Residents resist millionaire developers

By Joe Piette
Philadelphia

Darlene Foreman, a 60-year-old Black woman and one of the UC Townhomes tenant representatives, told the assembled press on July 11: “This is a fight for the Townhomes but not only the Townhomes.” It’s for people “all over the country who are facing displacement.”

Behind her were about 50 other residents and supporters holding signs or cell phones as she continued: “I will not be displaced. … Me, the residents here and people all over the country are sick of it. So, if this fight takes today, tomorrow, next week, next month, next year, the year after that, then we’re gonna be out here fighting!”

In the background were about 15 tents, which were put up on the property’s green lawn after a “Protect the Block Party” July 9. Residents and housing activist supporters are taking turns staying overnight as part of the “We ain’t going nowhere” campaign, joining in the residents’ resistance.

During the press conference, organizers announced the housing center’s new name, as residents covered up the official 5’ by 5’ sign with their own new banner proclaiming “The People’s Townhomes.”

The day before, a huge white banner with black lettering was put up on the sloped roof facing 40th Street that said “Housing is a human right.”

Dominique Walker of Oakland, California-based Moms for Housing, said, “We’re here to show solidarity with the People’s Townhomes. We know firsthand what displacement looks like. In Oakland, there’s been a lot of displacement of our Black and Brown residents. We know if we don’t resist, they will continue to do this.”

Aliyah Phelps of Moms for Housing said: “That’s something that we lose when gentrification happens—that sense of community, that sense of belonging, that sense of security that’s so important. When you lose that, you end up losing other things. Mental health deteriorates, your safety net, crime, everything.”

Resident Sheldon Davids said, “This is a special place, where our children can play safely, where our elders can access nearby hospitals. The People’s Townhomes are located next to the 40th Street Station. Access to this major transportation hub is not a small thing; that is one of the reasons why we are not going anywhere!”

Housing is a human right

UC Townhomes residents and their supporters staged a “Families4Housing” march to kick off a summer of events on July 9. Their goal is to stop displacement of 68 West Philly families from the low-income housing units near the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University, which is targeted for development by gentrifiers.

Just before the march began to form up, Philadelphia drum group Positive Movement Entertainment Drumline circled through the crowd, getting everyone’s attention with their powerful drum beats. Soon after as the march started, Krystal Strong led with chants of: “When Townhomes are under attack, what do we do— stand up, fight back!”

The marchers took a circular route that led them by the campuses. At 48th and Chestnut streets, UC Townhomes resident Darlene Foreman started a chant as marchers blocked a trolley and automobile traffic for 15 minutes. “They’re holding up our lives; we’re holding up the traffic.”

Continued on page 8
Houston welcomes Pastors for Peace caravan

By Gloria Rubac

Houston activists welcomed the IFCO (Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization) Pastors for Peace caravan July 9. Angie Langdon and Mario Galvan were greeted with dinner and over a dozen boxes of medical aid for Cuba.

Langdon is Social Media Coordinator for Pastors for Peace. As guest speaker, she explained the blockade and why they were defying the U.S. government by taking aid to Cuba and taking people to see firsthand what life on the socialist island is really like.

Galvan had bought a new van so he could travel the Southwest route, which began in New Mexico, then made stops in Oklahoma City and Dallas before arriving in Houston. After they left Houston, they headed to Louisiana. There are three caravan routes which will converge in Miami; and the caravan will then be in Cuba from July 10-30.

Since 1992, IFCO/Pastors for Peace has organized 31 Friendship caravans to Cuba. With each caravan and each successive effort made to resist the 60-year U.S. economic blockade of Cuba, the U.S. government has been compelled to back down, to relent and to soften its enforcement of the blockade.

Pastors for Peace takes humanitarian aid donated by the people of the U.S. to the people of Cuba. And they take people to Cuba in defiance of the U.S. blockade. See ifcwnews.org/news-events/ for more information about the Friendship caravans to Cuba.

Atlanta marks 40th anniversary of Mumia’s incarceration

By Dianne Mathiowetz

Atlanta

To mark the 40th anniversary of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal being sentenced to death, the film “Long Distance Revolutionary” was screened in Atlanta July 3. After decades of political and legal struggle, Mumia’s death sentence was overturned, although he remains incarcerated in Pennsylvania’s hellholes called prisons.

Recently released Black liberation leader, Jail Mo’Afro, was a special guest and encouraged our people to come to free Mumia. The event, in solidarity with the call by LoveNotPhear, was sponsored by the Imam Jamil Action Network (IJAN), Workers World Party, Community Movement Builders, Black Alliance for Peace-Atlanta Chapter and the Atlanta Peace Coalition in Defense of Black Lives. The evening ended with a rousing litany of “Free Them All” chants.

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

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression, attacks on immigrants, misogyny, LGBTQ+ 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 ever-greater profits.

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

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

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Despite police attacks, protests continue over cop murder of Jayland Walker

By Martha Grevatt

The racist police lynching of Jayland Walker in Akron, Ohio, on June 27 sparked a wave of protests that shows no signs of letting up. Walker, a 25-year-old Black man who worked as a DoorDash worker, was shot and killed on a sidewalk by a police officer who fired 90 shots at him while he fled on foot from the scene.

The city administration, which has yet to release the names of the murdering cops, has instead imposed harsh repression against activists. Dozens of protesters have been arrested and brutalized, while a curfew in downtown Akron remains in effect as of this writing. About 50 peaceful demonstrators were arrested July 4—a so-called “Independence Day”—after being tear-gassed and confronted by cops in riot gear and armored vehicles. Charges include rioting and disorderly conduct. Northeast Ohio progressives mobilized solidarity, providing vehicles. Charges include rioting and disorderly conduct. Northeast Ohio progressives mobilized solidarity, providing vehicles. Charges include rioting and disorderly conduct. Northeast Ohio progressives mobilized solidarity, providing vehicles.

Another Houston police murder

By Gloria Rubac

“Say his name! Jalen Randle.” This chant went on for over 45 minutes, on the way to and outside of City Hall, and their chants were echoing off the skyscrapers.

Over 500 Houston residents, on the way to and outside of City Hall, and their chants were echoing off the skyscrapers.

The crowd demonstrated at the police headquarters July 2 was so militant that many of the curfews and curfew-related charges were thrown out, but a federal civil suit related to the incident is ongoing.

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Jalen Randle, a young Black man, was assassinated by a cop who was chasing him on April 27. The cop, Shane Privette, pointed his gun at Randle and gave him commands to show his hands. The camera worn by Privette shows the officer getting out of his vehicle, giving a command to Randle but then shooting him in the back of the neck before finishing his sentence.

Community outrage forces resignation of cop who killed Tamir Rice

By Betsey Plett

Timothy Loehmann, the cop who killed 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland in 2014, was sworn in as Tioga, Pennsylvania’s lone police officer July 5. On July 6, protesters demonstrated outside the north Pennsylvania Tioga Borough office. The firststorm of outrage from borough residents and others forced Loehmann’s resignation July 7.

Borough Mayor David Wilcon, who swore him in while acknowledging Loehmann was the cop hired by Cleveland, claimed the council hadn’t allowed him to see Loehmann’s resume when he was hired. (SunGazette.com, July 7)

On Nov. 22, 2014, Rice, a 12-year-old Black child, was killed by a Cleveland recreation center with a pellet gun. Responding to a 911-call, Loehmann and his partner Officer Frank Garmes pulled up to the gazebo where Rice was playing with the pellet gun. Loehmann shot and killed Rice within 12 seconds of exiting his car.

