political appointee is not so likely to make concessions to labor, when there is a lull in the class struggle — but the same individual may feel compelled to take a progressive position when unions are on the move.

In fact, the NLRB might be overwhelmed by the growing number of workforces filing for representation elections. Since April 1 alone there have been over 200 separate filings, 15 just on April 21. The surge in the month of April includes over 50 Starbucks stores across the country.

Clearly, the class struggle is putting tremendous pressure on the ruling class. □

Seattle Rolling the Starbucks union on

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

Starbucks workers from across the Seattle area and the U.S. marched and rallied April 23 against union busting. Starbucks billionaire CEO Howard Schultz’s “break the union” campaign has led to many firings, followed by strikes and more organizing.

The Seattle action was organized by insurgent Starbucks Workers United (SWU), along with the office of City Councilperson Kshama Sawant, and was supported by Socialist Alternative, the Democratic Socialists of America and a number of unions.

The march celebrated a tremendous union victory April 21 at the coffee giant’s flagship Seattle Roastery on Capitol Hill, which does a \$20-million retail business annually. That store is nine blocks from the original Pike Place Starbucks.

With 100 workers eligible to vote, the workers voted 38-27 to certify unionization through the National Labor Relations

Board with SWU.
This hit Schultz in the heart of the Starbucks empire — that Seattle facility was the first roastery he opened, in 2014. A Roastery worker said Schultz visited this store himself two or three times a week, for a long time.

The chanting workers marched from Capitol Hill to Westlake Center downtown. There were solidarity contingents from the Seattle Education Association, Service Employees Union Local 925, United Auto Workers Local 4121, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 46 and the Alphabet Workers Union of Google, along with other groups.

Council member Sawant applauded the local SWU win and, as well, as the huge recent victory of the Amazon Labor Union in Staten Island, New York. She supported the call for a joint national action with SWU and the ALU on upcoming May Day — or any other time in the future.

Many Starbucks workers there had been fired for organizing, like those from

Michigan and Overland Park, Kansas, but said they were continuing to organize. Beto Sanchez of the Memphis 7 — organizing committee members who were fired — related the Memphis connection to a history of struggle. Some of the young workers joining the Starbucks union had grandparents who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King and the striking sanitation workers in 1968, just before his

assassination.

Many of the workers from the Seattle, Olympia and Marysville, Washington, stores had had successful three-day strikes the previous week. Starbucks worker-organizers spoke who had come from Kansas City, Kansas; Phoenix; New York state; Michigan; and western Washington state.

They were all together in Seattle, as the workers ‘roll the union on!’ □



Hundreds march in Seattle in support of workers unionizing at Starbucks and Amazon, April 23.

WHEN WE
FIGHT
WE WIN!

On the picket line

By Marie Kelly

Doctors unionize

By a vote of 209-59 in favor, the resident physicians at the University of Vermont Medical Center have become the newest members of the Committee of Interns and Residents (CIR). The National Labor Relations Board held the union election at UVM, after the hospital declined to recognize the union despite over two-thirds of the resident staff signing union membership cards. (Seven Days, April 14)

CIR is a local of the Service Employees Union (SEIU) and has over 20,000 members across the U.S. Resident physicians are the backbone of medical staff at university hospitals. They work long hours, especially in the evening and overnight “off” hours, when attending physicians are not available. Even with changes to residency work hours set in 2003, many resident doctors still work 80 hours a week, and sometimes they work for 30 hours straight. (cirseiu.org)

Resident union members share a common concern with nurses’ unions. How can they properly and safely care for sick people if they are overworked and stressed from the incredible toll the pandemic has taken?



Nurses union rallies at University of Vermont Medical Center, Aug. 25, 2021.

Resident physicians are essential members of the working class, and it is right that they seek collective bargaining rights to push back against hospitals that continue to value profits above their workers.

Grad students want credit

Graduate Students at Fordham University in New York City voted by a landslide to join the Communications Workers of America (CWA). The NLRB tally was 229 in favor of unionizing and only 15 opposed. The graduate students are fighting for a pay increase, better health care benefits and child care. They need a formal grievance process, since they are often exploited by universities who consider them a cheap labor pool.

Graduate student duties at Fordham include teaching classes, tutoring students, supporting faculty members’ work, organizing workshops and providing administrative assistance. The union drive also highlighted the precarious position of international graduate students, who are often prevented from working in the summer.

The push to form a union gained momentum during the pandemic when graduate students bore the task of setting

Essential workers win big

Worker power and union clout were forces that the Realty Advisory Board in New York City had to reckon with in order to avert a strike of essential building workers, who are members of Local 32BJ of the Service Employees Union (SEIU). The contract for the “32,000 doorpersons, superintendents, resident managers, handypersons, concierges and porters” was due to expire, and a strike was set for April 21. The last 32BJ residential building workers’ strike was over 30 years ago and lasted 12 days.

The contract still needs to be ratified by the rank and file, but negotiations have guaranteed a 12.6% wage increase, \$3,000 bonus, 100% employer-paid health insurance with no premium-sharing for union members and protected paid sick leave and vacation days.

Union President Kyle Bragg said: “We got a deal done that our members have earned and deserved. This contract honors the indispensable contributions that 32BJ members made throughout the pandemic and includes pay bonuses — a powerful recognition of our members’ sacrifice.” (Eyewitness News ABC, April 20) □

Atlanta Apple store workers move to unionize

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

April 27 — Shock waves were no doubt felt at tech giant Apple headquarters when workers at the Cumberland Mall Apple retail store in Atlanta made national news with the announcement that they had filed for an National Labor Relations Board election — the first Apple store to do so in the U.S.

According to a press release issued by the Communications Workers (CWA), more than 70% of the 107 employees at the store have already signed union cards.

One worker voiced excitement at the union push with a request to get a photo of this writer in her “Power to the Workers” face mask during a visit to the store.

Derrick Bowles, a member of the union organizing committee, said the first Bessemer, Alabama, drive at that Amazon warehouse in 2020 had inspired him to think seriously about the need for a union at his workplace.

Although these workers are skilled at dealing with customers’ technical questions and requests at a fast pace, their pay is less than what they need to afford the current outrageous housing costs, the

rising price of food and other necessities. And like most workplaces, work conditions and lack of respect by management are matters of worker discontent.

Almost simultaneously with the Atlanta organizing, workers at the Grand Central Station Apple store in New York City announced their intentions to unionize.

There is no doubt that the deteriorating conditions of workers, literally worldwide, along with the bold and successful victories of Starbucks Workers United and the Amazon Labor Union, have motivated many workers to think: “If they can do it, so can we!” □



WW PHOTO

Dianne Mathiowetz at solidarity rally for Amazon workers, Bessemer, Alabama, Feb. 6, 2020

From ‘The Manifesto of the Communist Party’

By Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

These excerpts are from the edition posted at marxists.org and attributed to Marx/Engels “Selected Works,” Vol. One (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969). This 1888 translation was by Samuel Moore in cooperation with Friedrich Engels, who footnoted the opening sentence: “That is, all written history. In 1847 the pre-history of society, the social organization existing previous to recorded history, was all but unknown.” Engels adds he develops this perspective in “The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State,” using the research of Lewis Henry Morgan, based on knowledge shared by Ely Parker, Seneca Nation, on still existing matrilineal, pre-class societies, specifically of the Haudenosaunee Confederation in central and western New York state.*

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.*

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at

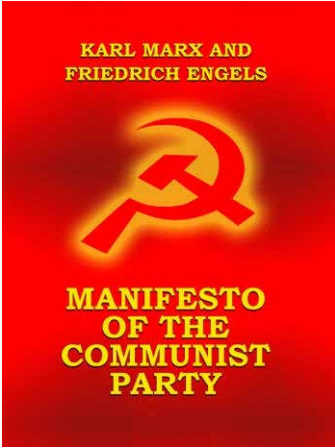
large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other — Bourgeoisie and Proletariat. ...

The workers begin to form combinations (Trades’ Unions) against the



bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there, the contest breaks out into riots.

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the

ever expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry, and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another.

It was just this contact that was needed to centralize the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And that union, to attain which the burghers of the Middle Ages, with their miserable highways, required centuries, the modern proletariat, thanks to railways, achieved in a few years.

This organization of the proletarians

into a class, and, consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. ...

The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air. ...

The essential conditions for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labor. Wage-labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association.

The development of modern industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable. □

Happy birthday, Mumia!

By Betsey Piette and Gloria Rubac

Political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal’s 68th birthday was celebrated worldwide April 24. The day honoring the veteran Black Panther was marked with in-person and virtual demonstrations, celebratory events, film showings, letter writing and teach-ins in New York City; Boston; Oakland, California; and in Mexico, France and Germany.

