

Economic crisis deepens

Young workers
show way forward

By Otis Grotewohl

A global economic crisis is emerging, and for readers of Workers World, this comes as little to no surprise.

As Marxists and dialectical materialists, we are cautious about making predictions. It is no secret that corporations are bragging about record profits at the same time working people are struggling to afford groceries, gas, baby formula and other necessities. A recent study reveals that “corporate profits rose 35% during the last year and are at their highest level since 1950. Inflation, meanwhile, rose to 8.5% year over year in March.” (Guardian, April 27)

There is a bourgeois myth that “workforce shortages” exist because “people

don’t want to work.” The reality is, most people cannot afford to work in dangerous conditions for menial pay. Many employers are offering small hiring incentives, but few are attracting people who are trying to make ends meet, especially those, mostly women, who can not find affordable child care.

Despite these hiring incentives, bosses are always seeking ways to “cut costs” to enhance their profits, and that includes layoffs and deliberate understaffing of the labor force. The billionaire class wants to squeeze out as much labor as they can, from as few workers as possible. Intentional understaffing is and has been particularly common in the health care and service industries in the U.S.

In “Capital,” Karl Marx notably wrote,

“Capital is dead labor, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks.”

U.S. ‘solution’ to economic crisis

The capitalist class’s current “solution” to the very inflation and staffing crisis their profit-driven system created is to raise interest rates. In mid-June the Federal Open Market Committee raised its key interest rate by 75 basis points, which is its largest rate increase since November 1994. (Forbes Advisor, June 15) The “logic” behind boosting interest rates is based on a deceptive prediction that people will spend less, and that should somehow reduce inflation.

Working and oppressed people, particularly the youth, are the ones expected to

suffer most because of higher interest rates, which will impact mortgages and student loans. According to freelance writer and business analyst Mary Hall, “... as interest rates rise, many investors believe growth stocks [will] come to appear less favorable, because their long-term discounted cash flow is reduced and their ability to [secure] low-cost debt financing is more difficult.” (Investopedia June 22)

The fluctuation of interest rates by the Fed is a game that has historically been played by the billionaire class at the expense of the working class and nationally oppressed people.

In his 1845 book “The Condition of the Working-Class in England,” Friedrich Engels coined the phrase “reserve army of labor,” a term Marx would often use to describe the segment of unemployed and underemployed workers that would inescapably emerge during the “recovery” after capitalist crises throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.

Workers World Party founder and chairperson Sam Marcy warned in 1992: “Today the pool of unemployed threatens to become an ocean. And even if there is a recovery and a phase of so-called prosperity, this ocean of unemployed will be wider and deeper than in any previous upturn.”

With the U.S. imperialist state in financial disarray, especially with its proxy war against Russia where the U.S. has spent tens of billions of dollars in a matter of



Amazon workers at the DTG5 Warehouse in Doraville, Georgia, near Atlanta, walked off the job to demand better pay on Prime Day, July 13. Amazon’s \$33.36 billion profits in 2021 came from workers’ unpaid labor.

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Celebrate the Cuban Revolution with Workers World

Workers World/Mundo Obrero joins with the Cuban people in celebrating the 69th anniversary of an event which changed the course of history for their island nation. On July 26, 1953, Cuban revolutionaries boldly attacked the Moncada garrison in Santiago de Cuba and simultaneously conducted a siege of the army barracks in Bayamo.

These courageous acts were aimed to strike a blow against the brutal U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Although the military goals were not achieved and the struggle suffered a temporary setback, the armed struggle had reached a new stage that continued until the dictatorship was overthrown Jan. 1, 1959. As the guerrilla forces fought in the mountains, an underground movement spread across the country.

Cuba has not only developed in every sphere since the socialist revolution, this island nation has carried out acts of international solidarity to aid oppressed countries in Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa, whether with military might or medical personnel and supplies. This assistance has been given generously, despite the horrific blockade implemented against Cuba by Washington for over six decades.

Even now during the pandemic, despite having a dearth of medical supplies, Cuba is sharing their COVID-19 vaccines with countries denied them by the imperialist West. Due to the dedication and meticulous efforts of their scientists and health care workers, nearly all of their own population has

been inoculated with Cuban-produced vaccines.

In recognition of their heroic work in dealing with this health crisis, 50,000 representatives of the health and science sectors were invited to lead this year’s May Day march in Havana. Cuba’s leaders thanked them for their remarkable work.

Cuba has deservedly won the support and respect of peoples around the globe. Workers World/Mundo Obrero has shown our unwavering solidarity with this socialist country on this newspaper’s pages and in countless activities on the streets.

WW needs your help!

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

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

For a donation of \$60 a year, or \$120 or \$300, you receive a subscription to WW newspaper and one, two or three free subscriptions for friends, depending on donation. A free download of the “What Road to Socialism?” book, published in 2020, is available at workers.org/books. Notify us if you want a paperback book.

Write checks, either monthly or annually, to Workers World. Mail them with your name and address to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, New York 10011. Put “Supporter Program” in the memo line. Or donate online at workers.org/donate/.

We appreciate your help in building Workers World! □



Some of the heroes of Moncada, as they were freed from prison by a people’s campaign in 1955. Fidel Castro, front center.

Join us in the fight for socialism!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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U.S. Supreme Court attacks tribal sovereignty – again

By Will H., K. James and W. James

On June 29, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) continued its centuries-long assault on Native Americans in its decision in the case of *Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta*.

In a 5-4 decision, SCOTUS ruled that the state of Oklahoma has the authority to prosecute criminal cases on Native reservations. This decision was a direct attack on tribal sovereignty, which is the right of Native tribes to govern themselves without interference from the U.S. government.

“With today’s decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against legal precedent and the basic principles of congressional authority and Indian law,” said Chuck Hoskin Jr., Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation.

This decision was a reversal of SCOTUS’s 2020 *McGirt v. Oklahoma* ruling, which barred Oklahoma from prosecuting criminal cases involving tribal citizens within the lands of various tribal nations. *McGirt* was viewed as a major victory for tribal nations, because it acknowledged their right to make and enforce their own laws as sovereign nations, free from the interference of settler-state governments.

Most importantly, *McGirt* resulted in almost 43% of Oklahoma being recognized as “Indian Country.” This meant that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, the Cherokee Nation and other tribal nations, rather than the state of Oklahoma, had jurisdiction over their lands.

SCOTUS’s June 29 ruling on *Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta* has put these gains into jeopardy and has served as a reminder of the United States’ unending cruelty and relentless efforts to strip Native Americans of their lands.

Writing the majority opinion for *Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta*, Brett Kavanaugh insisted that “since Oklahoma’s statehood in the early 1900s, Indian Country has been part of the territory of Oklahoma,” a claim which directly contradicts Native nations’ rights to self-determination and sovereignty. This decision asserts that the land in Oklahoma belongs to a settler government, rather than to the tribal nations who have lived on those lands since time immemorial and to those tribes forcibly relocated there on the “Trail of Tears” in the 19th century.

So brazen was the SCOTUS’s disregard of tribal law that Justice Neil Gorsuch — a

Trump nominee — broke ranks with his reactionary colleagues. In his dissent, Justice Gorsuch denounced the Court’s decision in *Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta*, writing that “a more ahistorical and mistaken statement of Indian law would be hard to fathom.”

Making laws to justify land theft

However, the United States weaponizing its justice system to attack tribal sovereignty is nothing new. The Court’s disastrous ruling on *Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta* relies heavily on the “Doctrine of Discovery,” which was used by Western Europe’s colonial powers — and, in more recent years, the U.S. government — to justify genocide and land theft.

Central to this doctrine is the idea of “terra nullius,” which translates to “land belonging to no one.”

When colonizers arrived in the “New World,” they encountered millions of Indigenous peoples living all across these lands. The colonizers needed to justify stealing land from the Indigenous populations, and so the colonizers asserted that Indigenous people had no claim to their lands because they were not human.

Therefore, in the eyes of the colonizer, because there were no humans who had any claim to the land, the land belonged to no one and was therefore free for the taking.

“Terra nullius” is a core tenet of all settler-colonial projects, including the Zionist state of Israel, which has frequently used the mantra of “a land without people for a people without land” to

excuse its dispossession of Indigenous Palestinians.

The United States has in many ways perfected the use of the Doctrine of Discovery to justify land theft. In his 1823 opinion on *Johnson v. M’Intosh*, Chief Justice John Marshall declared that the Doctrine of Discovery — and by extension, “terra nullius” — “gave European nations an absolute right to New World lands.”

Moreover, he reasoned that the right to conquer and rule Native tribes had passed from European nations to the U.S. government. Marshall’s white-supremacist logic has become the basis for settler-colonial jurisprudence in the United States and is regularly referred to by judges and justices in rulings affecting tribal sovereignty.

The United States continuously attacks tribal sovereignty in order to perpetuate and strengthen its role as a “prison house of nations.” As V.I. Lenin wrote in “The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination,” a “prison house of nations” sacrifices “the freedom of nations and democracy in general for the interests of capitalist expansion.”

Though written about the Russian Empire, Lenin’s words also apply to the U.S. settler-colonial state, whose continued existence depends on the denial of such freedom.

The *Castro-Huerta* decision underscores the need to support tribal nations — in their ongoing battle against the “American prison house” and in their struggle for self-determination and sovereignty. □



Sasafane (Euchee) protests the U.S. Supreme Court ruling against Native sovereignty in the *Castro-Huerta* decision, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, June 29.

Tamir Rice remembered, struggle continues

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

Tamir Rice would have been 20 years old June 25. But on November 22, 2014, the 12-year-old was murdered by racist Cleveland police. His mother, Samaria Rice, has spent the past eight years fighting for justice for Tamir and finding ways to keep his memory alive.

Hundreds of family and community members gathered July 16 at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Tamir Rice Memorial Butterfly Garden on the site Rice was killed. The garden honors Tamir as well his sister Tajai Rice, who was 14 when she was handcuffed and brutalized by the police at the scene of the murder.

The garden is in the shape of a butterfly and includes plants that attract butterflies. The butterfly symbolizes qualitative change — from a caterpillar to a butterfly — serving as a metaphor for the qualitative changes needed in the way Black youths like Tamir are treated by police all over the country.

A plaque reads: “This garden represents the injustice of the death of my son, Tamir Rice, and the treatment of my daughter, Tajai Rice — who was 14 at

the time and witnessed the death of her brother at the hands of a Cleveland police officer on November 22, 2014. Tajai will forever be traumatized by having experienced the horrific events of that day. This plaque will be a constant reminder of the injustices in our country.

“This butterfly garden was created by Tamir’s community, who helped turn it into something beautiful for better memories going forward, for the park, the Rice family and the community. Thank you, Samaria, mother of Tamir and Tajai.”

Speakers included Samaria Rice; Tamir’s siblings Tajai, Tasheonna and Tayvon Rice; Josiah Quarles and Molly Nagin of the Tamir Rice Foundation; U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown; Rev. Evan Regis Bunch, Transitional Pastor, Fifth Christian Church Disciples of Christ; Chicago artist Michael Rakowitz and Dr. Diane Jones Allen, principal landscape architect for the Butterfly Garden. Musical artists Anuvybe performed.

Samaria Rice recognized the many mothers and other family members of people killed by police. Present were relatives of Angelo Miller, Craig Bickerstaff, Tanisha Anderson, Vincent Belmonte and others killed in Cleveland; Jun Wang,

killed in the Cleveland suburb of North Royalton; and Jamarion Robinson, killed in suburban Atlanta.

The pattern continues

July 17 marked the eighth anniversary of the 2014 police murder of Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York. The video of Garner’s death by chokehold — and the famous words “I can’t breathe,” uttered by George Floyd in his final minutes — went viral, spurring on the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Eight years later and two years after the Minneapolis police lynching of Floyd sparked a massive upsurge, the epidemic of racist police violence has not been stemmed.

