Protests target Starbucks

By Martha Grevatt

December 9 marked the one-year anniversary of the historic victory at a Starbucks store in Buffalo, New York, when the workers voted to be represented by Starbucks Workers United (SBWU). During a rally at Niagara Square, 100+ Starbucks workers and supporters marked their year of struggle, braving the winter cold while listening to union speakers.

Solidarity came from the Buffalo Central Labor Council, various teachers unions, the United Auto Workers (UAW) and others. Starbucks workers linked the fight against gender oppression and racism to the fight for labor rights and asked union supporters not to buy Starbucks gift cards this holiday season.

“November 15, 2021, when U.S.-orchestrated protests were taking place in Cuba, we shouldn’t look down on Cuba,” SBWU organizer Arjae Red told the crowd. “We are up against the largest coffee corporation in the world; and in just one year, we managed to organize 270 stores representing more than 7,000 workers. We’ve seen the momentum of our movement explode beyond Buffalo and inspire workers across the country and even outside Starbucks, to other companies like Amazon, REL, Chipotle, Trader Joe’s, Apple and many, many more. This was viewed as impossible just a year ago, but we’ve proven everyone wrong who said we couldn’t do it. For this we should be proud.

“But if I’m being honest, I am angry today, and I think many other workers here today are too. Because we are one year in, and we don’t have a contract. We are facing mass firings and write-ups. We are being purged from our workplaces, and we have seen no justice. We did achieve the rehiring of the Memphian 7 and a handful of other workers, which would not have been possible without our fight. But justice is not just undoing a few wrongful firings; justice is reinstating all fired workers. Justice is an end to new firings. Justice is a contract where we have our basic needs met. Justice is having a say in how our workplace is run. Because we, the workers, built this company, not Howard Schultz.

“We have filed over 900 Unfair Labor Practice charges. Are we going to wait till we file 900 more? It’s up to us! It’s up to our class — not the middle class — the working class. But Starbucks workers are only one small part of our class, and we need the rest of you onboard; and you need us too, if we all want to win. We can win, our class has won before. And companies like Starbucks know this, or they wouldn’t spend untold millions trying to break us.”

About 300 people showed up in City Hall Park for New York City’s day of action — a couple of miles from the Starbucks Reserve Roastery, where a strike had been prompted by a bedbug infestation, mold in the ice and management’s failure to meet.

Having won health and safety concessions from the Roastery bosses — as well as a date for contract negotiations, a rarity for Starbucks unions — the Starbucks workers returned to work Dec. 12, after being out for seven weeks. Starbucks union members active in the struggle were given a voice on a podium surrounded by pro-union signs and cameras. Madalyn Stauffer, a New York City barista, expressed that they “have witnessed firsthand
Workers World’s message for 2023
Fight for a socialist future!

Workers World is a workers’ newspaper, written by, for and about workers. Now at the end of the year, we hail the many struggles for union recognition and rights, higher wages and safer working conditions that took place in 2022, many of which have been covered in our pages.

WW lauds the members of the multinational, multigender, multigenerational working class who have taken on corporate bosses, some of them the richest people in the world, who deprive workers of livable wages and decent working conditions to keep on accumulating wealth. Our pages have devoted much space to the brave Amazon Union, which seeks to organize those whose labor increases the coffers of founder Jeff Bezos. WW applauds the courageous young organizers who have unionized 370 Starbucks stores this year, staying strong against hostile union-busting bosses. Their victories have inspired workers around the country to organize.

WW articles back the railroad workers, who were forbidden to strike by the self-proclaimed “most pro-labor” board of directors. The board fired workers for trying to take their struggles to the next level — to build a united classwide movement against capitalism, with the most oppressed in the lead. The goal is to oust this abominable system-for-profit, and fight for a socialist society, free of profitseekers and geared to providing all human beings with the necessities and joys of life.

WW needs your support!

Workers World relies on our readers’ backing. The WW Supporter Program was founded 45 years ago to help build this socialist newspaper, which now produces one print issue a month. Since the early 1990s, this fund has supported the website workers.org, where new articles are posted daily and the PDF of the weekly paper is displayed. Workers.org contains news and analyses of global and U.S. struggles; it is a resource for political activists. This website contains firsthand accounts by writer-activists in many countries, translated by our staff. Timely articles by worker-organizers keep the newspaper current on U.S. union drives, along with reports on anti-racist and other progressive movements.

While WW’s staff is voluntary, the printed issue and the website incur expenses. Although many online publications require payment to read their articles, WW does not. Our articles are free to all readers.

Join the WW Supporter Program. Can you donate $50, $100, $200 or more per year? Contributing $50 or more will entitle you to 12 print issues a year, a PDF of every weekly issue in your email inbox and, upon request, a copy of the book “What road to socialism?”

By donating to this fund, you can help get class truth to more readers. Write monthly or annual checks to Workers World. Mail them with your name, address and email to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011.

We appreciate your support.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on 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, socialist-ism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you.

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

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For the full contents, go to www.workers.org.
Indigenous leader exposes racist myth of ‘Thanksgiving’

By Kimimilasha James

The following edited remarks were made by Kimimilasha James, co-leader of United American Indians of New England, at the 53rd annual National Day of Mourning rally, Nov. 24, 2022. Go to youtube.com/6ZV3y2KNcw for the live stream of the entire rally.

Good afternoon sisters, brothers and siblings!

Once again on so-called “Thanksgiving Day,” United American Indians of New England (UAINE) demand a change in the narrative of the first official Thanksgiving. We demand that we be thanked, in the spirit of the Wampanoag, for our support and resources, which are the foundation of this country. We ask that we are not erased from the story and that this country is the product and creation of the Wampanoag Nation.

As my grandfather said back in 1970: “We are now being heard; we do not need religious freedom— we did not need political freedom— we did not need religious freedom— we did not need political freedom. We are being heard. We are being engaged in the conversation. We are being heard and we are seen.”

We are not vanishing. We are not conquered. We are here.

In 1970, we were refused the right to march in the streets of this country. In 1970, we were not allowed to demonstrate. In 1970, we were not allowed to speak our truth. In 1970, we were not allowed to see our ancestors. In 1970, we were not allowed to speak to our people. In 1970, we were not allowed to speak our truth.

In 1970, we were blocked on Leyden Street. In 1970, we were not allowed to celebrate. In 1970, we were not allowed to march. In 1970, we were not allowed to speak. In 1970, we were not allowed to be.

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New union wants to raise up Southern workers

A new generation of labor activists has formed the Union of Southern Service Workers (USSW). The union will work to organize the most oppressed, underpaid, and exploited workers in service industries, like fast food, retail, and home care; the majority are Black and Brown workers. USSW intends to build its membership across all service industries, from McDonald’s and Freddy’s Frozen Custard and Steakburgers (where workers led successful walkouts during the pandemic) to Walmart and Dollar General.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports only 3% of workers in the U.S. South belong to a union. Bosses in the South have had a long history of creating racist divisions among workers to defeat their solidarity. But the 190 co-founders of the USSW are drawing inspiration from the Fight for $15, the campaign that has dramatically increased the minimum wage for millions of workers and the 11 railroad unions. Thus with the realization that despite being “essential” frontline workers, they must ration their salaries and rely on family for a place to live.