Black Power Media broadcast an all-day “Happy Birthday, Mumia!” special. Love Not Phear and the Cops Off Campus Coalition held an all-campus teach-in and call to action from the Paul Robeson House in Philadelphia—historic home of that earlier internationally famed Black revolutionary from 1966 until 1976.

In the neighborhood in Philadelphia

Mumia’s birthday was specially celebrated with a “Give Back to the Community” in this city where he grew up.

At the Richard Allen housing project in North Philadelphia, organizers with Love Not Phear Philadelphia and other Mumia supporters swept stones and debris from



Food donated to residents of Mumia’s community, Philadelphia.

a small lot where they set up soccer nets, which were later donated to the community along with other sports equipment. There were tables loaded with dozens of bags of groceries distributed to community residents, plus free books for both children and adults.

In the weeks prior to the event, organizers had gone door-to-door to let residents know to expect them. The area is surrounded and threatened by gentrification.

There was face painting for neighborhood children. Videographers from Spirit of Mandela were on hand to interview participants and neighborhood residents. T-shirts were sold at discounted prices.

A highlight of the day was when two of Mumia’s friends and former classmates at Stoddart Fleisher Junior High School and Benjamin Franklin High School came out to share their fond memories of Mumia, why they believed he was innocent and how he was framed. They pointed out the house

where Mumia grew up. One brought out their junior high school yearbook from 1968, which included Mumia’s picture and two pieces he wrote, as Wesley Cook, at age 14. One called for the term “Black” to be used instead of “Negro” in a reflection on the need for Black involvement in the movement initiated by Dr. Martin Luther



Houston

King Jr. The other was a poem on self reflection.

During the event the film crew from the Spirit of Mandela hung a large red, green and black banner on a wall visible from the street. It read: “We still charge genocide.”

With activists in Houston

Activists joined together to celebrate Mumia Abu-Jamal, watch a film on his life, “Long Distance Revolutionary,” sing “Happy Birthday,” read poetry and greetings from Texas death row activists, and eat pizza and birthday cake.

It was an afternoon of joy and concern. Joy that Mumia is still alive after years on death row and in prison. Concern

that Mumia is living on “slow death row” with a myriad of serious health issues.

The gathering was sponsored by the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement; the Harris County Green Party; Workers World Party; Party for Socialism and Liberation; the Brown Berets of Houston, Tejas; Justice or Else Houston Organizing Committee; and the National Alumni Association of the Black Panther Party.

The following message of solidarity was posted on Twitter by Within Our Lifetime (@WOLPalestine): “On July 3rd, 1982, Mumia Abu-Jamal was unjustly sent to death row by a racist system. Today on his 68th birthday we join the global call to demand freedom for Mumia and all political prisoners, from Pennsylvania to Palestine! #40YearsInPrison” #FreeMumia #FreeThemAll

Activists in Philadelphia are organizing for a major demonstration in Center City July 3, to mark the 40th anniversary of Mumia’s unjust conviction and sentencing. They are calling on the movement to hold events that day in at least 40 cities. □



Philadelphia

Pennsylvania Prisons

A fight for humane release policies

By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

Bradford Gamble is out of prison after serving 46 years and is now living with his nephew, Shaquan J. Jordan, in West Philadelphia. He is terminally ill with metastatic colon cancer that has spread to his liver. Gamble is one of only 33 people in the last 13 years who have successfully petitioned the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to release him because of illness.

Gamble was arrested in 1976, when he was 19 years old, and sentenced to spend the rest of his life in prison, with no chance of parole. He says he deeply regrets his past actions, which caused the death of another person, and thinks about this every day. He is far from the rash teenager he was 46 years ago.

A terrible choice

The 66-year-old Gamble won his release because of the help of Bryant Arroyo, another incarcerated person, who informed him of a little-known state law that allows terminally ill people to be let out of prison—but only if they have less than a year to live. For those sentenced to a life term, it’s one of the only ways they can get out of prison.

Rather than get treatment to prolong his life and stay in prison, Gamble decided to refuse medical treatment so he could die at home instead of behind bars. He has six months to a year left to live. If his health improves, the DOC or a state prosecutor could send him back to prison.

“The statute is drafted so narrowly that it forces you to make decisions like forgoing

lifesaving treatment in order to get even the possibility of medical transfer,” said Rupalee Rashatwar, an attorney with the Abolitionist Law Project, a public interest law firm that represented Gamble in his transfer petition. Rashatwar is working to help more seriously ill people get out of prison before they die.

End life terms without parole

Abolitionist activists are trying to get laws passed that would put an end to life sentences without the possibility of parole. In Pennsylvania, 13.4% of people in prison are sentenced to life terms without parole, compared to a 3.6% average in other states.

This and other sobering statistics compiled in a Families for Justice Reform report are driven by two state laws: the mandatory minimum sentence of life imprisonment required for first- and second-degree murder charges; and the denial of parole eligibility to anyone with a life sentence. (tinyurl.com/yckrwxym)

By 2019, because of these and other severe sentencing policies, Pennsylvania courts had imprisoned more than seven times the number of people they incarcerated in 1970.

Harsh sentences target the oppressed

These laws are racist. While Black residents compose 11% of Pennsylvania’s population, an astounding 65% of those sentenced to life terms are Black. As a result of decades of these draconian white-supremacist sentencing policies, the prison population of those 50 years of age or older increased from 351 people in 1979 to 10,706 in 2019. This is a 30-fold increase!

There is no rational reason to imprison people for so many decades, especially after they reach the age of 50. The fact is that only 1% of those released at age 55 or older are reincarcerated within three years. Among people previously convicted of murder, the reimprisonment rate fell to as low as 0.4%.

Not only are activists and relatives of incarcerated people campaigning to end life sentences without parole, but there is an effort to persuade state legislators to pass a compassionate release policy for elderly and ill people.

Rally to abolish death by incarceration!

The Coalition to Abolish Death by Incarceration is one of many Pennsylvania organizations demanding that legislators support bills that would allow “our loved ones” the opportunity to come home from prison. The organization is mobilizing for a mass statewide “Second chances keep our communities safe” rally in front of the state capitol in Harrisburg, on May 25. (fb.me/e/35LtHD98)

Thousands of people remain in Pennsylvania’s prisons even if they are ill, were imprisoned decades earlier and are no longer considered a threat to the public. It’s a burden on people in prison and their families. And it costs the state \$2.3 billion



Joe Piette and Bradford Gamble

a year to feed, house and provide medical care for incarcerated people.

Gamble told his supporters a few days after his release, “I didn’t make it out here just to say, oh, I’m home. Family, friends, it’s lovely. It’s beautiful. But I got more to do.” Wanting to inform health care workers about medical abuse in the prisons, he stressed: “I’m a human being. And I deserve to be treated as a human being. I want you

all to know that there are things going on behind closed doors.

“People like me are not being treated as human beings. We’re being treated like cattle. We’re being treated like nonfunctional robots. The DOC medical department is 100% wrong in their way of treating us. We need people to know and understand that. I’m out here now, but I never left the prison mentally, because a lot of the people I love are still there. And they need your help.” (workers.org, March 22)

A month later, Gamble participated in a panel via Zoom on April 20 alongside Celeste Trusty, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Board of Pardons, and State Senator Sharif Street. He joined panel members in urging legislators to pass SB835, which would replace the current restrictive compassionate release law and establish more flexible parole opportunities based on age or illness. □

Supporters rally to stop Melissa Lucio’s execution

By Gloria Rubac

April 25 - Melissa Lucio was granted a stay of her April 27 execution by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, to consider evidence of her innocence.

A National Day of Action for Melissa Lucio was held from coast to coast in the U.S. on April 23. Lucio, the first woman of Mexican descent on Texas’ death row, has lived in relative anonymity since being wrongfully convicted of capital murder in 2008 in the tragic death of her young daughter.

Now she is facing execution April 27 for a crime that never occurred. Lucio has maintained her innocence for 14 years.

From Atlanta to Boston, Cleveland to Los Angeles, and throughout Texas — Austin, Houston, Brownsville, Dallas, El Paso, Harlingen and San Antonio — the rallying cry was “Free Melissa! Stop the execution!”

In Houston, as well as in other cities, family members and supporters of Lucio participated. Activists spoke there with local and national media, with both English and Spanish language TV present. □



At the Plaza Guadalupe, Houston, April 23. WWW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

WW COMMENTARY

Cops terrorize child, protect a bag of Doritos

By Minnie Bruce Pratt
Syracuse, New York

By now you’ve probably seen the video, if you can bear to watch yet another horrifying, racist police assault on a person of color. Three massive white cops are terrorizing and shoving around — an eight-year-old Black child.