Most recently the eyes of the country have been focused on Akron, Ohio, just south of Cleveland, where Jayland Walker was killed June 27 in a hail of police gunfire. In the autopsy report released July 15, the Summit County medical examiner stated that Walker had 46 bullet wounds.

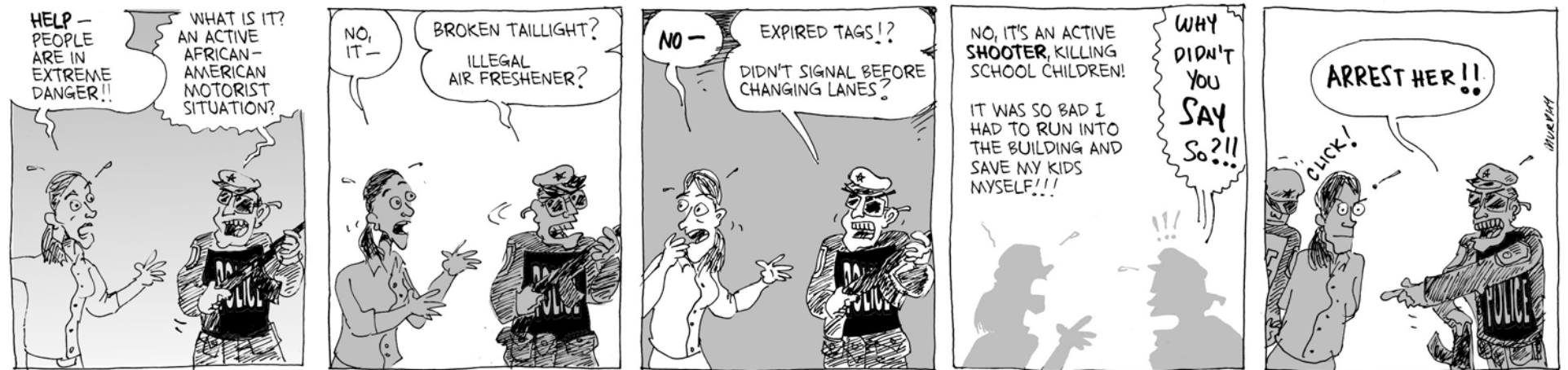
Despite dozens of arrests of activists in Akron, protests continue to demand



Tasheonna, Tajai and Tayvon Rice, siblings of Tamir Rice, at ribbon cutting ceremony for Tamir Rice Memorial Butterfly Garden, Cleveland, July 16.

justice for Walker and the dropping of all charges against demonstrators. Those arrested have included Bianca Austin, aunt of Breonna Taylor, who was murdered by Louisville, Kentucky, police in 2020, and Jacob Blake Sr., father of Jacob Blake Jr., shot and paralyzed by Kenosha, Wisconsin, cops in 2020.

Hundreds turned out for Walker’s funeral July 13, and several large car protests have shut down traffic around Akron. Samaria Rice has participated in the protests. □



Young workers show way forward

Continued from page 1

months, there may not be a recovery following the next economic bust. This will likely result in a new vicious assault on the working class.

Workers fight back around the world

On the upside, October 2021 saw an impressive wave of strikes throughout the world and in the capitalist U.S. The combination of collective labor actions became known as “#Striketober.”

According to the National Labor Relations Board, union representation petitions filed between October 2021 and March 2022 at the NLRB increased 57% from the same period a year earlier. Workers at over 300 Starbucks stores have filed petitions to be exclusively recognized by Starbucks Workers United, and over 50 locations have successfully organized. In a vicious response, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz has been trying to use divisive union-busting tactics to discourage future SWU union drives.

Amazon warehouse workers in Staten Island, New York, recently voted to be recognized by the newly formed Amazon Labor Union, and many other locations are hoping to follow suit. At the same time, ALU is currently being held hostage by Amazon in ongoing NLRB hearings in Phoenix over Amazon’s bogus “objections” to the union win. Much like Starbucks boss Schultz, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos is determined to break the ALU and its organizing campaigns.

As higher-paying union jobs have deteriorated over the decades, low-wage jobs that are predominantly nonunion have expanded. The union victory of ALU, led by its president, Chris Smalls, has been inspiring for many young people, especially nationally oppressed and LGBTQ2S+ youth, as well as people who do not feel welcomed by, or see themselves as part of, the official labor movement.

The fact that the ALU was not formally honored at the recent AFL-CIO convention, held June 12-15 in Philadelphia, speaks volumes. Fortunately, at the Labor Notes convention held in Chicago just a couple of days later, ALU leaders were given the same honorable recognition as the militantly progressive Association of Flight Attendants-CWA President Sara Nelson and recently elected Teamsters President Sean O’Brien.

Workers around the world have been in motion. Over 200 million workers and farmers carried out a two-day strike in India March 28-29. The strike was conducted under a joint platform of the various central trade unions, most of which are affiliated with the Communist Party of India, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or the Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist).



WW PHOTO: TONY MURPHY

Activists with Workers Assembly Against Racism (WAAR) picket in front of the residence of Starbucks CEO, Howard Schultz, for a 75th Un-birthday Protest in Manhattan, July 19. On the mic is Amazon Labor Union member Brett Daniels, there with two other ALU workers, Micheal Aguilar and Tristan Dutchin, from the historic unionized Staten Island Amazon warehouse to support Starbucks workers.

Rail workers in England, Wales and Scotland went on strike in late June to protest job cuts, speedups and lack of a significant pay raise. The British ruling class was fearful the strikes would spill into other industries, as indicated in frantic headlines of bourgeois publications. French rail workers went on strike in early July for similar reasons as their English, Welsh and Scottish counterparts.

Fed up with food and medicine shortages, workers and farmers in Sri Lanka have been holding massive protests since the beginning of 2022. On July 9, tens of thousands of protesters stormed the palace of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, forcing him to step down.

There are many other examples of workers fighting back against the conditions being brought on by the global recession.

Class-struggle unionism over class collaboration

In a recent summation of the financial catastrophe, “The Working Class and the Global Capitalist Crisis,” WWP First Secretary Larry Holmes posed key questions: “So will the economic crisis take the steam out of the worker organizing? Or will it make workers more angry, maybe even make them more revolutionary? These are questions that we have to take very seriously.

“Because, comrades, whether it’s up or down, whether they win or lose, whatever gains the workers achieve through the struggle, those can never be permanent under capitalism.” (workers.org, May 27)

To ensure that the material gains being won through mass struggles are not reversed by the ruling class, we must push the working-class movement toward a revolutionary socialist path. It is crucial we welcome and invite workers who have traditionally been excluded by the trade union bureaucracy, such as sex workers, gig workers, prisoners and people formerly incarcerated, into the movement for revolutionary change.

Unions in many countries are affiliated with socialist, communist and sometimes revolutionary parties. In the U.S., on the other hand, most unions are bound to the Democratic Party. Red-baiting and the Taft-Hartley law’s anti-communist clause drove communists out of the labor movement in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Prior to McCarthyism, communists inside many U.S. unions, especially those affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), employed a strategy known as “class-struggle unionism.”

It is crucial we welcome and invite workers who have traditionally been excluded by the trade union bureaucracy, such as sex workers, gig workers, prisoners and people formerly incarcerated, into the movement for revolutionary change.

Class-struggle unionism strives to give leadership power to the rank-and-file and avoid the class-collaborationist tactics of “business unionism.” Class-struggle unionists epitomized the most militant, class-conscious and anti-racist labor agitators, who prioritized organizing women, immigrant and nationally oppressed workers—those shamefully ignored by conservative elements of the labor movement.

Class struggle unions that exist in the U.S. today include the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, United Electrical Workers (UE) and California Nurses Association/National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United.

Smash fascism and build workers assemblies

One way workers are coming together in an inclusive and revolutionary manner is through workers assemblies, bringing organized and unorganized workers together. Workers assemblies advance class consciousness and class unity, in

some ways similar to how the soviets, i.e., the “workers’ councils,” did in bringing about the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

Workers assemblies also connect different issues that are tied to capitalism and imperialism. One powerful example is the Southern Workers Assembly, which features class-struggle unions, rank-and-file leaders of other unions and nonunion activists who are organizing the predominantly nonunionized South. SWA is active in many struggles against racism and social injustice.

Workers assemblies can fill the void in the U.S. labor movement. There should be calls for mass rallies by the AFL-CIO and SEIU to defend ALU and SWU, but that is not happening. Instead, the national leaderships of most major business unions are once again urging people to “respect the process” and “vote Democrat.”

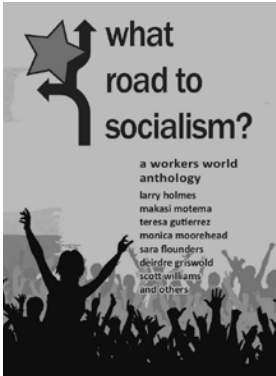
Workers assemblies can call for much needed direct action and do not need to rely on the bourgeois courts or electoral system.

Workers assemblies are crucial in combating the fascist rot that has been

spreading in the United States. Fascism — which relies upon the vilest forms of racism, sexism, anti-Semitism and anti-LGBTQ2S+ bigotry in order to exist — is a poisonous product of dead-end capitalism that often appears in times of crisis. Fascists will target oppressed people.

Workers assemblies can operate as anti-fascist defense organizations. Workers assemblies should consciously be led by, and representative of, oppressed workers.

In his conclusion, Holmes declares, “All the issues are tied together. And what ties them together is the class struggle. We must have a perfect working-class strategy going forward. Because that class strategy is the only strategy capable of defeating war and fascism and ultimately bringing about communist revolution.” □



What Road to Socialism?

A Workers World anthology, confronting the burning questions and key contradictions during this deadly pandemic and global capitalist meltdown.

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- Socialism or death: socialist countries lead the way to the future
- What is socialism?

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Cleveland ‘No contract, no coffee!’



Starbucks workers, union and community supporters demonstrated outside the University Circle Starbucks store in Cleveland July 15. In addition to showing solidarity with the workers trying to unionize that store, demonstrators were protesting the firing of a member of the union organizing committee by Starbucks the week of July 3.

The store, near Case Western Reserve University, is one of three Cleveland stores where the National Labor Relations Board will count union election ballots in July.

Chants of “No contract, no coffee!” rang out as drivers, including union bus drivers and city workers, honked continuously.

— Report and photo by Martha Grevatt

Why is everything getting so expensive?

By Ben Carroll

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, rising energy and food costs pushed the annual inflation rate in the U.S. to 8.6% in May, the highest rate in 40 years. The following analysis of the causes of inflation is a slightly edited version of an article published by Workers World, Jan. 2, 2022.

The prices of all basic goods and services necessary for human survival have been going up — in some cases, way up. There is no major city where a person working 40 hours a week at the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 can afford a one-bedroom apartment.

This comes in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a profound crisis of public health made far worse by the for-profit health care system in this country. It has exacerbated the deepening crisis of global capitalism, ushering in a wave of job losses, evictions and more suffering for workers and the oppressed.

The “mainstream” press is filled with a range of supposed explanations to diagnose why inflation has set in so rapidly in the U.S. and similar economies around the globe. But the reality is that none of these explain the root causes of what is driving down the standard of living for millions of workers in this country.

So what’s really to blame for the rise in prices?

Capitalist system in crisis

Since the 2008 financial crisis, the global capitalist system has been on life support, propped up for the past decade by the central banks funneling unprecedented infusions of money to the commercial banks and financial institutions. In the U.S., the Federal Reserve has pumped upwards of \$10 trillion into the financial system and maintained very low interest rates throughout this past decade. It has ramped up this activity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2008 to 2014 alone, the Federal Reserve printed \$3.5 trillion (!) in new money — nearly three times the amount the central bank had created since its founding 95 years earlier. During this entire last decade, the Fed has kept interest rates near zero, for a longer period of time than ever before.