The union wants to elevate demands for higher wages, safety protections and consistent schedules to the status of human rights for a living wage, housing and health care.

Durham, North Carolina, labor organizer Leisha Francis was part of the labor actions at Freddy’s. She was hesitant at first to challenge the bosses but has grown with the realization that workers have power. According to Francis, “USSW will give us the representation we need to transform these jobs into good jobs for most people from union into high-paying union jobs. That’s going to give us a new sense of dignity.”

Harm-reduction center workers resist capitalist abuses

Workers at OnPoint NYC, an overdose prevention center, have submitted a demand for voluntary recognition of their union, OnPoint United. The center provides a safe environment and supplies to drug users, along with opportunities to receive other services, including comprehensive medical care.

The workers come from a broad range of backgrounds, including the formerly incarcerated. They have witnessed the catastrophic fallout the U.S. War on Drugs has had on their communities, especially on poor and marginalized Black and Brown people.

OnPoint United is demanding better health care and more decision-making power in the workplace. They have seen how the profit-driven privatization of treatment centers like OnPoint NYC has intensified the defects of capitalism. As physician Michael Pappas states: “There’s an interesting relationship here, as the workplace of capitalism bleeds into the healthcare system in a way, because it’s ideal for the ruling class to keep the end result of capitalism — poverty, homelessness, psychological suffering, etc. — out of the public eye for the ongoing facilitation of private accumulation under the system.

“At the same time, by [workers] treating people using drugs with love, compassion and respect and demanding they are treated like humans, we can fight to show that our purpose, ourvants, our humanity, generally, deserves a system better than capitalism.”

NewsGuild members stage 24-hour walkout, urge reader boycott

It was in 1965 when newsroom workers, members of the New York Times Guild union, last shut down the New York Times; that strike lasted 24 days. On Dec. 8, 1,100 Times workers, members of the NewsGuild of New York (part of The Newspaper Guild-CWA), made history once again by staging a 24-hour walkout to protest management’s failure to meet their contract demands. The workers also called for President Biden to revoke the Railway Labor Act, one of the most anti-union and anti-worker laws in the country.

Workers hadn’t had a pay raise since 2020, despite the paper increasing its paid subscription and report- ers’ pay. The current 30% hike in pay for executive prose-cutives certainly made the rank and file see red ink. The bosses’ disregard was right there in black and white. (nyguild.org, Dec. 7)

Oakland teachers, community demand “Education, not retaliation!”

By Judy Greenspan
Oakland, California

Nov. 30 – Teachers, parents and students rallied today downtown, outside the former Oakland Unified School District building, to protest retaliatory measures and firings of both classroom and substitute teachers who were actively opposed to school closures and other district policies.

In August, the district ordered a police attack on teachers and family members who were occupying Parker School, a historically Black public school, and fired two substitute (formerly classroom) teachers, Craig Gordon and June Nelson, for their tireless organizing.

Since then, rank-and-file Oakland Education Association (OEA) members have been mobilizing. Boldered by the formation of an ad hoc coalition against the retaliation, press conferences and protests have been held in front of La Escuelita Elementary School, the site of Oakland school board meetings.

The rally was co-led by Misty Cross, an Oakland parent activist and member of Moms for Housing, and Judy Greenspan, Chair of the OEA Substitute Teacher Caucus, who expressed the outrage of OEA substitutes over the arbitrary teacher firings. Greenspan stated: “On behalf of the OEA substitute teachers, we are solidly behind this movement to stop all school closures, and we are solidly behind getting some protection for substitute teachers in this district.”

Ismael Armendariz, OIA First Vice President, said, “Our union stands really strongly behind ensuring that members have due process and are not retaliated against for union actions.”

Tut Kingdom X, an Oakland parent and leader of the first Unfair Labor Practice strikes at Walmart, stated, “They are trying to make it private, but we are not going to let that happen.”

He added, “The union is a place of refuge for education. It’s a place where we cultivate the leaders of the community for the next generation.”

Workers World Party statement

Solidarity with railroad workers!

President Joe Biden has just signed legislation, passed by both houses of Congress, imposing a contract between Class One freight rail companies and the 11 railroad unions. Thus with the stroke of a pen, the CEO of the capitalist state, Biden, stripped these unions of their power. According to Franceis, “USSW will give us the representation we need to transform these jobs into good jobs for most people from union into high-paying union jobs. That’s going to give us a new sense of dignity.”

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A separate bill adding seven paid sick days to the railroad workers’ contract – a key bargaining issue for the workers – which it has done 18 times since the law’s passage— even after the law’s passage— even after 2020, despite the paper increasing its paid subscription and report- ers’ pay. The current 30% hike in pay for executive prose-cutives certainly made the rank and file see red ink. The bosses’ disregard was right there in black and white. (nyguild.org, Dec. 7)

Craig Gordon speaks out at an earlier press conference protesting teacher firings and retaliation.

Workers celebrate as they vote the Union of Southern Service Workers into existence, Columbia, South Carolina, Nov. 19.
On one-year anniversary of the first Starbucks workers' union victory

A New Year's resolution for the labor movement

The following Dec. 9 statement was issued by Workers Assembly Against Racism, based in New York City, as solidarity actions were called for that day across the U.S.

One year ago today, workers at a Starbucks store in Buffalo, New York, voted for a union and opened the biggest year of U.S. worker organizing since the 1930s. Today, workers in nearly 300 Starbucks stores have voted to unionize.

The organizing contagion has inspired union drives in other chain stores and restaurants, like Target and Chipotle. At the same time, Amazon workers from New York City to California, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and many other places have started union organizing against one of the biggest transnational corporations in the world.

This worker organizing wave holds the potential of not only reviving the labor movement but also transforming that movement from its present state into a militant, rank and file-led workers’ movement that is hostile to the entire capitalist system.

The superrich capitalists, who for decades have grown accustomed to wagging what seemed like a one-sided war against the workers, are scared to death by what is happening.

With the full backing of Wall Street, the corporate boardrooms of Starbucks and Amazon have unleashed a no-holds-barred, multimillion-dollar union-busting campaign to crush this new rising workers’ movement. Pro-union workers have been fired; and efforts to force the bosses to the negotiating table, either on a worksite, regional or national basis, have been stymied by an army of union-busting lawyers.

Many in the labor movement have pointed out that the National Labor Relations Board is woefully underfunded and therefore unable to respond to all of the union-busting charges. This no doubt is true—but relying on a government agency like the NLRB, that pretends to be neutral but is more often favorable to union busters, is not the real solution.

As we enter a new year of struggle, it must be made clear to all that the only way to ensure that this young workers’ uprising is not crushed is for there to be a sea change in organized labor’s relationship to the uprising.

Lofty speeches and photo opportunities with leaders of this new workers’ movement are not enough. Labor leaders must be made to understand that if they don’t commit themselves to real support for this movement, the movement will not survive, and every union and every worker will be hurt by such an outcome.

What does real support look like? The next time Starbucks workers anywhere go on strike, not just hundreds but thousands of workers must be mobilized to join the picket line and not just for a few hours but every day. Labor leaders must stop relying on the Democratic Party and a president who just denied railroad workers the right to strike for paid sick leave.

When Amazon workers walk off the job, other union workers should show their solidarity by doing the same thing; 2023 has got to be the year that a real workers’ movement that can shut down cities and disrupt the status quo comes into being.