A week ago, in this city where I live, Kenneth Jackson videotaped the cops manhandling and shoving the wailing boy into a patrol car. Jackson challenged the police repeatedly, saying, “What are y’all doing? He looks like a baby to me, and you’re snatching him off the street. What are y’all doing? For a bag of chips, you treating him like a — cold-blooded killer.”

The cops are defiant, barking “Keep walking,” “He’s stealing,” “Are you going to pay for what he takes?” Jackson says, “Yes, he’s a kid!” And in the background someone, maybe another child, says, “It wasn’t him.”

The cops drive off with the child, whose fate is unknown to those watching.

For all we know, he will be suddenly, “accidentally” dead like Tamir Rice, who was 12 years old when he was killed by cops for just being a boy, fiddling with his toy gun, in a playground in Cleveland.

Or almost asphyxiated, like the 12-year-old Black girl in Kenosha, Wisconsin, this March, when a cop knelt with his knee on her neck — the same “subduing” move that killed the adult George Floyd in nearby Minneapolis. Or body-slammed, like a young Black girl in 2021 by a white “resource” officer in Florida. Or handcuffed with extensive

injuring force, like the 10-year-old Black girl seized by a white cop in Honolulu in 2020. (The Root, April 21)

Like any of the thousands of Black children hurt and killed by the forces of white-supremacist “law” and vigilantism in the U.S. over the last 400 years.

Since then, the Syracuse police chief has resigned — with no reference to this outrage as a reason. His replacement defended the cops as doing “Community Policing 101.” Excused because they didn’t handcuff or arrest the eight year old, but “took him home” — to intimidate his father, who works two jobs, takes care of a sick wife and tries to keep his family together.

Yes, this is “community policing” — where it is blatantly obvious that the cops’ job is to protect property, not people. Three cops throwing an eight-year-old child around because of a bag of Doritos.

And did anyone ask the child if he were hungry? The Census Bureau ranks Syracuse number one in child poverty in the U.S. for a city its size. (syracuse.com, March 27) The city school in my neighborhood has an entire “resource” room filled with backpacks, shirts and

pants, sneakers, socks, soap, deodorant, toothbrushes, shampoo, barrettes, school supplies. Because the school not only feeds the children, the teachers clothe and care for children who come to school every day with nothing.

Terrorizing a child over a bag of Doritos is the early stage of a police technique to beat down and subdue the resistance of people who have been oppressed beyond the breaking point. In some states, legislation is actually being passed to prohibit the teaching of historic resistance against racism — called the anti-CRT laws.

This time the child got home alive — likely thanks to Mr. Kenneth Jackson, who kept insisting “What are y’all doing?” and focusing his camera, his questions and his anger.

It’s past time to let our anger flow and focus against this white-supremacist, exploitative, child-hating capitalist system — and against the cops who enforce its property and profit.

Time to focus on building a movement united in solidarity that will permanently abolish the racist police, abolish capitalism and build toward socialism to ultimately provide a sustaining life for all people — “from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs.” □



Breakfast is handed out at Dr. Weeks Elementary School, Syracuse, New York, with the highest child poverty rate of any city its size in the U.S.

Community marches for justice for Patrick Lyoya

By Sam Tunninggly

This article appeared in the April 13 online issue of Fightback News! (fightbacknews.org/) Four police videos of the killing of Patrick Lyoya were released that day. On April 22 Lyoya’s funeral service took on the character of a political rally with hundreds attending and Black political leaders demanding justice. Audience members carried signs and wore t-shirts with the assertion, “It’s our right to live,” in English, Swahili and French, spoken in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Grand Rapids, Michigan - A crowd of hundreds marched to the Grand Rapids City Commissioners meeting, April 12, to demand both the release of the raw video showing the murder of Patrick Lyoya and the arrest of the still-unnamed killer cop. Lyoya was a 26-year-old Congolese immigrant executed by the Grand Rapids Police Department last week [April 4 – WW]. In the days after his death, citywide mourning and protests against the police have increased and are expected to surge after the release of the video this Wednesday.

The police department has continued

to stall the footage, while the city insists it is acting in full transparency. Patrick’s father, Peter Lyoya, said the video shows his son murdered “execution style” on the ground. The family has said the narrative of the department, that there was a “struggle,” runs counter to the facts.

The Royal Black Panther Party of Grand Rapids organized the march to the meeting. It was attended by hundreds of community members and weaved through all the major streets of downtown. “Say his name! Patrick Lyoya!” and “You can’t stop the revolution! GRPD is not the solution!” echoed through the city.

Before the protest, barricades were erected around the police station. A few of the businesses downtown have boarded up their windows with “Patrick Lyoya” painted on the plywood.

The protesters stopped in front of City Hall and were led through chants of “I am! A revolutionary!” and “Black power!” before crowding into the building. Demonstrators were led up in groups due to capacity limits, while the rest stayed on the first floor to continue chanting and watching the livestream in an overflow room.

City Manager Mark Washington, near the beginning of the meeting, said

the video will be released tomorrow at 3 p.m. during a livestream with the police chief, who will “provide context” for the images. The video provided Wednesday will be compiled from nine different sources. GRPD Chief Eric Winstrom released a statement warning the video has “graphic images resulting in the loss of life” and will be tagged with an age restriction on the city’s YouTube page.

During public comments, calls for the release of the video, the arrest of the unnamed killer cop and the resignation of the entire commissioner board were prevalent. A few speakers acknowledged their continued presence at the meetings over the past few years, and the city’s inaction in resolving the GRPD’s brutality, which has left local activists with physical injuries and mental trauma.

Commissioners were called out by name for failing to do their jobs and for their “crocodile tears” now that the attention is on them. One local woman said her husband was murdered by the GRPD, and her 12-year-old child was too traumatized to attend the meeting. The meeting lasted well over four hours. Further protests were scheduled for after the release of the video. □

COMMENTARY BY MUMIA

Another life, another loss

April 19 — They came to America to escape from interethnic wars in the DRC, the Democratic Republic of Congo, in central Africa. Like many refugees of war, they thought that America was the land of peace. The Lyoya family settled in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and began living their lives as refugees have done for generations.

But something as small as a traffic incident revealed the limits of the land of peace. When 26-year-old Patrick Lyoya faced a traffic stop, he apparently felt unsafe after a cop stopped his vehicle. He bursts into a sprint with a cop in hot pursuit. When the cop pulls a Taser, Lyoya seems to cover it with his hands, thus blocking its effect.

Someone points a phone cam at the altercation, which shows a cop seemingly on Lyoya’s back, pushing his head downwards. A shot is heard, and Patrick Lyoya is gone, dead from a bullet in the back of his head. Once again, driving while Black is a capital offense.

For Love not Phear, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

These commentaries are recorded by PrisonRadio.org.

‘Take This War and Shove It’

The coming of age of a Vietnam War military resister

By John Catalinotto

“Take This War and Shove It — A Most Unwilling Soldier 1967-1971,” by Greg Laxer, *Unbearable Truth Publications, 2021, 327 pages, gregorylaxer.com.*

That Greg Laxer, who most of us in the American Servicemen’s Union office circa 1968 knew as “the Shadow,” should write and publish a memoir of that period, is no surprise. Like the more famous “Shadow” — the old-time radio-drama namesake of his protective pseudonym — he “knew the evil that lurked” in the hearts of Pentagon generals, and he was ready to expose it to the world.

Even in 1968, Laxer had a reputation of being the most stubborn of a spiny group of determined iconoclasts in the ASU, a characteristic vital for writing and producing a book about his experiences.

Laxer was one of a group of antiwar heroes this reviewer had the privilege to know and/or work with, those at the visible apex of the iceberg of resistance in the ranks of the military, those who were among the first to resist and keep resisting. What these leaders represented terrified the Pentagon’s officer corps — at least those capable of understanding the politics of what was happening — who finally decided they wanted a professional army.

A voyage through the 1960s

To be effective and worthwhile, a historical memoir must be honest, as accurate as possible, and it should take the readers through the same voyage the author took, exposing the author’s feelings at each moment of crisis.

Besides accomplishing this, Laxer’s memoir is a valuable and fascinating political, literary, musical and psychedelic voyage through the 1960s, written by an acute observer of

his own voyage, as seen looking backward 50 years later.

What helps Laxer’s memoir succeed is his access to an excellent source of personal and chronological truth. During much of the time he was in the U.S. Army, 1967-71, Laxer wrote letters to his parents. His mother kept and stored the letters. As a resource, they are better than a journal and far better than the coverage by the U.S. corporate media.