When the bank in 2018 tried to begin raising interest rates and scaling back its printing of new money — known as “quantitative easing” — capital revolted. This sent stocks sharply lower and forced the Fed to abandon its plans and return to the regime of near-zero interest rates, thus pumping trillions of dollars into the coffers of the banks and large financial institutions. (politico.com, Dec. 28, 2021)

Speculation, cheap money, low wages, high profits

Several phenomena happened as a result. On the one hand, the amount of money hoarded by the banks and borrowed to speculate in financial markets is at a record high — upwards of \$918 billion at the end of November 2021. This is more than double the nearly \$400 billion in so-called “margin debt” incurred prior to the financial crisis of 2008.

A report by the McKinsey Global Institute, published in 2021, found that just above two-thirds of global net worth was now stored in real estate, while only around 20% was stored in other fixed assets or means of production. This phenomenon is driving wild speculation in real estate, raising the cost of renting or owning a home and intensifying the familiar scenes of gentrification across the U.S. and the globe. (tinyurl.com/bdf24hmy)

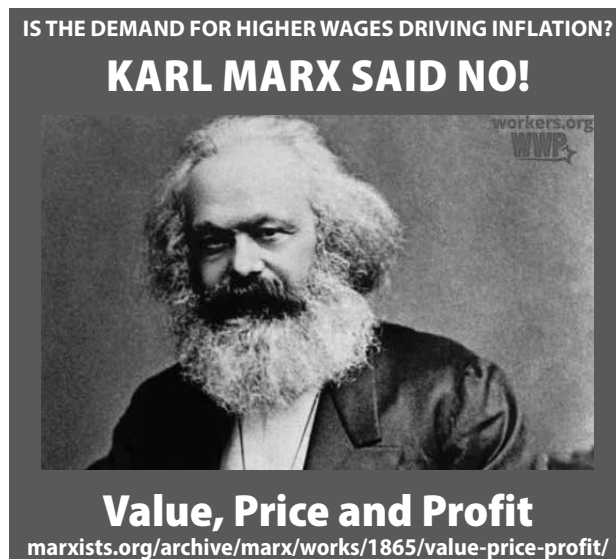
Since 2010, the stock market has doubled in value, during a period of time characterized by permanent unemployment and underemployment, the rise of the so-called gig economy, austerity measures and more suffering imposed on the working class and the oppressed. The superrich have seen their wealth balloon during this period, intensifying the antagonisms between labor and capital and bringing the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system into sharper relief.

At the same time, the number of so-called “zombie companies” — those which hold substantial amounts of debt relative to profit and are thus barely able (or are altogether unable) to pay off their debt — has continued to rise. According to a Bloomberg News report published Dec. 28, 2021, more than 650 of the country’s 3,000 largest corporations are considered “zombie” companies — nearly 22%, or one in every five. Their proliferation has been driven in large part by the Federal Reserve’s policy of making money extremely cheap for banks and large corporations to borrow.

Which brings us back to the question at hand: What’s driving inflation?

For the owners of these companies and financial institutions — the capitalist class — some inflation is a desirable thing. After all, the name of the game for the bosses is expanding profits and beating out rival firms, and higher prices increase profits or otherwise offset any rise in costs of raw materials needed for production, etc. That is what is in play now. Faced with access to easy money to borrow and invest, coupled with higher costs for raw materials based on the various supply chain issues impacting the global economy, bosses are raising prices to protect and, in many cases grow, their profits.

This access to easy money has given corporations



the ability to automate production to a higher degree, investing in robots and other technology that enable each worker to produce more commodities. Indeed, the productivity of labor has increased substantially over the past several decades, while the real wages of workers have stayed relatively flat or, in many cases, fallen.

As labor becomes more productive

But a curious thing happens as labor becomes more and more productive. Under capitalism, it is the exploitation of labor (or labor power) that creates value. There is a general tendency then for the value of commodities to decline over time as the supply of those goods rises, based on less human labor being needed to produce them.

The argument by many mainstream economists and CEOs — that growing demands from workers for higher wages, especially among the lowest-paid workers, is driving or even contributing to inflation — is categorically false.

The ‘mainstream’ press is filled with a range of supposed explanations to diagnose why inflation has set in so rapidly in the U.S. and similar economies around the globe. But the reality is that none of these explain the root causes of what is driving down the standard of living for millions of workers in this country. So what’s really to blame for the rise in prices?

Karl Marx disproved this theory in his groundbreaking work “Value, Price and Profit,” noting that “a struggle for a rise of wages follows only in the track of previous changes and is the necessary offspring of previous changes in the amount of production ... in one word, as reactions of labor against the previous action of capital. ... A general rise in the rate of wages would result in a

fall of the general rate of profit but not affect the prices of commodities.”

Out-of-control inflation, however, can become undesirable for the capitalist class. It can lead to ballooning costs of raw materials — and even more dangerous, to the tightening of monetary policy, making access to borrowed money more expensive.

If this were to happen, which is what the Federal Reserve and other central banks are currently considering, it could usher in a wave of defaults and bankruptcies, triggering another financial crisis and an economic decline that would affect the global economy. It would be managed by trying to extract even more concessions from the working class and the oppressed.

Class struggle decisive

It is the preferred policy of the federal government and central banks to use various monetary policy tools at their disposal to control rampant inflation. But it wasn’t always this way.

After the end of World War II, the United States experienced a similar period of high inflation. At that time, there was a militant and growing workers’ movement in the streets, fighting for various social reforms, building unions, conducting strikes and more.

Rather than utilize monetary policy tools to deal with inflation, the federal government enacted price controls. In the early 1970s, similar measures were again implemented to deal with rising inflation.

But starting in the late 1970s, roughly coinciding with capital’s renewed offensive against labor, there was a shift toward the monetary policy route as the ruling class’s preferred method to deal with inflation, and that has been the case ever since. The Federal Reserve at that time raised interest rates through the roof, exacerbating a punishing recession in the economy.

Things are different now, both in terms of subjective factors like the level of worker organization and consciousness, as well as objective factors regarding development in the global capitalist economy.

It’s too early to say where inflationary trends will head and with what method the federal government and central banks will choose to respond. The newly combative attitude of workers, forced to stay on the job throughout the pandemic, exposing themselves and their families to the risk of COVID-19 while earning small change, compared to the billions raked in by the companies they work for, will play a decisive role going forward.

Workers on the move

This growing workers’ movement could raise demands for a price freeze, higher wages, an end to evictions, free health care, an end to the war on migrant workers and other pro-worker initiatives to address the increasingly dire conditions facing our class and the most oppressed.

The Federal Reserve and the federal government have bent over backwards to hand out tens of trillions of dollars to the banks and large corporations. Each year, they spend upwards of \$1 trillion on the Pentagon, funding U.S. wars abroad in the interests of capital.

During the pandemic, the federal government imposed pauses on or altogether forgave various debts held by workers, implemented an eviction moratorium, gave stimulus payments directly to workers and took other measures to alleviate the public health crisis. Altogether, this demonstrates that the money is there to implement programs and policies that benefit the vast majority of society versus the interests of the rich. What has been missing is a mobilized and militant workers’ movement to fight for it.

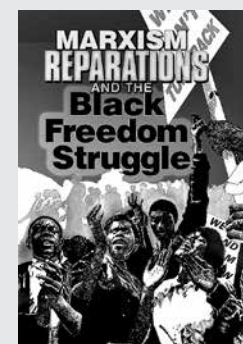
But that is changing.

As another deep and protracted crisis of the capitalist system looms, it is imperative for the workers’ movement and its most revolutionary elements to find ways to intervene. □

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper
Edited by Monica Moorehead

Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes • **Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy • **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell • **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead • **Black Reconstruction: The unfinished revolution** Minnie Bruce Pratt • **Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad • **Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal • **The U.S. role in Darfur Sudan** Sara Flounders • **Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions** Pat Chin • **Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation** Consuela Lee • **Africa needs reparations, not occupation and sanctions** Deirdre Griswold • **The May Day uprising of 2006** Larry Holmes



COVER GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON

Available at workers.org/books and major online booksellers.

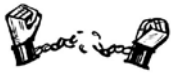
Letters from behind the walls

Re: “Released after 46 years, Bradford Gamble exposes medical abuse,” WW Vol. 64, No. 12 (wwp.pub/gamble)

I read what your organization published on Bradford Gamble before it ran in the Philadelphia Inquirer. ’Twas a well-written article that speaks volumes to what occurs inside Pennsylvania Dept. of Corrections locations, medical-wise. What they did was just downright deplorable, not immediately letting Mr. Gamble know that he had cancer.

I was in a cell next to Mr. Gamble at SCI Coal Township. I read a lot of what he was going through, as he and Mr. [Bryant] Arroyo asked me at times to type a few things for them on this and other matters. Mr. Arroyo was an adamant advocate for Mr. Gamble to be released from jail on compassionate grounds. Kudos to him and EVERYONE that worked on getting Mr. Gamble out. I hope your organization and EVERY organization out there keeps vigilant in these kind of endeavors and get more inmates released on compassionate grounds when they are diagnosed with a terminal illness. Thank you to ALL of you!

Craig J
SCI Coal Township
Pennsylvania



Re: Overturning Roe v. Wade
Dear comrades,
Peace! As protests form all across this

country in response to the overturning of Roe v. Wade and curtailing abortion access within the U.S.; this gives factual evidence of the illusion of freedom here. Corruption, judicial injustice, racism, homelessness and the ghettos are all engineered things that the government created to outlast and control and violate the human rights of Black people and other people of color.

Men and women are being exonerated after decades of incarceration; and although some of these individuals are compensated, the government isn’t doing anything to eradicate the untreated pandemic within this country which is called racism. Racism is a known horror, which is responsible for millions of lives lost to homicide and incarceration.

And no amount of wealth can compensate you for the years lost, nor the pain you endure while struggling within this system. This system affects our families as well. The psychological trauma is harsh to say the least.

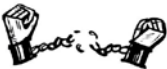
Men like Anthony Harrell, Aaron Fox, Bryant Arroyo, Shawn Ross, John Ray, Kevin Rashid Johnson, Steven Ivey have all been in prison fighting for their release from the life sentences they received from this so-called justice system. These men have all made real sacrifices for others, and I’m speaking as a witness, not a researcher. We need to move toward aiding and assisting these men, by challenging the government and providing for our community.

The solution to stop the violence is

within the minds of the men and women who are incarcerated. The most brilliant minds exist within the DOC. This place has within its core the ability to make you or break you. It’s designed by its structure to break you, simply because prisoners, like slaves, are deemed property. And a billion-dollar economy exists due to the mass production of repeat offenders and criminals in general.

I intend to work to release the aforementioned men and to eradicate parole altogether.

Nasir Ali
SCI Forest
Pennsylvania



Re: Unequal treatment
I live in a small historic town in Williamsburg, Virginia, where Blacks are treated differently in the justice system. The FBI comes into my area and continuously targets minorities, and no one questions any of the wrongdoing that goes on. I made a mistake, and I would have rather taken my own life than to return to a system in which I felt I had no chance of justice.

I am still struggling to be heard and will continue my battle for justice until I am heard. I pray that you strongly consider giving a voice to the word of this innocent man.

My name has been slandered in

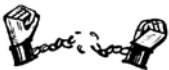


articles. Officers lied in testimonies to obtain a conviction. No one in the

media made an effort to hear my side of the story. It truly saddens me to see witnesses come forward, on their own, to tell the truth and not be allowed to by the justice system. Virginia state law does not allow the admission of new evidence in a case such as mine.

We all need to come together and expose those who misuse their position.

Christopher Piggott
Red Onion State Prison
Virginia



Re: Subscription
Dear WW:
Thank you for over a decade of the Workers World. The publication was invaluable to my personal growth, my academic career at SUNY Ulster; and, I am sure, it will remain equally important in obtaining my bachelor’s degree in social science.