Let’s make doing whatever is necessary to accomplish this our most important New Year’s resolution.

Protests target Starbucks

Continued from page 1

management’s attempts to union bust, since our vote back in April. What started out as minor inconveniences quickly became major issues, because of lack of communication and mutual respect between managers and baristas.

Ezra Scollo, a trans representative of New York State Poor People’s Campaign, emphasized the importance of the prominent queer voices in the Starbucks workers struggle and the labor force as a whole. “Starbucks and many other corporations have pink-washed themselves, especially in June,” Scollo said. “But it is now December, and a rainbow logo isn’t going to pay our rent!”

In an interview after the rally, Ley Kido spoke on the importance of community. As the head organizer of the Roastery strike, she sang the praises of the employes who walked out, picketed and stood alongside her when things looked bleak. And although the New York City work stoppage was a “minority strike” — not all workers went out — the ones who did were able to disrupt their environment enough to meet with management and make their demands known.

Attendees included members of Amazon Labor Union, Service Employees Union (SEIU), Workers Assembly Against Racism, Workers World Party (WWP), Young Communist League, Athena and the New York City Central Labor Council.

Protests in 10 target cities

In Atlanta, although it poured rain and kept raining through the entire rally, supporters turned out. In addition to Atlanta Starbucks workers, people came from Alabama and Florida. A international labor conference was taking place in Atlanta; unionists from Sweden, the Netherlands and Belgium attended the rally.

Atlanta-North Georgia Labor Council, the Painters union, American Federation of Teachers, SEIU, Teamsters, United Steelworkers, WWP, Democratic Socialists of America, Party of Socialism and Liberation, Communist Party USA and the radio station WRGP were represented.

The rally was held at the Peace Amphilheater of Ebenezer Baptist Church, across from the crypt of Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King. Organizers emphasized the links between the Civil Rights and anti-racist struggle, the growing multi-national, multi-gendered workers movement, and the need for a mass solidarity movement.

About 100 Starbucks workers and supporters rallied in Seattle to protest the closure of the Broadway and Denny Starbucks store, the first store to unionize in the city. The rally, held a block away from the store, was called to affirm the union’s determination to grow their organization in defiance of store closures, firings, cuts in hours and Starbucks’ refusal to bargain. It was announced that five new stores had just voted in the union.

A speaker from the Martin Luther King Central Labor Council acknowledged the support of many unions present, including the UAW, SEIU Locals 1199 and 775, Washington Education Association, Seattle Education Association and others. The MLK Labor Council spokesperson congratulated the Starbucks workers for the one-year anniversary of their revival of the labor movement.

Mari, an SBWU organizer, talked about the benefits Starbucks workers had won locally, including 10% pay raises and severance pay, despite the company’s stonewalling in negotiations.

Three speakers from the LGBTQ+ community affirmed their support going forward, as well as a union Starbucks stores had been closed in the LGBTQ+ neighborhood of Capitol Hill. sleda Allen, former national president of Pride at Work, talked about her partner’s growth through the union struggle at the nearby Starbucks Roastery.

And as in Buffalo, a speaker asked people not to buy Starbucks gift cards for the holidays. Demonstrations also targeted Starbucks in Boston; Arlington, Virginia; Pittsburgh; Chicago; San Antonio; and Los Angeles.

The solidarity visible Dec. 9, with Starbucks workers joined by unions, elected officials and socialist groups, showed very quickly that this worker struggle was bigger than Starbucks.

This was a shout from workers everywhere to remind the capitalists at the top that their multimillion-dollar corpora
tions can’t run without employees — and a demand that worker contributions and worker power be recognized.

Arjoe Red, Dianne Mathioueitz, Jim McManus, Janisiles Miles and Tony Murphy contributed to this article.

Alex Saab on trial

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Alex Saab, diplomat and Special Envoy for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, was placed on trial Dec. 12 in Miami for defying U.S. sanctions. For making trade arrangements for food, medicine, technology and other things which benefit the Venezuelan people, he was illegally imprisoned in Cape Verde in 2020 and then kidnapped by the U.S. in 2021.

Solidarity activists protested for his release outside the Federal Court building in Miami, as well as in Detroit, Milwaukee and New York City at the United Nations. Follow the struggle at fightbacknews.org.
Can Brittney Griner’s release expose U.S. hypocrisy on prisons?

By Monica Moorehead

As the majority of the world knows by now, Brittney Griner, a star player with the Women’s National Basketball Association’s Phoenix Mercury, was released from a Russian prison on Dec. 17, in a prisoner exchange swap for Viktor Bout, a Russian prisoner held in the U.S. She was first arrested at a Moscow airport for accidentally bringing in a little over 1 gram of drug possession, after vape pen cartridges of hashish oil were discovered in her luggage. She pled guilty and in August was sentenced to nine years.

The reason for her being in Russia in the first place was to fulfill her contract to play for the Russian women’s team, UMMC Ekaterinburg, for $1 million, a salary four times more than her salary with the Mercury.

Despite being a WNBA champion and multiple all-star, Griner was still compelled to earn more money outside the U.S. during the off-season. This put her in a very vulnerable position of being subjected to repressive laws in other countries.

The discrepancy in salaries for WNBA players and the WNBA players is incredibly stark. The average NBA salary is over $9.6 million, with the minimum salary being over $1 million especially for undrafted players.

Compare that to the average WNBA salary of over $102,000 and a base salary of over $72,000. Blatant sexism is on full display of joy and relief knowing that she will soon be reunited with her family, the WNBA player community and her friends.” (wnba.com, Dec. 8)

We have no right to celebrate when you announced you’d stay in the locker room when the national anthem was played before games, you took a heroic stance against police violence. In a protest for justice for Breonna Taylor, a Black woman murdered by police in Louisville, Kentucky, in March of 2020, your position against killer cops raised an urgent issue way too common in communities of color.

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Women and girls, with a large number being queer. And Brittney Griner is an important face of the WNBA being both Black and queer.

Despite being a WNBA champion and multiple all-star, Griner was still compelled to earn more money outside the U.S. during the off-season. This put her in a very vulnerable position of being subjected to repressive laws in other countries.

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Many bourgeois commentators, including sports analysts, pushed the argument that Griner faced brutality and trauma once she was transferred to a so-called Russian “penal colony.” Isn’t it ironic that there is so much intense propaganda against Russian incarceration — an extension of the U.S.-NATO proxy war in Ukraine — but virtual silence when it comes to the conditions of incarceration in the U.S. and abroad?

It is no secret that the U.S. is home to 25% of the world’s incarcerated people — a country with only 5% of the world’s population. The U.S. is a modern-day prison house of nations, with a disproportionate number of Black, Brown and Indigenous people locked up, many until they die there. Private prisons, including migrant detention centers, have been a source of tremendous profits for Wall Street investors since the 1980s.

Brutality women face behind the walls

According to a July 20, 2020, report, “The new Jane Crow: Women’s mass incarceration” by Michelle Goodwin, the U.S. incarcerates more women in the world than those imprisoned in Russia, Thailand, China and India combined. An estimated one-third of the world’s female incarcerated population is in the U.S., with Black women representing 22% while being only 6% of the U.S. population.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reported in 2014 that, on a state level, 25% of incarcerated women were serving time for drug offenses, compared to 15% of incarcerated men, with African American women being statistically overrepresented.