While both officers claimed they gave Rice several warning commands, there were no witnesses to corroborate their story. In conflicting accounts, the officers said Rice was “holding the pellet gun” and that Rice was “reaching for the gun.” Nonetheless a 2015 grand jury failed to indict Loehmann. In April 2016, the judge refused to release the footage, while heartbreak- ing for the family of Jalen Randle, gives us a closer picture of what happened to Jalen in his final moments. The brutality displayed in this video is extremely disturbing—from the officer firing a deadly shot, seemingly as he ordered, Jalen to put his hands up, to the way they handcuffed and dragged his lifeless body across the ground.” Crump was hired by Randle’s family to investigate his death. Much of the press conference covered Officer Privette’s prior use of force. He was indicted by a grand jury in 2017 for allegedly knelling a Black drug suspect in the face. Those charges were thrown out, but a federal civil suit related to the incident is ongoing.

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As Ohio’s Black Lives Matter movement gains in numbers and militancy, the repressive arm of the white-supremacist ruling class continues to flex its muscles. The Ohio House of Representatives Bill 308 would let police arbitrarily categorize a protest as a “riot.” HB 109 creates new “crimes” for partici- pants in such protests.

People demand justice!

After the arrests of Blake, Austin and others, the Akron Freedom BLOC (Black Led Organizing Collaborative) Serve the People Akron and Akron Democratic Socialists of America held a joint news conference to release their demands: “The Establishment of an Independent Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate Jayland Walker’s murder and others killed by the Akron Police Department; release the names of all officers involved in the murder of Jayland Walker, cut their administrative leave, fire them, prosecute them immediately; abol- ish the deployment of tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets in City Code Section 35.17; disarm any police or security forces deployed to meet protests or assemblies; release all memorandums of understanding and current, in-place contracts between the City of Akron and the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 7 and Regional Branch of the Fraternal Order of Police; “Release a financial breakdown of all expenditures of dollars and contracts executed to meet protestors and assem- bles over the last week; legislate the abo- lition of curfews; legislate the abolition of police chases, eliminate traffic stops for all traffic violations; legislate the imme- diate release of officer-involved inci- dents; stop arresting peaceful protestors, immediately release all protestors from all jails and holding institutions, expunge the records and clear the bail and fines of all those arrested for protesting over the last week; create a Citizens Review Board for the police, with power to sub- poena and members selected strictly by local organizations; and create a Citizen- led Commission to study and strategize the defining and abolition of the Akron Police Department, municipal holding centers and jails.” (list abridged)
On her 75th birthday
Assata Shakur: ‘I am a 20th century escaped slave’

By Assata Shakur

In honor of Assata Shakur’s 75th birthday on July 16, WW is reprinted this slightly edited version of her open letter, first posted on Dec. 30, 2014. The FBI put out a $2 million bounty for her recapture almost 50 years ago.

My name is Assata Shakur, and I am a 20th century escaped slave. Because of government persecution, I was left with no other choice than to flee from the police. I was not involved in the New Jersey Turnpike robbery and violence that demonstrated the U.S. government’s policy toward people of color. I am an ex-political prisoner, and I have been living in exile in Cuba since 1984.

I have been a political activist most of my life, and although the U.S. government has done everything in its power to criminalize me, I am not a criminal, nor have I ever been one. In the 1960s, I participated in various struggles: the Black Liberation Movement, the student rights movement and the movement to end the war in Vietnam. I joined the Black Panther Party.

By 1969, the Black Panther Party had become the number one organization targeted by the FBI’s COINTELPRO program. Because the Black Panther Party demanded the total liberation of Black people, J. Edgar Hoover called it “the greatest threat to internal security of the country” and vowed to destroy it and its leaders and activists.

In 1978, my case was one of many cases brought before the United Nations Organization in a petition filed by the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression and the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, exposing the existence of political prisoners in the United States, their political persecution and the cruel and inhuman treatment they receive in U.S. prisons. According to the report: “The FBI and the New York Police Department, in particular, charged and accused Assata Shakur of participating in attacks on law enforcement personnel and widely circulated such charges and accusations among police agencies and units. The FBI and the NYPPD further charged her as being a leader of the Black Liberation Army, which the government and its respective agencies described as an organization engaged in the shooting of police officers.

“This description of the Black Liberation Army and the accusation of Assata Shakur’s relationship to it was widely circulated by government agents among police agencies and units. As a result of these activities by the government, Ms. Shakur became a hunted person; posters with her picture and this description being involved in serious criminal activities; she was highlighted on the FBI’s most wanted list; and to police at all levels, she became a ‘shoot-to-kill’ target.”

I was falsely accused in six different “criminal cases,” and in all six of these cases, I was eventually acquitted or the charges were dismissed. The fact that I was acquitted or that the charges were dismissed did not mean that I received justice in the courts; that was certainly not the case. It only meant that the “evidence” presented against me was so flimsy and false that my innocence became evident. This political persecution was part and parcel of the government’s policy of eliminating political opposition by charging them with crimes and arresting them with no regard to the factual basis of such charges.

Political frame-up

On May 2, 1973, I along with Zayd Malik Shakur and Sundiata Acoli were stopped on the New Jersey Turnpike, supposedly for a “faux tail-light.” Sundiata Acoli got out of the car to determine why we were stopped. Zayd and I remained in the car. State trooper [James] Harper then came to the car, opened the door and began to question us. Because we were Black and riding in a car with Vermont license plates, he claimed he became “suspicious.” He then drew his gun, pointed it at us and told us to put our hands up in the air, in front of us, where he could see them. I complied, and in a split second, there was a sound that came from outside the car; there was a sudden movement, and I was shot once with my arms held up in the air and then once again from the back.

Zayd Malik Shakur was later killed; trooper Werner Foerster was killed; and even though trooper Harper admitted that he shot and killed Zayd Malik Shakur, under the New Jersey felony murder law, I was charged with killing both Zayd Malik Shakur, who was my closest friend and comrade, and charged in the death of trooper Foerster. Never in my life have I felt such grief. Zayd had vowed to protect me and to help me to get to a safe place, and it was clear that he had lost his life trying to protect both me and Sundiata.

Although he was also unarmmed, and the gun that killed trooper Foerster was found under Zayd’s leg, Sundiata Acoli, who was captured later, was also charged with the killing of trooper Harper.

In 1977, I was convicted by an all-white jury and sentenced to life imprisonment in the state of New Jersey and in the United States. Although he was also unarmed, and the gun that killed trooper Harper was found on Zayd Malik Shakur, and it was clear that he had lost his life trying to protect both me and Sundiata, the charges were dismissed. The fact that I was acquitted and it was clear that he had lost his life trying to protect both me and Sundiata.

I have been a political activist most of my life, and the U.S. government has done everything in its power to criminalize me, I am not a criminal, nor have I ever been one. In the 1960s, I participated in various struggles: the Black Liberation Movement, the student rights movement and the movement to end the war in Vietnam. I joined the Black Panther Party.

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“All I have is my voice”

In January of 1998, during the Pope’s visit to Cuba, I agreed to do an interview with NBC journalist Ralph Penza around my letter to the Pope, about my experiences in the New Jersey court system, and about the changes I saw in the United States and its treatment of Black people in the last 25 years. I agreed to do this interview because I saw this secret letter to the Pope as a vicious, vulgar publicity maneuver on the part of the New Jersey State Police and as a cynical attempt to manipulate Pope John Paul II.

I have lived in Cuba for many years and was completely out of touch with the sensationalist, dishonest nature of the establishment media today. It is worse today than it was 30 years ago. After years of being victimized by the “establishment” media, it took me some time to realize that I might finally get the opportunity to tell “my side of the story.”

Instead of an interview with me, what took place was a “staged media event” in three parts, full of distortions, inaccuracies and outright lies. NBC purposely misrepresented the facts. Not only did NBC spend thousands of dollars promoting this “exclusive interview series” on NBC, they also spent a great deal of money advertising this “exclusive interview” on Black radio stations and also placed notices in local newspapers.

Like most poor and oppressed people in the United States, I do not have a voice. Black people, poor people in the U.S. do not have real freedom of speech, no real freedom of expression and very little freedom of the press. The Black press and the progressive media have historically played an essential role in the struggle for social justice. We need to continue and to expand that tradition. We need to create media outlets that help to educate our people and our children and not annihilate their minds.