I, however, request to have the subscription terminated.
I regain my liberty in July 2022.
Again, thank you.
Curtis Farrow
Shawangunk Correctional Facility
New York □

Groundswell of support to free Brittney Griner

By Monica Moorehead

The struggle to bring Brittney Griner home intensifies. The star center for the Women’s National Basketball Association’s Phoenix Mercury has been incarcerated in a Russian prison since her arrest at a Moscow airport on Feb. 17 for drug possession, after vape pen cartridges of hashish oil were discovered in her luggage.

She pled guilty to the charge, hoping this action will eventually lead to a reduced sentence and a possible prisoner exchange between the U.S. and Russia that will bring her back home. She is still on trial.

Los Angeles Lakers forward, LeBron James, arguably considered the face of



Brittney Griner

today’s National Basketball Association, stated in a trailer for the latest episode of his youtube broadcast, “The Shop: Uninterrupted”: “Now, how can she feel like America has her back? I would be

feeling like, ‘Do I even want to go back to America?’”

In response to James’s remarks, Briner’s coach, Vanessa Nygaard, stated: “If it was LeBron, he’d be home, right? It’s a statement about the value of women. It’s a statement about the value of a Black person. It’s a statement about the value of a gay person. All of those things. We know it, and so that’s what hurts a little more.” (espn.com, July 12)

During the WNBA All-Star game on July 10 in Chicago, every player wore a blazer with Griner’s name and her number 42 during the second half of the competition.

On July 5 a letter was hand delivered to

the White House signed by an estimated 1,200 Black women urging that President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris do everything possible to insure Griner’s release. The letter said in part, “It is imperative, President Biden, that you address this ongoing human rights crisis and make a deal to bring Brittney home quickly and safely.”

Some of the signers include Bernice King, daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; actor Anika Noni Rose; singer Ledisi; television hosts Shaun Robinson and Sunny Hostin; former NAACP president Hazel Dukes; University of South Carolina women’s basketball coach and three-time Olympic gold medalist Dawn Staley; and numerous players, coaches and executives from the WNBA. □

Women charge abuse at Stewart Detention Center

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

July 17 — Once again, a privately-operated immigrant detention center in Georgia is the focus of abuse charges by several women detainees.

A male nurse employed by CoreCivic at the Stewart Detention Center (SDC) in Lumpkin, Georgia, has been named in an official complaint to the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

Four women who were held at the SDC between late 2021 and early 2022 have described their frightening encounters with the nurse, who required them to remove their shirts and in at least one case a bra, to check their heart with a stethoscope while touching their bare skin. One woman said he put his penis in her hand and ordered her to pull down her pants.

They reported other very sexualized motions and facial expressions he made while supposedly examining them for an injured wrist or upset stomach.

Two immediately reported his behavior to corrections officials, who then subjected them to harsh, multiple interrogations, accused them repeatedly of lying and threatened them with seven years in prison for making a false accusation. The other two, fearing retaliation while in prison and a longer time in detention, came forward upon their release from Stewart.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, along with a number of immigrant advocacy groups, filed the charges July 13. The groups included Black Alliance for Just Immigration, Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights, Project South and El Refugio.

Stewart opened in 2006 as a men-only facility, one of the largest detention

centers in the country. Its failure to provide adequate medical care, edible food and sanitary conditions quickly brought it to the attention of immigrant rights activists.

For years, Georgia Detention Watch and its member groups have held demonstrations in Lumpkin and at the ICE headquarters in Atlanta, written detailed reports and initiated meetings and tours by elected officials of the facility. They also educated the public about CoreCivic, the for-profit, private corporation that makes tens of millions of dollars in profit imprisoning immigrants.

Women began being housed at Stewart in late 2020. This followed the explosive revelation that women at the Irwin Detention Center in Ocilla, Georgia, had undergone unnecessary gynecological procedures without their consent. The federal government cut its ICE contract

with Irwin’s private prison corporate operator and began to ship women to Stewart in late 2020.

Stewart already had a reputation as the deadliest ICE detention center in the country, due to lack of medical care and suicides. Then COVID-19 deaths cemented that brutal reality.

CoreCivic claims its investigations into the sexual abuse charges found them to be “unsubstantiated” and “unfounded.”

The male nurse was still employed at Stewart as of May.

On July 15, a press conference was held in front of the Atlanta ICE office. The speakers demanded that the women who so bravely came forward be believed and that Stewart be shut down now.

Additional information can be found in the July 14 Intercept article, “The Worst Day of My Life.”

My cancer – and the cancerous prison system

By Kevin “Rashid” Johnson

On July 1, 2022, I was informed by a prison doctor here at Virginia’s Nottoway Correctional [sic!] Center (NCC) that I had tested positive for prostate cancer.

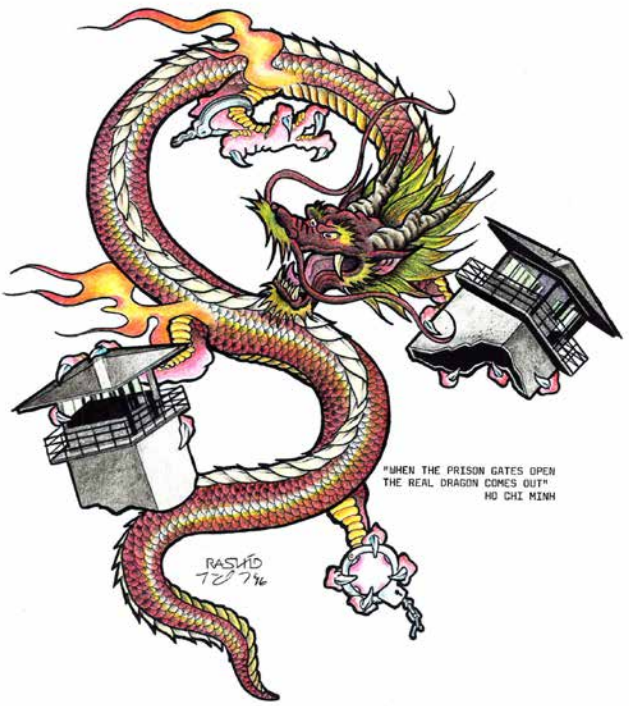
This diagnosis came after I had been left for months by NCC medical staff with blood test results showing that my PSA (prostate specific analysis) levels were extremely high, evidencing likely prostate-related illness. This delay in follow-up testing and treatment left the cancer to develop or advance beyond stages at which it might have been less serious.

First signs

My PSA levels were first tested on Oct. 8, 2021, at which time the reading was 14.3, way above a 4 which is considered the “normal” level. My PSA level was tested as part of routine blood tests that I receive biannually, as part of my ongoing treatment for chronic hypertension. The prison doctor recognized the reading to be abnormal and told me as much when he saw me a few days after the blood tests for my routine hypertension checkup.

He ordered a follow-up PSA test to determine if the results were correct or a “fluke,” because, according to him, the PSA tests sometimes come back with erroneous elevated readings. He told me he would see me again after this second test to discuss the results.

A follow-up blood test was administered



ART BY KEVIN RASHID JOHNSON

Nov. 10, 2021. I would later discover that this reading came back even higher, at 14.6. The doctor never saw me again.

Second signs

My next regularly scheduled hypertension-related blood tests were taken six months later. My PSA levels came back again at 14.6. A few days later, I was seen by the chronic care Nurse Bendyl for my routine hypertension checkup.

At that time she told me that my PSA levels were extremely high and had been when I was seen on chronic care six months before. She expressed concern that I had not been sent immediately out to a urology clinic for examination and

testing after the abnormal PSA test results six months before. I mentioned that this was clear malpractice. In response she assured me that she would have me promptly seen by a urologist.

Testing and diagnosis

On March 22 I was taken out of the prison to a urologist for initial consultation and scheduled for an MRI and biopsy. The MRI was performed May 26. I was told nothing about the results by NCC medical staff, so I filed a complaint within the prison.

In response I was told I would be seen on sick call that week. I was not seen.

I was then taken out to the Medical College of Virginia on June 23 to receive a biopsy. At that time hospital staff told me the results of the May 26 MRI. I was told that it showed a “spot” in my prostate that might be cancer. This area, they explained, would be targeted in the biopsy along with other random areas. During the biopsy, 13 specimens were taken from my prostate.

I was able to speak to NCC Dr. York, not the doctor who saw me in 2021 while I was in the medical department a few days after my biopsy. This was a chance meeting, where he happened to walk past me going on his lunch break, and I stopped him to raise concerns about my possible condition and lack of prompt care.

He immediately acknowledged that from my description, my situation had not been properly addressed and committed to look into it. He also assured me that

he would have me brought to the medical department a week later, by which time the biopsy results should be available, which he would share with me.

On July 1 Dr. York called me to the medical department and read the biopsy results to me. It found that 11 of the 13 specimens taken from my prostate showed positive for cancer. Also, that I suffered prostatitis.

But for my chance encounter with Dr. York the week before, no one would have told me of my diagnosis.

And had I not pressed the issue with Nurse Bendyl during my April 2022 hypertension chronic care visit, I might never have been sent to a urologist for testing and diagnosis.

A cancerous prison system

What happened to me is typical of prison medical departments. On a routine basis prisoners are left to suffer, deteriorate and die from lack of care or from sub-standard care.

I’ve written about this in relation to other prisoners many times over the years, in the many prisons and prison systems I have been confined to. My acute awareness of this disregard for our health needs is one reason I am extremely vocal and vigilant in pressing officials to address and follow up on my and others’ medical care needs.

This is but another layer of the inhumanity that inheres in the U.S. mass-imprisonment system. This injustice demands that this system be razed to the ground and that one oriented to healing people be erected by the people in its place.

Dare to struggle, dare to win! All Power to the People! □

Extreme weather and mass incarceration deaths

By Mirinda Crissman
Houston

Across the hottest places in the U.S., people in prisons, jails and detention centers often face unbearable and sometimes lethal conditions behind the walls, where air conditioning is not provided.

The Prison Policy Initiative has found that many famously hot states lack universal air conditioning in prisons and jails. These include Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia. (Prisonpolicy.org, June 18, 2019)

Data compiled and analyzed by The Intercept shows that Texas in particular has more jails, prisons and detention centers impacted by severe to extreme heat than any other state. The state prison system has spotty air-conditioning coverage at best. When the information was last made public in 2020, parts or the whole of around 70 Texas prisons, with a combined capacity of 122,000 potential imprisoned people, had no air conditioning. (The Intercept, Feb. 12)

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) spent \$7 million fighting a lawsuit by prisoners demanding AC at the Wallace Pack Unit near College Station, where it would have cost only \$4 million to do it. (Texas Tribune, March 21, 2019)

When Texas Governor Greg Abbott served as Attorney General of Texas from 2002-2015, he defended TDCJ from heat lawsuits. (The Intercept, Feb. 12) For

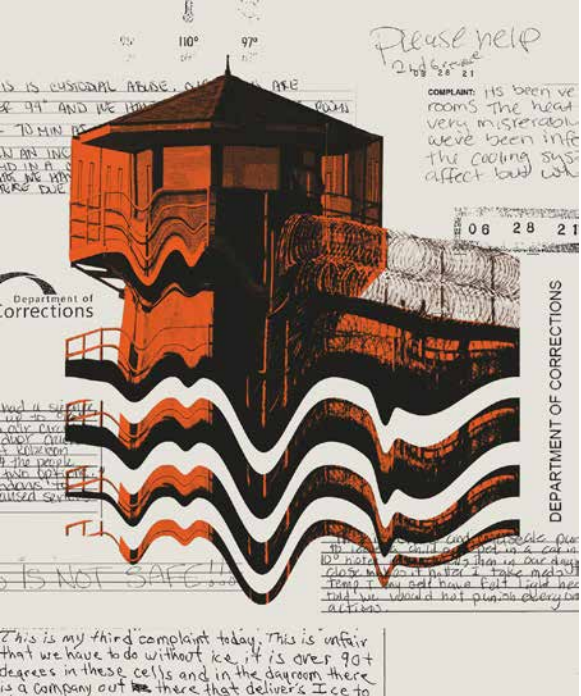
many years TDCJ has had a hard time retaining guards at safe staffing levels, as they cannot stand the heat behind the walls without AC. (The Marshall Project, November 1, 2021)

Cruelty is often the point of this abuse, as refusing to install air conditioning is a matter not just of short-term cost savings but of appearing tough on crime. In 2014, the people of Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, only voted to build a new jail after local leaders promised there would be no air conditioning.