Queer lives and U.S. propaganda

Black gender-nonconforming women face special opposition behind the walls, especially if they have been incarcerated. Nearly one in six transgender people in the U.S. — and one in two Black transgender people — have been to prison, according to the Sylvia Rivera Law Project states, “Over-policing and profiling of low-income people and of trans and gender-nonconforming people intersect, producing a far richer risk than average of imprisonment, police harassment and violence for low-income trans people.”

Women prisoners face poor health care in relationship to various cancers, COVID-19, shackling during birth, sexual assault and rape at the hands of male guards and even death. Both 28-year-old Sandra Bland, a Black woman, and 30-year-old Andrea Circle Bear, an Indigenous woman, died behind the walls in 2015 and 2020 respectively.

Griner was viewed as a political prisoner by bourgeois pundits. But what about U.S. political prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, Ana Belén Montes, Dr. Aafia Siddiqui — not to mention hundreds of Palestinians languishing in U.S.-backed Zionist dungeons?

The justified celebration of Griner’s return should not be used as an excuse to promote chauvinists and anti-communists. The United States was the number one country in the world with a rate of 664 per 100,000 as of July 25, 2022.

Think of the real changes that you all could make right here that have influence and not just on the basketball courts.

Brittney, you were so right, saying in a 2020 interview: “Basketball doesn’t mean anything in a world where we can’t just live. We can’t wake up and do whatever we want to do. Go for a run, go to the store to buy some candy, drive your car without the fear of being wrongfully pulled over.” (tinyurl.com/243588eh)

You and the rest of the WNBA can help make this world a better place by supporting incarcerated people, especially women of color.

For all the Sandra Blands of the country, I hope you will all do it.

Again, welcome home, Brittney.

Gloria Rubac
Organizer with the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement

Support for Brittney Griner at a WNBA game
Health care in prisons is a crime

By Bryant Arroyo and Joe Piette

If you have the misfortune of being convicted of a crime, or not, what’s it like behind bars if you have an illness, disease or injury?

Bryant Arroyo, incarcerated at State Correctional Institution at Coal Township, Pennsylvania, gave recent examples of how people there are treated by Wellpath (formerly CCS), the health care provider for Pennsylvania prisons.

Arroyo said, “Wellpath health care has set up a scam company to make them appear as though they are headed by doctors. They hire retired cardiology medical centers to cut costs, while providing ghastly health care to inmates with inadequate medical care. They also promote nurses like Lynette Rich, who is the medical director at SCI Coal Township charged with overseeing doctors. She continuously overlooked them and rejected medications and treatment prescribed by doctors.”

Sick people routinely mistreated

Arroyo said, “Philip Quinn (ES14694) was a pacemaker in 2010. He was sent to the emergency ward on Oct. 6 due to his pulse rate being 31, which can lead to heart failure and death. Normal heart beat is 75-79 beats per minute. “Quinn is disoriented at times and has to sit down because he doesn’t feel right. He’s already had quadraple bypass surgery. His pacemaker beeps, a sign it is not working properly. He told Tior they said they got a new battery for him until 2032.”

Arroyo described Ryan Devine (M60828), suffering from a pierced or caused COVID-19 symptoms. He was falsely accused by Wellpath prison informal staff June 11 of illicit drug use. After explaining that in the weeks prior, he had visited sick call numerous times, giving his temperature, urine samples, etc. and found he had COVID-19, he was finally transported to Geisinger Hospital, where they confirmed he had a cyst in his nasal cavity and referred him to an ear, nose and throat specialist.

Since then, Devine has filed grievances charging that “the medical department/staff were deliberately indifferent to his serious medical needs, and [he] was wrongly accused of illicit drug usage [in] their records without any reliable or credible proof.” Devine’s grievance seeking the firing of all staff related to the incident, and $200,000 in compensatory and punitive damages, was denied on Oct. 13.

On Nov. 4, Matthew Early (NP177) went into a diabetic coma due to glucose levels of 20 and fell off the top bunk while he was sleeping, landing face first on the concrete floor. He died two days later.

Arroyo reports what he witnessed: “The nurse brought the wounded gurney to bring him downstairs, but he didn’t know he was going to die so he fell out of the gurney and fall off. The lieutenant made the decision that four officers grab Early’s legs and arms and carry him out that way. Even with a neck brace, it was a dangerous way to transport someone with a possible spinal injury. That’s how they took him out.”

Early was not only diagnosed with a mild concussion, headache and sharp neck pains, but also received an injury in his upper left eye receiving one stitch. The medical treatment was two Tylenols. He stated recently that he continues to suffer from “constant debilitating pain in my neck area.”

These are just a few examples of the ineptness, unprofessionalism and lack of human compassion in how Wellpath and prison staff treat incarcerated people. Arroyo said, “They have the cheapest bare-bones system for treating prisoners suffering from life-threatening physical illnesses. Wellpath willfully places budgetary concerns over prisoners’ health care.”

In 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court set the standard for the medical rights of prisoners in Estelle v. Gamble, ruling incarcerated people should be granted health care equal to what is available to those living in the immediate community beyond prison walls.

Wellpath notorious

Numerous reports make it clear Wellpath’s profits-first policies lead to poor care and preventable deaths of incarcerated people. But Wellpath — which should not be the health care provider at any prison — is still the largest private provider of health care in U.S. jails.

In March 2022, Prison Legal News (PLN) published an extensive article on Wellpath’s contracts in prisons, covering the October 2019 federal indictment to which Wellpath’s Chairman of the Board Jerry Boyle later pleaded guilty. The article discloses that Boyle “provided Sheriff McCabe [of Norfolk, Virginia] with cash, travel, a loan, entertainment, gift cards, personal gifts, sports tickets and campaign contributions, over a period from 2004 through 2016. In return McCabe provided CCS/Wellpath help with contract extensions and renewals, including all incrementing fee information, for the provision of health care at the Norfolk City Jail.” (tinyurl.com/aao6bt7y)

Arroyo asserts that Wellpath’s culture of corruption extends to its internal operations and its prison staff. As just one example, he points out the Wellpath’s hiring of Dr. John Hochberg at SCI Coal Township. The New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners imposed a five-year license suspension and $60,000 in civil penalties on Hochberg in 2009, because his “gross negligence” contributed to the death of an inmate under his care while he was medical director at Northern State Prison in Nebraska. He was charged with repeated acts of gross negligence, malpractice and/or professional misconduct in the care of four other patients he had treated for chronic pain. (tinyurl.com/sy8czaum)

Arroyo pointed out that, while Wellpath and the Pennsylvania’s Department of Corrections gave Hochberg a second chance to resume his career, those same prison and prosecutorial officials don’t believe in giving incarcerated people a second chance.

PLN also revealed a number of cases of people who died from inadequate care, citing the danger of staff attitudes that Ryan Devine had to contend with. “There’s a baked-in cynicism about what inmates say and what they complain about,” said Andrew Harris, a professor of criminology and justice studies at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell.

That lack of trust plus a culture of profits first is a dangerous combination. According to Korene Kendrick, a staff attorney with the Prison Law Office in California, there is “incentive to scrimp on care, because for every lab test not run or a specialist visit not done, that’s just additional profit that the company can pocket.”