Not that he always told all the truth to his parents. No, but as he reread them for the memoir, he remembered what he was hiding from them or why he was doing it, which was mainly to protect them from his pain. He remembered how he felt when he wrote them. The reader who pays attention will feel it too.

In a letter to his parents at the time of his first confrontation in the Army, Laxer wrote that his attorney “thought accepting the Article 15 wouldn’t be a bad idea, but I said it would equal abject surrender. I convinced him that he couldn’t dissuade me from making a stand at a trial.” (p. 102)

Laxer displayed his stubbornness repeatedly in his memoir. Other antiwar soldiers might have accepted their lawyer’s advice to plead guilty to a minor infraction, instead of forcing a court-martial they were doomed to lose. Laxer never accepted what appeared to be a practically wise tactic if he believed it violated his principles.

Embracing the ‘enemy’

While getting experience as a medic at Valley Forge General Hospital in Pennsylvania in 1969, Laxer had to fill out a form for the \$5,000 insurance payment in 1969 should he be killed in combat. He wrote, “I designate as my beneficiary ‘The National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.’” (p. 117)

From the family letters you can find a bibliography

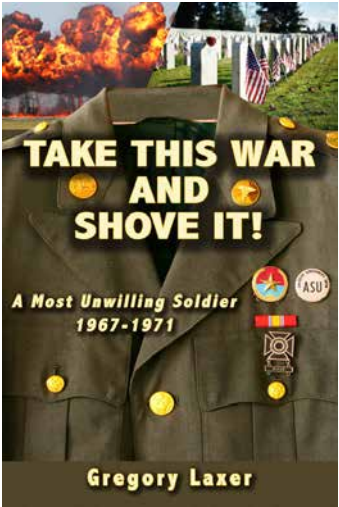
of revolutionary ideology that Laxer devoured during those years. Marx, Lenin, Malcolm X and Franz Fanon were on the list. Anyone interested in the music of that period would find an equally impressive discography of the protest musicians, jazz players, composers and other popular artists of the time.

At the start of his Army experience, Laxer was a committed pacifist. After a few years of reading and the direct contact with Pentagon reality, his voyage led him to understand the necessity for oppressed peoples and nations to resist U.S. imperialism, with arms if necessary. His pantheon of heroes included Ho Chi Minh.

Always short on money — most of which he spent on books and records — to get a ticket to Hawai’i and join the sanctuary struggle there in August 1969, the AWOL Laxer typed an authentic-looking military order to report to Honolulu and used it to board a flight.

He was present at some of the biggest struggles in the military during his four years, from Oahu, Hawai’i, to Fort Ord, California, to the Fort Dix Stockade in New Jersey. Anyone who wants to learn how the Vietnam War affected this individual — and many different personalities who made a similar voyage — should pick up this memoir.

Catalinotto was circulation manager for The Bond, the newspaper of the American Servicemen’s Union from 1968-70, and is author of “Turn the Guns Around — Mutinies, Soldier Revolts and Revolution.”



COVER DESIGN: GREGORYLAXER.COM

U.S. aims to push China into war over Taiwan

By Jorge Cadima

Article first published in Avante, the weekly newspaper of the Portuguese Communist Party, April 21. Translation: John Catalinotto.

It is evident that the U.S./European Union wants to prolong the war in Ukraine as long as possible. But war-mongering is also evident at the other end of the planet: The U.S. is repeating the Ukraine script in Taiwan.

Contrary to the words of respect for China’s territorial integrity uttered during the video-summit between Presidents Xi [Jinping] and [Joe] Biden in March, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and third in the U.S. hierarchy of power, Nancy Pelosi, announced a visit to Taiwan, which was postponed, allegedly by COVID-19. A week later, six U.S. legislators “from the military, intelligence, foreign affairs, justice and finance

committees” (globaltimes.cn, GT, April 15) visited the Chinese island, including the hawk of all wars, Lindsey Graham. Already in March there was a visit by senior U.S. military and intelligence officials.

Arms are being sold to the island, which is not even officially recognized as a country by the U.S. itself: \$750 million last year (thedefensepost.com, Aug. 6, 2021); \$100 million in February (CNN, Feb. 8); \$95 million in April (Al Jazeera, April 6).

While the flames of war are burning in Ukraine, it would seem logical not to instigate new hotbeds of conflict. That’s how it would be if decadent imperialism did not want war. But it does. And just as it pushed Russia into the Ukraine war, it is trying to push China into a war over Taiwan.

The Global Times states that “the deceptive nature and duplicity of U.S. policy toward China is fully exposed.” (GT, April 9) The Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs



Soldiers of the People’s Liberation Army of China with their country’s flag.

demanding that Pelosi not only postpone, but cancel the visit. (GT, April 9)

The Chinese response also took the form of military maneuvers, which the April 15 GT describes thus: “The People’s Liberation Army is ready for combat and will take all necessary measures to resolutely crush any attempts at interference by external forces and secessionist initiatives [. . .] so as to preserve national sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

Meanwhile, the U.S. strives to destabilize Pakistan and threaten India, “guilty” of not going along with the strategy of sanctions and warmongering against Russia. (GT, April 12)

Militarism is always accompanied by lies and authoritarianism. Público, the newspaper of Big Capital that has defended all the wars of imperialism, including the invasion of Iraq, is indignant at those who raise suspicions about war propaganda. Suspicions [were] expressed by the former U.S. and U.N. disarmament inspector, Scott Ritter, who directly witnessed Iraq’s lies. Ritter claims to be convinced that the Bucha massacre was a provocation, in which “the Ukrainian National Police murdered Ukrainian civilians,” then blamed “the Russians.” (consortiumnews.com, April 13) For arguing that position, he was suspended from Twitter.

Those who think that censorship is due because of the Ukraine war should remember Julian Assange, arrested in Britain long before Ukraine, for exposing the crimes and lies of imperialist wars. War and lies are in the DNA of the system — which today threaten to lead humanity into catastrophe. □

Stop U.S. war games!

‘One dream to reunite Korea’

By Brenda Ryan

A march calling for reunification of Korea and an end to U.S.-South Korea war games rallied in New York City on April 23. The protest began at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza with chants of “Stop the U.S. war machine from North Korea to the Philippines,” “No more war drills” and “End the Korean War — 70 years is enough.” People proceeded to the Republic of Korea Permanent Mission to the United Nations and then formed a human chain to the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to the U.N. to unite the two Koreas.

“Since our division in 1945, we’ve always had one dream to reunite Korea,” one of the organizers told the crowd. But, they added, U.S. war games, which take place several times a year on the Korean Peninsula, are “driving 80 million Koreans to fear and despair, destroying any hope for inter-Korean relations.”

Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center, said it is U.S. missiles, bases and war games, which are really U.S. war threats, that maintain this

division: “The whole world owes a debt to the Korean people because they have proven that it’s possible to resist U.S. imperialism; it’s possible to rebuild, to stand strong and stand together.”

The event was organized by the 615 N.Y. Committee for Reunification of Korea with the support of numerous organizations, including the International Action Center and Workers World Party. □



New York City, April 23

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

Arrests, kidnappings and ‘decommunization’ in Ukraine

By Otis Grotewohl

The Western corporate media has been working overtime to demonize and disparage Russian President Vladimir Putin following the Feb. 24 Russian intervention in Ukraine.

Whenever imperialist powers have their scopes set on overthrowing a sovereign government, they tend to follow a predictable trend, such as crying foul over “human rights,” questioning the mental capacity of its highest-ranking leader and making cliché comparisons to hated historical figures like Hitler, regardless of context. The current vilification campaign against Putin — and the xenophobic attacks against Russian people that go along with it — are perfect examples of this deliberate propaganda campaign.

On the flipside of a media barrage of Russophobia, there is the uncritical promotion of Ukraine, and even Ukrainian nationalism, which ignores the atrocities committed by the current government in Kiev. Rarely stated is the fact that the Ukrainian government is the product of an illegitimate 2014 coup, carried out by fascist hooligans with the financial blessing of the U.S. and NATO.

Now since early March, several Ukrainian dissidents — opponents of the Kiev regime — have either been arrested or kidnapped by the government Security Service of Ukraine, known as the SBU, and the Western media has been silent. A Grayzone April 17 article claims, “Pro-Western monitors, including the United Nations Office of the High Commission and Human Rights Watch, have accused the SBU of systematically torturing political opponents and Ukrainian dissidents with near-total impunity.”

“The U.N. OHCHR found in 2016 that ‘arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment of such conflict-related detainees were common practice of SBU.’ ... A former Kharkiv SBU officer explained, ‘For the SBU, the law virtually does not exist, as everything that is illegal can be either classified or explained by referring to state necessity.’”