Benny Hernandez, an incarcerated man in Texas, told Prison Policy Initiative how torturous heat is in prisons: “It routinely feels as if one’s sitting in a convection oven being slowly cooked alive. There is no respite from the agony that the heat in Texas prisons inflicts.”

Cruel and unusual health conditions

Health conditions, such as diabetes and obesity, as well as taking psychotropic or high blood pressure medications, can limit anyone’s ability to regulate heat. Older people are highly susceptible to organ failure in the heat. Extreme heat is an enemy to health, especially when you are confined to a cage, and this is especially compounded during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Prison heat GRAPHIC: JOAN WONG/HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

Poor health conditions are often caused by the prison, jail or detention center facilities themselves. “Prisons are too often built near (or directly on) abandoned industrial sites, places deemed fit only for dumping toxic materials. One-third (32%) of state and federal prisons are located within 3 miles of federal Superfund sites, the most serious contaminated places requiring extensive cleanup.” (tinyurl.com/PrisonEnvironInjustice)

In New York City, the Rikers Island jail complex is on the same site as a landfill,

where the toxic fumes from poorly decomposing trash are so bad that correctional officers working at the facility have sued the city.

As the global climate crisis accelerates, extreme weather is on the rise everywhere. Temperatures in typically temperate Washington State prisons topped 115 F last year, with no actionable heat plan in place statewide to keep those incarcerated safe. (Grist.org, June 4)

Flooding in highly incarcerated states like Texas and Louisiana have caused some imprisoned people to be evacuated before storms into packed gymnasiums, with others left in the wake of devastating hurricanes in locked cells and waist-high water and sewage for days. (tinyurl.com/2p8a3eek)

Prisons, jails and detention centers are a public health crisis in a myriad of ways. The people typically locked behind the walls are disproportionately Indigenous, Black, Latinx, LGBTQ+, disabled and often a combination of multiple interlocking oppressions. (tinyurl.com/9cs7racj)

The conditions of the cages in which they are locked constitute a modern, ongoing genocide. Under capitalism prisons, jails and detention centers are operated as concentration camps for the poor and oppressed members of the working class. They produce conditions rife with mass death.

It is on us to abolish the material conditions that made this system of mass incarceration possible. Free them all for public health! □

‘Mothers of Gynecology’ monument exposes horrors of slavery

By Monica Moorehead

A righteous tidal wave of anger followed people seeing the nine-minute-plus videotaped police lynching of George Floyd in Minneapolis late May 2020. Racist monuments glorifying the slave-owning Confederacy came tumbling down, especially in the Deep South. These acts to take down the statues were part of historic mass protests that swept the country during the summer of 2020 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Two years earlier the monument paying homage to J. Marion Sims, once praised as the “father of modern gynecology,” was removed from Central Park in New York City, following many years of protest.

What led to the removal was a growing understanding and anger that Sims, a 19th century gynecologist in Montgomery, Alabama, used enslaved Black women as guinea pigs, experimenting on them with new medical techniques without using anesthesia or obtaining their consent. His techniques resulted in unspeakable torture.

Sims believed that Black women did not experience the same kind of pain as white human beings. Black people were nothing more than chattel to Sims and his ilk, who viewed them as less than human and actually treated them worse than animals.

This was the prevailing view of enslavers in the South and even in some regions of the North.

Black women during this period were denied the right to control their own reproductive systems and destinies, starting when they were adolescents. This is horribly similar to the recent case of the 10-year-old girl from Ohio, raped twice, impregnated, and in order to receive an abortion, was forced to travel to Indiana, because of the fascistic anti-abortion law in Ohio. The doctor who performed that abortion is now being threatened with prosecution by the attorney general of Indiana, using a legal technicality to harass and punish her.

Treated as property, enslaved Black girls and women were systematically raped and sexually assaulted by white plantation owners and treated as “breeders” to produce more enslaved people. The enslaved grandmother of the great Mississippi activist, Fannie Lou Hamer, was forced to give birth 21 times as a result of this barbaric treatment.

Honoring those who resisted

In Montgomery where Sims first performed his horrific experiments, a stunning new monument was unveiled Sept. 24, 2021. “Mothers of Gynecology” includes figures representing Anarcha, Lucy and

Betsey, three of the 11 enslaved women who were unwilling participants in Sims’ depraved procedures. Anarcha was reportedly pregnant at age 17 during this time.

The statues, located at the More Up Campus, are almost 15 feet high and were created by local Montgomery artist and activist Michelle Browder. The campus is dedicated to changing how history is remembered, “by finding creative ways to honor the voiceless, the minimized, the ignored.” (anarchalucybetsey.org)

Browder says of her motives, “The endeavor is to change the narrative as it relates to the history and how it’s portrayed, regarding Sims and the women [who] were used as experiments. They’re not mentioned in any of the iconography or the information, the markers.

“No one talks about these women and their sacrifices and the experimentations that they suffered,” Browder said. “And so I feel that if you’re going to tell the truth about this history, we need to tell it all.

“There’s more to this history than Dr. King and Rosa Parks, and the Confederacy.” (al.com, Sept. 27, 2021)

The monument is a gut-wrenching reminder of the strategic role that slavery played in establishing the U.S. as the most powerful imperialist country in the world, through the ongoing systematic



The enslaved Black ‘Mothers of Gynecology’ are now honored in this memorial in Montgomery, Alabama.

and systemic repression of Black people as an oppressed nation.

As every Confederate monument comes tumbling down, new monuments should eventually take their place, honoring those who gave their life’s blood to resist and destroy the monstrous institution of white supremacy.

Besides the legendary heroes Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, Gabriel Prosser, Osborne P. Anderson and John Brown, now in Montgomery the less-well-known heroes are honored — Lucy, Anarcha and Betsey. □

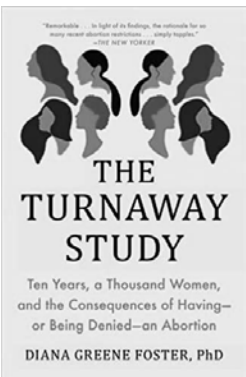
The Turnaway Study — when reproductive freedom is denied

By Marie Kelly

There has already been catastrophic fallout since SCOTUS handed down the Dobbs decision overturning Roe, ending federal guarantee of right of access to abortion and allowing states to completely ban abortion. It hasn’t taken long to hear stories of forced pregnancy, vital medical care withheld and criminalization of reproductive rights. Stories of maternal deaths are sure to come.

Pregnant people who live in, or have the resources to travel to, a pro-choice state will be able to terminate a pregnancy. They will still have that reproductive freedom. But what about the pregnant people forced to give birth because of restricted abortion access? What will the future be like for them, already oppressed whether it be due to poverty, racism, genderphobia or misogyny?

A window into the not-too-distant future comes through the Turnaway Study, a



longitudinal study conducted by researchers at University of California-San Francisco, who studied the long-term health and well-being of women who had had abortions.

The study was created in response to the lack of data to answer anecdotal claims from far-right Christian groups that having an abortion led to long-term emotional trauma. The researchers followed 1,000

women over a period of 10 years ending in 2016. Participants either had had an abortion or were turned away because they were too far along in their pregnancies, according to medical or state restrictions.

Researchers interviewed participants over a five-year period to determine the impact the abortion or — if they were turned away — the childbirth had had on their lives.

The Turnaway Study disproved the prevailing theory that abortion was a regrettable life event for anyone choosing to end a pregnancy; 95% of the women in the study

who had had an abortion said it had been the right decision. That did not change over the five-year period. These participants did not experience a higher than average degree of anxiety, depression or suicide, debunking the claim of far-right zealots.

What the study researchers did conclude was that not allowing women to have an abortion, when that was clearly their choice, had far-reaching, long-term, sometimes devastating impacts on their lives and the lives of their families.

The “turned away” women were four times more likely to be living in poverty, and they reported more anxiety symptoms and low self-esteem. They had more instances of serious health complications directly related to pregnancy. These complications ranged from high blood pressure and chronic pain to eclampsia (seizures during or shortly after childbirth) and even maternal death.

According to the Turnaway research, women who had been denied an abortion were less likely to have any kind of hopeful plan for the future and were more likely to stay with an abusive partner.

This last finding is particularly disturbing given that homicide is already the leading cause of death among pregnant women. According to a study in the October 2021 “Obstetrics and Gynecology,” pregnant women in the U.S. die by homicide more often than they die of pregnancy-related causes — and are frequently killed by a partner. Using death certificates, researchers discovered the dreadful statistic by comparing homicides and pregnancy-related deaths across the U.S. for the first time.

Maternal mortality in the U.S. has been increasing since the 1990s. The rate of that mortality is surely higher than statistics show, given that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention do not count homicide in their maternal mortality statistics. (jezebel.com, July 14)

The outcomes of the Turnaway Study underline the necessity for bold action now, to regain and secure reproductive rights, before more lives and futures are crushed.

For more information, see ansirh.org/research/ongoing/turnaway-study.

WW COMMENTARY

In the crosshairs of the abortion battle

By Kathy Durkin

Dr. Caitlin Bernard did what any dedicated doctor would do when faced with a medical emergency: Provide care. That is what she did for a 10-year-old rape victim, who could not obtain an abortion in Ohio, her home state, because she had missed the state’s six-week abortion deadline. This traumatized child had to travel to Indiana to access a medication abortion June 30.

This case, which made national news following an Indianapolis Star story July 1, became a political football for reactionaries whose goal is to abolish all abortions. The Supreme Court’s June 24 overturn of the Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortions has emboldened anti-abortion extremists, whose violent

history includes murder of abortion providers.

Fox News, the Wall Street Journal and conservative politicians and pundits, called the story a “hoax” meant to bolster the pro-choice movement. Ohio Attorney General Dave Jost joined the chorus.

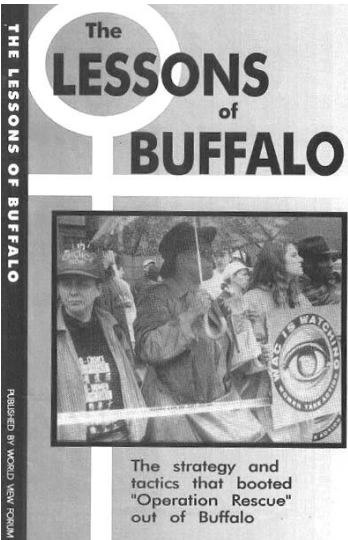
The Columbus Dispatch July 13 reported a suspect had confessed to the rape. It was no hoax. But no apologies came.

Then reactionaries fiercely attacked Dr. Bernard for telling the child’s story. Allegations arose that she did not file obligatory reports about the abortion or rape. Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita has threatened to investigate Dr. Bernard for not submitting these documents, but the New York Times verified they were filed.

The ultraright has targeted Dr. Bernard

before. She had to stop providing abortions at a clinic in South Bend, Indiana, after hostile forces threatened to kidnap her daughter. Her name is on a list of doctors at Right to Life Michiana, an anti-abortion website that was tied to Amy Coney Barrett before her Supreme Court appointment.

Dr. Bernard is courageous and principled, as are medical staff and clinic workers countrywide who provide abortions in the face of rabid opposition. Reactionaries seek to criminalize and punish everyone involved in providing or accessing abortions — and ultimately, to enforce a national abortion ban — even though the majority of U.S. residents support this right. Those who prevent children, the most vulnerable among us, from getting essential medical care, are the real criminals. □



On-the-ground narrative about organizing to defeat right-wing reactionaries. Download free at workers.org/books.