Culture of profits

A 2019 CNN investigation by Blake Ellis and Melanie Hicken examined complaints at nearly 120 locations in 32 states. They found Wellpath was a well-funded and standard care due to its focus on containing costs, leading to numerous deaths and other serious outcomes that could have been avoided with more staffing, better training and more experienced employees. … [CCS/Wellpath] employees have denied urgent emergency room transfers. … They have failed to spot or treat serious psychiatric disorders and have allowed common infections and conditions to become fatal. (tinyurl.com/mrkjkkks)

In November 2022, Michael Fenne published a very critical report about Wellpath. “Equity Firms Rebrand Prison Health Care but Care Issues Continue.” He cited the following U.S. Department of Justice evaluation:

“In San Luis Obispo County, [California,] medical staff frequently overlooked prisoners’ concerns, fail to provide prompt care or fail to provide care at all. … Other deficiencies noted were “failures to provide adequate specialty care, ancillary services and follow-up treatment and care.” Appointment, laboratory blood draws and other tests “are frequently ‘rescheduled’ for no discernable or documented reason, resulting in very long delays and the failure to perform tests or deliver follow-up care entirely.” (tinyurl.com/apv8qyyj)

Read in full the investigative articles from Prison Legal News (PLN) and Prisoners’ Rights Catalyst Project. Then you’ll understand the depth of Wellpath’s routine refusal to provide adequate health care for our incarcerated loved ones and why their policies should be made a crime.

‘The Mumia exception’

By Betsey Piette

Philadelphia

For 41 years, journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal has been unjustly imprisoned for the murder of a Philadelphia police officer. His case comes before Philadelphia Common Pleas Court Judge Lauren Clemons on Dec. 16 for what may well be a final appeal hearing.

Mumia’s case has been fraught with police, judicial and prosecutorial misconduct and rampant racism. Journalist Lytton Washington Jr. coined the phrase “the Mumia exception” to describe how courts routinely deny Abu-Jamal the same legal rights extended to others challenging unjust convictions.

In 1982 a case titled “Cruel and Unusual: How the justice system is failing Mumia Abu-Jamal,” Washington explains the unsurprising pattern of rulings: “These judges have denied Abu-Jamal the legal relief that others convicted of similar crimes and who asserted violations of their legal rights — were granted. For example, during the 28 years after Abu-Jamal’s arrest, Philadelphia and Pennsylvania appellate court judges overturned 86 Philadelphia death penalty convictions, due to various errors by police, prosecutors, defense attorneys and even judges — including the judge at Abu-Jamal’s 1982 trial. (tinyurl.com/yycngmfr)

“However, during that time frame, judges declared not a single error — evidentiary or procedural — existed anywhere in the Abu-Jamal case, despite the persistent evidence of compelling new evidence that undermined all elements of his conviction.”

“The fact that state and federal judges have consistently upheld Abu-Jamal’s conviction is cited as solid con-
firmation of his guilt. Brushed aside is the fact that judges have upheld Abu-Jamal’s conviction by skirting established legal procedure (precedence), creating new legal standards that undercut Abu-Jamal’s claims and rejecting newly discovered evidence of impro-
vocative innocence by police, prosecutors and even judges.”

“An analysis of Abu-Jamal’s case by Amnesty International in 2000 tracked the Pennsylvania Supreme Court’s 1986 establishment of a standard that prohibited particular remarks prosecutors could make to a jury. Pennsylvania’s highest court reversed that standard, when it rejected Abu-Jamal’s first appeal in 1988. A year later that standard was reinstated.”

Judge Clemons, following in the footsteps of her predecessors, claims a judicial “time bar” prohibits new evidence — from six boxes of Abu-Jamal case material, including evidence of racism in jury selection, hidden in the back alley that the District Attorney’s office for 36 years — from being heard, despite U.S. and Pennsylvania law that requires prosecutors to promptly disclose evidence favorable to an accused person.

Clemons announced her intent to reject Abu-Jamal’s request for a new trial. But where there is clear evidence of racial bias, as there is throughout Mumia’s case, no “time-bar” should apply. □
U.N. rocked by International Day of Persons with Disabilities

By Disability Justice and Rights Caucus of Workers World Party

On Dec. 2, the eve of the 30th annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities, disabled activists and artists and allies, organized and led by Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST), rocked Grand Central Station Plaza at the United Nations in New York City.

They demonstrated in-person with a political and musical hybrid event, demanding the rights and benefits guaranteed to children and adults with disabilities by human rights treaties, which the U.S. still refuses to ratify. These are the Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Conventions on the Rights of the Child.

The rally endorsed PIST’s campaign to put a Schoolbus Bill of Rights on the city election ballot, so disabled students and their peers will have the same access to education as others. As a fact, some New York City students are not receiving the yellow school bus service they are entitled to. Lack of reliable transportation has caused thousands more to miss hours and days of school.

Activists spoke between songs played by Harlem-based DJ CrystalClear, while ASL interpreters signed. Sara Catalinotto, co-founder of PIST, introduced Monica Roman of PIST, who shared that her own disabled daughter’s school bus is often late. Roman held a yellow placard with work by Rebecca Freimuth, a blind photographer in Ohio, who has said: “I want people to see the reality of our culture and society...I want you to pause for just a moment and take in the world around you. Picturize speaking to the country’s very best writers throughout the entire pandemic.”

Those figures mean that, since China managed to keep exposure of people to COVID low, the impact of long-term COVID in China will likewise be low. In the U.S., the 98 million confirmed COVID cases mean that tens of millions are out of work due to it. Economists, have long COVID, and 2 million to 4 million have difficulty doing some kinds of work. Others include anxiety, depression, heart palpitations and “brain fog,” which affects 15% to 25% of people with the disease. Over 200 symptoms are associated with long COVID. Shortness of breath, fatigue, and sleep disorders or insomnia are the most common. Others include anxiety, depression, heart palpitations and "brain fog," which affects 15% to 25% of people with the disease. Over 200 symptoms are associated with long COVID. Shortness of breath, fatigue, and sleep disorders or insomnia are the common. Others include anxiety, depression, heart palpitations and "brain fog," which affects 15% to 25% of people with the disease. Over 200 symptoms are associated with long COVID. Shortness of breath, fatigue, and sleep disorders or insomnia are the

According to Forbes: “If the U.S. were to report similar numbers every day for a year, you would have a picture of the U.S.’s very best writers throughout the entire pandemic.”

Edward M. Yood of Communications Workers Local 1180 pointed out that workers throughout the U.S., 90% of whom are not in unions, are increasingly vulnerable to becoming disabled during the COVID-19 pandemic. Yood is Chair of Local 1180’s Committee on People with the Disability Pride NYC Parade’s Outreach Committee.

Yood reported that the unemployment rate for people with disabilities in New York state is a whopping 67%. This fact constitutes a broken promise, violating the Second Bill of Rights proposed by disabled President Franklin Roosevelt in his 1945 State of the Union Message, which had advocated full employment throughout the U.S.

Yood demanded that President Joe Biden lawfully bypass the Senate and ratify the Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities immediately by issuing an Executive Order. Then by a second Executive Order, Biden should extend all of its protections to the Americans with Disabilities Act, thus keeping the promise he made in his 2020 election victory declaration speech to folks with disabilities.