The mysterious case of Gonzalo Lira

Anti-imperialist activists around the world were relieved on April 22 to discover that Chilean journalist Gonzalo Lira was still alive, after Lira had gone missing in Ukraine exactly one week before. People first became alarmed when he did not appear on his scheduled slot of the “The Galloway Show,” hosted by antiwar former Member of the British Parliament

George Galloway, on April 17.

Lira is a critic of the post-coup regime in Kiev, as well as its president, Volodymyr Zelensky. In a chilling March 26 tweet, Lira wrote, “You want to learn the truth about the Zelensky regime? Google these names,” and he dropped names of several other Ukrainian critics who have been kidnapped or murdered by the SBU. He concluded: “If you haven’t heard from me in 12 hours or more, put my name on this list.”

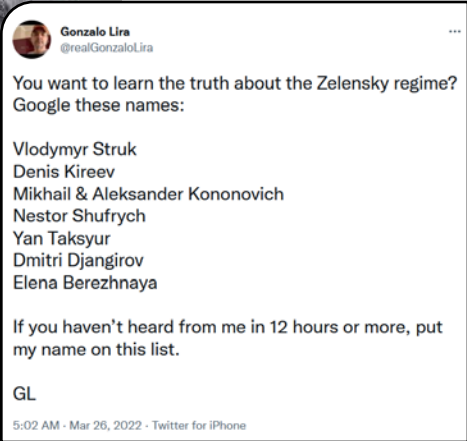
On the day Lira resurfaced, he appeared on a podcast hosted by Alex Christoforou of The Duran and said, “I’m in Kharkiv. I was picked up by the SBU on Friday, April 15. I’m okay physically. I’m a little rattled. There are a lot of other people who are frankly more deserving of attention. Those people matter more. We don’t know where they are, and some of them have been killed.”



Gonzalo Lira’s March 26 tweet

community. Taksyur was rounded up by SBU forces in Kiev on March 10 and detained without any official charges. (Union of Orthodox Journalists, March 13)

The next-to-last person Lira lists in his tweet is Dimitri Djangrov, a Ukrainian journalist and businessperson. The last person named is Elena Berezhnaya, a famous Russian pair skater.



On March 19, Russian official and triathlete Dmitry Polyanskiy tweeted, “We are extremely worried about the fate of Ukrainian human rights defender and anti-fascist activist Elena Berezhnaya, who was taken by #Ukraine’s Security Services (SBU).” Much like the Kononovich brothers, there is little information regarding the status of Djangrov and Berezhnaya.

‘Denazification’ vs. ‘decommunization’

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has stated that, in addition to recognizing the autonomy of the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics of Donbass, Russia is fighting Nazi influence in Ukraine and a propaganda crusade to make Stepan Bandera — a Nazi collaborator during WWII — a national hero throughout Ukraine. (Newsweek, Feb. 28).

During World War II, most Ukrainians sided with the USSR and not with the Nazis, despite current attempts to make Bandera some kind of hero.

Now Ukrainian officials have been bragging about “decommunization,” a pro-capitalist attack against socialism that started with the counterrevolution against the Soviet Union in 1991 and that intensified shortly after the 2014 overthrow of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych.

According to a report from the Indian Marxist journal, The International, “Decommunization rules were introduced in 2015 to prohibit communist iconography, and the electoral commission

decided that the Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU) would not be allowed to run in the 2019 elections.” (March 10)

As part of its “decommunization” campaign, Zelensky personally announced March 20 the suspension of 11 moderate to left-wing political parties in Ukraine. The parties barred are Opposition Party-For Life, Shariy Party, Nashi, Opposition Bloc, Left Opposition, Union of Left Forces, State, Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine, Socialist Party of Ukraine, Socialists Party and Volodymyr Saldo Bloc.

The targeting of some of these parties threatens the security of the trade unions affiliated with them, despite Zelensky being portrayed as a “liberal darling” by the West.

Statues and monuments representing national liberation, socialism and workers’ power have been destroyed throughout Ukraine. Workers World has featured articles about the destructive and murderous actions of anti-communist forces within Ukraine since the destruction of the USSR, including interviews with people who fought back against those forces of reaction in 2014.

In May 28, 2021, a Workers World article, “U.S., EU threaten Belarus while defending pro-Nazi forces,” pointed out how reactionary Belarussian oppositionist Roman Protasevich joined the pro-Nazi Azov Battalion — the official regiment of the Ukrainian National Guard — for a 2014 photo op of this group destroying a statue of Bolshevik revolutionary leader, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

Recently a statue of Lenin taken down by the Ukrainian government in 2015 was reconstructed two days before the late revolutionary’s 152nd birthday. On April 20 “Coordinamento Ucraina Antifascista” posted a photo of the statue on Facebook with this comment: “Under the flag of Victory, the statue of Lenin restored after the liberation of the city of Genichesk, in Kherson region.”

There is a crusade of Ukrainian nationalists and proponents of Stepan Bandera to silence their critics, ban moderate-to-left opposition and even murder some of their challengers. Unfortunately, there are many progressive-minded people, particularly in the West, who are reaching erroneous conclusions and pointing blame in the wrong direction.

Genuine anti-imperialists and Marxist revolutionaries who care about the Ukrainian and Russian working classes and oppressed peoples need to demand: Self-determination for People’s Republics in Donbass! No arms to Ukraine! Disband NATO! □

U.S. escalates war

Continued from page 1

major world military powers, armed with thousands of nuclear weapons. It can lead to World War III.

A windfall for the merchants of death

A third conclusion is that the arms deliveries provide a windfall of profits for the military-industrial complex, first and foremost for U.S. arms manufacturers and their investors.

“Last week,” reported the April 20 NY Times, “the Pentagon met with leaders of eight large military contractors, like Raytheon Company and Lockheed Martin Corporation, to discuss how to overcome any supply problems — both to replenish American weapons stocks that have been drawn down to help Ukraine and to keep Kyiv [Kiev] in the fight. The two companies together make the Javelin [anti-tank

missile], and Raytheon makes the Stinger [anti-aircraft]. ... The Pentagon has urged manufacturers to ramp up production.” [emphasis added]

Note that billions have been allocated without reluctance by the same administration, and Congress has so far refused to forgive student debt, finance housing for the houseless, guarantee extended unemployment insurance or pay for all necessary medical care.

The Biden administration — seconded by the Republican leadership, which is equally responsible for the U.S. drive to war — pushes this dangerous policy of arming the Kiev regime while disguising its role of using and manipulating the Ukrainian people against Russia.

Biden claims the U.S. will avoid direct involvement in the war. Yet each step prolonging the war creates forces — from the arms manufacturers to the most

belligerent anti-Russian elements in Eastern Europe, to Ukrainians who feel “betrayed” by the manipulators in the West, to U.S. generals who think the goal should be victory for Ukraine — that will push toward escalating the war.

And at some point the Russian government may take countermeasures. “The Russian government recently sent a formal warning to the United States, saying that Western deliveries of the ‘most sensitive’ weapons systems to Ukraine could bring ‘unpredictable consequences.’” (NY Times, April 20)

A movement has already begun in Europe to protest the arms

deliveries and the escalation of the war. Antiwar forces in the U.S. should continue to mobilize with the demands: No arms to Ukraine! U.S. out of Europe! Disband NATO! □



Antiwar protesters rally in front of the White House, Washington, D.C., Jan. 27.

May Day message Workers and oppressed people of the world, unite!

Corporate advertisers change their slogans regularly. How many of us remember “Look for the golden arches?” We can date ourselves by what we can recall.

But it’s a different story with the slogans of the working class. “An injury to one is an injury to all” has stood the test of time. The same with the chorus of U.S. labor’s most famous anthem: “Solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong.”

The slogan that has resided on this paper’s masthead for decades is “Workers and oppressed people of the world unite!” It’s not new. Over 100 years ago, V.I. Lenin modified the famous call in the Communist Manifesto of 1848 by adding “oppressed people.” He deemed it necessary to include the masses of colonized nations who were not yet part of the working class, but for whom only a socialist revolution could bring true national liberation.

Today we remind ourselves that the struggle of the most oppressed for liberation is part and parcel of the fight for socialism. Solidarity against national oppression — racism and white supremacy in the U.S. — and other forms of special oppression is how we build

working-class unity. It’s part of building a global, classwide movement to bring down the capitalist system of exploitation.

International Workers Day — May 1, May Day — is when, on the same day all over the world, workers demonstrate their power. The day was declared in 1889 at a socialist conference and recognizes a mass protest three years prior, where workers, many of them immigrants, demonstrated in Haymarket Square in Chicago for the eight-hour workday. Eight workers and union leaders were framed by the state of Illinois for the killing of a police officer; five paid the ultimate price.