I am only one woman. I own no TV stations or radio stations or newspapers. But I feel that people need to be educated as to what is going on and to understand the connection between the news media and the instruments of repression in America. All I have is my voice, my spirit and the will to tell the truth. But I sincerely ask those of you in the Black community, in the progressive media, those of you who believe in truth and freedom, to publish this statement and to let people know what is happening. We have no voice, so you must be the voice of the voiceless.

Free All Political Prisoners. I Send You Love and Revolutionary Greetings from Cuba, One of the Largest, Most Resistant and Least Co-opted Resistance Zones (Maroon Camps) That Has Ever Existed on the Face of This Planet.

Assata Shakur, Havana, Cuba

Oct. 5, 2013

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Who really profits from ‘forced labor’?

By Betsy Piette

First signed by President Joe Biden in December, the “Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act” took effect June 23. Under this latest anti-China measure, all goods made in Xinjiang province are banned, unless the importer can demonstrate the imports were produced “free of forced labor.” The ban also impacts programs that transport Uyghur workers to job sites.

The new law could affect a handful of companies or far more. Its implementation could result in more detention of goods at the U.S. border, further delaying product deliveries and further fueling inflation. Hardest hit will be U.S. industries that rely on the import of commodities such as cotton, lithium, nickel, magnesium, beryllium copper and gold mined in Xinjiang. These include manufacturers of solar panels, auto companies and energy firms.

This latest U.S. anti-China propaganda campaign is based on unsubstantiated claims that Uyghur people were forced to take up new jobs in industries recently relocated to Xinjiang.

However, if U.S. politicians and anti-China lobbyists are genuinely concerned about protecting people from being subjected to “forced labor,” they should look no further than the U.S. prison-industrial complex. According to a report the American Civil Liberties Union released June 13, incarcerated workers in the U.S. produce roughly $1 billion in goods or services each year but receive pennies an hour in “wages” for their work.

Jennifer Turner, principal author of the report stated: “The United States has a long, problematic history of using incarcerated workers as a source of cheap labor and to subsidize the costs of our blotted prison system. Incarcerated workers are stripped of even the most minimal protections against labor exploitation and abuse. They are paid pennies for their work in often unsafe working conditions, even as they produce billions of dollars for the prison and the federal government.”

In the U.S., which imprisons a higher percentage of its population than any other country, roughly 800,000 people are subject to this forced labor, making roughly 13 cents to 52 cents per hour. In Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina and Texas, incarcerated workers are essentially enslaved — paid nothing for their labor. Over 75% of incarcerated workers interviewed by the ACLU told researchers that if they refuse to work, they are subjected to punishment, including solitary confinement, loss of family visits and denial of reduced sentences.

The Global Times, which is publishing a series of stories to expose the U.S. as a real “contemporary slavery empire,” says that this exploitation of incarcerated workers “plainly demonstrates the U.S.’s real disregard for basic human rights and their brutal exploitation of the country’s workforce.”

The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, passed on Jan. 31, 1865, while abolishing enslavement actually allowed enslavement to remain legal, as “a punishment for crime wherein the party shall have been duly convicted.” This amendment lets the government legally impose forced labor on incarcerated workers across the country.

Prison labor insourcing

Part of the problem for the U.S. enforcement of the anti-China labor ban is identifying what companies produce goods involving Uyghur labor in Xinjiang province. But it is very easy to find that U.S. companies are producing directly from privatizing prisons or exploiting prison labor. A majority of the labor performed by exploited prison workers directly benefits the states managing prisons. Incarcerated workers are forced to perform various tasks from food preparation to laundry services. But many private companies profit as well.

Two major companies — Core Civic and Geo Group — are the giants of the U.S. private prison industry. Core Civic recognized $826 million in annual gross profits in 2021. Geo Group made $628 million. But these companies are not alone in profiting from prisons.

A Feb. 15 report by CareerAddict.com estimated that 4,200 large corporations use over 600,000 incarcerated workers to produce goods and services. These are served by known companies on this list. McDonalds and Wendy’s use prison labor to produce frozen beef patties and other products. Calls to Verizon, Sprint or Avis for service may be answered by incarcerated workers.

Walmart and Starbucks use enslaved prison labor to cut down their costs of producing goods and services. Prison labor produces circuit boards for Compaq. For years Aramark has used incarcerated workers to prepare and package most food items used in prisons. In 2019 Aramark was sued for using “involuntary servitude” — they were not paying incarcerated workers anything.

Police could amend the 13th Amendment to remove the prison labor exclusion clause. Biden could take measures to end contracts with private prison companies. But none of this is likely to happen under capitalism.

Those genuinely concerned about “forced labor” should be on board with the movement to abolish prisons.

Abortion access: don’t agonize — organize!

By Kathy Durkin

Thousands of women and people of all genders, nationalities and ages, who gathered in Washington, D.C., on July 9, turned out to protest the outrageous SCOTUS decision handed down by the Supreme Court on June 24, outlawing abortions. By a 5-4 vote, the reactionary, conservative Court overruled what to many is rife with arrogance and misogyny.

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The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, passed on Jan. 31, 1865, while abolishing enslavement actually allowed enslavement to remain legal, as “a punishment for crime wherein the party shall have been duly convicted.”

This amendment lets the government legally impose forced labor on incarcerated workers across the country.

Prison labor insourcing

Part of the problem for the U.S. enforcement of the anti-China labor ban is identifying what companies produce goods involving Uyghur labor in Xinjiang province. But it is very easy to find that U.S. companies are producing directly from privatizing prisons or exploiting prison labor. A majority of the labor performed by exploited prison workers directly benefits the states managing prisons. Incarcerated workers are forced to perform various tasks from food preparation to laundry services. But many private companies profit as well.

Two major companies — Core Civic and Geo Group — are the giants of the U.S. private prison industry. Core Civic recognized $826 million in annual gross profits in 2021. Geo Group made $628 million. But these companies are not alone in profiting from prisons.

A Feb. 15 report by CareerAddict.com estimated that 4,200 large corporations use over 600,000 incarcerated workers to produce goods and services. These are served by known companies on this list. McDonalds and Wendy’s use prison labor to produce frozen beef patties and other products. Calls to Verizon, Sprint or Avis for service may be answered by incarcerated workers.

Walmart and Starbucks use enslaved prison labor to cut down their costs of producing goods and services. Prison labor produces circuit boards for Compaq. For years Aramark has used incarcerated workers to prepare and package most food items used in prisons. In 2019 Aramark was sued for using “involuntary servitude” — they were not paying incarcerated workers anything.

Police could amend the 13th Amendment to remove the prison labor exclusion clause. Biden could take measures to end contracts with private prison companies. But none of this is likely to happen under capitalism.

Those genuinely concerned about “forced labor” should be on board with the movement to abolish prisons.

Abortion access: don’t agonize — organize!

By Kathy Durkin

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Workers mobilize against Amazon—across borders

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Despite ferocious union-busting attacks, Amazon workers continue to fight and move forward—with recent noteworthy progress from the U.S. South to the Mexican border.

On July 7, More Perfect Union broke the news on Twitter that workers at Amazon warehouse SDF1 in Campbellsville, Kentucky, are affiliated with the Amazon Labor Union. On April 1, the ALU, under Black leadership, won a historic victory as the first Amazon union in the U.S. to win an NLRB-supervised election, at the Staten Island, New York, JFK1 warehouse. Yet Amazon refuses to recognize the ALU, despite the liquidated vote in the union’s favor. The company has filed 25 "objections" with the NLRB in an attempt to have the vote thrown out, subtending union leaders to a tortuous hearing far away in Phoenix, which has dragged on for weeks.

The Kentucky Amazon facility, which employs about 1,000 people, was one of the first Amazon warehouses built in the U.S. About 600 of the workers are eligible to vote in the National Labor Relations Board election.