Robert Acevedo of Disabled in Action next addressed the rally. Acevedo is a veteran of many protests for elevator access in the city’s subways. More than three-quarters of elevators are not accessible for people with mobility and other disabilities. Elias Ellis, a City University of New York student, spoke as the sibling of a city schools District 75 school bus rider, explained to the in-person and online audience how to tune in to the online celebration. For the next 12 hours, supportive DJs from around the world shared their music mixes online. (For the photos and music, see tinyurl.com/jy7p1hnpk.)

A report by a participant in this event was featured at the Dec. 11 Disability Justice and Rights Caucus of Workers World Party’s next public zoom meeting of the 2nd Sunday Dialogue will be Sunday, Jan. 8, 2023, at 7 p.m. Contact djrrwp@workers.org for more information.

Long COVID: a public health catastrophe

By G. Dunkel

On Sept. 18, President Joe Biden declared: “The pandemic is over. We still have a problem with COVID. We’re still dealing with a lot of work on it. But the pandemic is over.”

The U.S. had an average daily rate of 207 deaths from COVID as of Dec. 10. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported 2,987 COVID deaths in the week preceding Dec. 7, with 458,986 new cases. These figures indicate that the pandemic is not really over, even though most U.S. politicians and indeed most people throughout the world wish it was.

There is a lot of crowing in the U.S., especially among officials with public health responsibilities, about the changes China is making in its public health policies with respect to COVID. China has had 5,233 deaths and around 1.6 million cases since the beginning of the pandemic.

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New York City

Sick days are a human right

By Workers World New York City bureau

A coalition of unions, activists and workers’ rights groups protested Dec. 7 outside and inside Grand Central Station in New York City, to demand full sick pay and labor rights for the 115,000 rail workers who transport essential goods. Their 11 unions were denied the constitutional right to strike by a bill passed by Congress and signed by President Joe Biden.

Coalition organizers called out Biden for his assistance to Wall Street and the rail corporations, which lost billions in profits from rail workers’ labor, while endangering their health and safety.

If Biden wants to avoid disrupting the economy during the holidays,” said Larry Holmes, a leader with Workers Assembly Against Racism, one of the coalitions calling the action, “with the stroke of his pen, he can extend Obama’s legislation requiring paid sick leave for employees of companies with federal government contracts to rail workers.

“Congress’ anti-worker legislation should shatter all illusions that the Democratic Party is the party of the working class. Biden’s signing the deal gives the lie to his phony statement, made for the umpteenth time in Labor Day 2021, that he is ‘the most pro-union president leading the most pro-union administration in American history.’”

Black labor and community activists took the lead in organizing this important solidarity action. The coalition includes Disabled in Action, Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST), Workers Assembly Against Racism; Charles Jenkins, president of the New York City Chapter of Community College of New York City; Matthew Mitchell and Edward Valente of Association of Commuter Rail Employees Locals 1 and 2; and Neil Merola of ACRE, the lead in organizing this important solidarity action. The coalition includes Disabled in Action, Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST), Workers Assembly Against Racism; Charles Jenkins, president of the New York City Chapter of Community College of New York City; Matthew Mitchell and Edward Valente of Association of Commuter Rail Employees Locals 1 and 2; and Neil Merola of ACRE

A broad coalition of labor union organizers and allies attended the Dec. 7 action, including these railroad union representatives, Grand Central Station, New York City.
Solidarity with Palestine marks World Cup games

By Kathy Durkin

If there is a clear winner at the World Cup soccer games in Qatar, it is the Palestinian people. Even though they are not competing, their voices have been front and center in the stadiums, markets and streets of Doha, the country’s capital, the site of the first such competition ever held in the Middle East.

The games have not been free of controversy. The mistreatment, even deaths, of migrant workers since Qatar was named host of the games in 2010, has been criticized. FIFA, the World Cup’s owner, banned players from wearing “One Love” rainbow armbands symbolizing inclusivity because they promoted LGBTQ rights, violating Qatar’s strict laws. However, state officials have allowed armbands and other symbols of solidarity with Palestine.

“Free Palestine” flags fly everywhere. Thousands of fans wear pro-Palestinian armbands. Chants and songs supporting the struggle against U.S.-backed Israeli repression reverberate throughout Qatar and beyond to other Arab countries and further, as anti-Zionist allies worldwide show their solidarity.

During a game between Tunisia and Australia Nov. 26, the crowd displayed an enormous “Free Palestine” banner. When Tunisia qualified for the World Cup, whether in France four days later, fans ran onto the field waving Palestinian flags, while the crowd chanted “Free Palestine!”

Significantly, Morocco’s national team highlighted the Palestinian cause by raising Palestine’s flag after its many victories. Fans celebrated, especially when Morocco eliminated Spain in a penalty shootout Dec. 6. And after winning on Dec. 10, Morocco beat Portugal 1-0.

Morocco is the first Arab team to make it to the quarterfinals of the World Cup and the first African team to make the semifinals. Their wins are seen as a victory for Africa and the Arab world, and especially for the Palestinians.

Following Morocco’s victories, celebrations occurred nightly in Doha of Arab peoples cheering for Palestine. Thousands joyfully danced and honked car horns in Ramallah and throughout the West Bank and Gaza; horns in Ramallah and throughout the West Bank and Gaza; horns in Ramallah and throughout the West Bank and Gaza; horns in Ramallah and throughout the West Bank and Gaza. For the first time in centuries, the masses in the Arab world defied Zionist occupation and the force of hatred and fear, especially among their people.

“Jewish money” as fodder for anti-Semitism. He apologized, but it only复查ed the claim.

He has since apologized and removed the feed.

The threat is real, as evidenced by the Oct. 27 massacre at a synagogue in Pittsburgh. Emboldened under Trump, previously suppressed elements, the most violent, anti-Semitic scum, are surfacing and acting in a way that has not been seen in this country for decades. At the same time, racist attacks, already epidemic, are on the rise. The playing field for the capitalists wield anti-Semitism as a favored tool.

The only effective response is unity, first and foremost against racism and against all forms of bias and division, from anti-Semitism to sexism to LGBTQ+ oppression. It’s this unity, rejecting the bosses’ attempts to divert anger away from themselves, that will move the struggle of the workers and oppressed forward against capitalism itself.
China and the cost of reversing COVID-19 policies

For months western media has been attacking China’s COVID-19 policies, condemning them for causing enormous inconvenience and discomfort to avoid massive deaths from the pandemic. So, it comes as no surprise that when protests actually occur within China against the protective restrictions, these same media pundits elevate them to the degree of the alleged 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Anti-government protests that occurred in China in late November added ammunition to the argument that China should adopt the capitalist viewpoint that the world’s priority should be to get back to business as usual, to keep making profits regardless of the virus’s toll on the global working class. There was little analysis of the class forces behind these protests, similar to the media’s treatment of widespread “anti-vaxing” and “anti-vaxing” right-wing demonstrations in the U.S. and Europe in 2021. In early February 2022, corporate media gave extensive coverage to the controversial, overtly racist, right-wing “Freedom Convoy” of truckers protesting vaccine mandates in Canada for three weeks, while barely covering persistent counterdemonstrations.