‘We have shown that we can win’

For decades May Day, recognized around the world, had barely been celebrated in the U.S. In 2005 the Million Worker March Movement led a May Day march in New York City. In 2006 millions of immigrant workers held a general strike, one of the few political strikes and by far the biggest in U.S. labor history. May Day is now again commemorated every year across the country.

This past year has witnessed a marked increase in the number of strikes and

union drives. In the U.S. Starbucks and Amazon workers have led the way. With organizing drives at 220 or more Starbucks stores, workers have filed for a union election with the National Labor Relations Board at about 30 eateries, and so far the union has won at all but one store. The Amazon Labor Union (ALU) won its first — and definitely not its last — election at a warehouse in Staten Island. This is a Black-led union with many immigrant members from all over the world.

In a joint May Day statement, Starbucks Workers United and the ALU said: “From Buffalo, New York, to Memphis, Tennessee, to Staten Island, New York, and Bessemer, Alabama, Seattle, Mesa, Arizona, and everywhere else, we remain persistent and determined to continue to fight for a better workplace and a better world. With many major victories, we have shown we can win. But it is only possible when we unite together in our



Starbucks workers hold walkout over safety, Ithaca, New York, April 16.

PHOTO: STARBUCKS WORKERS UNITED

common interests.”

Last year total union membership in the U.S. fell by 300,000 members, continuing a decades-long pattern of decline. But so far this year, at nearly 1,000 different workplaces, workers have filed for a union election. The filings are trending upward, with over 200 so far in April. (nlrb.gov)

Labor’s fortunes are about to be reversed by a new, youth-led working-class upsurge! This is part of a global resurgence of the class struggle, with mass strikes in India, Haiti, Colombia, France and other countries over the past year.

Lenin’s call to action is hardly out of style. Workers and oppressed people of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains! □

French election Xenophobe loses, banker wins

By G. Dunkel

Emmanuel Macron, the candidate for Forward the Republic (La République En Marche [EM]), won the second round of France’s presidential election with 58.54% of the vote. His opponent Marine Le Pen, the candidate for the National Rally (Rassemblement National [RN]), got 41.46% of the vote.

The two bourgeois parties which have alternated in running France ever since de Gaulle instituted the Fifth Republic in 1958 have evaporated. Their pitiful descendants together got less than 6% of the vote in the first round of the presidential elections April 10. That meant they neither made the second round nor

received government funding.

Macron’s record is filled with attacks on the working class. He raised taxes on gasoline and diesel, which set off the Yellow Vest movement at the end of 2018. This movement produced tens of thousands of protests, mainly in rural areas of France, over a broad range of issues — fuel prices, a tax on wealth, police violence and raising the minimum wage. It’s estimated that 3 million people participated. Macron’s government had police fire rubber-coated bullets at demonstrators, injuring thousands, many of whom lost an eye.

Macron changed the labor law so that it was easier to fire workers. He tried to raise the age of retirement.

One common charge against him is that he is “a president of the rich,” unsurprising considering his career as an investment banker at Rothschild & Co. He has vigorously pursued neocolonial interventions in the African countries which are former French colonies.

Le Pen’s xenophobia

Le Pen proposed laws making it legal to discriminate against people whose national identity is not French. She advocates legalizing discrimination against Muslims—there are around 6 million Muslims living in France—against women (with a total ban on abortion) and against immigrants.

She has made a big point of promising to improve workers’ incomes by lowering the value-added tax—a sales tax—on consumer goods.

In her concession speech after the results were announced, Le Pen said that although she didn’t win, the far right did have a victory of sorts in that over 40% of French voters supported it. But while over 40% of French voters who went to the polls did indeed support Le Pen, the number of voters who stayed home, or cast blank or spoiled ballots, was the highest since 1969. Many progressives refused to vote for either candidate.

The Greens, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the Republicans all issued calls for their supporters to vote for Macron, to create a “republican bloc” against the far right.

Jean-Luc Mélenchon and his party, La France Insoumise (France Unbowed), who narrowly missed the second round coming in a close third to Le Pen in the first round, called for

“no vote for Le Pen” but refrained from endorsing Macron.

Calls for a third round

A group of trade unions considered to be moderate has called for a major push at the May Day events to defend the interests of all French workers.

A group of small left parties and anarchist groups have called for a Third Round of struggle in the streets. In Toulouse, Marseille, Strasbourg and Paris, hundreds of people came out to protest and confront the police April 24 after the results were announced.

Putting forward their version of Round 3, Mélenchon and France Insoumise, along with the Union de la Gauche (Coalition of the Left), have announced a campaign for Mélenchon to run for the post of prime minister in the parliamentary elections in the middle of June.

Like the presidents of the United States, Russia and Turkey, the French president wields major executive powers, but the French president cannot be impeached or forced to resign. The French prime minister runs the government and is responsible to the National Assembly. And the Assembly can hold a vote of no-confidence and remove the prime minister at any time.

Nevertheless, the president’s decrees need the prime minister’s signature. While the prime minister is appointed by the president, the National Assembly must accept the person. If a party other than the president’s controls the National Assembly, the president must choose that party’s candidate.

The class struggles that have been roiling France the past few years will continue, despite the election results. □



When President Emmanuel Macron spoke in the central square of Figeac, a small town in southwestern France, April 22, the last day of campaigning, his security censored any critical signs. But people in the apartments around the square dropped this banner: ‘When everything is privatized, we are deprived of everything.’

WW COMMENTARY

How class oppression drives climate crises

By Mirinda Crissman

Originally published in Workers World, Sept. 30, 2020, this article is even more timely after Earth Day 2022. The U.S. proxy war in the Ukraine — and the continuing COVID-19 crisis — are being used by the Biden administration to excuse backing away from environmental promises of the 2020 campaign trail.

After pledging to make the U.S. carbon neutral by 2050 and to exempt federal lands from drilling, Biden has auctioned off large swaths of federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico to oil companies eyeing profits to be made, since Russian oil is under U.S. sanctions. Global supply chain problems during the pandemic are pushing manufacturing back into the U.S., with accompanying capitalist pressure loosening environmental safeguards. Crissman indicts this “greed and violence of a few hurtling us all toward environmental collapse.”

Climate emergencies and U.S. imperialism have quite a bit of overlap. Both are increasingly displacing the living at home and abroad on an almost unbelievable scale.

These conditions are creating migrants and refugees, who have to stay on the move to survive. To stave off climate annihilation induced by capitalist crisis, priority must be given to Indigenous land stewardship, food sovereignty for the masses and abolishing debts.

Displaced people and migrants in general are falsely blamed for much of the world’s scarcity. But there are more than enough resources to go around to take care of everyone. Scarcity exists because a handful of people own, hoard and amass wealth at the expense of the people who created it. While this small ruling class is the source of much suffering, hundreds of years of individualistic social conditioning in capitalist society obscure the fact that more people are closer to poverty than they will ever be to becoming millionaires.

The displaced migrants face food

insecurity, unemployment, homelessness and lack of adequate health care, water, electricity and sanitation, among other issues. During the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimated 40 million people in the United States — the richest country in the world — find themselves on the brink of homelessness and facing many of the exact same conditions migrants face globally.

Military, police and climate emergencies

What the U.S. military does abroad, internal law enforcement like police do to people at home. They will forcibly displace people, whether through armed force or eviction notice, so that the ruling class can make another dollar.

Also increasingly displacing those living at home and abroad are climate emergencies. Rising global temperatures from capitalist production on stolen land — particularly overproduction and overreliance on fossil fuels like coal, oil and natural gas — have led to extreme weather. Wildfires and hurricanes are becoming more and more frequent in displacing the living.

Native people successfully practiced stewardship of these lands for thousands of years with controlled burns and sustainable agriculture. Their forced displacement was a driving, if not the major, factor in producing misery in order to profit the few.

Land mismanagement and rising temperatures have led to drier forests and deserts primed for fire and dust storms, as well as an increase in heat energy released via hurricanes. Excessive capitalist oil production pollutes and heats up the air — which has no borders — and the waters and land. Fractured earth, ruined natural springs and aquifers, inland flooding, melting ice and rising sea levels are all “gifts” from colonial land mismanagement.

The U.S. military is one of the world’s largest consumers of oil. This armed body is guilty of displacing the living by driving climate crisis in its consumption of fossil fuels — in addition to displacing the living through violent, antagonistic conflict.

A recent report put out by Brown University’s Costs of War project conservatively estimates that U.S. wars since 9/11 have forcibly displaced at least 37 million people in and from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, the Philippines, Libya and Syria. This exceeds those displaced by every earlier war since 1900, with the exception of World War II. Other data suggest that the total displaced by U.S. post-9/11 wars could be closer to 48 to 59 million people.