Matt Littrell, 22, a picker at SDF1 and chair of the local organizing committee, said workers there are making "good progress" building support and could petition the NLRB for a vote "maybe within the next six months." (wdrv.com/news, July 7)

Changes against Amazon for union-busting activities were filed May 6 on behalf of the Campbellsville workers, including for coercive actions like surveillance and illegal "changes in terms and conditions of employment." James Knott, a regional director for warehouse workers led another union drive in March at the RDU1 warehouse at Garner, North Carolina, in the Raleigh-Durham area. Organized as CAUSE (Carolina Amazonians United For Solidarity and Empowerment), workers are dynamic on the ground and on social media, pointing out that Amazon pays so little that some workers have to sleep in their cars.

On July 6, in the organization’s Twitter video, Amazon worker "Darren" said that RDU1 reminds him of his time in prison, "from the constant surveillance, short breaks, harassment by racist security guards, to the cheap labor." In March just before the ALU’s epic New York win, Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama, voted for the second time on whether to become a local of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. In February 2021, those BHM1 warehouse workers were the first to hold a NLRB union election at an Amazon facility in the U.S. Bessemer, an old steel-producing and labor union town, adjoins the city of Birmingham.

Despite the initial loss, workers continued to relentlessly organize. The 2022 March vote in Bessemer was so close, the outcome is still undecided as of July, with disputed ballots to determine the outcome.

Solidarity across the border

Amazon warehouse workers who have had to commute as much as five hours a day, on foot, from Tijuana, Mexico, to the SAN3 warehouse in San Diego, have initiated an organizing flyer at Amazon’s SAN3 warehouse at the Otay Mesa, California, border crossing between Tijuana, Mexico, and San Diego.

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We should not be celebrating the 4th of July

By Arjaje Red

Below is an edited speech given at the "We reject your 4th" pro-choice demonstration in Buffalo, New York.

With the overturning of Roe v. Wade weighing heavily on a lot of people right now, many are choosing not to celebrate the 4th of July this year. This egregious assault on reproductive rights and autonomy is a dark moment for all people that this country views them only as property of a patriarchal capitalist system and that no mainstream political party is willing to defend the dignity of people.

While we should welcome those who have come to realize this as a necessary first step in understanding and embracing our shared humanity, we must make something abundantly clear for those who haven’t already been saying it all this time. This country did not become unfree the day Roe was overturned. Freedom has never existed for the majority of the population here. Black and Indigenous people have been considered property and "savage" (so dopey and inarticulate) by Republicans. Former President Barack Obama did not close Guantanamo Bay, as many people think. And Joe Biden did not release Jamal captive.

This is a country that dropped two atomic bombs on Japanese cities, killing hundreds of thousands of civilians, making many more sick for generations. A country that had concentration camps for political prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal captive. This is a country that dropped two atomic bombs on Japanese people forcibly removed from their communities.

Injustice continues

Even today, this country maintains concentration camps in the form of prisons and ICE detention centers. Biden did not close the camps, which were expanded by Republicans. Former President Barack Obama did not close Guanatamo Bay, as he said he would. This war on immigrants continues with 53 migrant workers dying from extreme heat in a locked semitruck just this past July.

This country wages endless imperialist wars all over the world, killing immeasurable numbers through warfare and sanctions. Roughly 1.5 million people were killed during the occupation of Iraq alone, with half a million children killed mostly through starvation—a effect of US war and economic sanctions.

Many other countries like Cuba suffer from crippling blockades, sanctions and economic warfare preventing medical equipment and other vital necessities from reaching people who need them. This country lost a million people—disproportionately working-class Black, Brown and Indigenous people— to COVID-19, deaths that were largely preventable but were allowed to happen anyway for the sake of maintaining high profit margins and implementing ruthless safety protocols. Meanwhile the People’s Republic of China, a country with not more than four times the population of the U.S., has fewer than 6,000 total deaths.

This is a country where workers like myself have to fight tooth-and-nail for our union against these so-called "progressive" companies, facing an unlimited number of illegal union-busting tactics that are given more no than a slap on the wrist by the NLRB (No Labor Rights Board).

While we struggle for our unions here, the United States sponsors right-wing death squads to kidnap and assassinate workers and union organizers in other countries, as they have done in Nicaragua, Guatemala, Colombia and others. Not to mention the war crimes which have had the governments overthrown and replaced with a U.S. puppet regime, like in Bolivia recently, Chile in 1973 and many more.

This is a country where police indiscriminately gun down Black people and get a paid vacation, like when 25-year-old Jayland Walker was shot over 60 TIMES by Akron, Ohio, police while unarmed just a week ago ... while white-supremacist mass shooters like Peyton Gendron are taken alive by police, while fully armed with assault weapons and body armor, after having just killed 10 Black shoppers and injuring the third on their own city.

Genocide and cruelty

This is a country where police will soon be arresting and charging people for seeking abortions to “save the kids,” while they sit outside an elementary school and let another mass shooter slaughter dozens of children, like in Uvalde. The overturning of Roe is only the most recent incident in a centuries-long legacy of police and economic warfare preventing medical care and education, freedom fighters and holds political prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal captive. This is a country whose own constitution proclaims Black people to be only three-fifths of a human being. A country that had concentration camps for Japanese people forcibly removed from their communities.

Arjaje Red speaking, with Starbucks Workers United contingent at “We reject your 4th” pro-choice demonstration in Buffalo, New York, July 4.

We should not be celebrating the 4th of July now, and we never should have been in the first place. When you really understand U.S. history, there is no way to view the 4th of July other than how Frederick Douglass had put it in 1852, a speech referenced by India Walton at today’s demonstration:

To the African slave, is your 4th of July? Answer? a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, that he is a stranger in a strange land, a settler-colonial foundation of the United States.

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"We reject your 4th" pro-choice demonstration in Buffalo, New York, July 4.

Arjaje Red
Immigrant detainees strike ICE detention centers

Immigrants fighting deportation while being held in two federal detention centers in California have organized a labor strike to protect workers from being fired and the outrageously meager compensation of $1 per day. These workers are responsible for cleaning dormitories and the facilities at the Adelanto and Golden State Annex facilities, which are run by the private multimillion-dollar GEO Group corporation.

The Florida-based company reported a $551 million profit in the first quarter of 2022 alone. In a statement released by the Golden State Annex strikers, the workers pinpoint the injustice and greed of the for-profit carceral system: “We are being exploited for our labor and being paid a paltry $1 per day for the dormitories.” Meanwhile, private prison corporations like the GEO Group receive tens of millions of each year to accommodate us detained in ICE custody."

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U Penn workers defeat two-tier pay

University of Pennsylvania housekeeping workers won a major contract victory. Rank-and-file members of Teamsters Local 151 launched a successful campaign prior to contract negotiations. They surveyed over 200 members about issues, held conference calls to keep members informed and nurtured members who wanted to get more involved in organizing.

The rank and file were vocal and held demonstrations to garner public support. The activities put pressure on their union leadership to press their demands and on the university to bargain in good faith. In June the 250 housekeepers ratified a five-year contract that ended the two-tier pay system (a grossly unfair pay structure meant to disrupt worker solidarity by paying newer workers less than higher seniority workers for the same work) and provided wage increases.

Teamster member Therese Whible said that in her 31 years as a union member, this is the best contract she has seen. “We haven’t seen raises like this since the 80s, and I’ve never seen union hall so packed.” The workers vow to continue their grassroots solidarity campaign to keep both employer and union leadership focused on the demands of the rank and file. With their recent firing workers who were prominent organizers, such as Victoria Conklin. Members of the community stopped by the picket to show support, including organizers from Communications Workers (CWA) Local 1108, BuffaloDSA, Workers World Party’s Buffalo branch and some passersby.