The global capitalist class has long pressured China to loosen its COVID-19 restrictions and “open up” its economy for production. A prolonged disruption of China’s manufacturing industry impacts the global economy, as China exports up to one-third of the world’s intermediate goods.

The capitalists want people back at work. They depend on workers showing up at all costs to supply more goods for Western markets. But at what cost?

In the U.S., population 331.4 million, there have been 99,942,420 confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of Dec. 11, 2022, and 1,092,410 confirmed deaths since early 2020. The U.S., which has loosened its COVID-19 protective policies, is now being hit by a “tri-epidemic” of COVID-19, the flu and Respiratory Syncytial Virus or RSV, which is killing children and the elderly in particular. Some health officials are now calling for a return to mask mandates.

To date, mainland China, population 1.4 billion, has had 5,235 deaths among 1,831,083 confirmed cases, according to the World Health Organization. Deaths have been higher in Hong Kong, which has been spared by the “nanny state” approach to COVID-19 policies. Given the difference in population size, if China had disorganized an approach to the pandemic as has the U.S., some 4.5 million more Chinese people might have died.

Even prior to the protests, China had introduced 20 measures to relax COVID-19 controls to a limited extent, but a spike in cases due to the Omicron variant has officials reluctant to change course entirely. The latest national guidelines eliminate mass testing and shutdowns of entire cities. Restrictions would only apply to high-risk communities, buildings and households. People no longer need evidence of a negative test to travel. The guidelines prioritize boosting rates of vaccination, especially for older people.

Whatever additional measures China takes—or doesn’t take—it has proved capable, time and again, of dealing with the crisis, including the building of massive new hospitals to treat patient overflows when that was necessary in 2020.

Time after time, socialist China’s health care system has proven itself vastly superior to the for-profit health care that exists in the U.S.

Palestine will be free

The year 2022 begins the 75th anniversary of Nakba Day, when Israel, then called the Nakba, “the disaster,” which followed the illegal founding of the state of Israel in 1948, with the full cooperation and support of international imperialism.

The founding of the Israeli state was accompanied by massacres and the forced removal through terror and intimidation of three-quarters of the population of Palestine at that time. Some 750 towns and villages were literally wiped from the face of the Earth, their remains bulldozed away. In violation of international law, not to mention the human rights of the Palestinians, the Israeli military occupied Arab homes and properties and took what they deemed unoccupied and driven out to return to their homeland.

In the early years of aggression, Israel seized the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights, where they remain to control, blockade and bomb. All over the world, people for decades have mobilized in solidarity with Palestine. Launched in 2005, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, led by Palestinians, began to have a major impact in effectively challenging international support for Israeli apartheid and settler colonialism.

In May 2013 the academic world was stunned when the late, noted theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking announced he was joining the academic boycott of Israel and would not attend an international conference there. Hawking, who took part in many intellectual gatherings despite being paralyzed by a debilitating form of the neurodegenerative disease ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease), stated: “If I attended, I would have stated my opinion to the political government in Israel to lead to disaster.” (Time.com, May 13, 2013)

That disaster has long since come. Now with the November election of former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in collaboration with other far-right forces, the annexation and outrage and murder of Palestinians in their ancestral homeland has intensified.

Human rights groups have condemned current Israeli attacks on Palestinians in Gaza as war crimes resulting in deaths of civilians. In early August 2022 the Israeli government launched indiscriminate airstrikes there, killing and injuring nearly 400 Palestinians, including dozens who will never see their next day. Palestinians are responding. (globalr2p.org)

Zionists are attempting to muzzle all criticism of these genocidal actions, even trying to remove a Netflix movie from distribution. “Farah,” set during the Nakba, graphically shows an Israeli soldier murdering a Palestinian family in cold blood. But the truth won’t go out, and resistance will continue. We mourn the Nakba—and we resolve to struggle with determination side-by-side with the Palestinian people for liberation and their right to return to their homeland—free of discrimination, violence, intimidation—free to live there “from the mountains to the sea.”

Sanctions Kill: a book, a movement, a dance

By Lyn Neeley

Several authors of the new book, “Sanctions: A Wrecking Ball in a Global Economy,” discussed the destructive effect of sanctions on 40 countries in a webinar on Dec. 10. More than 1,000 people registered for the webinar. (View at youtube.com/20220128)

Sara Flounders, contributing editor in Workers World News Network, shared a highlight with the International Action Center and co-editor of the book, has visited many of the most vulnerable countries that have been devastated by sanctions. She called Iraq, Iran, Gaza in occupied Palestine, Lebanon, Sudan, Venezuela, Cuba and Grenada.

She said sanctions were the most brutal form of war. Countries have lacked basic antibiotics and essential medicines, so that diarrhea or a broken bone was often a death sentence. There was no way to process clean water or provide teachers and medical staff.

Cuba has been heavily sanctioned by the imperialists for 60 years, yet they have supplied most doctors and medical staff to Africa than the World Health Organization. Though Cuba developed its own vaccines, because of the sanctions, it took a worldwide movement to send enough syringes to immunize its own population.


Ajamu Baraka of the Black Alliance for Peace spoke about small developing nations like Cuba and Nicaragua. The U.S. calls them threats to U.S. security in order to justify the use of sanctions, not because they will invade, bomb or occupy territories; they are an example of commitment to human rights, housing, medical care and clean water.

Other authors who spoke on the webinar were Rick Sterling from the Task Force on the Americas, who said sanctions are against international law, and thousands of people in Venezuela and other countries have died as a result; Erica Jung from Nododul Korean Community Development, who explained the dual impact of U.S. and U.N. sanctions; Carlos Martinez from the International Manifesto Group and Friends of China, who discussed the U.S./NATO-instigated war in Ukraine; Judy Bello of the Syria Support Movement who spoke on the United National Antiracist Coalition (UNAC) and its Garden, with Pacifica radio and the Black Agenda Report, who described the impact of sanctions on Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The Sanctions Kill campaign is both of analysis and of organizing against U.S.-imposed sanctions, a brutal form of warfare imposed on a third of civilian populations around the world. The Sanctions Kill website,-sanctionskill.org, offers concrete resources for schools and activists. The Sanctions Kill book is sold at iacentor.org/sanctions-book.

A week of action to “Stop U.S. Wars!” was called for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday week, Jan 13-22, 2023, in cities across the U.S. and around the world. Start organizing now and send planned actions for listing at unsanpeace.org.

In San Francisco, protesters at a Nakba 74 rally in May 2022 denounced the murder of Palestinian-American Abu Akleh, activist and Al Jazeera reporter, by Israeli soldiers.
Lessons of coups and ‘lawfare’ in Latin America

Cuban Revolution still inspires us

Continued from page 1

amobile and mobilize resentments arising from the shortages. After President Miguel Díaz-Canel correctly pointed out, “U.S. diplomatic officials meet frequently with leaders of the counterrevolution, to whom they provide support (‘Vive el Perú!’), and logistical and financial support.” (Reuters, Oct. 25, 2021)

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

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

A profound example of this is the process that led to the passing of a new Family Code, popularly known as a “Code of family practicals,” in September. Widely discredited by the Cuban population before its enactment, this codifies and expands marriage, adoption and other family rights, including the rights of gender identity, sexuality, race or disability.