Deaths from imperial intervention, in addition to direct combat, have been calculated to be as high as 3.1 million, with injured and traumatized folks extending into the tens of millions. (tinyurl.com/CostsOfUSWarOnTerror, Sept. 21, 2020)

The greed and violence of a few is hurtling us all toward environmental collapse. More and more of us will find our situations resembling the struggle of migrants globally. There are millions, even billions, of us whose collective survival depends on our ability to remake the world. What has been built by colonizers can be dismantled.

Capitalists have been “stewards” of the planet by force only in recent history. Indigenous peoples were true stewards of the land, living in harmony for thousands of years before all this destruction. And they know how to do it again.

Abolish private property on stolen land! The earth can provide for everyone’s basic human needs. Given all that we are facing with the many crises of capitalism, there is much work to be done. As long as work is dictated by what makes bosses and the ruling class money, people’s needs won’t be met. And we will see more forced migration and misery.

Engaging in explicitly anti-colonial projects is the way forward. And we can look to those who have successfully begun to do so, like Thomas Sankara.

Thomas Sankara and agroecology

Dr. Amber Murray explains: “The revolutionary transformation of the West

The U.S. military is one of the world’s largest consumers of oil. This armed body is guilty of displacing the living by driving climate crisis in its consumption of fossil fuels — in addition to displacing the living through violent, antagonistic conflict.

African country Upper Volta to Burkina Faso (what is known as the August Revolution of 1983) occurred during a previous neoliberal crisis, that of the 1980s African debt crisis. Sankara vehemently and publicly denounced odious debt and rallied African political leaders to do the same.

“Sankara’s politics and political leadership challenged the idea that the global capitalist system cannot be undone. During four years as the president of Burkina Faso, he worked with the people to construct an emancipatory politics informed by human, social, ecological and planetary well-being.” (Pambazuka News, May 5, 2016)

One of the many successful projects spearheaded by Sankara in Burkina Faso included the centering of food sovereignty through a system of agroecology. Agroecology encourages “power-dispersing and power-creating” communal food cultivation that enhances “the dignity, knowledge and capacities of all involved” and the regeneration of the environment. (From the documentary “Sur les traces de Thomas Sankara,” 2013) Other successful projects included the planting of 10 million trees across the Sahel, as a means of beginning to repair colonial suffocation that made the land more arid.

Sankara met an untimely demise, due to his revolutionary ideas and ways to remake the world. His spirit and ideas live on in revolutionary struggle that dares to win a world beyond the confines of capitalist-induced death. □

MUNDO OBRERO editorial

Se busca: un lugar seguro para dormir

Durante la oleada de tiroteos públicos masivos de las últimas semanas -desde Sacramento, California, hasta Syracuse, Nueva York-, un ataque del 12 de abril en el metro de Nueva York recibió una atención frenética. Los medios de comunicación difundieron videos de transeúntes que conmocionaban con gritos y sangre.

Pero el ex-policia, alcalde de Nueva York, Eric Adams, sólo ha tenido una “solución” para los problemas de la gente que vive en la ciudad: Imponer la “ley y el orden” enviando más policías. ¿Más conflictos en los lugares públicos? Su respuesta fue redistribuir a la policía de los puestos de trabajo a las calles.

El propio tirador de Nueva York, Frank James, diagnosticó lo que realmente hay que arreglar. James grabó horas de video en las redes sociales sobre su propia lucha contra el trastorno de estrés postraumático y la imposibilidad de acceder a un tratamiento, diciendo: “Sr. Alcalde, permítame decirle: Soy una víctima de su programa de salud mental en la ciudad de Nueva York”. (New York Post, 13 de abril)

Tras el ataque, el alcalde Adams tuvo que admitir finalmente que se necesitan más “camas psiquiátricas”. Pero lo que en realidad ha estado haciendo es atacar a la gente oprimida y trabajadora que lucha



Siete personas sin hogar y sus simpatizantes, que defendían un campamento en la avenida D y la calle Novena, fueron arrestados cuando la policía pasó a demoler el espacio vital en el East Village, Nueva York, el 6 de abril.

contra la falta de vivienda, el desahucio, la aplastante carga de trabajo y la falta de atención sanitaria de cualquier tipo, física o mental.

Este alcalde de la “ley y el orden” está renovando la vieja política de “ventanas rotas” del alcalde derechista Rudy Giuliani: hacer la ciudad “segura” para los turistas y para aquellos cuya riqueza es cada vez mayor.

Adams ha puesto a los policías a disolver campamentos de desamparados, destrozando sus escasas pertenencias. Hasta el 1 de abril, los policías habían “limpiado”

-demolido- unos 250 asentamientos de indigentes. Una ley que prohíbe dormir en el metro da a los policías vía libre para amenazar y desalojar a las personas que buscan refugio allí. (Amsterdam News, 7 de abril)

Siete personas sin hogar y simpatizantes, que defendían un campamento en la avenida D y la calle Novena, fueron arrestados cuando la policía entró para demoler el espacio vital en el East Village, Nueva York, el 6 de abril.

Durante los dos años de la epidemia de COVID-19, los propietarios de Nueva York han solicitado el desalojo de más de 100.000 personas. La misma tendencia es evidente en todo Estados Unidos. Los desalojos perjudican de forma abrumadora a las madres solteras, las personas mayores, las personas de color y los pobres. Son las personas con menos recursos, las que probablemente se refugien en algún lugar de la red de metro y en campamentos sin techo. (evictionlab.org/eviction-tracking)

Incluso los trabajadores alojados son ahora vulnerables si duermen la siesta al volver a casa de un trabajo, un acto habitual en el metro a lo largo de su historia.

La policía puede echar a una persona dormida en cualquier parada. Lo único que tiene que hacer la policía es

“aconsejarles que busquen ayuda”. ¿Y dónde está la ayuda?

Los policías no están para ayudar, y menos para “servir y proteger” a los trabajadores. Los policías existen para proteger la propiedad y proteger a los dueños de la propiedad - la clase capitalista.

En los últimos años ha habido acciones militantes para apoyar y ayudar a los pasajeros del metro de Nueva York que tienen problemas de discapacidad. Los grupos organizadores han sido The People’s MTA, Rise & Resist, People’s Power Assembly-NYC, la Straphangers Campaign y el Brooklyn Center for the Independence of the Disabled. También han participado miembros de Disabled In Action, TransitCenter y UP-STAND, un grupo de defensa de las mujeres embarazadas y las familias.

Ahora es el momento de la acción de base para defender a los usuarios del metro que están desahuciados, sin vivienda, neurodivergentes o que necesitan servicios de salud física o mental. Y sí, para defender a los trabajadores cansados que sólo necesitan dormir en el metro yendo y viniendo de sus agotadores trabajos.

¡No a los desahucios! ¡Nada de policías del metro! ¡La vivienda y la sanidad son un derecho para todos! □



FOTO: CARLOS GARCIA GRANTHON

Huelga Climática Mundial en Perú, 24 de septiembre de 2021.

Los palestinos resisten el ataque israelí a la mezquita

Por Richie Merino

Las fuerzas de ocupación israelíes asaltaron violentamente a los fieles palestinos el 15 de abril, durante las oraciones matutinas en la mezquita de al-Aqsa, en la Jerusalén oriental ocupada. El ataque premeditado y orquestado se produjo el segundo viernes del Ramadán, el mes más sagrado del año para los musulmanes, cuando decenas de miles de fieles se desplazan a al-Aqsa para rezar. Las fuerzas de ocupación israelíes hirieron a más de 153 palestinos y detuvieron a más de 400 durante el brutal asalto.

Según el Centro Palestino de Derechos Humanos (PCHR), miles de fieles sufrieron intimidaciones al entrar en las puertas del recinto de la mezquita en medio de una fuerte presencia de las fuerzas de ocupación israelíes, incluidos francotiradores encaramados en la azotea. Dado el largo historial del régimen israelí de aterrorizar a los palestinos durante el mes sagrado del Ramadán, los fieles habían colocado barreras de madera alrededor de la mezquita en

previsión de una incursión israelí.

Poco después de concluir la oración del amanecer, las fuerzas israelíes que ocupaban el tejado rompieron las vidrieras de la sala de oración de la mezquita y tendieron una emboscada a los fieles, disparando balas de acero recubiertas de goma, gases lacrimógenos y granadas de aturdimiento contra la multitud.