NATO exploits Picasso's anti-war 'Guernica'

By Renán Vega Cantor

This article from El Colectivo, July 7, edited by María Piedad Ossaba of lapluma.net and translated by John Catalinotto, refers to events at the June 28-30 NATO Summit in Spain.

The photo is outrageous, although at first glance it appears harmless: A group of women are posing, and in the background is "Guernica," Pablo Picasso's iconic anti-war painting. What is behind this seemingly innocent and banal photo?

To understand, it is necessary to discuss who the women in the photo are and what was happening when it was taken. Because let's remember there is no text — in this case it's all visual, just a photo — without a context that might allow us to understand it.

In the photo are women linked to European or North American power. They are the "First Ladies," who met in Madrid on the occasion of the NATO Summit in early July. They were summoned there by Spanish Queen Letizia Ortiz.

That is to say, they are women who accompany the presidents and prime ministers of the member countries of that military alliance that serves U.S. imperialism. The NATO meeting spoke precisely not about peace, but about war.

In this context, the photograph is an apology for war on the part of the women linked to NATO power. Considering the circumstances, the image of Guernica has been dragged through the muck.

Guernica is a universal icon that denounces the barbarities of war in general and the fascist aggression suffered by Spain in the 1930s in particular.

Guernica 1937

It is worth remembering that the painting in question was created by Picasso in mid-1937, following the bombing of the town of Guernica, which occurred on April 26 of that year. [The town was located in the Basque Country of Spain, and its Basque name is Gernikara.]

On that day, an indiscriminate air raid by German and Italian planes supporting [Spanish fascist leader] Francisco Franco killed some 300 people in the town and



This group posing in front of Picasso's 'Guernica' painting included Queen Letizia of Spain, Jill Biden of the U.S. and 14 other 'First Ladies' of 'world leaders' attending the 2022 NATO Summit in Madrid, June 29.

inaugurated the [modern] war of terror from the air — that is, the indiscriminate bombing of cities and their [civilian] inhabitants.

In Paris, two days after the attack, Picasso saw in French newspapers the destructive results of the bombing and began the work that later came to fruition at the request of the government of the Second Spanish Republic, which commissioned [Picasso] for a painting to be exhibited in the Spanish pavilion at the 1937 international exhibition in Paris.

Due to the result of the Spanish Civil War, that is, the triumph of Franco's regime, "Guernica" was kept outside Spain until 1981, when it returned to that country and is now exhibited at the Reina Sofia Museum.

"Guernica" is an iconic painting of the 20th century and one of the most important anti-war symbols of all times, due to the moment in which it was created, its purpose of denouncing fascist crimes during the Spanish Civil War and for being an early pictorial announcement of what was to come with World War II and its trail of death and destruction by the Nazi hordes.

At the time of its creation, Picasso himself categorically stated: "In the mural 'Guernica' [...] I clearly express my hatred for the military caste that has shipwrecked Spain in an ocean of pain and death."

Now it turns out that NATO, a criminal organization par excellence, is using "Guernica" as a symbol of its wars of aggression against the world, where the blood and pain generated by the fascist

forces in the small town of Guernica on April 26, 1937, are multiplied.

Daniela Ortiz condemns the misuse of art

For all these reasons, it had to be a painter, the Peruvian Daniela Ortiz, who left a testimony of her indignation for the vulgar war-like use of Guernica. With that motive she wrote a letter to the Reina Sofia Museum demanding the withdrawal of her works from that museum.

It is "aberrant," Ortiz wrote, that "a piece created in response to a bombing should be used as a backdrop for those political figures who decide to impose war at a global level."

She noted in her letter that "at this summit, held days after the massacre that took the lives of at least 37 migrants, the war conflict in Eastern Europe is even more tense with the entry of Sweden and Finland into NATO," which "implies an intensification of the war and persecution of the Kurdish people," to satisfy the appetites of Turkey. NATO "has taken a step further in the escalation of

militarization, generation of wars and conflicts," after singling out China "as a threat."

She deplored that the Spanish government under President Pedro Sánchez has "succeeded in getting NATO to incorporate the so-called migratory flows as a hybrid threat. ... This decision will further strengthen the militarization of the border and the deadly violence against the migrant population."

She stressed that "the Reina Sofia Museum, funded largely with public money from the efforts of the migrant and Spanish working class, should not use the works of artists for the political purposes of organizations that impose war and violence, such as NATO, and that it should never use public resources to carry out these deplorable events."

In this letter, something essential is emphasized, which is that the Museum should not only watch over the physical integrity of "Guernica," but also its

political integrity. And, we add, its moral integrity. Because it is unacceptable to use a work that denounces the crimes of the original fascism of the 1930s as a justification for the worldwide crimes of the imperialist armies of NATO in the 21st century.

Poor "Guernica" and poor Picasso in the hands of those who are preparing World War III and who are the direct political descendants of Hitler, Franco and Mussolini.

Translator's notes: The Turkish regime had delayed Finland and Sweden's entry into NATO until those Nordic states stopped granting asylum to Kurdish refugees.

On June 29, Moroccan security forces and Spanish Civil Guards attacked some 2,000 African migrants climbing chain link fences to enter Spain's Melilla enclave bordering Morocco. Nearly 40 migrants died.

Now it turns out that NATO, a criminal organization par excellence, is using 'Guernica' as a symbol of its wars of aggression against the world, where the blood and pain generated by the fascist forces in the small town of Guernica on April 26, 1937, is multiplied.

Biden in Occupied Palestine and the 'Jerusalem Declaration'

Samidoun Palestine Prisoner Solidarity Network issued this collective statement with co-signers "in struggle and solidarity" July 16. The full list of signers, including Workers World Party and the International Action Center, is at samidoun.net. Organizations can endorse at bit.ly/bidenpalestine.

The joint declaration of U.S. President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid reveals not only the fundamental bankruptcy of the imperialist and Zionist systems they represent but also underlines the necessity to act and stand now in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their resistance, to liberate their land from the river to the sea. This strategic partnership of violence, warmongering, repression and colonialism must be met with our own anti-Zionist, anti-imperialist strategic partnership for justice.

Issued in occupied Jerusalem, itself a signal of the declaration's alignment with impunity for ongoing war crimes and crimes against humanity, the document boasts of "shared values and shared interests." It is clear that

the shared values referred to here are those of imperial domination, settler colonialism and the violent oppression of Indigenous peoples. We reject these "shared values and shared interests" and instead uphold the shared values of humanity: the dismantling of apartheid and settler colonialism, the liberation of the land and the protection of peoples' rights, not war profiteers' greed and colonial land theft.

The declaration repeatedly attacks the Palestinian resistance and all forces and nations in the region that seek to defend their right to sovereignty and self-determination. It labels Palestinian resistance as terrorism while remaining silent on the ongoing extrajudicial killings of Palestinians, mass incarceration, land theft, siege and the exile of millions of Palestinians denied their right to return home. Israel and the U.S. are waging colonial war. Their declaration asserts a right to unilateral war, the logic of the colonizer, and boasts of the over \$3.8 billion in U.S. taxpayer money sent to further arm that war (while enriching

U.S. arms developers). The Palestinian people, like all colonized people, have the right to defend themselves.

Biden and Lapid reinforce their attacks on boycott campaigns, the growing call for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) and the "delegitimization of Israel," and clumsily attempt to link campaigns for justice and liberation in Palestine with anti-Semitism. In reality, the campaign to boycott and isolate Israel is growing on our campuses, in our community centers, labor unions and academic associations, in our food co-ops and social justice organizations, in the streets of our cities and communities. Such statements do nothing to legitimize a fundamentally illegitimate project — the colonization of Palestine and the dispossession of Palestinians.

While Biden and Lapid trumpet their military alliance, we must respond with a



PHOTO: ABBAS MOMANI

Protesters hounded U.S. President Joe Biden in Palestine, including on July 15 in Bethlehem where boys carried the photograph of Shireen Abu Akleh, Palestinian-American journalist murdered by Israeli Defense Force troops while on assignment in the Palestinian refugee camp of Jenin.

peoples' alliance: that is, an alliance that firmly rejects imperialism and Zionism, that builds the very boycott campaigns they seek to undermine or even criminalize, that supports the Palestinian people and their resistance by all means and that stands together against the systems of domination, injustice, settler colonialism and exploitation that they represent. Together, we organize and struggle until return and liberation, from the river to the sea. □

Beyond Biden

Young people who backed Joe Biden in 2020, because they feared or hated Donald Trump, are now fed up with the Democratic Party. Fed up, disillusioned, disgusted and looking for new solutions. That was the message in a July 14 article in The New York Times interviewing youth from around the country. And in a poll published a day earlier. The articles warned the Democratic Party leadership they faced a midterm disaster.

The interviews showed that youths supported Biden in 2020 because he promised to defend abortion rights, fight the climate crisis, impose gun controls, provide affordable health care, crush COVID-19 and rebuild the infrastructure to stimulate the economy while reducing inequality.

He failed on all counts. Biden abandoned Build Back Better, barely contested SCOTUS on Roe v. Wade, reopened oil and gas leasing in the Gulf of Mexico, changed nothing regarding assault weapons and now presides over 2,500 COVID-19 deaths per week while boasting victory.

The administration failed to defend the rights of people with disabilities and has overseen increased police budgets, without eliminating the systemic racism that sparked massive protests in summer 2020.

One West Virginia senator, owned by the power monopolies, has provided the administration's excuse for failing to set climate rules, pass stimulus programs or eliminate inequalities. Even some Democrats are asking to remove Joe Manchin, even if it costs them their Senate majority. They have accomplished nothing anyway with Manchin as their 50th vote in the Senate.

Dems strong — in warmaking

Oops, we exaggerate. The Biden leadership has been assertive in one area: warmaking. Democrats just joined with Republicans in the House of Representatives to pass a bill by 329-101, adding \$37 billion to the already bloated \$803 billion budget Biden proposed for the U.S. Armed Forces, for a total of \$840 billion.

Regarding militarism, that is, projecting U.S. economic, political and media power worldwide and dominating the world, the

Democratic Party and the Republican Party have always been in agreement. There's a reason revolutionary Marxists label them twin parties representing U.S. imperialism: They are. They will prove this once again as the Senate approves the military spending bill.

Life experience is teaching youths the frustration that comes from expecting an electoral victory of the Democrats to solve life's problems. Understanding that the Democratic Party is part of the problem is the first step toward a solution. Our task, however, is not simply to show that

both Republicans and Democrats are enemies of the multinational working class and that neither imperialist party offers a solution. We must open a path to struggle that can bring real changes.

Fortunately, there are real struggles beginning among the people that can lead to the answer. Here are two of them:

Mostly young people at unorganized major corporations — Amazon, Starbucks, Apple and some of the retail superstores — have begun organizing unions and have won votes to unionize. Their organizing has drawn solidarity — from other young people, from those unions that have a fighting leadership, from other groups battling for their rights — which has led to solidarity actions uniting different sectors of the working class in joint struggle. (See the lead article in this July 21 issue.)

In response to the SCOTUS decision to overthrow Roe v. Wade and to the atrocities this decision has already provoked, organizations with a history of fighting for the right to reproductive choices and for obtaining health care for women and anyone who can become pregnant have been mobilizing. The network exists and volunteers are expanding it.

Both these paths to struggle can be independent of the two imperialist parties. They can, taken together with other examples, lead to forming organizations like the Workers' Assemblies discussed in Workers World newspaper. Workers' Assemblies can operate to coordinate the struggles on issues to challenge power on a systematic level.

Understanding the role of the two imperialist parties is a start. □



WW PHOTO: TONI ARENSTEIN

Protest for reproductive rights, New York City, May 3.