This strike is one of many. Starket strikes erupting across the country over union busting and a massive list of Unfair Labor Practice charges. The very next day, the first unionized Starbucks on Elmwood Avenue in Buffalo went on strike. These Buffalo strikes follow strikes in Seattle, where eight stores went on strike at the same time. Workers at Pike Place Market, the infamous first Starbucks location in Seattle, joined the strike after being forced to reapply for their jobs. This strike has been joined by other stores in Seattle, Chicago, Pittsburgh and elsewhere. Starbucks has fired, reprimanded, and stopped the largest concurrent strike so far in the union campaign.

Abortion access: don’t agonize — organize!

Some of Biden’s major supporters have instructed him to pursue a way around state abortion bans, now implemented in 13 states with 12 ready to criminalize the procedure. Several bans apply from the moment of fertilization!

The story of a 10-year-old rape victim who had to travel out of Ohio to obtain an abortion is just one horror story of many. Can anyone discount that child’s fear and anguish? Apparent, right-wing judges and legislators can. And they call themselves “pro-life” and “pro-child.”


These same forces oppose government funding and stand to prevent every child and every healthy child. One might think abortion opponents would push for essential benefits for families. Not so. The same politicians who oppose abortions have vetoed funding services for children and parents, like food programs or Medicaid expansion. The SCOTUS ruling and state bans are traumatizing pregnant people and worrying clinic staff, who are afraid to do anything allegedly illegal. They will disproportionally affect Black, Latinx, immigrant, and low-income women. The campaign of terror is deliberately aimed at them to perpetuate racism and discrimination. The ultraright forces behind these heinous bans and restrictive laws deliberately strive to perpetuate this oppression.

Don’t mourn! Organize!

The counter to the SCOTUS ruling and state abortion bans is mass protests and more mass protests, using every tactic, civil or not. The Women’s March is calling for a “Summer of Rage.” Join those demonstrations or any you can. Or organize one. Boycott. Occupy. Block the streets. Strike. Rally. This malevolent right wing has to be pushed back by a fierce, militant, independent mass movement composed of women and all who can get pregnant, people of all nationalities and genders, workers, immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, youth, individuals with disabilities and all progressives.
Humanitarian crisis in England?

By G. Dunkel

The resignation of Boris Johnson as leader of the Conservative Party of Great Britain, which must be replaced as prime minister, was not just the consequence of a slapdash serial liar, forced out of office by 59 cabinet resignations in 40 hours. The leadership of the Conservative Party had come to the conclusion that Johnson, aka Mr. Brexit, didn’t have the wherewithal to reach a new agreement with the European Union over the northeast of Ireland, to deal with the growing anger over the cost-of-living crisis in Britain, immigration — sending refugees to Rwanda is not a real solution, labor shortages and the economic and political problems created by the conflict in Ukraine.

Britain, which consists of the nations England, Scotland, Wales and the British-occupied north of Ireland, is the fifth largest economy in the world and a major military power. On news of Johnson’s resignation, Volodymyr Zelensky, the president of Ukraine, called Johnson to express his “sadness” and to say “Ukrainian society greatly sympathizes with you.” (Le Monde, July 8)

Johnson, a strong supporter of U.S./NATO’s military pressure on Russia, had visited President Zelensky twice during the war and held frequent phone conversations.

In May inflation in Britain hit a 40-year high of 9.1%, the highest in Europe and the highest among the G7 leading imperialist economies. All European economies are suffering from high energy prices, but one of the side effects of Britain’s exit from the European Union is that Britain is hit the hardest.

Washington has forced its European allies to impose sanctions — embargoes on Russian exports. What makes the embargoes politically unpalatable is that the rising energy prices give Russia rising revenue on its exports at the same time they damage European economies (bloomsberg.com, July 8)

By G. Dunkel

Residents resist millionaire developers

Continued from page 1

Strong pointed out that organizers are changing the name of UC Townhomes to “The People’s Townhomes” as one lead banner proclaimed.

Back at the Townhomes, a rally stayed in the street for an hour at 40th and Market streets. Speakers included Mother Pam, the two speakers from California’s Moms for Housing and several more residents.

Adding to the march’s visual effects, Spiral Q provided a three-fourths life-size cardboard cutout of a bulldozer, plus three tall banners that read: “Reckon with Black Legacies.” The Townhomes are located in the Powelton Village neighborhood for an hour at 40th and Market streets. Speakers included Mother Pam, the two speakers from California’s Moms for Housing and several more residents.

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Tip of the gentrifiers’ iceberg

Over the next five years, 37 other Philadelphia low-income housing properties face renewal of HUD contracts, including a senior high-rise across the street. Another is Center Post Village, two blocks away at 40th Street and Powelton Avenue. Postering last week in the Powelton Village neighborhood where this writer once delivered mail, I was shocked by how many single-family homes had been torn down, replaced by new high-rent apartments.

Residents from these Black and Brown communities are being displaced into a housing market with fewer and fewer affordable vacancies. Many parents and seniors will have difficulty finding safe, healthy housing that offers similar amenities as their current neighborhood. According to widely published reports by Realtor.com, Philadelphia’s rental vacancy rate is well under 5%, with residents oftentimes being offered units in outlying areas with surging rates of violence and few amenities.

Back at the People’s Townhomes site, a “Protect the Block Party” continued late into the night. People danced to music by several DJs. A badminton game was set up, and children enjoyed making giant soap bubbles. Cindy Lou expertly face-painted children and adults. Free pizza, cookies, water and ice were provided to participants. The protest continued overnight with around a dozen tents set up for those who could stay.


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G7 NATO and BRICS summits confirm a global divide

By Sara Flounders

Three very different international meetings, as well as the events of June 23-30. The three “summits” confirm a growing global divide. It is worth examining these meetings: who attended, and what they said. Two focused on confrontation and military escalation—in sharp contrast to the first—BRICS—which focused on cooperation, sustainable development and trade.

**BRICS Summit, June 23-24**

The 14th BRICS Summit was the first gathering. It was held virtually June 23-24 and was chaired this year by China. BRICS stands for the countries of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. These five countries, with a total population of 3 billion, or 40% of the world’s people, have widely different political and economic systems. But they are all developing countries and were all formerly colonies or neocolonies looted by the G7 bloc of imperialist countries. They are shaped by anticolonial struggles and face the necessity of cooperation.

The focus of the BRICS Summit was on increasing economic cooperation and building an open world economy that supports trade and promotes cooperation. It was held under the theme: “Partnership, in a New Era for Global Development.”

BRICS is a unique forum that holds dozens of meetings prior to its annual summit. This years’ stakes and events took place, covering the fields of political security, economy, trade, finance, sustainable development and public health, as well as people-to-people and cultural exchanges. BRICS maintains a commitment to strengthening multilateralism and opposing hegemonism.

Argentina and Iran have recently formally applied to join BRICS.

Eight other developing countries have held meetings and expressed interest. These expanded meetings are called BRICS+.

The following statement noted that, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges, BRICS countries in 2022 have jointly continued enhancing solidarity and deepening cooperation.

BRICS countries produce around one-third of the world’s gross domestic product and are home to one-fifth of the world’s population. Their combined economies account for roughly 30% of global Gross Domestic Product.

The BRICS countries are determined to continue to strengthen economic cooperation and promote the establishment of a new international economic and monetary order.

The BRICS countries have been actively working on the expansion of the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) and the setting up of the BRICS Development Fund (BDF). These institutions are expected to play a significant role in promoting sustainable development and economic cooperation.

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For more information on these books and other writings by the author, Fred Goldstein, go to LowWageCapitalism.com

**NATO Summit, June 23-24**

The 48th Group of Seven (G7) held a three-day summit this year June 26-28 in Schloss Elmau, Krün, in the Bavarian Alps of Germany. Its stated purpose is to coordinate global economic policy. Leaders from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the United States, as well as the European Union, were present. These are the countries responsible for the looting and colonization of Asia, Africa and the Americas. They are also responsible for the genocide of Indigenous peoples, the enslavement of African people and the devastating world wars of the 20th century.