Los palestinos resistieron la violenta embestida durante cuatro horas antes de que las fuerzas de ocupación israelíes desalojaran finalmente la sala de oración y los patios de la mezquita de casi todos los fieles. Múltiples vídeos publicados en las redes sociales muestran a fuerzas israelíes fuertemente militarizadas lanzando granadas aturdidoras dentro de la mezquita y golpeando y pateando brutalmente a los palestinos hasta someterlos. Un vídeo



Día Mundial de Al-Quds

muestra a las fuerzas israelíes arrodillándose sobre la parte superior del cuerpo de los fieles mientras los maltratan y los detienen por la fuerza.

Mientras tanto, en el exterior de la sala de oración, la policía israelí bloqueó la entrada al recinto y disparó balas de goma contra los paramédicos mientras corrían a socorrer a los heridos. “Golpearon a todo el mundo. A los periodistas,

a los médicos, a las ancianas... a todos los que se interponían en su camino. No perdonaron a nadie”, dijo el testigo Fakhri Abu Diab a Middle East Eye. Las fuerzas israelíes dispararon balas de goma a los ojos de los guardias de al-Aqsa que intentaban ayudar a las mujeres y los niños atrapados en el fuego cruzado. Otro vídeo inquietante muestra a un agente de policía israelí golpeando con un garrote a una mujer palestina desarmada que intentaba documentar

violaciones de derechos humanos.

Francesca Albanese, la recién nombrada relatora especial de la ONU sobre derechos humanos en la Cisjordania y la Franja de Gaza ocupadas, declaró el viernes que “los lugares de culto, como extensión de la libertad de religión, deben ser protegidos, especialmente en los días sagrados”. Añadió que los ataques intencionados y no provocados contra civiles constituyen crímenes de guerra según el Estatuto de Roma de la Corte Penal Internacional.

El jeque Ekrima Sabri, imán de al-Aqsa, dijo que la incursión se ejecutó en coordinación con nacionalistas israelíes de extrema derecha, que han prometido asaltar la mezquita y llevar animales al matadero dentro de su patio. La embestida pretendía desalojar a los palestinos y dejar espacio para que los colonos israelíes asaltaran la mezquita durante la festividad de la Pascua judía, que comenzaba esa noche.

Durante y después de la incursión prevista, los colonos israelíes intentaron entrar en la mezquita de al-Aqsa llevando ovejas y respondiendo a los llamamientos de las organizaciones sionistas para sacrificar a los animales para los sacrificios religiosos.

Estos grupos nacionalistas también abogan por la destrucción de la mezquita y la construcción de un templo judío en su lugar. Si estos sacrificios de animales se produjeran en el interior de al-Aqsa, sería una escalada sin precedentes de la ocupación ilegal y probablemente provocaría a los musulmanes de todo el mundo, que veneran el lugar de Jerusalén como uno de los más sagrados del Islam.

El sionismo es racismo

Según el imán de al-Aqsa, es probable que las fuerzas de ocupación israelíes intenten asaltar de nuevo la mezquita, dado el largo historial de Israel de intensificar los ataques violentos en la Palestina ocupada durante el mes de Ramadán. El año pasado, los sionistas llevaron a cabo múltiples incursiones violentas en el interior de la mezquita, lo que dio lugar a una guerra de 11 días entre Israel y los grupos de resistencia armados de Gaza. Más de 256 palestinos de Gaza, entre ellos al menos 66 niños, murieron durante los 11 días de intenso bombardeo que siguieron.

En 1948, las fuerzas militares israelíes, respaldadas por Estados Unidos y los imperialistas occidentales, expulsaron a 700.000 palestinos de sus hogares hacia el exilio, destruyendo cientos de ciudades y pueblos para formar el Estado de Israel.

Desde entonces, los medios de comunicación corporativos han sido débiles a la hora de cubrir las violaciones de los derechos humanos cometidas contra los palestinos ocupados y extremadamente parciales a favor de los colonos israelíes.

Israel ha sido un proyecto de apartheid genocida y colonial, pero es incapaz de aplastar la resistencia indígena palestina. En tiempos de aumento de la agresión israelí, es imperativo amplificar las voces palestinas. La resistencia palestina — y la defensa armada — está justificada en respuesta a una guerra de conquista y agresión de un siglo de duración por parte de los colonizadores israelíes contra el pueblo indígena de Palestina. □

Los trabajadores del Museo de Arte de Filadelfia se manifiestan por ‘¡Contrato ya!’

Por Joe Piette

Frente a una dirección intransigente, que se ha negado a llegar a un acuerdo con los trabajadores durante casi dos años, más de 200 trabajadores del personal del Museo de Arte de Filadelfia y sus partidarios se manifestaron y marcharon el 1 de abril.

Los trabajadores del museo obtuvieron una victoria histórica el 6 de agosto de 2020, con un 89% de votos a favor de la sindicalización como Sindicato del Museo de Arte de Filadelfia (Sindicato PMA), en afiliación al Consejo del Distrito 47 de la Federación Americana de Empleados Estatales, Municipales y de Condados.

Las cuestiones pendientes son los salarios, las prestaciones y las iniciativas en el lugar de trabajo, como la aplicación de protecciones para los trabajadores en cuanto a seguridad en el trabajo y contra el acoso, para las oportunidades de traslado y promoción, y para un seguro médico más económico.

La enérgica manifestación tuvo lugar el mismo día en que los trabajadores de Amazon en Staten Island, Nueva York, ganaron su histórica votación de reconocimiento sindical. Varios oradores mencionaron esta victoria sindical, que quedó

reflejada en varias pancartas. Al igual que con los trabajadores de Starbucks y Amazon, la solidaridad de otros trabajadores puede ser fundamental en momentos en que las poderosas instituciones capitalistas se niegan a dar a los trabajadores lo que necesitan y exigen.

El trabajador del PMA Lav dijo: “Trabajo en la recepción como miembro del equipo de asistentes de servicios a los visitantes. Llevo menos de un año trabajando en el museo, pero como la rotación de personal es tan alta, ya soy la segunda persona con más experiencia en ese equipo. Muchos [trabajadores] se han marchado por la forma en que la dirección ha respondido al COVID-19. La gente también se va porque hay muy pocas oportunidades de carrera para los asistentes de servicios a los visitantes aquí.”

Adam Rizzo, presidente del sindicato PMA, dijo a la multitud: “Es vergonzoso que un museo con un presupuesto [anual] de 60 millones de dólares tenga personal que necesitan múltiples trabajos para sobrevivir. El PMA prioriza el gasto de 233 millones de dólares en nuevos locales, mientras que los empleados que trabajan en esos locales no han recibido un aumento en años.”

La muralista y artista callejera Symone Salib dijo: “Algunas de mis primeras experiencias con el arte tuvieron lugar en el PMA. Los trabajadores hacen posible recuerdos duraderos, como los que yo tengo. Pero están sobrecargados de trabajo y mal pagados”.

Cathy Scott, Presidenta del Consejo de Distrito 47 de AFSCME, declaró: “Ningún empleador debería salirse con la suya al obstaculizar un contrato sindical justo. Es una

forma de romper el sindicato, simple y llanamente. PMA tiene una responsabilidad ante la comunidad como institución cívica”.

Entre los mayores sindicatos de personal de museos de Estados Unidos

La senadora del Estado de Pensilvania, Niki Saval, dijo: “El Museo de Arte es rico, poderoso y tiene recursos. Pero no existe sin sus trabajadores. Su trabajo abre el mundo. Es cruel que les subestimen. Ya es suficiente”.

El sindicato del PMA es uno de los varios trabajadores sindicados de las instituciones culturales de Filadelfia, como la Biblioteca Libre de Filadelfia y el Zoológico de Filadelfia. El sindicato del PMA se une a una lista cada vez mayor de grandes museos de arte con personal sindicado, como el Museo de Arte Moderno de Nueva York, el Museo de Arte Moderno de San Francisco, el Museo de Brooklyn, el Museo Guggenheim, el Museo Metropolitano de Arte, el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Massachusetts y el Museo de Arte Frye de Seattle.

Con su victoria en el reconocimiento del sindicato, el PMA se convirtió en el primer gran museo estadounidense organizado en un sindicato “de pared a pared”, en el que todo el personal con derecho a negociación colectiva está representado por un único sindicato. Esto los convirtió en uno de los mayores sindicatos de personal de museos de Estados Unidos y en parte de una creciente ola de sindicalización en todas las instituciones e industrias culturales de Estados Unidos.

Los miembros del sindicato del PMA piden a sus seguidores que expresen su solidaridad enviando una carta a los miembros del Consejo de Administración del Museo de Arte. Dígales que los trabajadores del PMA necesitan un contrato justo ahora! □



MO FOTO: JOE PIETTE

Trabajadores del PMA en acción laboral frente al Museo de Arte el 1 de abril.