Middle East visit Oil access trumps human rights

No Palestinians living under Israeli occupation benefitted one iota from President Joe Biden's brief Middle East visit. Biden had the executive power to reverse the damage done when former President Donald Trump moved the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, recognizing Israel's control over the disputed capital. Biden chose to not do so.

Biden has never addressed Israel's responsibility for the murder of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, killed by Israeli soldiers in May, as she covered an Israeli Defense Forces operation in the occupied West Bank.

Biden spent his brief time in occupied Palestine meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid. The two signed a joint strategic declaration pledging further bilateral cooperation. They took a hate-filled aim at the international Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which organizes nonviolent opposition to pressure Israel to adhere to international law.

Biden and Lapid discussed preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. Yet Israel, which never signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, possesses roughly 400 nuclear warheads and has the ability to deliver them by several methods. Shortly after Biden's brief visit, Israel escalated its bombing of the occupied Gaza Strip — often referred to the world's largest open-air prison.

Saudi Arabia

No workers or peasants in war-torn Yemen gained any solace from Biden's brief trip to Saudi Arabia — one of the worst violators of human rights in the region. Despite Biden's campaign attacks on Trump and promises to break with Saudi Arabia's war on Yemen, U.S. imperialism continues to prop up the Saudi effort.

The U.S.-backed Saudi war and blockade of Yemen have resulted in the deaths of over 110,000 people, destroyed the poorest country in the Arab world and left two-thirds of Yemen's population of 30 million dependent upon international humanitarian aid. Yet Biden continues his predecessors' policies of backing

Saudi Arabia against Yemen, regardless of the human cost.

Biden talks about human rights, then visits two of the Middle East's worst human rights violators. He criticizes other countries — socialist and those not loyal to Washington — for their alleged human rights violations, yet, as Trump did, visited the Saudi government which executed 81 people just months ago.

Biden spent much of his trip reinforcing Trump's policies for the region, instead of implementing the policies he campaigned around. Human rights violations were never a concern for Biden's visit to the region. His priority was securing access to the region's oil reserves — now that the U.S./NATO-backed war in Ukraine has shut off global access to oil from Russia.

A major plan for the U.S.-instigated NATO war in Ukraine was to set a price cap on Russian oil. So far the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) cartel has refused to go along with the U.S. plan. Washington has made it a priority to keep Saudi Arabia, the third largest oil producer in the world, as an ally, even if it means ignoring significant human rights violations.

During his visit to Saudi Arabia, Biden reportedly failed to confront Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman about the Saudi state-sanctioned murder of Washington Post contributor, Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in 2018. When questioned about this by reporters upon his return to the White House, Biden's very revealing response was "Why don't you talk about something that matters." □



PHOTO: AMMAR AWAD

Holding a poster of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, killed by the Israeli Defense Forces while on assignment and wearing press identification, a young Palestinian girl protests President Biden's presence in East Jerusalem, July 15.

Safe consumption sites

Ending the war on people who use drugs

By Princess Harmony

New York City 2020. In the shadow of the COVID-19 epidemic are two others: the opioid and overdose epidemics. Since the start of these epidemics, there have been thousands of deaths from overdoses, even when the people who OD don't even know they've consumed opioids.

What is the difference between the two? The opioid epidemic is the epidemic of people knowingly abusing opioids. The overdose epidemic is the epidemic of people overdosing from fentanyl analogues and other opioids unknowingly, such as overdoses when non-opioid drugs are tainted by dangerous opioids such as acrylfentanyl, acetylfentanyl, ohmefentanyl and carfentanil.

What are the preventative measures to keep people from overdosing on opioids, knowingly or unknowingly? One is to keep naloxone (Narcan, Evzio) on hand

to ensure that users can have their overdoses reversed. Another is to keep fentanyl test strips on hand, to catch the presence of fentanyl or most fentanyl analogues before one uses tainted substances. These methods save lives. But they require people being ready ahead of time. So what can consistently save the lives of drug addicts and others with Substance Use Disorder?

Safe consumption sites

The operation and usage of safe consumption sites are places that addicted people can go to to keep from overdosing. These provide clean needles, fentanyl test strips, naloxone rescues. Some even provide methadone and buprenorphine referrals or treatment. Around the world where these services are offered, people's lives have been saved in more than one way.

Whether it's being rescued with Narcan or saved from

the risk of HIV and hepatitis B and C, the sites work to serve working and oppressed people with Substance Use Disorder.

In the U.S., there has been a so-called "War on Drugs" that began in the 1980s under President Ronald Reagan, continued under the Clinton administration in the 1990s, the George W. Bush administration in the 2000s and the Trump administration in the 2010s. The decades of anti-drug measures were in fact a war on communities of color, with many young people sent to jail for life.

Now there's good news from the Journal of the American Medical Association. In a July 15 research letter to the JAMA Open Network, there is proof that safe consumption sites in the U.S. work here, just like in other countries. (tinyurl.com/4eyhbt4)

Despite the continued demonization of people who use

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COVID-19 variant hits

Cuba leads in health and vaccination rates

By Sara Flounders

As the most dangerous COVID-19 variant hits with full force, almost all precautions and mandates in the U.S. have ended — business must continue at all costs. With over 1 million dead, the United States has the highest number of deaths and infections in the world. The U.S. also has one of the lowest rates of vaccinations, systematic testing and genome sequencing among developed countries.

CNN sounded the alarm July 14: “Nearly two-and-a-half years since the coronavirus pandemic began, the most infectious and transmissible variant yet has arrived. ... Now the virus is spreading again — evolving, escaping immunity and driving an uptick in cases and hospitalizations.”

Major corporate media described how the new variant, labeled BA.5, can easily evade immunity from previous infections and vaccines, increasing the risk of re-infection. The seven-day average for daily deaths in the U.S. rose 26% over the past two weeks to 489 on July 12 (3,423 deaths per week). (Chicago Tribune, July 13)

Despite vague and uncoordinated appeals to get vaccinations and booster shots, only about 67.1% of the U.S. population is fully vaccinated. This includes about 60% of 12- to 17-year-olds and only 30% of children ages 5 to 11 years. (American Academy of Pediatrics, July 15)

Cuba’s socialist medicine

The lack of preparation in the face of a new wave of infections and deaths stands in stark contrast to the incredible accomplishments of blockaded and sanctioned socialist Cuba. A June 18 Washington Post article, “How Cuba became a pioneer in COVID-19 vaccines for kids,” describes Cuba’s successful development of Soberana 02, an inexpensive vaccine.

Over 90% of the population is vaccinated. Last September, Cuba launched the world’s first mass children’s coronavirus vaccine campaign, reaching 1.7 million youngsters aged 2 to 18. The most interesting admission, from a voice of U.S. corporate power, is the description of a health industry focused on the whole population.



PHOTO: GRANMA

In October 2021, Cuba announced that 100% of its then-eligible population had received at least one dose of its COVID-19 vaccine.

The Washington Post raised a fundamental question: “How did Cuba reach the finish line so fast?” Its vaccine makers credit the extraordinary teamwork of scientists around the globe. When the pandemic began, they quickly shared discoveries on the internet, such as China’s record-breaking genetic sequencing of the new virus, known as SARS-CoV-2.

The Cuban vaccines offer a significant advantage to developing countries that lack the ultracold freezer network that vaccines made by U.S. Big Pharma companies require. This makes storage and transportation much easier.

But Cuba wasn’t starting from scratch. In the 1980s, then-President Fidel Castro poured more than \$1 billion into an ambitious new biotech industry. Cuba sent students abroad for study

and built a “Scientific Pole” in Havana consisting of around 50 research institutions and enterprises. When COVID-19 hit, the country had three decades of experience inventing and manufacturing vaccines, said Amilcar Pérez Riverol, a Cuban scientist who now works at the Institute for Medical Genetics at the University of Oldenburg in Germany.

Several medical journals covered Cuba’s success based on using more conventional approaches to quickly developing a vaccine using harmless pieces of the virus to trigger the immune system to manufacture antibodies. The National Library of Medicine at the National Center for Biotechnology Information described Cuba’s COVID-19

health program in great detail:

“The three-dose schedule of vaccines developed and produced on the island is complemented by a rapid booster roll-out — also using Cuban vaccines — that began in December 2021. The island nation was able to achieve the third highest COVID-19 vaccination rate in the world after decades of scientific investment, research, discovery and innovation; regulatory oversight and compliance; professional training; and increased production capacity.

“But a vaccine is only as effective as the health system charged with administering it, in a safe and timely manner, to as many people as possible. Here too, Cuba has decades of experience, including a national pediatric immunization program where 98% of children under 5 are immunized against 13 diseases, an annual polio vaccination campaign (both launched in 1962 and uninterrupted since) and campaigns to contain epidemics such as H1N1. When the first COVID-19 cases were detected on the island in March 2020, Cuba harnessed this vaccine experience, making a hard tack toward developing its own vaccines.” (pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

But even with the capability to produce a lifesaving vaccine of enormous value to the whole world, Cuba, due to U.S. sanctions, faced a shortage of syringes and had to appeal for international donations to vaccinate its population. A New York-based charity, Global Health Partners, sent 6 million syringes.

Cuba shares with the world

Cuba — despite the U.S. blockade, its small size of 11 million people and its limited resources — has continued its highly developed medical research and sent more than 40 medical teams to more than 30 countries to fight COVID-19.

Cuban vaccines have been sent to Vietnam, Venezuela, Syria, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Nicaragua. Soberana 02 is being manufactured in Iran, and Cuba is sharing its technical knowledge to help other countries manufacture the vaccines locally. Cuba is in discussion with more than 15 countries, most of which are low-income nations, said Rolando Pérez Rodríguez, director of science and innovation at Cuba’s state-run pharmaceutical conglomerate, BioCubaFarma.

Cuban health officials have said that they will apply for World Health Organization approval, having secured funding to produce 200 million vaccine doses for low-income countries.

“Those vaccinated with the Cuban vaccines, Soberana and Abdala, have high percentages of seroconversion against the omicron variant,” said Ileana Morales Suárez, director of science and technology innovation at Cuba’s Ministry of Public Health. The results were “very encouraging and favorable.” (bmj.com)

Cuba and China cooperate on new vaccines

Cuba and China formally announced June 2 that they have filed for joint patent for a Pan-Corona vaccine. The new vaccine, a collaboration between the biotechnological sectors of the two countries, is the first patent for a single vaccine effective against the many variants of “COVID-19, all other coronaviruses and possible new related pathogens,” according to BioCubaFarma president Eduardo Martínez Díaz. (tinyurl.com/5n8xtbf8)

The Pan-Corona project is based in a joint biotechnological research and development center, operating since 2019 in the city of Yongzhou in Hunan province, and led by experts from Cuba’s Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB).

The joint Cuba-China statement declared: “The high-level bilateral political relationship and the unwavering friendship between the two communist parties, governments and people allow us to continue to strengthen a strategic alliance and a special relationship. As socialist countries ... Cuba and China have unlimited potential, which both sides must take advantage of for the benefit of our people and humanity.”

China has the productive capacity to mass produce and distribute these new vaccines on a global scale. China, along with protecting its own population, has already shipped and helped distribute more than 2 billion COVID-19 vaccines around the world. China’s vaccines have largely gone to developing countries that did not have the capacity to pay U.S. and European pharmaceutical industry prices.

While Pfizer, BioNTech and Moderna are making combined profits of \$1,000 a second, Pfizer and BioNTech have delivered less than 1% of their total vaccine supplies to low-income countries, while Moderna has delivered just 0.2%. (tinyurl.com/29w8pdda)

Life expectancy

The success of a people-oriented public health approach is proven by the rising life expectancy in both China and Cuba. Life expectancy in Cuba, 79.08 years, is higher than in the U.S. (macrorends.net) In 2022 life expectancy in China, now at 78.2 years, just surpassed the U.S. (Global Times, July 12) Life expectancy in the U.S. fell from 78.9 years in 2019 to 76.6 years in 2021. It is now more than five years less than the average among peer developed nations. (CNN, April 8)

U.S. life expectancy is declining year by year based on COVID-19 and numerous untreated chronic diseases, from diabetes and heart disease to poor nutrition in a for-profit medical system. Capitalism’s drive to maximize profits costs lives every day. Even in the face of a global pandemic and climate crisis, ruthless competition makes cooperation and long-term planning impossible.