U.S. policy: no peace for Cuba

Either President Joe Biden or Congress could end the blockade with the stroke of a pen and allow Cuba to pursue its “peaceful aims” — food, housing, jobs, education and medical care for all under a socialist economy — without interference. But the world corporate media — the New York Times and the British-based Economist, for example — stood true on its head and blamed Castillo for the coup that his enemies had plotted against Castillo since the November 2021 election. Venezuela President Nicolás Maduro said clearly that the far right wanted to send a message: “We are not going to allow you to get away with it.” (venezuelanalysis.com, Dec. 10)

Argentina’s last presidential election in October 2019 had replaced neoliberal, pro-imperialist incumbent President Mauricio Macri with center-left Alberto Fernandez, whose vice president is former President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner.

Because Cristina Fernandez was president herself and was previously the spouse of the late President Néstor Kirchner, the mass of working-class voters identify her — more than the president — with progressive and pro-sovereignty policies. For the same reason, Argentina’s ruling-class politicians targeted her with “lawfare.”

Lawfare means the elite uses the judges and courts to control the country’s banks, media, police, courts and armed forces.

To stop the third impeachement, Castillo ordered a constitutional court to solve Dec. 7 and called for a proportional assembly to write a new Constitution. This last-ditch action failed when Perú’s Constitutional Court condemned it, slamming Castillo’s moves as an “attempted coup d’état.” The national police arrested Castillo in August 2023, when he was in prison, which she can and will fight.

V. I. Lenin taught long ago about how elected officials in these three countries. World imperialism, have challenged leftist past few weeks, Latin America’s reac-

Leftist governments in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Brazil are encouraging, imperialism and its local elite junior partners remain a dangerous threat and in most countries remain in control.

Contrary examples can be found in Cuba and Venezuela, where the state apparatus is in the hands of the left. Despite vicious sanctions and blockades that have inflicted massive suffering on the populations, the left governments have resisted the imperialists’ plots to overthrow them.

Mass mobilizations have used their own control of the state apparatus — no longer in service to the rich — and mass mobilizations have defeated imperialist coups attempt. Revolutions should keep this history in mind, as they evaluate what a working-class government needs to do to defend itself and the masses it represents.

Mundo Obrero

Los cubanos aprueban el Nuevo Código de Familia por 2-1

Continúa de página 12

autónomamente para votar a los 16 años y pudieron votar en el referéndum, si así lo decidieron.

Personas LGBT+, mujeres, embarazadas, discapacitadas y más

El nuevo Código establece el derecho de todos los cubanos a formar una familia, independientemente de su sexo o identidad de género. Se reconocen diversas formas de familia, incluidas las familias multiparentales y se permite compartir la patria potestad entre una familia extensa y no tradicional que podría incluir abuelos, padres grew and madres subregadas.

El nuevo Código garantiza la defensa al aborto libre y seguro en un hospital o clíni
cica para todas las cubanas. En Estados Unidos se está eliminando, restringiendo severamente la libertad voluntaria al acceso a la elección republicana, a la salud reproductiva y a la salud maternal.

El nuevo Código de Familia la defensa de las personas con discapacidad de materiales e incluye a la vida y familia. Caridad del Carmen Valdés Díaz, profesora de Derecho de la Universidad de la Habana, dijo: “Los cambios incluida
dos en el Código de Familia buscan que las personas con discapacidad motora, sen
oría o psíquica tengan la posibilidad de declarar.” (Telesur, 5 de septiembre)

Oposición ultraderechista

El ministro cubano de Justicia, Oscar Silvent-Martínez, enfatizar la “ley es más sólida porque está impregnada de soberanía popular, esencia revolucionaria, protec
dón de derechos de un alto valor humano…” y no regulan modelos familiares rígidos o pre
establecidos, sino que favorece que todos puedan acceder a la protección de insti
tuciones de carácter familiar.” (Telesur, 5 de septiembre)

En la isla hubo cierta oposición de dere
celas al Código basadas en creencias religi
osas conservadoras. Contra el “ortodoxio” que ha sido favorecido por los organismos religiosos, incluida la iglesia católica, no están prohibidos en Cuba; simplemente no se han establecido principios políticos para el país.

Tras votar en el referéndum, el Presidente Miguel Díaz-Canel abrió la elección de la "ley anti-LGBTQ" con "crimen contra natura" de Carolina del Norte.

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Las cubanas aprueban el Nuevo Código de Familia por 2-1

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Estados Unidos. En EEUU el 5 de septiembre, la Ley Federal de Derechos de la Unidad sexual fue aprobada en el Senado. El 21 de septiembre, la ley fue firmada por el presidente Joe Biden.

En Cuba, la población ha expresado su apoyo al nuevo Código de Familia a través de referéndums. El último referéndum fue el 2 de octubre de 2023, donde se aprobó por un amplio margen el nuevo Código de Familia.

El nuevo Código de Familia incluye medidas para proteger los derechos de las personas con discapacidad, así como el reconocimiento de las familias de parentesco, la defensa del derecho al aborto y la protección de los derechos sexuales y reproductivos.

El nuevo Código de Familia busca construir una sociedad más justa y equitativa, donde las personas puedan disfrutar de sus derechos en igualdad de condiciones.

En conclusión, el nuevo Código de Familia es una señal clara de la importancia que el gobierno de Cuba otorga a la igualdad de derechos y el respeto por las libertades individuales. La aprobación del nuevo Código de Familia es un paso importante hacia una sociedad más justa y equitativa.

Cuba! Long live the Cuban Revolution!
Inclusivo, expansivo, revolucionario

Los cubanos aprueban el Nuevo Código de Familia por 2-1

Por Minnie Bruce Pratt

29 de septiembre de 2022—Tras años de intensas discusiones, debates y un proceso democrático sobre el terreno, barrio por barrio, el pueblo de Cuba ha aprobado un nuevo Código de Familia. Las disposiciones de este “Código de los Afecitos”, como se le conoce familiarmente, son progresistas, revolucionarias y han dado la realidad de la amplia gama de familias que la gente está creando en desafío al capitalismo patriarcal.

A lo largo de la historia, la gente ha formado todo tipo de configuraciones familiares diferentes. Pero en el capitalismo actual, hasta hace muy poco, sólo un tipo –el matrimonio heterosexual dominado por el hombre y conforme con la mujer– el matrimonio heterosexual dominado por el hombre y conforme con la mujer–el matrimonio heterosexual dominado por el hombre y conforme con la mujer–

Democracias no se refieren a la programación de su tiempo de trabajo y
don de los trabajadores a uno: un maquinista que opere los “trenes
deducida por ambas cámaras del Congreso, que impone un contrato entre las compañías de ferrocarriles de carga de clase uno y los 11 sindicatos de ferrocarril. Así, de un contrato que nunca se ha pactado en el país tras la muerte del Comandante en 2016.

Dicen en español: ‘Soy parte de la revolución—Yo también soy Fidel’ un canto muy extendido en el país tras la muerte del Comandante en 2016.

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El presidente Joe Biden acaba de firmar una ley, aprobada por ambas cámaras del Congreso, que impone un contrato entre las compañías de ferrocarriles de carga de clase uno y los 11 sindicatos de ferrocarril. Así, de un contrato que nunca se ha pactado en el país tras la muerte del Comandante en 2016.

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