This summit of the most powerful and wealthiest imperialist powers was focused on how to intensify sanctions on Russia and how to continue the war in Ukraine.

Their new demands that oil-producing countries agree to a cap on Russian oil prices and on Russian gold and rare minerals, along with new restrictions on technology, are likely to be ignored by the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

While the G7 member states represent less than 10% of the world’s population, their gross domestic product (GDP) control over 70% of global GDP. These powerful economies function in the interests of a tiny class of corporate owners, who control most of the world’s resources and capital. What concerns this owning class is that while their wealth is concentrated in fewer hands, their position is weakened by controlling 70% of global GDP some 30 years ago. How to reinforce their declining position—in the face of a capitalist economic recession, soaring energy prices and inflation—is increasingly dividing them.

The days of dominance of the dollar and euro have passed. The rounds of sanctions imposed on Russia, harsher than ever before, were ignored by most of the world. The effort to scheme some 40 other countries with sanctions has forced open new forms of exchange. Global trade is moving toward a basket of currencies that include the Russian ruble, trading at an all-time high, the Chinese yuan and the Indian rupee.

As a public relations gesture, G7 political leaders agreed to a goal of raising $600 billion in private and public funds over five years to finance needed infrastructure in developing countries. This measure was proposed as a counter to China’s multitrillion-dollar Belt and Road Development Initiative, involving more than 100 countries.

But this G7 plan, called the “Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment,” was just a rebreak of last year’s G7 pledge of $600 billion. That plan was called 2021 Build Back Better World (BBW). That grand plan never got off the ground last year’s press release announcement.

Its fate was similar to Biden’s promises and the even grander Build Back Better (BBB) transformational package for social needs and infrastructure within the U.S. The idea that Washington, which has already completed any large infrastructure project within the U.S., will help build infrastructure in the developing world is not taken seriously by any country. U.S. military industries are more interested in the superprofits of new weapons systems, the construction and maintenance of 800 military bases around the world and the project of building a new forward base in Poland.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) held its Summit Meeting in Madrid this year.

NATO is the U.S.-commanded military alliance that serves as a global enforcer of U.S. corporate power. It was formed in 1949 by 12 imperialist countries of Europe, Canada and the U.S. to block the Soviet Union and the countries attempting to build socialism in Eastern Europe after World War II.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, this military alliance, which surged across the Balkans and Eastern Europe, pushing formerly socialist countries into a military straitjacket, has imposed harsh capitalist economic restructuring, enforced privatization of industry and housing, along with costly military maneuvers every month—both Soviet and U.S. wars—in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This 2022 meeting of general and capitalist politicians agreed on a fundamental shift in NATO policy. Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg declared it the “biggest overhaul of our collective defense and defense since the Cold War.”

The NATO press release bragged: “NATO’s closest partners Finland and Sweden were invited to join the Alliance, a significant boost to Euro-Atlantic security. … Allies further agreed on long-term support for Ukraine through a strengthened Comprehensive Assistance Package.”

Most ominously, Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea were invited to be the “Indo-Pacific Partners” to participate in a NATO Summit for the first time. This invitation was part of a new “NATO Strategic Concept”—a 10-year strategy plan that opens the door to build a new global alliance to “contain China and Russia threatens western values.”

The NATO meeting focused on “strengthened forward defenses, enhanced battlegroups in the eastern part of the Alliance and an increase in the number of high-readiness forces.” The number of NATO troops on high alert would rise from the present 40,000 to well over 300,000. The United States will deploy over 20,000 additional forces to Europe. There are currently approximately 100,000 U.S. forces in Europe.

The plan includes enhanced rotational deployments in the Baltic region by armored, aviation, air defense and special operations forces.

**WAR without victory**

By Sara Flounders

“By revealing the underbelly of the empire, Flounders sheds insight on how to stand up to the imperialist war machine and, in so doing, save ourselves and humanity.”


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PentagonAchillesHeel.com

It is worth noting that NATO’s track record in pumping up the size of its forces on the ground was disastrously ineffective in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

With NATO’s trillion-dollar military army grew from 6,000 combat-ready troops in 2014, at the time of the U.S.-backed coup against the elected Ukrainian government, to nearly 100,000 by June 2021, according to a summary put out by the U.S. Congressional Research Service. Ukraine’s military expenditure tripled in the last year.

The U.S. modernized Ukraine’s tanks, armored vehicles and artillery systems and was the main provider of military hardware, radio equipment, military transport trucks and more than 200 Javelin man-portable, anti-tank missiles. Britain, Poland and Lithuania have also supplied Ukraine. (flaxnews.com)

Now these same well-trained, “combat-ready” Ukrainian troops are collapsing faster in Lagava than the NATO-trained forces did in Afghanistan last year. No evaluation of NATO’s resounding defeat in Afghanistan or the collapse in Ukraine was discussed.

The grand NATO plan to pull Russia into a quagmire in Ukraine and use sanctions to destabilize Russia with the escalations and shortages has hit the NATO members far harder than Russia. This is only escalating their war-thirsty for other military solutions.

Instead, the NATO Summit called for intense military involvement in the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel region of Africa. The Sahel stretches from Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Mali, Niger, Chad and Sudan to Ethiopia.

Rather than making development plans for Africa, NATO is planning increased military interventions and wars.

**Global divide grows**

New international alliances are forming. The presidents of Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan—the five countries that make up the Caspian Sea Basin, met June 29 in Turkmenistan at the Sixth Caspian Sea Summit to discuss regional cooperation and development, especially of oil and gas resources. (tinyurl.com/yye7z4u3) They pledged to keep foreign armies out of the Caspian Sea basin.

What is clear from the G7 and NATO meetings is that the U.S. ruling class is withdrawing rapidly from economic global capitalism, because it is no longer able to call the shots. Now it is doing all it can to sabotage supply lines and create shortages. A brutal effort is underway to establish new, smaller economic and military pacts with its allies. The resulting recession will deepen their economic woes.

Mass demonstrations held at the G7 and NATO Summits are a sign of growing and needed resistance.
The campaign to bring Brittney Griner home

Brittney Griner is a 31-year-old, 6-foot, 9-inch center for the Phoenix Mercury in the Women's National Basketball Association. As a college player for the Baylor Bears in Waco, Texas, she is a two-time Associated Press Player of the Year and a two-time Olympic gold medal winner. Griner, who is Black and a lesbian, is also a WNBA champion.

Griner's case has been outspoken since 2020, when she opposed the playing of the national anthem before basketball games in protest of the 2020 racist police murder of George Floyd, a 24-year-old Black man killed in Minnesota. Griner has been outspoken since 2020, when she pled guilty on July 1, saying that the drugs were "inadvertent" in her luggage, with the hope her guilty plea would mean she would not be imprisoned for a long time. Her trial is scheduled to resume later this month.

It is understandable that so many people want Brittney Griner back home, especially her family, friends and the millions of basketball fans who are passionate about her. Griner has accused Biden of not doing enough to bring her life partner back home.

It is important to put into political context that Russia is not the same as the former Soviet Union with progressions on the books. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union 30 years ago, Russia has developed a capitalist economy riddled with social divisions and inequalities. Biden, as President Putin is not a proponent of LGBTQ+ rights, and so far he has not been inclined to intervene in the legal proceedings to insure Griner's release.

The bigger factor is that the U.S. and its NATO allies are at war economically and politically with Russia, a war grown sharper during the military conflict in Ukraine. It is not beyond comprehension that the Biden administration would use Griner as a political pawn to further deepen anti-Russia sentiment amongst the U.S. masses.

It is important to continue to put pressure on Biden to do everything possible to bring Brittney Griner home, while at the same time demand that the U.S. and NATO stop their intervention in Ukraine, which they are doing to promote their own imperialist interests.