Countries with socialist planning, such as Cuba and China, have the capacity to meet new challenges and through cooperation open whole new frontiers of human knowledge. □

Safe consumption sites

Continued from page 10

drugs, the city of New York authorized the two safe consumption sites by OnPoint NYC: one in East Harlem and the other in Washington Heights. From the JAMA report, it’s now known that within the first two months of operations of the two sites, 613 people used the services almost 6,000 times.

Opioid overdoses required 19 naloxone and 35 oxygen interventions, while overdose prevention strategies were used 125 times overall. Other than overdose interventions, additional services were utilized at OnPoint’s two locations: naloxone distribution, counseling, hepatitis C virus testing, HIV testing,

medical care and holistic services such as acupuncture.

The sites give a wide variety of services to the most oppressed and crushed people and provide them with love for themselves. A popular phrase used in addiction and recovery is “We will love you until you learn to love yourself.” The services provided at the sites demonstrate the power of that process for the actively using addict.

This is only the beginning of studies into the usefulness of safe consumption

sites in the United States. And the future looks promising, indeed. □



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Safe consumption site, OnPoint NYC, East Harlem location.



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Guerra, libertad sexual y fascismo en Alemania

Lavanda y Rojo

Por Leslie Feinberg

Además de los ataques legislativos a las mujeres, a las personas no conformes con el género y a las vidas de los LGBTQ+, en junio grupos supremacistas blancos como los Proud Boys han intentado una incursión de estilo militar en Pride in the Park en Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, y han invadido bibliotecas públicas en Wilmington, Carolina del Norte, y en San Lorenzo, California, para interrumpir eventos infantiles donde se leían libros relacionados con los LGBTQ+. Estos extractos de Lavender & Red de Leslie Feinberg (24 de junio y 1 de julio de 2004, Workers World) nos recuerdan que los nazis utilizaron tácticas similares para dividir el creciente poder de la clase obrera. Comienza a organizar la solidaridad práctica — y la seguridad de los eventos — para tus acciones locales y lee la serie completa en workers.org/books.

El estallido de la Primera Guerra Mundial descarilo el impulso de los movimientos por la emancipación sexual y de género y por los derechos de las mujeres en Alemania. ... En cada uno de los países capitalistas, los patrones apelaron a los trabajadores para que se unieran a ellos en la batalla. ... Seguir este patriotismo derechista y asesino frenó todos los movimientos sociales — gays, trans y lesbianas, derechos de las mujeres, luchas obreras y socialistas — porque dio la ventaja a la clase dominante, fortaleció a la derecha e hizo retroceder al movimiento progresista. ...

Pero la Primera Guerra Mundial contribuyó a hacer necesaria la monumental Revolución Rusa. No fue la derrota militar en el campo de batalla, sino las revoluciones en Rusia y Alemania, lo que puso fin a la Primera Guerra Mundial.

Las revoluciones socialistas derriban el fanatismo anti-LGBTQ+

Ocho semanas después de la Revolución Rusa de octubre de 1917 que llevó al poder a los Soviets de obreros, campesinos y soldados, el nuevo gobierno dirigido por Lenin abolió las leyes zaristas contra los homosexuales, que eran similares al párrafo 175 alemán. Esto iba acompañado de la garantía de los derechos de los trabajadores, la tierra para los campesinos y la igualdad de derechos para las mujeres.... El ala izquierda del movimiento revolucionario ruso hizo algo más que eliminar las leyes antigay del código penal ruso. Los bolcheviques sostenían que había que derribar los muros que separaban el amor entre personas del mismo sexo del resto de la sexualidad humana ...

Los vientos frescos de la Revolución Rusa llenaron las velas de la lucha en otras partes del mundo, incluida Alemania. En 1918 estalló un motín en la marina alemana. Los trabajadores de todo el país se declararon en huelga en su apoyo. El 7 de noviembre, un consejo de obreros, soldados y campesinos estableció la República de Baviera. La ola revolucionaria se



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Leslie Feinberg en el Boston Youth Pride, 2005.

extendió a Berlín, donde se proclamó una república socialista el 9 de noviembre. El kaiser abdica al día siguiente.

Hirschfeld: socialista homosexual, internacionalista

La revolución dio al Movimiento de Emancipación Homosexual [en Alemania] una nueva energía y dio inspiración a la esperanza del movimiento de lesbianas y gays de que su liberación estaba en el horizonte. ...

Magnus Hirschfeld, líder del Movimiento de Emancipación Homosexual, junto con los miembros del Comité Científico Humanitario, apoyó la nueva república. “Tomamos la parte más activa en todos los acontecimientos revolucionarios”, informó el Comité.

Hirschfeld intervino en un mitin de masas en Berlín el 10 de noviembre, en el momento álgido de la revolución. Entre 3.000 y 4.000 personas se reunieron frente al edificio del Reichstag, cerca de donde los guardias rojos revolucionarios libraban batallas campales con los oficiales reaccionarios que apoyaban al kaiser.

Recordando a Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Wilhelm Liebknecht y otros revolucionarios, Hirschfeld dijo que, no sólo en Alemania “sino en todas partes, el nacionalismo intenta destruir el internacionalismo, y el militarismo intenta destruir el socialismo.”

Hirschfeld subrayó por qué el socialismo era tan importante: “El socialismo significa solidaridad, comunidad, mutualidad, mayor desarrollo de la sociedad en un cuerpo unificado de personas. Cada uno para todos y todos para cada uno.”

Dijo: “Queremos la comunidad de los pueblos, la lucha contra el racismo y el chovinismo nacional, la eliminación de las limitaciones a la comunicación económica y personal entre los pueblos, el derecho de los pueblos a la autodeterminación en cuanto a su relación con un Estado y su forma de gobierno.”

La mayor biblioteca LGBTQ+ del mundo

Los historiadores John Lauritsen y David Thorstad explican que cuando estalló la revolución [alemana], “el Comité envió inmediatamente una delegación al nuevo gobierno para presionar por una amnistía total que incluyera la liberación de la cárcel de todos los presos condenados por actos homosexuales.”

“La eliminación de la censura y la mayor libertad de prensa y expresión que se produjo, tras la revolución, fueron una

bendición para la lucha por los derechos de los homosexuales durante un tiempo. Pero quizás el beneficio más tangible para el movimiento gay fue la adquisición de un edificio que se convertiría en un centro internacional de liberación gay e investigación sexual. ...”

El primero de su clase, [el Instituto de Ciencias Sexuales de Hirschfeld] recopiló documentación histórica, biológica, antropológica, estadística y etnológica sobre la sexualidad y el género humanos [en una colección de más de 20.000 volúmenes. El instituto tiene el mérito de ser uno de los primeros centros médicos del mundo en ofrecer cirugías de afirmación de género para personas trans].

El fascismo quema libros y ataca a las personas LGBTQ+

Al mismo tiempo, la contrarrevolución alemana encabezada por Hitler y financiada y respaldada por un segmento de la clase industrial y bancaria había conseguido una base en la clase media.

Este fascismo tenía como objetivo los movimientos de derechos de los gays/trans/lésbicos y de las mujeres, incluso antes de que las leyes antijudías y antigays, codificadas en 1933-35, marcaran oficialmente el desencadenamiento de la campaña de terror generalizada.

Hirschfeld fue el objetivo de los nazis porque era judío y gay, además de líder del movimiento y socialista. ... El 6 de mayo de 1933, jóvenes fascistas se organizaron para marchar sobre su Instituto de Ciencias Sexuales, acompañados por una banda de música. Destrozaron el archivo internacional, haciendo una montaña de los muchos miles de libros, revistas, fotografías y gráficos en aquel momento la mayor colección [sobre sexualidad y género] de la historia del mundo. Las tropas de asalto aparecieron y se hicieron cargo del saqueo. Cuatro días después, el enorme montón de material de archivo fue quemado públicamente en la Plaza de la Ópera. ...

Después de 1933, los nazis desmantelaron por la fuerza todas las organizaciones juveniles independientes, incluso las católicas, denunciando a sus dirigentes como “degenerados homosexuales.” ... Un nuevo y duro edicto antigay emitido en 1935, el párrafo 175A, criminalizaba los besos, los abrazos e incluso las fantasías homosexuales. La ley daba al estado fascista licencia para llevar a cabo detenciones e internamientos en campos con impunidad. ...

Aunque las leyes contra el lesbianismo no habían sido codificadas, las mujeres fueron atrapadas en la red estatal, acorraladas en redadas de las SS en bares de lesbianas, condenadas y enviadas a campos de concentración donde se enfrentaron a una horrible brutalidad.

Aprender de los errores

Comunistas y socialistas de todas las sexualidades y géneros lucharon contra los ataques nazis a las luchas de los gays/trans/lesbianas y de las mujeres. Sin embargo, ¿hubo un retroceso en la homosexualidad por parte de los socialistas y comunistas de la izquierda alemana? Sí.

“La izquierda no era [y es] políticamente

monolítica. ... Al igual que un río caudaloso, los movimientos políticos se componen de muchas corrientes. ...”

Los revolucionarios deben trabajar constantemente para deshacerse de siglos de adoctrinamiento de la clase dominante que sirve para dividir y conquistar a la vasta clase trabajadora. Toda forma de fanatismo y atraso frena la unidad y el progreso en la lucha revolucionaria de todas las sexualidades, géneros y sexos para abolir el capitalismo y liberar a la humanidad.

El error frente a la ideología

Sin embargo, hay una profunda diferencia entre el error político y la ideología política. [En 1928] el abogado Felix Halle ... proporcionó esta formulación de la postura del Partido Comunista Alemán:

“El proletariado con conciencia de clase, no influenciado por la ideología de la propiedad y liberado de la ideología de las iglesias, aborda la cuestión de la vida sexual y también el problema de la homosexualidad con la falta de prejuicios que le proporciona la comprensión de la estructura social general. ... De acuerdo con los conocimientos científicos de los tiempos modernos, el proletariado considera estas relaciones como una forma especial de gratificación sexual y exige la misma libertad y restricciones para estas formas de vida sexual que para las relaciones entre los sexos. ...”

Los nazis ocultaron deliberadamente la naturaleza fascista de su partido llamándose “nacionalsocialistas.” Pero su respuesta a una encuesta [de los partidos políticos alemanes sobre su posición respecto al párrafo 175] muestra que el programa nazi era lo contrario de un partido obrero comunista. La respuesta nazi incluía esta escueta frase: “Cualquiera que siquiera piense en el amor homosexual es nuestro enemigo.”

Represión capitalista, resistencia socialista

A finales de la década de 1920, el movimiento fascista con su base en la clase media económicamente devastada empezó a ganar el respaldo de un sector de los industriales y banqueros alemanes para llevar a cabo el trabajo sucio de la contrarrevolución. La represión estatal de la sexualidad, el género y el sexo para imponer la unidad económica capitalista de la familia nuclear patriarcal fue un pilar fundamental de la plataforma fascista.

Las campañas nazis se centraron en la erradicación de la homosexualidad y el aborto, en la imposición de la procreación y en la fuerte restricción de los derechos y el papel de la mujer en la sociedad, además del racismo vicioso y el chovinismo nacional.

Los movimientos progresistas lucharon contra el Estado para despenalizar la variación de la sexualidad y el género. Intentaban liberar las vidas de las mujeres de todas las sexualidades y géneros, que estaban fuertemente encorsetadas por la falta de derechos sociales y económicos básicos.

Estos objetivos modestos pero vitales, planteados en un periodo de lucha de la clase obrera y de depresión económica capitalista, convirtieron a estos movimientos en enemigos de los Nazis. □