By Workers World bureau Philadelphia


It chronicles the summer of 2020 in Philadelphia, which like much of the world was embroiled in Black Lives Matter, anti-police brutality protests responding to the Minneapolis police murder of George Floyd. “How We Stay Free” includes testimony, personal reflections, prose, poetry and photographs from several predominantly Black activists and organizations.

Co-Editor Christopher Rodgers hosted the discussion. The event was organized by Shoshon Love, an education curator with the Museum of Art.

Speakers included Karen Asper Jordan, president of the Cecil B. Moore Philadelphia Freedom Fighters; writer, organizer and co-founder of the Black and Brown Workers Cooperative, Abdul-Ally Abdullah Muhammad; and portraiture and street photographer Karen Martin.

Workers World newspaper is honored that one of our major contributing photographers, Fajr Muhammad, contributed to the book and was part of the panel discussion.

Philadelphia-born and raised Karen Asper Jordan, 66 years when Cecil B. Moore led the struggle to integrate Girard College, is distinguished as a young Black woman in 1965. She described police barricades and press vilification of protestors during the seven-month struggle, during which demonstrators sang loudly in song to the dismay of white students inside the college walls.

At age 17, Asper Jordan was arrested at a demonstration at the post office, demanding an end to beatment in housing for Black women, and again in 1967 during a demonstration against racism in the school district. “I got involved and never stopped.” Today she is a retired nurse, who continues to advocate for justice, equality and human rights. Jordan cautioned that

"the fight for justice and equality is constant and might get worse before it gets better, but know you can always do something to make a difference."

Abdul-Ally Abdullah Muhammad, born and raised in West Philadelphia and a Black, queer and nonbinary activist, described becoming politically aware as a high school student just after the U.S. invaded Afghanistan and was pushing its war in Iraq. Their organizing in the nonprofit community around HIV/AIDS exposed the tension between staff and managers in this health field and led to their helping to establish the Black and Brown Workers Cooperative.

They recalled the brutal murder of Muslim activist in 2009, which inspired Martin to organize a protest and take pictures. She has used her camera as a visual "storyteller" focusing on Black women, both in the forefront of community struggles and as parents and often primary caregivers. Martin stressed the importance of networks of care, noting how much Black mothers sacrifice in order to take part in activist work.

You can't helicopter into a protest!

Well-known movement photographer Joe Piette contributed pictures from the protests on or around the Art Museum steps, including one of the infamously "Rocky" statue on which hung a sign reading "No Justice, No Peace." Another depicted chalk on multiple museum steps, calling out fascists as "bound to lose" — a reference to a Woody Guthrie song.

"How We Stay Free is available through CommonNotions.org."

Born in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, Piette became aware of racism when his Québécois immigrant family moved to Lockport, New York, where he grew up in a low-income, multicultural, working-class neighborhood.

Later Piette was drafted and served time in the U.S. Army. During the time Piette lived in Philadelphia during the 1960s, Piette said that people around the world can know what is happening in Philadelphia. One of the things Piette stressed is that people know what is happening around the world. Palestinians, well experienced in being tear-gassed were shared around the world. People around the world made aware of the world. People around the world were made aware of what is happening in Ferguson.

"You can’t helicopter into a protest and take pictures. You have to understand what people are saying and why. You have to show respect, ask permission to take pictures and show care not to post photos that could be used by police to incriminate activists.

"I offer my photos to organizations so that people around the world can know what is happening in Philadelphia. One example of why this is important stems from the struggle in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014, when images of Black activists being tear-gassed were shared around the world. Palestinians, well experienced in dealing with tear gas from Israeli forces, sent messages to people in Ferguson offering advice on how to deal with its impact."

"How We Stay Free is available through CommonNotions.org."
Ons Jabeur: a trailblazer

By Monica Moorehead

The oldest and most prestigious Grand Slam tournament is the All England Tennis Championships, hosted at Wimbledon in a suburb of London, England. Founded in 1877, this year marks the 104th edition of the Wimbledon tournament being played at its current location — on Centre Court.

In 1978, at the age of 17, Ons Jabeur, a 27-year-old Tunisian, accomplished that feat. Before Jabeur lost the finals to 25-year-old Elena Rybakina from Kazakhstan in a three-set match July 9, she was the number two ranked player in the world by the Women’s Tennis Association and American Tennis Association.

As of July 11, she is ranked number five. She was ranked number 24 just a year ago, until she won a World Tennis Association title in Birmingham, England, earlier this year, along with winning a number of other tournaments.

Jabeur is nicknamed “Minister of Happiness” in her native Tunisia, a North African country of over 12 million people located on the Mediterranean Coast. Tunisia shares a border with Algeria and Libya; due to its close proximity to the Mediterranean Sea, Tunisia is also part of the Arab world.

Jabeur stated, “In the area, we want to see more players. It’s not like Europe or any other countries. I want to see more players from my country and the Middle East, from Africa.” (CNN, July 8)

Tunisian citizen Mourad Karoui related her feelings about Jabeur, saying, “She made us happy even in the economic conditions we were in.” Jabeur has “shown a beautiful image of Tunisia to the world.” (Reuters, July 8)

Tunisia’s Sports Minister Mohamed Mamar dilated that Jabeur will be a national celebration in honor of Ons Jabeur when she returns home.

The writer witnessed Jabeur play in person at the 2022 U.S. Open.

Haiti’s president assassinated a year ago — much still unknown

By Catherine Charlemagne

The following article is excerpted from an article that first appeared in Haitihilberte.com, July 7, 2022. The full article can be found at tิงningurl.com/jo6j0fch.

It’s been one year since Haiti’s President Jovenel Moise was machine-gunned at home in front of his wife and children.

The murder was carried out by a commando of Colombian assassins, presumably in the service of Haiti’s political and economic oligarchs, whose identities are still unknown. For a year, this case has been one of the hands of examining magistrates. For a year, five investigating judges, appointed by the Dean of Port-au-Prince’s High Court, Bernard Saint-Vil, have received and then passed on the case, not one of them making any headway. In short, the investigation has gone almost nowhere in a year, and the most horrific magnitude of modern times remains unsolved.

Not only has no one been held responsible for the murder of Haiti’s president, but several people have been arrested in Haiti, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Turkey and Panama. Most of them were either imprisoned in Haiti, but the most important ones are held in the United States.

Others are still on the run, like Joseph Félix Baez, who is believed to be somewhere in Haiti. Haitian-Jordanian businessman Samir Handal was arrested in Ankara, Turkey, in November 2021. Haiti requested his extradition, but the Istanbul Criminal Court released him on Monday, July 4, 2022, saying that the documents provided by Haiti’s justice officers did not make clear how Handal was actually implicated in the crime. As a result, Turkey rejected Haiti’s extradition request and freed Handal.

Some actors are also dead. In addition to three Colombian mercenaries whose Haitian policemen killed in the gun battles after the assassination, there was the case of businessman and former coup-plotters police chief Marie-Jude Gilbert Dragon, who died in Port-au-Prince’s National Penitentiary, reportedly of COVID-19.

The three most important prisoners accused of central roles in the murder are being held in Florida by U.S. authorities. They are former Haitian Senator John Joel Joseph (arrested in Jamaica), former convicted Haitian drug trafficker Rodolpho “Whiskey” Jaar (arrested in the Dominican Republic) and former Colombian soldier and mercenary Mario Antonio Palacios (arrested in Panama).

Their suspects are being held in the U.S., at least in part because some of them have worked with and for the U.S. government. Indeed, in April a federal judge in Miami allowed the U.S. government to withhold from Palacios’ defense attorney unspecified evidence on the grounds that it was a “potential threat … to [U.S.] national security.” Meanwhile it’s a matter of record that Jaar was previously a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) informant. The Haitian state, being totally dependent on and, indeed, installed by Washington, will find it nearly impossible to bring back to Haiti any of these suspects to answer for their actions.

At the same time, at least three businesswomen who are also citizens — Antonia Intriago, Walter Veintemilla and Aracely Pretel Ortiz — hired and helped finance, which they characterize as “fascist.”

Abe’s killing spotlight Japan’s global role

By John Catalinoto

Shinzo Abe, the right-wing former Japanese prime minister, was assassinated July 8 during an election campaign rally in the city of Nara, a former imperial capital. The 67-year-old, who retired from politics in 2020 after being diagnosed with stomach cancer, was scheduled to run for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Abe’s shocking death is one of the most significant events since the end of World War II.

The LDP won an election July 10 for the upper house of parliament by an even larger margin than anticipated. Some say the LDP gained a sympathy vote with Abe’s assassination.

No one has indicated that the assassina- tion would result in substantial changes in Japanese international or domestic poli- cies. It does throw a spotlight on Japanese imperialism’s role in the world. While Japan’s only current direct colony is Okinawa, a former U.S. military base, the country’s imperialist legacy can be traced back to the late 19th century.

After the Japanese government and military surrendered to U.S. imperialism in 1945, which began after the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing hundreds of thousands of civilians. World War II ended in the Pacific, not long because the Japanese ruling class wanted to avoid surrendering to the Soviet Union.

The U.S. military then occupied Japan and imposed laws preventing the reviva- lization of the Japanese Armed Forces. Over the years, Washington’s policy evolved as the U.S. military extended and enhanced its Pacific empire.

“Potential threat … to [U.S.] national security.” Meanwhile it’s a matter of record that Jaar was previously a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) informant. The Haitian state, being totally dependent on and, indeed, installed by Washington, will find it nearly impossible to bring back to Haiti any of these suspects to answer for their actions.

At the same time, at least three businesswomen who are also citizens — Antonia Intriago, Walter Veintemilla and Aracely Pretel Ortiz — hired and helped finance, which they characterize as “fascist.”

Abe disavowed and considered repealing the 1993 Kono Statement, which acknowl- edged and apologized to comfort women.

The Tokyo District Court’s Supreme Court issued the opinion that Japanese corporations that used slave labor from Korea during WWII must pay $860,000 in reparations to surviving slave laborers. In response, Abe declared a trade war.

Abe’s killings spotlight on Japan’s global role.

The writer witnessed Jabeur play in person at the 2022 U.S. Open.

Opinions of Nudotul

Like Donald Trump in the U.S., Abe was known for refusing to apologize for the past war crimes of Japanese militarists. Abe was also a forceful expression of this nationalism.

When asked about Japan being subor- dinate to Washington, Abe disavowed and considered repealing the 1993 Kono Statement, which acknowl- edged and apologized to comfort women.

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El Título IX se debilita con la sentencia Roe de la TSE

El 23 de junio se cumplió el 50º aniversario del Título IX, la legislación federal que promueve la igualdad de oportunidades para la participación de mujeres y hombres en actividades que antes habían sido reservadas para los dos sexos. Al día siguiente, el Tribunal Supremo de EE.UU. anuló otra decisión de hace 50 años -el caso Roe contra Wade-, negando así a las mujeres y niñas protegidas por el Título IX su autonomía corporal para elegir si quieren o no tener hijos.

El Título IX establece: “ Ninguna persona puede ser excluida, por razón de su sexo, de la participación en cualquier programa o actividad educativa que reciba ayuda financiera federal, si se niega a garantizarle a esa persona el mismo, o un equivalente, servicio.”

El Título IX dio a las mujeres la oportunidad de desempeñarse en deportes en la universidad sin que tuvieran que cargar con una enorme deuda de préstamos estudiantiles. Años después de su aprobación, se crearon las bases para que las atletas profesionales exigieran y obtuvieran la misma remuneración que los hombres. El 18 de mayo fuimos testigos del histórico acuerdo de negociación colectiva entre la Federación de Fútbol de Estados Unidos y la Asociación de Jugadoras de la Selección Nacional Femenina de Estados Unidos y la Asociación de Jugadoras de la Selección Nacional de Fútbol de Estados Unidos que creó una verdadera igualdad salarial en los deportes. En el aniversario de la aprobación del Título IX, la revista TIME entrevistó a la campeona de fútbol profesional Megan Rapinoe sobre las deficiencias del Título IX y el impacto de la sentencia Roe de la SCOTUS. Rapinoe responde que las deficiencias del Título IX “reflejan los agujeros de la sociedad... hay un punto ciego racial... hay un punto ciego LGBTIQ... hay un punto ciego para los inmigrantes, todo eso.”

Rapinoe fue una de más de 500 atletas que firmaron un informe amicus en apoyo del caso Roe contra Wade, argumentando que Roe era esencial para el Título IX. El Título IX aseguraba que la elección ofrecida a muchas mujeres la oportunidad de practicar deportes. Afirmó: “Es absolutamente necesario que se mantenga porque los deportes son una forma de liberación para muchas mujeres que ayudan a su desarrollo.”

¡Proteger a los violadores

El Título IX, promulgado por el presidente Richard M. Nixon en 1972, al tiempo que aumentaba enormemente las oportunidades deportivas de las mujeres y las niñas, también ofrecía recursos a las víctimas de agresiones sexuales o acoso por razón de su género. Sentó las bases de cómo las escuelas que recibían financiación federal debían manejar las acusaciones y proteger a las sobrevivientes.

En 2020, la Administración de educación de Donald Trump, Betsy DeVos, debilitó estas protecciones haciendo que los deportes fueran un insumo del éxito de los acusados. Las universidades tuvieron que ofrecer audiencias en vivo para adjudicar las denuncias de agresión sexual. En esta audiencia, el acusado podía reprob- runtes a los testimonios e incluso interrumpir a la víctima, lo que desanimaba fuertemente a las víctimas de violar las agresiones sexuales o el acoso. No es casualidad que las prohibiciones restrictivas del aborto en varios estados otorguen a los violadores y misóginos más control sobre los embarazos que no deseados que el que otorgan a las personas a las que les fueron criminales.

Para conmemorar el 50º aniversario del Título IX, el presidente Joe Biden puso en práctica medidas que rigen el modo en que las instituciones educativas investigan y resuelven las reclamaciones sobre acoso sexual, de manera que se facilita la eliminación de las audiencias en directo.

Lucha por proteger a los deportistas transgénero

Los cambios propuestos por Biden en el Título IX también prohibirían a los colegios, institutos y universidades discriminatorias a los estudiantes transgénero. Si se aprueban, obligarían a las escuelas a acomodar a los estudiantes transgénero permitiéndoles usar los baños que coincidan con su identidad. Las escuelas que no cumplan con estas normas podrán perder la financiación federal.

Hambre en África Oriental: cientos de miles de personas amenazadas

La sequía en Chad.

Los precios de los alimentos se están disparando en todo el mundo. No sólo los precios del trigo y otros cereales, que es donde Estados Unidos y sus aliados de la Unión Europea han centrado su atención, sino también en productos como la carne de vaca, que usualmente importan Líbano y Túnez, y dos tercios de las importaciones para Libia y Egipto. Aunque en África Oriental no se ha declarado oficialmente una hambruna, la gente -principalmente los niños- está muriendo de hambre. Oxfam calcula que 81 millones de personas en África Oriental podrían estar en niveles de crisis de hambre en 2022, y en todo el mundo, se prevé que 350 millones de personas se encuentren en niveles de crisis de hambre en 2022.

Una de las causas es el cambio climático, que está aumentando la volatilidad de las cosechas y la incertidumbre de precios. Las exportaciones de alimentos de la región del Mar Negro se han visto parcialmente compensado por el aumento de las exportaciones de la UE y la India, lo que deja un vacío de unos 3 millones de toneladas. Aún en países que no son escasos de alimentos, como Brasil y China, que son exportadores de trigo y otros cereales, tienen problemas con el cambio climático y han experimentado congelamientos de cosechas y sequías. La única solución es la producción de alimentos más próximos a los consumidores, lo que requeriría una inversión significativa en infraestructura y tecnología para mejorar la producción de alimentos en África Oriental.

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